



HIGHLIGHTS

Spring Issue

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March 2023



For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

— Isaiah 61:11



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



PURSUING EXCELLENCE

Mr. Ron Koole, Administrator

Are we encouraging, even demanding of our children that they pursue excellence when it comes to their academic studies? Or are we content to accept from our children less than their best effort as long as they are not failing or at least doing average work or better?

I think we all know what the Lord requires of us. He demands that each of us use and develop the gifts He has given to their fullest extent and to His glory. This applies to all our endeavors and callings in this life; whether in the home, on the job, or for the church or the school. Responsibilities and callings change as we grow older and our lives change from childhood to adulthood, but the calling remains the same. Philippians 3:23 “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men”. Slothfulness is condemned by the writer of Proverbs and we are told to consider the activity and example of the ant.

This pursuit of excellence in academics begins in the home. Fathers and mothers, are we setting a positive example for our children? Are we interested in learning? As an illustration, March is “Reading Month”. Have we been encouraging our children to participate in the school-suggested reading activities? One of the best ways to encourage our children to read is to set a good example by reading ourselves. Do our children see us reading quality literature, both spiritual and secular? “Do as I do” means more than “Do as I say.” I single out reading because it is such a vital component to pursuing academic excellence.

Encouraging academic excellence goes beyond just being an example. It includes our involvement and interest in what our children are learning in school. We need to be talking to the children about their studies, assisting them with their homework, and reviewing with them the material to be tested. And then going beyond the assigned school work to fill in family time with enjoyable educational things such as: playing games with the children that develop math, word, and strategy skills, watching wholesome videos, and suggesting interesting and enjoyable websites for the children to visit. It extends as far as incorporating experiences on the family vacations. This list could go on. Sound sacrificial? Yes, that’s what parenting and child rearing is all about. We desire the next generation to have trained minds who appreciate and desire to know more of the wonderful creation and works of God.

I stated that this pursuit of excellence “begins” in the home. It doesn’t end there. The school has a major role to play in this vital endeavor. I have been using the pronouns “we” and “us” because I include myself not only as a parent but also as a teacher. As school and teachers we must demand excellence. The academics must be challenging. The teaching must be lively, fresh, and motivating. Less than the students’ best efforts should be unacceptable. Sloppy or incomplete assignments should require consequences. Most students quickly get the message that doing work right the first time will save them time and effort over the long run.

But we really want our children to give their best efforts and work because they know that this is not only what parents and teachers require but that which God requires. I have found that positive encouragement and personal conversation with the children can go a long way toward changing the less motivated students’ attitude and effort.

This is our calling as parents and teachers. As is stated in Ecclesiastes 11:1 “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.” This makes clear that the fruit of our labors will not always be immediately apparent. We leave the results of our labors in the Lord’s hands with the prayer that He establish the work of our hands and that our children rejoice in the days of their youth, remembering their Creator.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott Kooienga, Chairman
Matt DeBoer, Dan Kalsbeek, Dave Langerak

Greetings from the Education Committee! The last few months we have been busy conducting much of the routine business that takes place each year. Please do not mistake the word "routine" to mean "unimportant". In fact, it is quite the opposite. Many of the routine matters at this time of year are of utmost importance! One of the most important things we as a committee do each January is conduct annual teacher reviews. These reviews are profitable for both the Education Committee, as well as the teachers. The annual reviews are a time where we, as an Education Committee, have an opportunity to meet with each teacher individually. This gives the teachers an opportunity to voice any concerns they have and also gives us an opportunity to personally express our gratitude for the faithful labors of our teachers, who stand in the place of the parents, in the covenantal education of our children. We welcome feedback from them regarding our administrator, as well as how things are going both professionally and with regard to their students. The text chosen for this year was Matthew 22:34-40 with the theme being "Promoting the Love of God in the Classroom". We can report with confidence that our dedicated teachers are diligent in showing and promoting the love of God, in various ways, in their classrooms. We are blessed indeed!

Another important item of business this time of year is the issuing and renewing of contracts. We are happy to report that all teachers with the exception of Mrs. Stephanie Daling, have signed contracts to return to Hope School for the 23/24 school year. This year we interviewed three candidates to take the place of Mrs. Daling in the 6th grade class. All of the candidates interviewed very well, and we are truly blessed as a community of PR schools to have such a talented pool to choose from. Of course, this didn't make our decision any easier, but a verbal offer was made to one of these candidates. We now patiently wait for April 1st when we can offer an official written contract to her.

Part of the work of the committee is to oversee the school library. Our librarians, Lorraine DeVries and Mary Kalsbeek, continue the on-going work of replacing worn out books with good used or new copies of the same titles. These ladies scour used book stores, second hand stores, garage sales, etc. for good used titles from past years or new reprints of these titles. This is a great deal of work and we are thankful for the many hours these ladies put in both in school and outside of school for the benefit of our library.

We would like to thank all of the many volunteers who spend their time helping in various ways each day. Additionally, we'd like to thank our secretary, Laurel, who works tirelessly each day assisting in many different areas of the school, which keeps things operating smoothly. May God continue to bless the labors of all those involved in the cause of the covenant, Christian education here at Hope School and for the love shown to each one of our children.

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2023
25TH ANNUAL HOPE CLASSIC
REGISTRATION TO OPEN AFTER SPRING BREAK

Actual to Budget. YTD February	Total	Budgeted	%
Income			
Church Collections	33,546.82	46,000.00	72.9%
Gifts and Pledges	315,041.42	346,000.00	91.1%
Gym Rental	4,717.00	5,000.00	94.3%
Hope Foundation	25,000.00	50,000.00	50.0%
Special Ed Society	7,869.96	12,074.00	65.2%
Tuition	607,342.72	737,570.00	82.3%
Z - Bus Fees	17,180.70	14,950.00	114.9%
Total Income	1,010,698.62	1,211,594.00	83.4%
Expenses			
Accounting Fees	5,100.00	6,450.00	79.1%
Band Expenses	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	872.06	43,000.00	2.0%
Class Trip Fund	1,500.00	1,500.00	100.0%
Educational Supplies and Books	30,000.00	30,000.00	100.0%
Federation Dues	4,179.34	4,168.00	100.3%
Insurance, General	10,606.50	14,118.00	75.1%
Insurance, Group	54,398.13	95,000.00	57.3%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	2,092.17	4,000.00	52.3%
Insurance, Workers Comp	1,963.92	2,620.00	75.0%
Janitors Supplies	2,540.90	4,500.00	56.5%
Library Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Long Range Building Fund Trans	15,000.00	22,500.00	66.7%
Miscellaneous Expense	1,684.88	2,000.00	84.2%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,500.00	0.0%
Office Supplies	1,166.50	1,000.00	116.7%
Payroll - Band / Choir	13,862.04	21,000.00	66.0%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	1,711.75	2,250.00	76.1%
Payroll - Discovery Room	46,874.54	67,600.00	69.3%
Payroll - Janitor	22,336.00	33,500.00	66.7%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	2,466.50	4,200.00	58.7%
Payroll - Librarian	3,117.50	5,200.00	60.0%
Payroll - Office	21,885.50	34,225.00	63.9%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	270.00	1,000.00	27.0%
Payroll - Teachers	389,264.52	581,797.00	66.9%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	7,043.25	19,000.00	37.1%
Payroll - Technology Maintenance	150.00	3,000.00	5.0%
Payroll Taxes	35,975.32	59,158.00	60.8%
Phys Ed Uniforms	838.59	1,000.00	83.9%
Repairs and Maintenance	3,496.16	7,400.00	47.2%
Retirement Plan	10,745.95	18,862.00	57.0%
Snow Removal	1,320.00	3,500.00	37.7%
Teacher Classroom	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.0%
Teacher Development - Y/E	8,593.94	12,000.00	71.6%
Technology Supplies	13,200.00	14,000.00	94.3%
Utilities, Electric	11,979.35	23,000.00	52.1%
Utilities, Gas	6,450.59	11,000.00	58.6%
Utilities, Internet & Phone	2,903.62	4,000.00	72.6%
Utilities, Trash	1,312.07	2,100.00	62.5%
Utilities, Water & Sewer	1,043.15	1,300.00	80.2%

Actual to Budget. YTD February	Total	Budgeted	%
Z. Bus Expenses			
Bus Depreciation Fund Trans	5,833.36	8,750.00	66.7%
Bus Driver Cost Subsidy	390.00	1,000.00	39.0%
Bus Driver Payroll	16,073.00	22,918.00	70.1%
Bus Driver Payroll Taxes	1,033.80	1,700.00	60.8%
Bus Driver Workers Compensation	749.58	1,000.00	75.0%
Bus Insurance	1,627.75	2,100.00	77.5%
Bus Repair	5,344.87	7,000.00	76.4%
Gas and Oil	9,225.82	12,500.00	73.8%
Transportation Supervisor	1,600.00	1,250.00	128.0%
Total Z. Bus Expenses	41,878.18	58,218.00	71.9%
Total Expenses	785,522.92	1,226,366.00	64.1%

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Brad VanderVeen, Chairman
 Scott Kooienga, Josh Meulenberg

The Finance Committee continues to meet at the beginning of each month, counting and recording the income we receive, and reviewing the finances of the school. This issue of the *Highlights* contains a financial summary as of the end of February. The end of February marks 2/3 of the way through the fiscal year, therefore we expect that revenue and expenses are tracking at approximately 67%. We are happy to report that we are doing very well on both sides. The bottom line shows our income at 83% of budget, and our expenses at 64% of budget. Our strong income position is due to an overwhelming Spring Drive, and many families being ahead on tuition payments. You can see in the financial report that we have already collected over 90% of our budgeted drive amount and 82% of tuition for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The Finance Committee is humbled at the level of financial support from our constituents, and ultimately thankful to God for supplying all our needs.

Over the next few months, we will be conducting the Spring Drive. Please look for information in your church or home mailbox shortly. If you do not receive a letter for the Spring Drive and would like to contribute—please contact the school office to get on the mailing list.

Overall, tuition collection has gone smoothly this year with very few families falling behind. We would like to remind all tuition-paying families that their last tuition payment should be made in May. All tuition should be paid by June 1st. We continue to email tuition statements every month, shortly after each Finance Committee meeting. Please review your statement closely to make sure that you are on track to have your last tuition payment in the office before the 1st of June. For those families taking advantage of EFT payments, the committee will adjust your last payment so that (if possible) you end the year with a zero balance. If you have any questions or concerns regarding tuition payments, contact a member of the Finance Committee.

It is a great privilege to have our children taught in a Protestant Reformed Christian School, and we are thankful that the Lord continues to provide us graciously with the financial means necessary to operate this school.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Matt DeBoer, Chairman
Brad Schipper, Brad Schwarz

The committee is happy to report that our transportation efforts remain on track for the school year. We are thankful that our drivers continue to be dependable and reliable, and operate without major incident. Many may have already noticed that we are looking for a Coopersville route bus driver for next year as it is Mr. Dennis Kaptein's intention not to return next year.

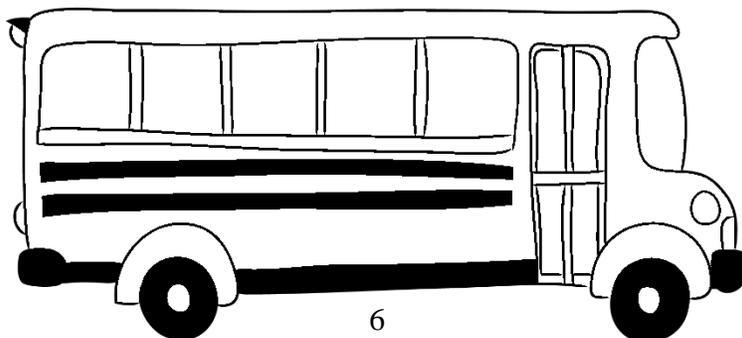
Bus ridership remains low and we don't anticipate much change next school year; however, we remain committed to continue offering bus service to our families. School busses remain the safest means of transporting students to and from school. Convenience for a young family as well as fuel costs may cause some families to consider using the bus service. We did add a few CCHS riders this year and as long as it works well for our existing routes, we plan to continue that for anyone who is interested.

Our busses continue to operate well for us. The committee continues to evaluate the possible replacement of bus #15 as it nears the end of its expected serviceable life. It received some rust repair this past summer and that appears to be holding up well. The mechanics who service it say it remains in good condition and agree that it could run for another school year. The committee continues to receive and evaluate bids to purchase a replacement bus and despite having the funds on hand to purchase, we recommended to the Board that we keep this bus in service for at least another year.

Recently it was brought to our attention that students are not remaining seated at all times which is a safety concern. Additionally, food on the buses has resulted in a lot of cleanup work for our drivers. Parents are asked to speak to their children about the need to maintain bus safety and cleanliness. For a refresher on the Bus Policies, please reference pages 20-21 of the School Directory (also found in the Parent/ Student Handbook).

This past fall we received notice from Dan Kalsbeek that he wished to "hang up" his duties as Transportation Supervisor, a role he has held since 2012. Thankfully, the committee didn't have to look very far for his replacement; Jen Kalsbeek has agreed to become our next Transportation Supervisor. Jen has been driving bus for Hope for 5+ years and is well acquainted with Hope's transportation needs. In November, she officially began taking over for Dan who has agreed to assist with the transition throughout the current school year. We heartily thank Dan for his time served as supervisor and are thankful Jen has agreed to take on this new role. Jen's contact info can be found on page 22 of the School Directory.

May God continue to grant us a safe and blessed school year.



STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

MONKEYS, SLOTHS, ORANGUTANS

Mrs. Sue Grasman, 1st Grade

Due to the COVID 19 shutdown cancelling Family and Friends Night 2020, which resulted into a three-year hiatus, the return of the main event in 2023 was met with great excitement and expectations. From all reports, it seems that it did not disappoint. The theme of the night was "Natural Wonders of the World", of which there are many in God's wonderful creation. The first grade class chose to present the rainforests of South America, Africa and Southeast Asia; focusing mainly on the most famous, the Amazon rainforest which is found mostly in Brazil. We concentrated on learning about the four layers that make up the rainforest – the emergent, canopy, understory and forest floor. We also spent time learning about the many amazing and unique animals that make their home among these four layers of the forest. We discovered creatures such as monkeys, sloths, orangutans, snakes and many, many others. The students loved bringing in their own jungle animals to display throughout the classroom – a life sized snake and gorilla being a major hit!

Our class also enjoyed working in groups to create miniature gardens housed in small glass containers called terrariums. While an aquarium has water and fish, a terrarium is just for earth and plants, the name coming from the Latin *terra* which means "earth" and *arium* meaning "place". The 1st graders were very excited to get their hands dirty planting seeds. Seeing these self-sufficient and fully functioning ecosystems grow and thrive, while at the same time watering themselves, was a reminder of God's goodness to His people in creating plants and trees on the third day of creation. What an amazing God we serve!

The first graders enjoyed learning about the plants and animals that inhabit the rainforest and were eager to write about their experiences and share their knowledge. Monkeys, sloths, orangutans – read on and discover all the many wonders of the rainforest and the fun of Friends and Family Night!



Following are writings from the 1st graders.

On Friends and Family Night I thought the 4th grade room was so cool! There were lots of bats hanging from the ceiling of the school and the 4th graders made caves.
~ Max VanderVeen

I loved Friends and Family Night. The rooms were cool and my Dad tried to win the trivia contest. I brought a monkey and Selah brought a gorilla.
~ Oakleigh Peterson

I learned about the rainforest. It has a canopy and an understory. Sloths, butterflies and orangutans all live in the rainforest.
~ Remy Cammenga

Our theme for Friends and Family Night was the rainforest. It was so fun! We brought monkeys and snakes. We sang a song called "There are layers in the rainforest, yes indeed!"
~ Victoria Langerak

We made a terrarium. First we bought the rocks in and then dirt. After that we added the plants and flowers.

~ Anna DeVries

For Friends and Family Night we did the rainforest. My mom and dad, brothers and sisters and my cousins came to see our cool room!

~ Hannah De Boer

The rainforest has birds and butterflies. We learned a rainforest riddle! I loved Friends and Family Night!

~ Selah Kuiper

I liked singing the rainforest song and I liked learning how plants grow.

~ Lizzy Oosterhouse

I loved Friends and Family Night! My favorite parts were learning about the animals and making terrariums. I loved seeing my Dad and Mom there!

~ Frances DeMeester

There are animals in the rainforest and I brought a leopard. There were also snakes and sloths in our room. Mrs. Grasman even had books about the rainforest.

~ Brecken Vogel

I liked the game in the big gym. That was fun! The other classrooms had cool stuff. The 8th grade had volcanoes and the 7th had a large waterfall!

~ Cody Hanko

We learned about the rainforest. Mrs. Grasman read us *The Great Kapok Tree* where people were cutting down the trees. We set up animals around our room. We had a sloth, leopard, gorilla and a jaguar!

~ Isaak VanUffelen

Friends and Family Night was March 3, 2023. We were in the big gym first. There was a trivia contest and my Dad was in it. I was happy to see him walk up to get the prize! The whole school had a theme – natural wonders of the world. Our class theme was the rainforest. We really decorated our room and had a gorilla outside the door! We also had snakes, lizards and a toucan!

~ Davith Kalsbeek

We made a terrarium for Friends and Family Night. First, we put in rocks. Then we added moss. Finally, we planted a flower.

~ Willem Engelsma

We worked in groups for Friends and Family Night. I learned to be kind, to obey my teacher and to work with other people.

~ Brielle DeVries

For Friends and Family Night I learned about the rainforest. I made a terrarium with my friends. I colored a picture of a toucan and had lots of fun!

~ Julia Huizinga

We learned a cool song about the rainforest! We had plastic hats and paper bag vests and I borrowed binoculars from Grandpa. Lots and lots of people came! We made our door into a waterfall! We did lots of fun art but I liked coloring the toucan the best! The other classrooms were cool too!

~ Rebekah Tanis

We made a terrarium and sang a song about the rainforest. We learned that there are people trying to cut down the trees and that we must protect them!

~ Breelyn Bylsma

We learned about the rainforest. We decorated our door to look like a waterfall. Making the terrariums was fun but hard work! I brought a snake, which I think was cool. Teenagers on up played a game in the gym that was fun to watch! My parents came and looked at my classroom. It looked good!

~ Lincoln Doezema

We brought lots of animals that live in the rainforest. The best of them all was the gorilla!

~ Ryan Kleyn

Mrs. Grasman read us a book where we learned that men are cutting down the rainforest. If I am president someday there will be no cutting down of the rainforest.

~ Sawyer VanOostenbrugge

We learned about the animals in the rainforest like toucans, monkeys and snakes. We made a terrarium and sang a song.

~ Monroe Kalsbeek

FRIENDS AND FAMILY NIGHT

Mrs. Julie Schwarz, 2nd Grade

At this time Friends and Family Night is over and if you attended you undoubtedly saw many wonderful projects showcasing aspects of God's majestic and beautiful creation. Getting ready for this night was a little daunting. First, the committee had to pick a theme and "Natural Wonders" was decided on. Then each teacher had to decide what aspect of this theme they wanted to develop. For second grade, I decided to do natural camouflage as this tied in with our science unit, as well as our reading story. It took a lot of planning to fit in the extra projects along with the normal lessons that had to be taught. It took a lot of re-planning due to snow days and several days without internet. However, in spite of all the stress, preparing for this night was fun for both my students and myself and we all learned a lot.

The second graders made dioramas of different habitats that showed how animals blend in with their surroundings. It was so enjoyable watching the enthusiasm the students had in doing this hands-on project. It was fun to see them using their imagination and creating ways to camouflage their animals. This project helped them learn to work together as a group. They learned to listen to each other's ideas and decide together which ideas worked best. I learned a couple of things also. First, I found that with a little guidance, second graders are able to do a lot more than I gave them credit for. Also, I found this was an opportunity for students who sometimes struggle with everyday lessons to really shine on a project like this!

The second graders also did a reading theater. This activity provided the students an opportunity to read a story in a different way. It gave them a chance to read parts and use different voices. They had to follow along carefully so they didn't miss their turn to speak. Knowing exactly the part they would read was a great way for struggling readers to feel more confident in their reading and speaking. Again, it was great to see different students shine!

At times it was rather chaotic and challenging getting ready for this big night, but I think the lessons learned were beneficial. Above all, the students gained a better understanding of God's care for His creatures. Learning the different ways animals camouflage in their environment, and learning about the unique characteristics God has given each animal was a wonderful opportunity for the students to appreciate God's great wisdom, beauty, and faithfulness regarding His creation.



Following are the research reports the students wrote for this night.

Our animal is a furious tiger. A tiger can eat pigs, deer, rhino, and even small elephants. They can even eat 80 pounds in one meal! A tiger is 8 to 10 feet long and is orange with black stripes. They live in grasslands, forests, and swamps in Asia. Their stripes help them blend in with the tall grass. These animals are endangered animals too. Did you know a tiger's canine teeth can be 3 inches long? Also, a tiger's vision is 6 times better than a human's. They are the biggest cats in the world. Tigers that live in cold places are bigger than tigers that live in warm places. They also can swim and leap 30 feet. We are glad that God made these animals.

Cole Huizinga & Casen Meulenberg

We are writing about cheetahs. Cheetahs live in lots of places such as Africa and also Asia. In grassland they camouflage because their tan skin hides them. This also helps them hunt their prey. We learned that cheetahs are born blind and helpless. Also, cheetah cubs have a silver mane on their neck and shoulder that disappears as they get older. Cheetahs can't roar but they do chirp as well as growl, hiss, and purr. God made these amazing animals.

Ava Meulenberg & Paige Schipper

We are writing about jaguars. Jaguars have orange-brown fur with black spots. They live in rainforests, grasslands, deserts, forests, and swamps. They eat turtles, fish, peccaries, deer, tapirs, cattle, capybaras, and caimans. Jaguar's mothers give birth to 1 to 4 cubs which are born with their eyes and ears closed. Jaguars like the water and are very good swimmers. Also, jaguars are the only big cat species in the whole world. Their spots and brown fur hide them in the shadows. God created this animal very unique so it could survive.

Henry Rutgers, Benji Huizinga, & Judah Miersma

Poisonous frogs are very interesting animals because God made them. They live by creeks in the rainforest. They can be yellow, gold, copper, red, green, blue, or black. Poisonous frogs eat ants, termites, centipedes, and beetles. We learned that the colors of these frogs are good camouflage because they blend into the flowers to hide from their predators. Poisonous frogs are very deadly. God gave these frogs the ability to do these amazing things.

Lyndi Mahtani & Lily Heyboer

We are writing about leopard sharks. These sharks have dark saddle-shaped splotches along their fins and upper body. They eat crabs, fish eggs, clam siphons, and worms. They live in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. They are five to seven feet long. Their skeletons are made entirely of cartilage and they are very flexible. These sharks blend into the rocks around them. We both love them because of their great camouflage.

Charlie Kooienga & Benji DeVries

Our animal is the Great horned owl. The Great horned owl gets its name from the tufts of feathers on its head that look like ears. It eats: rabbits, skunks, woodchucks, mice, rats, squirrels, and fish. The owl can be found in mountains, grasslands, forests, and deserts. The

Great horned owl is also known as the tiger owl or cat owl. An owl can hear a mouse stepping on a twig from 75 feet away. These owls live in hot places and cold places. When they land on a tree, they look exactly like it. Great horned owls are amazing animals.

Natalie VanderVeen & Teagan Feenstra

Our animal report is on black bears. Black bears are smaller than brown bears. Black bears are 3 feet tall. Stone-age hunters worshiped and hunted bears at the same time. Black bear cubs stay with their mothers for one to three years. They look just like their cousin the brown bear but just a different color. They eat mammals, berries, and more. Black bears live around North America and Asia. Black bears camouflage in caves and cliffs because their colors blend in.

Jayden Guichelaar & Hoyt VanOverloop

Our animal is an Arctic fox. An Arctic Fox is white and very fluffy. They have pointy ears and a small furry body. They eat lemmings, meat, and seal scraps that polar bears leave behind. Their favorite foods are: birds, bird eggs, berries, fish, and small animals. They live in the Arctic and the Arctic Circle. These foxes don't swim and their babies are called kits. Their size at birth is 2½ ounces. A small fox is about the size of a Chihuahua and a large fox is about the size of a Jack Russell Terrier. In the winter an Arctic fox's feet are covered with fur. Their furry feet help them to stay warm while they trot over frozen tundra. Arctic foxes have many predators such as: golden eagles, bald eagles, wolves, wolverines, and polar bears. They are very white so they can blend in with the snow. We think Arctic foxes are very cool.

Clara Rutgers & Brooklyn Kregel

We are writing about an Arctic fox. Arctic foxes can be white or blue. They can eat a seal that a polar bear leaves behind and they also can eat lemmings. The tundra is one of the coldest places on the earth. In the winter, the Arctic fox's feet are completely covered in fur. Arctic foxes have predators such as: golden eagles, wolves, wolverines, polar bears, and others. Arctic foxes camouflage because their white fur blends into the snow. God created these wonderful creatures.

Bella Feenstra & Nora VanOostenbrugge

Our animal is a camel. Camels live in East Asia. They are herbivores so they eat plants. They are over 7 feet tall and they weigh over 1800 pounds. Camels have two rows of long legs and two humps. Baby camels are born with their eyes open. They can run when they are just a few hours old. Camels move both legs on one side of their body forward at the same time. They camouflage because their color blends in with the sand. God gave camels amazing abilities.

Aaliyah Peterson & Hannah VandenBerg

Did you know that Gila monsters are not really monsters? Some people think Gila monsters can spit venom, but they really can't. If a predator grabs the Gila monster, the Gila monster will chomp down on it. Did you know that Gila monsters have a forked tongue? They also have long sharp claws. Gila monsters are orange and black. They live in northwestern Mexico and the southwestern United States. They eat meat, rodents, birds, eggs, chicks, frogs,

lizards, insects and worms. They camouflage on rocks and sand. We think that Gila monsters are amazing creatures.

Myla Veldman & Alexa Feenstra

We are writing about seahorses. Seahorses have tiny, spiny plates that cover its body all the way down to their curled, flexible tail. Seahorses eat krill, copepods, fish larvae, and other tiny edibles. Seahorses live in the Pacific Ocean near Antarctica. We learned that seahorses don't have teeth or even a stomach. Also, they are poor swimmers and they are the slowest moving of all fish species. Seahorses camouflage with weeds and leaves. God made this amazing animal.

Miriam Koole & Clara Kregel

DID CURIOSITY REALLY KILL THE CAT?

Miss Gayle Lotterman, 3rd Grade

"Curiosity killed the cat" is a proverb that is used to warn of the risks of unnecessary investigation. It implies that being curious can sometimes lead to danger or death. One that hears this proverb might envision a cat, in an attempt to satisfy its curiosity, climbing higher and higher up a tree, only to eventually get stuck and need help. Or, one might even envision a worse result for this poor cat.

A variation of this proverb adds a phrase to the end: "Curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought him back." This addition makes curiosity seem worth it when it helps you find an answer. Gaining knowledge or finding truth are proven to be worthwhile endeavors even if there might be danger involved.

Third grade is a wonderful age to encourage curiosity. Students can't get enough of the "Weird But True" books, and ask a hundred "why" questions each day. This curiosity can be channeled, especially when asking students to complete big projects like what were accomplished for Friends and Family Night. Other times we purposefully make time in our day to discover something new as it comes up during class. Teachers don't always have the answers to everything, you know!

This month, the third graders completed a Curiosity Quest. As part of a reading month activity, students submitted a question for me to "Google", and we went through these together using the smartboard to find answers. I suppose I am used to having Google available to me whenever I want, for what seems like a normal thing to me is a special thing for third graders. Students asked questions such as:

1. Do red-winged blackbirds go south in the winter? Yes
2. About how many fish are there in the world? 3.5 trillion (estimated)
3. What is the biggest word in the English language?
pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanokoniosis
4. How many words in the KJV Bible? 783,137

Students submitted their questions to me in advance so I could make sure we could find answers and not see anything improper, and I think it's necessary for safeguards such as this to be in place. Taking time to prepare and protect can give a little peace of mind when thinking about the dangers easily accessible on the internet.

So now it's time to consider – did curiosity really kill the cat? Or did satisfaction bring him back? When I consider these options, I understand both sides to this proverb. In this day and age, with answers literally at our fingertips, there are dangers to following our every whim of curiosity. "Googling" any question that arises in our mind can have negative effects if the question is not proper, or if the results are not viewed with discernment. Yet, if we never use the resources we have to find answers to appropriate questions, we won't grow in knowledge of creation and the world around us either.

Our curiosity in third grade led us to see that sometimes our questions cannot be answered by Google, and we marveled at the immeasurable knowledge of God. Many questions had answers that were estimates, because can we really know the exact number of how many blades of grass there are on the earth? Only God can. In the end, I think this is the value of being curious – to once again be pointed to the greatness of our Heavenly Father. When I think about this, it makes me think of Psalm 147:4-5: "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite."



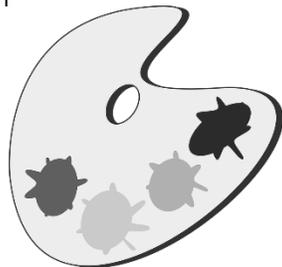
Please enjoy an assortment of different writing projects from the third grade room:

The other day I had the best breakfast. It was delicious! It tasted like cinnamon, and it was sweet. It looks round, and it looks tan or brown. It feels a little bumpy and sticky. It looks squishy and is sometimes little, and sometimes it's big. It's a good breakfast. You can make it in the oven, and you can buy it at Meijer. It makes you hungry. Did you guess it? It's a cinnamon roll.

- Daniel DeBoer

Kittens are the best animals ever! They are so cute and are very cuddly. Sometimes they can be very sneaky too. Kittens are mostly friendly, and also very playful. Kittens are very soft. I think kittens are terrific!

- Emma Kleyn



One day I tried the yuckiest food in the whole world. It was a little spicy, and when you feel it, it feels squishy, soft, and smooth. It looks whitish, orange, and black. One of the toppings is cheese. When you eat it, you barely can hear it. Can you guess it? It's barbeque pizza!

- Grady Hanko

Belugas are fantastic animals to me. Belugas are really friendly. As well, belugas are fun to play with. Belugas are my 3rd favorite animal. They look fabulous because they are a very pretty glittering white color. Belugas are amazing sea creatures!

- Bridget Kleyn

Art is my favorite subject in school. First of all, art is fun and creative for me. Also, it might give me some talent. I know that it can help me learn. It can also help me think. That's why art is my favorite subject in school.

- Haley Miersma

Cats are the worst. First, I don't like cats because they are annoying. Cats are too loud. Also, cats are super stubborn. Cats sit around a lot. Cats are the most awful animal!

- Beckett Veldman

I Saw a Toad on the Road

By: Cienna Jordan

I saw a toad on the road,
Trying to crack the code.
The toad saw a key,
And he rushed to see
If it was the right one.
Oh, how much fun
The toad had on the road.



"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

Mrs. Stephanie Daling, 6th Grade

"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore, will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Isaiah 43:1-4.

We live in an imperfect world, one where God's people suffer and where, at times, the wicked seem to prosper. Yet, immediately in verse one of Isaiah 43, the Lord exhorts us and calls us to **fear not**. God is present with us, His children, through Christ. He promises to strengthen and help us in our troubles.

Isaiah begins each thought in these verses with "when", not "if". "When" implies it **will** eventually happen. We **will** face trials. We **will** face fears. He mentions these afflictions and tribulations when he uses the words water and fire in the text. He describes our trials like walking

At the Game

By: Nick DeVries

Let's go to the game,
With the American flag waving in the
breeze.

The ump cries,
"Play ball!"

The batter steps to the plate.
The pitcher throws the ball.

The bat swings,
And it cracks in two.

Oh,

What the taste of lemonade,

Popcorn,

Cracker jack,

And peanuts!

Someone strikes out and the mascot's
spilling popcorn.

It's time for the 7th inning stretch!

Let's sing, "Take me out to the ball game!"

Now we're back to watch or play the end
of the game!

Pretty soon after this,

"Game over!"

We win!

through deep waters. I remember hiking through the narrows in Zion National Park a few summers back. There were many parts of that hike where our walking sticks went quite deep into the water, or where we were pulled by the strong current. At any moment, you were apt to be swept off your feet and carried downstream or stumble and become uncertain of your footing. That is the way it often is when we are facing and going through a trial in life. Yet, Isaiah mentions the turbulence of our trials. "they shall **not** overflow thee". "They" is plural, meaning we will face many challenges in our lives. However, these challenges will not drown us. They will not overcome us. The same is being repeated to us with the picture of our trials being as a flame, yet we shall not be burned. What a great comfort and guide when we face the many trials and tribulations on this sinful earth.

No matter what we go through in life, God is there with us walking by our side. Though we may feel as though we are overwhelmed and drowning in a sea of despair, He will uphold us. God knows, in His divine providence, exactly what we will face each and every day. What a comfort to know that we can completely trust Him to walk us through it. We WILL get through it. Jehovah God is our comfort, hope, and strength.

Nowhere does God say to us that as His children we will not face trials; however, the beauty of this all, as stated in verse 1, is that He hath redeemed us. We belong to Him, He calls us by name – He will be with us and bring us through our afflictions. These roaring waves and fiery flames will not consume us. We have no reason to fear for God is by our side – why? Because we are precious in His sight. We are highly valued, esteemed, loved (vs. 4). God chose to set His love upon us, His elect children. God's presence with us should make us confident that He will gather His people to Himself and will walk through these trials with us.

We will fear. We are sinful. Just like the unbeliever, we fear death, sickness, robbery, and so much more. But we must remember to come to God's Word for comfort and guidance. In this passage, and so many others, God is reminding us that He is Jehovah. He is the God of the covenant. He is the eternal God who loves us. We have been redeemed by Him. We have nothing to fear, for God is with us. We know who He is and who WE are. We know what great and merciful things He has done for us, and we know our God is everywhere present – always there to protect and strengthen us. We have nothing to fear. Isaiah 41:10 – "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yeah, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Luke 12:7 – "But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore ye are of more value than many sparrows." God's providence cares for the smallest details of our lives. If God does not forget even the little birds, how much more can we find comfort and confidence in His care for us who were created in His image and saved by His precious Son? What a comfort God's Word brings to us during our times of affliction.



The 6th grade students are involved in many different forms of writing throughout the school year. In December we looked specifically at poetry. There are many different ways to write poems, but we focused on limericks and prepositional phrase poems. The prepositional phrase poem required at least three lines that were simply prepositional phrases. They needed to begin with a preposition, end with an object of the preposition, and some descriptive words in between. The final line of the poem consisted of a subject + verb or verb + subject phrase. This subject

and verb were what had been described in the previous prepositional phrases. We created random poems when we first started and drew pictures to go along with them. The students also used this concept in Ancient History to describe an aspect of the Ancient Egyptian geography or culture we had studied. Here are a few examples!

Within the marvelous palace,
 On the gold throne,
 Inside King Tut,
 Dwells the god Horus.
 ~ Chase DeVries, Ben Engelsma, Dane Meulenberg

In a dark tomb,
 Underneath a moonless, night sky,
 Beyond the rippling river,
 Lies a long-dead Pharaoh.
 ~ Cara Kalsbeek, Addison Koole, Lily Rutgers

In the long Nile,
 Under the shimmering water,
 On the muddy bottom,
 Lays the gold, fertile silt.
 ~ Mayla Mahtani and Hannah VanderVeen

In the sparkling, glittering snow,
 Below the bright, blue sky,
 Near the tall, green, pine trees,
 By the deep, blue, refreshing water,
 Lies the largest, oldest mountain.
 ~ Sonya Minderhoud

Between the Sahara and Eastern Desert,
 Into the Mediterranean Sea,
 Beside the Red Sea,
 Without me there would be no god Hapi,
 Is the Nile River.
 ~ Nelle Kregel, Sonya Minderhoud, Aubrey Rutgers

Above the dark and snowy mountains,
 Below the dark gray clouds,
 With the small white birds,
 Flies the blue and red plane.
 ~Anthony Kregel

Below the blue, cloudless sky,
 On the black, fertile ground,
 Between hot and sandy deserts,
 Runs the long, fertile Nile.
 ~ Ethan DeVries, Brodie Griess, Anthony Kregel

On the high seas,
 With cannons flaring,
 Beyond the battleships,
 Sails the U.S.S. Enterprise.
 ~Chase DeVries

Between the two, red houses,
 Nearby the soon setting sun,
 Under the big, golden sky,
 On the short thin clothesline,
 Hang three socks of twine.
 ~Hannah VanderVeen

2023-24 SCHOOL CALENDAR	
August 28, 2023	First Day of School
September 1-4	Labor Day Break
October 5	PTA
October 12-13	P/T Conferences
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 25 – Jan. 2	Christmas Break
January 19	End of 1 st Semester
February 8	PTA
February 15-16	P/T Conferences
April 1-5	Spring Break
May 27	Memorial Day
May 31	Last Day of School
June 3	Graduation

ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

Friday, April 28 – 7 pm

**Grandville High School
Auditorium**