



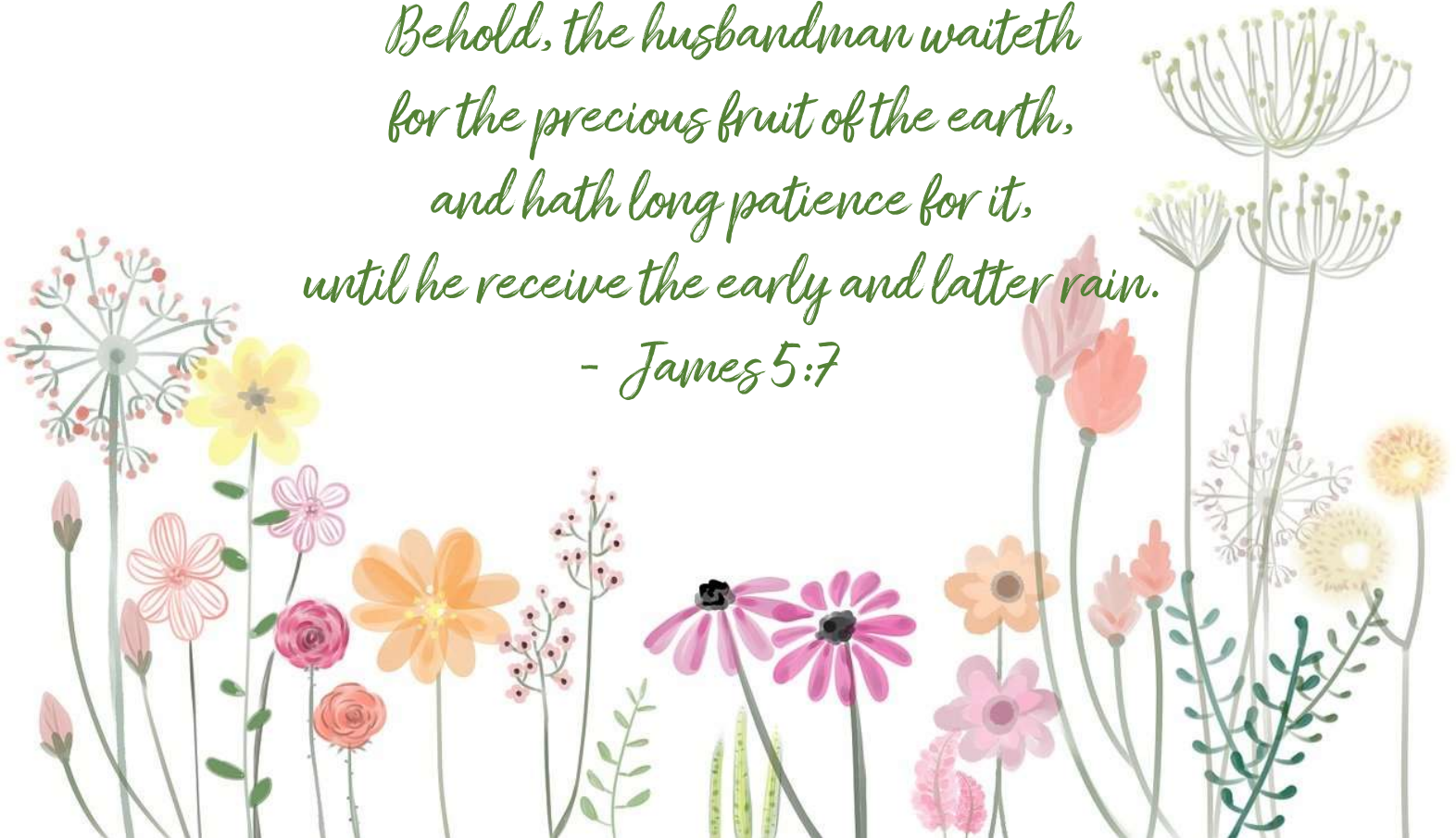
HIGHLIGHTS

Spring Issue

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March 2024

*Be patient therefore, brethren,
unto the coming of the Lord.
Behold, the husbandman waiteth
for the precious fruit of the earth,
and hath long patience for it,
until he receive the early and latter rain.
- James 5:7*



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

From the AD-ministrator
Mr. Ron Koole, Principal

For as many years as I have served as the Administrator of Hope School, I have also had the “privilege” to serve as the Athletic Director - commonly referred to as the “AD”. The AD’s job is to oversee the extracurricular athletic (sports) program. Some of the main duties include: the hiring of coaches, setting practice and game schedules, hiring referees, preparing and lining fields, as well as purchasing the necessary equipment and team uniforms.

When you look over the Board financial information printed in this *Highlights*, you will notice that there is no line item for “Athletics”. That’s not an omission. The funds for athletics are secured by a generous annual donation from the School Circle and the profits of the Hope Classic Races (25 years and still running - due mostly to generous sponsor gifts).

For years the most time-consuming task of the AD job was scheduling games. This was partly due to Hope having teams comprised of 8th and 9th graders and other Christian grade schools not having 9th grade. There were many, many phone calls begging other AD’s to schedule games with us. This part of the job all changed when Hope was accepted into the Allegan, Ottawa, Kent County Christian Middle School League (AOK League) and then the 9th grade moving to CCHS a number of years ago. This league presently is made up of twelve area Christian middle schools. The league has a designated scheduler as well as guidelines, rules, and policies for the various sports.

Teams need coaches (and I must add, referees). I’m thankful for the willingness of so many very capable folks who give of their time to coach (and ref) both our 7th and 8th grade teams. Good, mature coaches make the AD’s job less strenuous and all the athletes benefit. We presently have boys’ and girls’ soccer teams, two girls’ volleyball teams, a boys’ baseball team, and two boys’ and girls’ basketball teams. In addition, there are the opportunities for students to run on a joint PR grade school XC team in the fall, as well as the opportunity to participate in a league bowling tournament and golf tournament. Lots of opportunity for junior high students to enjoy these extracurricular activities.

As with all aspects of the education at Hope School, there must be Christian purpose and intentional goals which make athletics a legitimate part of the education of our children. To that end, Hope School has its own rules and policies which govern coaches and the athletic program. The following are the school approved “Goals of the Interscholastic Sports Program at Hope School”:

1. *To offer all students the opportunity to participate in group competition with other Christian schools.*
2. *To promote the physical development of the participants: strength, coordination, muscle control, etc.*
3. *To promote the social skills of the participants: ability to work together, helping one improve skills, prompting Christian attitudes toward one another. “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” Philippians 2:3*
4. *To promote the development of Christian virtues in a competitive setting: kindness, consideration for others, humility, honesty, meekness, etc. Also, to maintain a view of sports in which a proper Christian perspective is developed. “For bodily exercise profiteth little, but Godliness is profitable unto all things...” 1 Timothy 4:8*

5. *To teach children to conform to the rules of games and to obey the officials and coaches promptly and cheerfully as examples of Christian obedience.*
6. *In as much as interscholastic sports can threaten family life, particularly by interfering with meal times and devotions, practices and competitive events should be scheduled with this in mind. Generally, involvement in any sport should be restricted to three afternoons per week, including both practice sessions and games. This principle should also govern the length of the season, the number of games, and the number of hours allocated for practices and events.*

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Rich DeMeester, Chairman
Dan Kalsbeek, Scott Kooienga, Steve Langerak

Three months have passed since you last read a *Highlights*. Since then, there are several items that we can report. Our biggest news is likely the retirement of a long time teacher, Brian Dykstra. After 39 years at Hope and hundreds of students taught, Brian has informed the Education Committee that he does not intend to return for the 2024/25 school year. Many of us don't know a Hope school without Mr. Dykstra, so it will certainly be different without him here. We give Brian our hearty thanks for his many years of service and his care and concern for our covenant children.

This news prompted the Education Committee to advertise and interview for a new 5th grade teacher. We are excited to report that we have contracted Miss Melanie Hanko for this position. Melanie has taught at HCHS in Dyer, Indiana since January of 2023. We look forward to having Melanie as part of our staff at Hope!

It is also the annual duty of our committee to sit down with each teacher, the secretary, and the administrator individually to review their activity in their respective roles. This year's theme for these reviews was "Scripture in the classroom". After reading Ephesians 6 with our focus on verse 4, we discussed the importance of biblical principles for each class. The teachers gave us some good examples of how they go about using scripture, even in classes that it would seem to be difficult to do. In addition to discussing the theme, time is also set aside for asking if the teachers have any needs in the classrooms, if their workload is manageable, and if they have any concerns for us. These reviews proved to be beneficial for our committee and we hope for the teachers too.

In our last *Highlights* article, we informed you that our committee moved forward with a change in our testing methods for 3rd through 8th grade. Instead of taking the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, we began using MAP testing (Measures of Academic Progress). These include three separate tests throughout the year. The second of these three has now been completed and the results have been reviewed by our staff. It is reported by the staff that these tests have been very insightful and informative for both the classroom teachers and the Discovery staff. It has proved to be very beneficial for the good of the students individually and the classes as a whole. The results of these tests were shared with parents at the recent parent/teacher conferences in mid-February. Testing for grades K-2 has also taken place to help the staff determine how to better help the younger children.

On February 29, PTA was held at which two of our teachers, Jill Reitsma and Suzanna Smit gave a presentation on communication between teachers and parents. After they presented

a PowerPoint on the topic, we were separated into three groups and discussed various situations and questions that the presenters posed. We thank these teachers for their informative presentation.

Our Technology Committee has been active in trying to keep up with the demands of the school which includes adding and updating Chromebooks, installing software on computers, maintaining the current equipment and preparing for future needs of the school. The current library software will also be updated.

We would like to thank the teachers, aides, administrator, secretary, and volunteers who give of their time for the instruction of our covenant children. We also recognize that all of our labors would be in vain apart from God's blessing. Therefore, we are thankful to Him for all his blessings in Jesus Christ.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Josh Meulenberg, Chairman

Phil Kalsbeek, Kevin Koole

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 about 67% of the annual budget. We are happy to report that we are doing very well on both sides. The bottom line shows our income at 78% of the budget, and our expenses at 66% of the budget. Our strong income position is due to a great Fall Drive, and many families being ahead on tuition payments. Tuition is also up due to higher-than-expected enrollment. We were expecting 185 students from 75 families but are currently at 190 students from 78 families. Thanks be to our faithful God for the financial support and for the increase in numbers.

Over the next few months we will be conducting the Spring Drive. The total drive amount collected through February is \$270,320, with an annual drive goal of \$346,000. Information related to the Spring Drive will be sent out soon. Please prayerfully consider this important need.

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. It is of God's grace that our needs are met. To God be the glory.

Highlights Budget Report - YTD February

Actual to Budget. YTD February	Total	Budgeted	%
<u>Income</u>			
Church Collections	29,937.76	46,000.00	65.1%
Gifts and Pledges	270,320.30	346,000.00	78.1%
Gym Rental	3,372.00	5,000.00	67.4%
Hope Foundation	25,000.00	50,000.00	50.0%
Special Ed Society	10,415.25	14,794.00	70.4%
Tuition	628,874.37	780,000.00	80.6%
Z - Bus Fees	18,166.22	20,550.00	88.4%
Total Income	986,085.90	1,262,344.00	78.1%
<u>Expenses</u>			
Accounting Fees	5,300.00	6,750.00	78.5%
Band Expenses	3,000.00	3,000.00	100.0%
Building and Grounds - Y/E	20,706.96	43,000.00	48.2%
Class Trip Fund	2,000.00	2,000.00	100.0%
Educational Supplies and Books	35,000.00	35,000.00	100.0%
Federation Dues	4,419.12	5,136.00	86.0%
Insurance, General	11,089.50	14,762.00	75.1%
Insurance, Group	62,160.50	84,000.00	74.0%
Insurance, HRA - Y/E	519.44	4,000.00	13.0%
Insurance, Workers Comp	1,959.87	2,564.00	76.4%
Janitors Supplies	2,957.83	4,500.00	65.7%
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	1,034.20	2,500.00	41.4%
Office Equipment - Y/E	0.00	1,500.00	0.0%
Office Supplies	1,540.74	1,000.00	154.1%
Payroll - Band / Choir	15,893.60	24,000.00	66.2%
Payroll - Building Maintenance	1,181.25	2,500.00	47.3%
Payroll - Discovery Room	52,923.73	90,143.00	58.7%
Payroll - Janitor	23,334.40	35,000.00	66.7%
Payroll - Lawn Maintenance	3,060.00	4,200.00	72.9%
Payroll - Librarian	3,480.00	5,250.00	66.3%
Payroll - Office	22,811.25	36,575.00	62.4%
Payroll - Substitute Teachers	735.00	1,000.00	73.5%
Payroll - Teachers	399,178.04	603,589.00	66.1%
Payroll - Teachers Aids	19,044.25	21,546.00	88.4%

Highlights Budget Report - YTD February

Actual to Budget. YTD February	Total	Budgeted	%
Payroll - Technolgy Maintenance	270.00	3,000.00	9.0%
Payroll Taxes	37,856.58	63,518.00	59.6%
Phys Ed Uniforms	713.30	1,000.00	71.3%
Repairs and Maintenance	8,781.60	9,000.00	97.6%
Retirement Plan	11,449.23	19,693.00	58.1%
Snow Removal	2,143.88	3,500.00	61.3%
Teacher Classroom	1,700.00	1,700.00	100.0%
Teacher Development - Y/E	3,657.32	4,000.00	91.4%
Technology Supplies	13,310.00	14,000.00	95.1%
Utilities, Electric	11,339.12	23,000.00	49.3%
Utilities, Gas	5,126.02	12,000.00	42.7%
Utilities, Internet & Phone	3,005.02	4,400.00	68.3%
Utilities, Trash	1,272.17	1,900.00	67.0%
Utilities, Water & Sewer	969.36	1,300.00	74.6%
Z. Bus Expenses			
Bus Depreciation Fund Trans	5,833.36	8,750.00	66.7%
Bus Driver Cost Subsidy	450.00	1,000.00	45.0%
Bus Driver Payroll	12,915.00	22,918.00	56.4%
Bus Driver Payroll Taxes	1,013.19	1,700.00	59.6%
Bus Driver Workers Compensation	764.38	1,000.00	76.4%
Bus Insurance	1,617.00	2,100.00	77.0%
Bus Repair	3,290.77	7,000.00	47.0%
Gas and Oil	6,617.10	12,500.00	52.9%
Transportation Supervisor	3,000.00	1,250.00	240.0%
Total Z. Bus Expenses	35,500.80	58,218.00	61.0%
Total Expenses	847,424.08	1,278,244.00	66.3%

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Matt DeBoer, Chairman
Dan Kalsbeek, Kevin Koole

At the beginning of the school year, we reported on a number of changes to the bus routes this school year. Despite unusual arrangements for some, the committee is glad to report that our transportation efforts remain on track. We are thankful that our supervisor and drivers continue to be dependable and reliable, and operate without major incident. We would like to use this opportunity to echo the significant need we have for bus drivers for next year and beyond.

We remain committed to continue offering bus service to our families. School buses remain the safest means of getting students to and from school. Convenience for a young family as well as fuel costs may prompt some families to consider using the bus service. We are optimistic about the prospect of two full bus routes again for next year, and we would like to ask *all families who have an interest in riding next year*, whether currently riding or not, to please communicate your intent to the transportation chairman.

The committee continues to evaluate the possible replacement of bus #15 as it nears the end of its expected serviceable life. It appears to be holding up well enough this school year, but it is showing signs of wear and we are not confident it can go another full school year without a major repair. The committee continues to evaluate both new and used options to purchase a bus since the cost of new has increased more than 50% in the six years since we last purchased a bus. Since we have the funds on hand for either option, at this point we are recommending the Board that we replace bus #15 in some fashion prior to next year.

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



STAFF & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE DAY

Mrs. Becca Lubbers, Discovery Room

January 26, 2024 was a special day at Hope School. We celebrated Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Day! On this day, we praised God for His amazing work of creating us, His people, each unique yet essential for the Body of Christ. Throughout the day, we learned about certain disabilities and how people learn to live with those disabilities. Some time was spent in the classrooms doing activities that demonstrated what it can be like to live with that impairment or disability. Throughout the whole day though, the recurring theme was how fearfully and wonderfully God has made each and every one of us in our unique and beautiful way.

Each classroom focused on a different disability. Kindergarten received an introduction to what disabilities are, and they learned about motor impairments, hearing impairments, and blindness. First grade focused on blindness. Second grade learned about hearing impairment. Third grade learned about cognitive impairments, especially focusing on Down's Syndrome.

Fourth grade focused on motor impairments, both gross and fine motor. Fifth grade talked about learning disabilities, such as dyslexia and dyscalculia. Sixth grade reviewed cognitive impairments, with their focus being on Autism. Presenters came to speak to the seventh grade class about different chronic conditions (diabetes and MS). The eighth grade class focused on serious illness, especially cancer.

After we had Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Day, I took some time interviewing students from Kindergarten to Sixth grade about their experiences throughout the day.

What was your favorite part of Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Day?

- "Riding on the wheelchairs." (Larkin Kalsbeek - K)
- "Using crutches." (Greta VanUffelen - K)
- "Pouring water into cups when blindfolded." (Charlotte Rutgers - 1st)
- "Learning sign language." (Lincoln Doezeema - 2nd)
- "Buttoning shirts with socks on our hands." (Charlie Kooienga - 3rd)
- "Watching Mr. Koole go into his bike." (Bridget Kleyn - 4th)
- "Using the wheelchairs and crutches." (Haley Miersma - 4th)
- "Looking in mirrors and writing sentences or doing math." (Tessa Kregel - 5th)
- "Asking Daniel Kuiper questions, like 243, and he solved it in his head!" (Gideon Kuiper - 6th)

What did you learn about the disability your class focused on?

- "Sometimes their legs don't work." (Kaylie Huizing - K)
- "All the letters when you are blind called Braille." (Rowan Wassink - 1st)
- "People who can't hear get hearing aids." (Isaak VanUffelen - 2nd)
- "We shouldn't mock them. It's fun having them around." (Ava Meulenberg - 3rd)
- "It's hard to do crutches. They have hard times getting into things." (Jolee Schimmel - 4th)
- "Dyslexia is hard because words are fuzzy." (Millie DeMeester - 5th)
- "Disability might make you struggle a little more, but it does not mean you can't learn like the rest of us." (Brianna Feenstra - 6th)

How can we care for and help those with special needs?

- "We can ask them what's wrong, give help, and put band-aids on." (Lena Rutgers - K)
- "By leading them or holding their hand." (Zoey VanOverloop - 1st)
- "Giving a meal, help them do work, and do sign language." (Selah Kuiper - 2nd)
- "If they take a long time getting snow pants, we can ask, 'Do you need help?'" (Brooklyn Kregel - 3rd)
- "Try to be their friends and help them get a ball for something." (Brynlee VanOostenbrugge - 4th)
- "Larger print in books." (Kennedy Guichelaar - 5th)
- "Read to them, and ask if they can figure the words out." (Claire Feenstra - 5th)
- "By being kind and making them feel welcome." (Sadie Meulenberg - 6th)

DESCRIPTIVE WRITING IN 1ST GRADE

Mrs. Susann Grasman, 1st Grade

Descriptive writing is all about using the power of words to activate the imagination, capture attention, and create a lasting impact in the minds of the reader. Included as part of our writing curriculum at Hope School, we aim to have students enhance their descriptive writing skills by using descriptive elements in their writing. Basically, this involves writing in a vivid and relatable manner. In other words, taking a “boring” sentence and transforming it into one that the reader can relate too. These descriptive elements help to allure the reader to read ahead, giving the sense that there is so much more to come and convincing them that there is more to say and discover.

Arguably the most important benefit of descriptive writing, and why we teach it, is that the use of more interesting words helps the reader to visualize what you want to say. This involves conveying a mental picture to your reader. It means finding words that describe exactly what you intend to say, thus building vocabulary as the writer seeks to find words that are unconventional or less used.

The success of descriptive writing lies in the details. The more detailed the depiction of a plot or character the more engrossed the reader is. It involves being a keen observer while paying attention to the tiniest of details and bits of information and including them in your writing.

While first graders are just beginning their writing careers and very new to descriptive writing, they are not too young to try. We begin with identifying what it is that we are setting out to describe. This usually includes the description of a person, a place or an experience. This year, because Grandparents Day at Hope school is fast approaching, the 1st graders decided to write a descriptive piece about one of their Grandparents. What follows is their finished product. We hope that you enjoy them and also have a mental picture of their chosen Grandparent in mind while you read!



My Grandma Veldman is funny. And I love how she is so kind. She loves to play games and invites me over every Sunday to play games with her. Sometimes I even read books with her. ~ Savannah Veldman

My Grandma Mulder is really nice. She always lets us have ice cream when it is hot. She also lets us swim in her pool and sometimes we can even stay for dinner! ~ Charlotte Rutgers

My Great Grandpa lived in a nursing home. He died on my Dad's birthday. It was a Sunday. ~ Oscar Peterson

My Great Grandma Van Den Top's name is Silly Grandma. She loves to have us over. She also really likes flowers. ~ Anson Feenstra

My Grandpa Engelsma is really funny. He likes to drive on his golf cart. He works with wood and sometimes he comes over to our house to work with us. ~ Michael Engelsma

My Grandpa Feenstra is kind. He is also funny. He likes to play with me and also give me candy. ~ Brody Feenstra

My Grandma Huizinga likes to have us over. When it was her birthday we had a party at the Hope School gym. ~ Ella Schipper

My Grandpa Veldman is kind. He is also very funny. He plays a lot of games with me and gives me candy. ~ Emerson Veldman

My Grandma VanOverloop is really funny. She is really good at cooking and always gives me candy at church. ~ Zoey VanOverloop

My Grandpa Westra works at Zeeland Bakery and he likes to read me a book about a girl that went to help her uncle at a bakery. He is tall. He loves to drink coffee with me at his house. He was an elder at our church. ~ Emily Tanis

I am writing about my great grandma. She is very old. I think that she is older than 70 years old. On Sundays we go to my Grandma's house and great grandma sometimes comes too. She is usually funny. ~ Rowan Wassink

My Grandma Lubbers is nice. She gives us candy whenever we go to her house. She is tall and her hair is not white. I love her so much! ~ Nella Meulenberg

Grandma Haak gives me stickers and candy. She has a lot of clothes and also a lot of toys. She almost always plays games with us. ~ Tressa Mahtani

My Grandma Heyboer is really good at painting rocks. She is kind and often gives kids candy at church. I love it when she lets us come to Ludington with her! ~ Zack Heyboer

Grandpa Cammenga is a minister. He works hard and is very funny, too. He likes candy and his favorite color is blue. He teases us a lot! I don't know when his birthday is but his favorite holiday is Christmas. His favorite food is hot dogs. Yum! Yum! He is a good grandpa!

My Grandma is medium size. She is nice and often gives us candy! ~ Lucas Pipe

Great Grandma VanDenTop always gives us candy and ice cream. On Sundays we go downstairs and play with her toys! ~ Emma Koole

My Oma DeVries is very nice. She has white hair and she is blind. We usually go to her house on Sunday afternoons. She is very good at playing the organ and the piano. ~ Nora DeVries

TIME TO READ
Mrs. Julie Schwarz, 2nd Grade

The month of March is an exciting time at Hope School because March is National Reading month! Of course, learning how to read is one of the main goals of school and much time is spent on this all year long. But Reading Month is the perfect excuse to give a little extra attention to encourage the students to pick up a book and read. Our librarians work hard to plan many fun activities towards this end.

The month started off with Dictionary Day. The students were encouraged to find a new word in the dictionary and bring it to school to share with their classmates. Most of the second graders were excited to share their words and many of the words were impressive. A few examples are "ovoviviparous", "ubiquitous", and "guerdon." You can look up their meanings! We also had the first of four book swap days. The students brought a book to school that they could trade in for a "new" book. It was fun to see their eyes light up when they found a book they wanted, and they realized they could keep it.

Everybody loves a good joke, right? Joke Day is coming up and this is usually a big hit as students love to tell the funny jokes they have found. If nothing else, this is a good opportunity for students to practice speaking loudly and clearly in front of their peers. Maybe the most exciting event of all happens toward the end of the month. If you happen to visit school on this day, you might just encounter a familiar friend as everyone is encouraged to dress as a favorite book character. You may see the unpredictable Pippi Longstocking, the comical Amelia Bedelia, the loveable bear Corduroy, or maybe even the meanest substitute teacher, Viola Swamp. This should be an exciting day!

These are only a few of the things going on this month. They are fun for the students and they add some excitement to the normal routine of our days. The students enjoy the change and hopefully are encouraged to pick up a book and read!



Following are some book reviews that the 2nd graders wrote:

If you like animals, then you should read *The Homeless Kitten*. You will like *The Homeless Kitten* because there are three kittens found in the woods. You will also like *The Homeless Kitten* because they don't have a home. Another reason you will like *The Homeless Kitten* is because they find homes for two of the kittens but one they get to keep. The most important reason is that the kitten and the dog become friends. I think you would like this book. ~ Breelyn Bylsma

Pippi Longstocking is a very good book. You will like it because Pippi is very brave when she rescues some boys. You will also like this book because Pippi is a very funny girl and she rides on a horse at the circus. The most important reason you will like *Pippi Longstocking* is because Pippi gets in big trouble. I think you should read *Pippi Longstocking*. ~ Hannah DeBoer

Charlotte's Web is a very good book. You will like it because it has a cute little girl who really wants to keep the baby pig. The most important reason you will like *Charlotte's Web* is because

Fern begs to keep the baby pig whose name is Wilbur. Her dad was about to kill him but then he did not. This was a really good book. ~ Frances DeMeester

If you are looking for a good book to read, you should pick *Pippi Longstocking*. It is a good book. You will like it because Pippi gets in trouble a lot. You will also like it because she says things that do not make sense. This is a good book, you should pick it. ~ Anna DeVries

If you are looking for a good book to read, you should pick *Matilda*. I read it and you will like it because of the good pictures. Another reason you will like *Matilda* is because Miss Truchbull is mean and Miss Honey is nice. The most important reason you will like *Matilda* is because Miss Truchbull is really exciting! You won't be sorry when you read this book. ~ Brielle DeVries

Trouble Maker is a very good book. You will like *Trouble Maker* because his big brother works at a coffee shop. You will also like *Trouble Maker* because his friends are cool. The most important reason you will like *Trouble Maker* is because he is so funny. You will not be sorry if you read *Trouble Maker*. ~ Davith Kalsbeek

Charlotte's Web is my favorite book. You will like it because it is an interesting book and a funny book. You will also like it because Fern gets her pig. The most important reason you will like this book is because it is good when Wilber runs away. I think you should read this book. ~ Monroe Kalsbeek

Snow Treasure is a very good book. You will like it because the Germans try to steal the gold. You will also like *Snow Treasure* because it has an army. The most important reason you will like *Snow Treasure* is because the children hide the gold. I hope you read this book. ~ Ryan Kley

If you are looking for a good book, pick *Heidi*. You will like *Heidi* because she lives with her Grandfather. You will also like *Heidi* because she got sent to a house with a strict woman and also with a girl named Clara who becomes friends with Heidi. A third reason you will like *Heidi* is because Heidi was sent back when she got ill. Clara came for a little bit. The most important reason you will like *Heidi* is the good friendship between Heidi and Clara. You will like it not just because I like it. ~ Selah Kuiper

The Quilt is a very good book. You will like it because it is about a poor family who has a baby. You will also like it because *The Quilt* is a true story. The most important reason you will like *The Quilt* is because they have to sell the baby boy when the grandma dies. *The Quilt* is a very good book. ~ Victoria Langerak

Pippi Longstocking is a very good book. You will like it because Pippi is so funny and gets into trouble! You will also like Pippi because she is so much stronger than the boys. She hung a boy on a tree! The most important reason you will like *Pippi Longstocking* is because she makes up things! I think you should read *Pippi Longstocking*. ~ Lizzy Oosterhouse

I think you should read *I Survived the Eruption of Mt. St. Helens*. You will like this book because there is a little girl who sees Mt. St. Helens erupt. You will also like it because it is about a volcano erupting and the family is poor. The most important reason you will like this book is because in the end the girl saves the valley. I think you should read *I Survived the Eruption of Mt. St. Helens of 1980*. ~ Oakleigh Peterson

I think *Pippi Longstocking* is a very good book. You will like *Pippi Longstocking* because some thieves came to Pippi's house. One thief blew on a comb and Pippi danced with the other thief. You will also like *Pippi Longstocking* because before Pippi made friends with the thieves they thought the monkey, Mr. Nilsson, was a man. The most important reason you will like *Pippi Longstocking* is because Pippi is strong, funny, and always getting into trouble. I really think you should read *Pippi Longstocking*. ~Rebekah Tanis

Pippi Longstocking is a very good book. You will like Pippi because it is super funny. You will also like Pippi because she is really strong. The most important reason you will like Pippi is because she puts some boys in a tree. You will not be sorry if you read this book. ~Sawyer VanOostenbrugge

If you are looking for a good book, you should read *White Fang*. You will like this book because White Fang is separated from his mom. You will also like *White Fang* because White Fang almost died from a bear. The most important reason you will like *White Fang* is because he almost died from a bulldog. I hope you will read *White Fang*. ~ Isaak VanUffelen

Here are some thoughts from the second graders on our science unit on Living Things:

I see God's wisdom in a lion because God made it have hair around his head. God made the lion to run fast to catch its food. ~Brecken Vogel

I see God's wisdom in the yak because its thick coat helps the yak stay warm in the winter. ~ Max VanderVeen

I see God's wisdom in the birds. There's a bird that has a pinching beak and a bird that has a scooping beak. The scooping beak scoops fish and the pinching beak pinches the bugs. If the scooping bird had a pinching beak it would not be able to get its food. If the pinching bird had a scooping beak it would not be able to get its food. God made these birds perfect. ~ Selah Kuiper

I see God's wisdom in the giraffe with its long neck. It helps the giraffe get leaves from trees. ~ Julia Huizinga

I see God in His creation. I see His wisdom in the giraffe because of its beautiful texture. I also see it in the zebra's stripes and how it makes them blend in when lions try to eat them. ~ Cody Hanko

I see God's wisdom in the cheetah. He gave it a flexible body to make it run fast. God gave it sharp teeth to drill into their prey. ~ Willem Engelsma

I see God's wisdom in the long necks of giraffes and how they live right in the place where God planted that amazing creature. The reason God gave giraffes long necks is because then they can see far away and can see predators from far away and get a head start. ~ Lincoln Doezeema

God made animals with the parts that they need like the archer fish. It shoots water like a hose. It has to aim at a bug or a frog. It also can swim in all directions and God made the colors too. ~ Remy Cammenga

AN "UN"-INTRODUCTION

Mr. Brian Dykstra, 5th Grade

In Covenant Christian's last *Courier* I noticed there was a section where the new teachers introduced themselves to the community. This caused me to wonder what one should do when *leaving* one's post in the community. Thus, I give you my "un"-introduction.

When I began teaching at Hope in September of 1985, I had finished two years of teaching in Loveland, Colorado. My wife and I had one daughter then, a seven-month-old red-head. We now have six grandchildren, the oldest is a 6th grader at Heritage, and the youngest approaching two years old.

I came to Hope with degrees in Social Sciences (economics and history) and Language Arts (a few foreign languages and literature) from Hope College. I have since added a master's degree in Classroom Teaching and Curriculum from Michigan State University. I was one of the last teachers in Michigan to be awarded a Permanent Certificate in teaching, meaning I no longer have to take classes to keep my certificate up-to-date. I can now attend the University of RFP, specializing in old SB articles, for further training. To fund part of my retirement, I will auction my rare and valuable permanent teaching certification to the highest bidder. Don't worry about the fraud charge which might ensue. I know a young lawyer who, though he might not be able to clear you of the charge, will find your case interesting.

I arrived at Hope when Heritage started. When the dust had settled from sorting out the teaching staffs, there was one position left at Hope. The year before I came, Hope had 374 students and 183 families. My first year at Hope there were 199 students and 87 families left. During my time at Hope enrollment reached a high in 2006 with 257. I have witnessed two building projects and three renovations of the school. The "old girl" doesn't look anything as she used to when I first taught here, but then, neither do I. From the first staff with whom I served in '85, I am the only one left. One colleague left for a Christian Reformed School, and, of the others, all but one, Mrs. Marilyn Schipper, have since passed away. I often think of these dear, helpful colleagues as I walk down the hallway.

With that, I have "un"-introduced myself. If you are one of my 893 former students at Hope, or a couple dozen from Loveland, feel free to say "hi" and, please, introduce yourself. I'm terrible remembering names, and most of you no longer appear as you did when you were in 5th grade!

I gave the current 5th graders the opportunity to ask me questions by writing them on index cards. I said I would answer them. I hope I don't regret this!

Tony Oosterhouse: Why do you hate squirrels?

I *dislike* them, and, generally, all rodents. Our old bird-feeder was just fine, until we moved to our current house. Squirrels destroyed it within a week. They eat the bird seed, which is clearly labeled as not for them, and, if you can't read, and squirrels can't, there are pictures of birds on the package, not rodents. They chew my wife's flower pots, get into the garden, and chipmunks ate holes in the vinyl siding of our house. Thus, they started it, and I will oblige them in continuing the struggle!

Danton VanderVeen: Have you ever been an elder?

No, I have not, and that's OK. It's not an easy task to perform, but I hope the boys know they might be an officebearer someday and prepare themselves by reading the Bible each day.

Kennedy Guichelaar: If you would have a pet, what animal would you choose?

Before we were married, my wife and I promised each other we would not have pets. I was a beekeeper for five years, but they aren't pets. Maybe I could get away with a parakeet!

Preston Kregel: Have you ever been a referee for a CCHS basketball game?

No, but if I did, there would be constant "travelling" and "palming the ball" violations called. It's time to clean-up the game!

Jayden Koole: Why won't you tell us how old you are?

Your parents will spend \$1.2 million to run our school this year. They don't want you to learn about me. They want you to learn valuable things: first, so that you can be of service in the church, and, second, so that someday you can pay your own bills.

Ainsley Huizinga: Where were you born?

I was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In a way, the world in which I grew up no longer exists. Technology has changed nearly everything!

Kelsey Minderhoud: Why did you become a teacher?

Claire Feenstra: Why do you love teaching?

These are related. I wanted to do what I could to pass on the beautiful Reformed faith to the next generation. God is under no obligation to let us have a true church. If we don't cherish His truth, He has every right to take it away. I pray that we are faithful to Him.

Finley VanOverloop: What classes did you take in college to be a teacher?

I started at Calvin (that's hard to admit!) taking biology and chemistry. In Pre-seminary I took mostly Dutch, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and speech. At Hope College (some of the best years of my life!) I took economics, history and education with some wonderful teachers.

Jude Rutgers: Why did you go to MSU instead of Michigan? Michigan is way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way, way better!

I sense an attitude here! When I looked for a place to earn a master's degree, MSU had one of the best colleges of education in the Midwest. They also had extension offices in downtown GR, so it was convenient. Finally, I did very well on my UM application test, but I was informed that my score was very severely deficient in the area of arrogance, thus disqualifying me from acceptance there. Go Green!

Macy Moelker: What is the best memory of teaching?

I enjoyed my colleagues, especially in my first years at Hope, and laughing with Mr. Quenga. What's really great to see is when students see someone who is going through hard times and are willing to pray for them and help them.

Darla VanDenTop: How many vacations have you gone on in your life?

Silas Rutgers: How many trips have you gone on?

I took four trips with my dad when I was young. My wife has taken me on many more! I cannot remember how many. She plans the trips, but she needs a driver and photographer to help her. I am thankful she continues to choose me for those services!

Gavin Rau: What was your favorite vacation and why?

My wife has taken me to many wonderful places, so it's hard to pick one, but Alaska was special because it is so beautiful and the wildlife is incredible!

Tessa Kregel: What is your favorite place to go to?

I have a hunch that Tessa is wondering about vacation spots, but the real answer of my favorite place to go is the chair opposite my wife at our dinner table.

Austen Veldman: What is your favorite Psalter number?

One possible answer is the last one we happen to have sung, as long as it wasn't 254. I've always liked 241 because the congregation sang it many times in the old First Church. That's why I made sure to work that Psalter number into this year's school program since I knew it would be the last time I would serve on the program committee. I know, that was a little sneaky.

Brody DeVries: If we are not a factor in salvation, how do we work out our salvation?

Brody is still thinking about our last reading assignment! The class read an article by Rev. G. Vos titled "Work Out Your Salvation" from the October 1, 1959 *Standard Bearer*. God plants salvation in our hearts without any work on our part and without our cooperation. In that way we are not a factor in our salvation. Now that salvation is in our hearts, God does not want His gift to remain hidden there. God renews us so we work salvation out of the hidden places of our hearts and out into the open. Others now see the fruits of salvation, our sorrow for sin and thankfulness to God. Others now witness what God has so graciously done for us. God makes us active in that part of salvation as God does not drag us to heaven as inactive, unwilling rocks. We serve Him as thinking and willing friend-servants.

Millie DeMeester: How can we glorify God today?

This is a frequent petition in our classroom prayers. We ask God's help in living in a way which glorifies Him. Today's world is far different from the one of my childhood, and who knows how much the world will change for this generation before Christ returns? However, God's commandments to us are the same today as they were for previous generations. We glorify Him by loving Him and our neighbor.

Levi Vandenberg: Is it bad to think as a Christian, you can sin for a year and turn back in the way of a Christian?

Yes, we don't plan to sin for a time and then live a godly life when we are finished "having fun." We go through this life in sinful flesh and we sometimes fall, as we learned when we studied the history of David. God will work repentance in His children so His "fatherly countenance again shines upon" us. We pray for our loved ones who stray that the almighty Spirit will work in their hearts to return them to the way of thankful obedience.

Miles Fogal: What will you do when you retire? I know you and your wife will go on many trips to amazing places, and take many, many pictures, which we will never see, sadly, but where will you go? What else will you do? P.S. I hope your wife is kind to you.

You are right, Miles, my wife is planning some trips. I'm glad you enjoy the vacation photos on the bulletin board. I have a couple of hobbies at which I am not very good, but maybe I can change that! Also, I will have some part-time work suitable for an older man. I won't have a problem staying busy. P.S. My wife is very, very kind to me!

2024-25 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 26, 2024	First Day of School
Aug. 30 – Sept. 2	Labor Day Break
September 18	School Pictures
October 3	PTA
October 10-11	P/T Conferences
October 17-18	Teachers' Convention
November 28-29	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 23 – Jan. 1	Christmas Break
January 17	End of 1 st Semester
February 13	PTA
February 6-7	P/T Conferences
April 7-11	Spring Break
May 26	Memorial Day
May 27	Last Day of School
	Graduation

ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

Thursday, April 18 – 7 pm

Hope School Gym

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2024
26TH ANNUAL HOPE CLASSIC
REGISTRATION TO OPEN AFTER SPRING BREAK