

ANNOUNCER

Adams Protestant Reformed Christian School

5539 Byron Center Avenue – Wyoming, Michigan 49519 – (616) 531-0748 – June, 2021
adamschristianschool.org

Congratulations

Class of 2021

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Melinda Rose Doezema
Abby Marie Dykstra
Caleb Matthew Dykstra
Benjamin James Elzinga
Elliot James Gunnink
Jacob Aaron Kaiser
Clara Nicole Kaptein
Bryce Aaron Knott
Kylie Marie Kuiper
Luke Anthony Langerak
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Aidan Timothy Pipe
Chloe Erika Pipe
Evan Ryan Pipe
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Marissa Lynn Steenwyk
Jessica Ann Ten Broeke
Aiden Levi Van Dyke
Austin David Vander Kolk
Brady Jon Vander Meulen
Aiden James Zandstra

Class Text

*“From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee,
when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”
Ps. 61:2*

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Administration & Staff

***New Curricula for Next Year:
 Rigorous and Christ-Centered***

**Mr. Rick Mingerink
 Administrator**

A school’s curriculum is one of the most important, yet easily neglected, components in the school. (Classroom air conditioning would fall in that category, too!) Curriculum is especially important in a Christian school. A Christian school plants her identity on the fact that she has Christian instruction. While curriculum and instruction are not the same thing, instruction finds its grounding in the curriculum. The curriculum is the framework for the instruction.

It takes a considerable amount of time constructing that framework, but even more time shaping your instruction within that framework. When a teacher is told that they are going to be given a different curriculum, they know that hours of additional work lay ahead of them. It is like a company changing out its operational software for something new. A teacher not only needs to become familiar with the curriculum, but also needs to know how to provide instruction within it. This means out with the old lesson plans and in with the new. For this reason, a school does not change curriculum unless it needs to or unless it finds great benefit in a revision.

Both reasons factored in this year when the school adopted new curricula. I am excited to inform you that we will be using new math curriculum in our K-5 classrooms and new science and history

curricula in 7-8 classrooms. These adoptions took place after extensive review in faculty committees that began two years ago.

The new K-5 math curriculum is a Singapore math curriculum. It is known as *Dimensions Math*. This replaces our current *EveryDay Mathematics* curriculum which has been in use at Adams for well over twenty years. *EveryDay Mathematics* is based on the educational principle that math needs to be learned in “everyday” contexts. As such, it emphasizes *applied* mathematics. It is also based on a spiral approach. This means the learning of concepts is spread over a longer time period as similar concepts are taught at multiple points in a school year. We found that this curriculum was quite complex to teach and required several years for a teacher to get comfortable with it. We also found it difficult for students to gain mastery of a concept because concepts were never presented in a concentrated enough dose at once.

The new *Dimensions Math* is rigorous, yet simple. This was one of the key characteristics that we wanted in a new program. It also required the least amount of time to teach than other curricular programs we reviewed. That does not mean it can be taught in less than a class period. Not at all. It is just that most modern mathematics curriculum are based on 60 – 90-minute math blocks. This is because most modern mathematics curriculum we reviewed heavily emphasize “discovery learning” models which are often less efficient compared to direct instruction type models.

Singapore-based math was developed in Singapore (surprise!). It is built upon the premise that students learn mathematical concepts best when they begin with concrete objects they can touch and manipulate, then move to pictures on a page, and finally to the abstract number equation. It emphasizes concept mastery, too. We piloted this program in a few of our classrooms this year and it is a no-frills, simple, yet effective curriculum.

Regarding the new 7th and 8th grade science and history curricula, they are Christian-based programs. That means they view the Bible as authoritative in all areas of history and creation. Decades ago, these Christian curriculums left much to be desired. Today, with the increase in Christian schools and homeschools, there are Christian curriculum companies that are producing very good products. After

reviewing several of them, I am convinced we adopted the best of the best.

The benefits of a Christian-based curriculum are seen in the worldview the curriculum helps shape. Instead of infusing the science curriculum with evolutionary principles, it roots all aspects of science back to God, the Creator and Sustainer of it all. It also is filled with critical-thinking questions that cause students to examine the subject matter in the light of God's Word. For example, as I page through the textbook, I observe the following questions on just one page:

- *Describe two ways that the fossil record affirms the truth of Scripture?*
- *Though genetic load poses risks for small populations today, why might this not have been a problem for the animals exiting the Ark after the Flood?*
- *What is one of the major problems arising out of a person's rejection of Genesis as real history?*

Below these questions, I see a section devoted to eugenics (i.e., only "fit" humans should reproduce) and what the Bible teaches concerning it. This is good stuff.

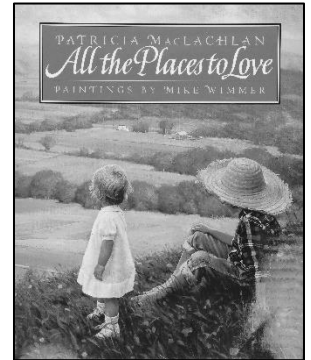
This is also true for the history curriculum. A secular understanding of history is just as damaging to a Christian student as an evolutionary understanding of science. Our new U.S. history curriculum presents God as the mover and shaper of all history. The Providence of God is emphasized over the exaltation of man. As I look at one of the textbook pages in front of me, I read this question: *One of the differences between Jefferson and the Federalists concerned the roles of legislatures and judges. Jefferson wanted clear laws on every subject. He thought a judge should be "a mere machine" who decides only whether a statute is broken. The Federalists favored laws that set out broad principles, which wise judges could apply to specific situations. Which approach do you think is most closely aligned with examples in Scripture? Defend your answer.* Isn't it a delightful thought to imagine a classroom of students wrestling with such a question? This curriculum shapes their minds to see the Scriptures as the touchstone for what is right and true.

I am thrilled with these new curricular adoptions. These new curricula are not only rigorous, but they will provide a better framework for Christ-centered instruction.

All the Places to Love

Mrs. Annica Kuiper
First Grade

We all have one. Or at least I hope you do. Maybe it's that corner in the road as you come around the bend and see the lake, stretching out before you, breathtaking in its big-ness and depth. Maybe it's the front porch rocking chair or the back deck views that remind you that you can be all alone in the world, and yet not lonely at all. Maybe it's right behind the steering wheel, heading out on a path less traveled, or up in that tree stand right at the crack of dawn. Maybe it's coming up the drive to your own house, walking through the doors of your own church, or sitting around the table with your own family. But wherever it is, it gives you that feeling—that there's no other place in the world you'd rather be, right now. We all have one—a place to love.



The first graders, in just seven short years of living and even less of memory, all have one too. Some are soft, gentle places. Some are loud, exciting places. Some are loved for their newness. Some they have loved as long as they can remember. Some are places only they have been to. And some are places we all know and love.

In one of our last writing units for the year, my students begin to do their first bit of independent narrative writing. This year, I brought in one of my long-time favorite books to guide our thinking and writing—*All the Places to Love* by Patricia MacLachlan. The book's beautiful painted pictures and poetic prose can't help but bring to mind the many places we know and love in our lives.

As my students and I begin to talk about the places we love, their youthful exuberance usually takes them to wherever they have been most recently—the tire swing! the ice cream store! But after guiding them to think more deeply, we found a myriad of unique experiences and encounters right within our own classroom. As the first graders shared some of their favorite places, we quickly realized that God gives each of His children their own special place to occupy in this world. Some of us have traveled many miles, some of us have lived in many

houses, some of us have met many people. But God has given all of us reasons for joy and places to love.

In between, around, and through all of their stories and suggestions, we start to organize our thoughts into a Key Word Outline (see picture for an example—can you guess which story it goes with?).

We learn how to introduce our writing with a topic sentence and how to finish with a

clinger sentence. We learn which details are important, and which ones to leave out. We try to make our writing descriptive with interesting verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. You will sense some of this structure in their paragraphs below.

Some students are more independent than others, some write more easily than others, but all have something to say. Please enjoy reading about **All Our Places to Love**.

Pittsburgh

A place I love is Pittsburgh. My family rides in a car and it takes six hours! When I am in Pittsburgh, I go to Grandma and Grandpa's house and play with my friends. Pittsburgh is special because my Grandma and Grandpa live there. I love visiting Pittsburgh.

~Cody Kuiper

My Backyard

A place I love is my backyard. I get to my backyard by going out my slider door. When I am in my backyard, I can play in my tree-fort, and school is close by! I play at school. My backyard is special because it's shady and peaceful and I can look at God's creation. I love exploring my backyard!

~Caleb Mingerink

The Woods

The best place in the world is the woods. I just open the door and walk outside and skip to the woods. The first thing I do when I get to the woods is hunt for old things and hunt for bunny holes. I spot bunnies hopping, too! The woods is special because it is peaceful. You can go there if you are fighting and you can sit and just listen and smell it. It is the best woods in the world.

~Sylvia Mingerink

Our Barn

A place I love is our barn. You get there by walking outside and you are there. I can spot my bike in there and I can spot the cat! The barn is special because upstairs there is a basketball hoop. The barn is a great place to be.

~Stefan Engelsma

Florida

One of my favorite places is hot Florida. You get there by driving a car for 15 hours for the trip! When I am in Florida, I can jump over big waves. And it is fun to lay in the sand and get hot. Florida is special because I get to see more of GOD'S amazing creation. I love to visit Florida.

~Nolan Kuiper

The Pond

A place I love is the pond. You get there by walking or scootering around the corner. At the pond, you can spot small turtles and you can see a beaver dam! The pond is special because I can see my friends and walk around the pond with my friends. It is very cool, I hope you can come some day!

~Derek Karsemeyer

Grandma's Home

A place I love is Grandma's home. I get there by riding in a car with my family. At Grandma's, I can spot deer on our hike and we can go play football. Grandma's house is special because I get to see my cousins I love. I can't wait to go back to see Grandma!

~Alex Griffioen

My School

A place I love is my school. You get there by riding in the car. When I am at school, we read the Bible and I can go outside and play at recess. School is special because my loving friends share with me. School is the best!

~Isabel Velthouse

Grandma's Woods

A place I love is Grandma's woods. We get there by riding in the car for 20 minutes. When I go to Grandma and Grandpa's woods, we make amazing forts. I run down hills speedily. Grandma's woods are special because I can see God's amazing creation. I can't wait to go there again!

~Bennett VanTil

Catch Air

My best place to go is Catch Air. You get there by riding in the car and it takes about one hour! When I am at Catch Air I love to climb up the fantastic tightropes! There are long slides about twenty-five feet long! Catch Air is special because friends can come and we make new friends and eat pizza! You should go to Catch Air one day.

~Lachlan Dijkstra

Illinois

A place I love is Illinois. My family gets there in a car and it is a two-hour drive to get there. When I get there, I get to ride my uncle's pit bike. And we can have fun fishing in a lake. Illinois is special because we go there every year with my family. I wish I could go back again.

~David Engelsma

Hungry Horse

My favorite place is Hungry Horse campground. I ride in my car and we pull our trailer. When I am at Hungry Horse, I go into the huge pool and swim in the pool. We go to the candy shop and it is super fun! Hungry Horse is special because I enjoy God's creation there. This is the best place ever!

~Maddox Deemter

My Backyard

A place I love is my backyard. You get there by walking out the door and you are in! When I'm in the backyard, I jump on a tramp and I can spin and play tag. My backyard is special because my friends and family can play with me there. I can't wait to play in my backyard!

~ Everett Hall

Ohio

A place I love is Ohio. You get there by riding in a car. At Ohio, we can go hiking. Ohio is special because I can go under waterfalls. I can not wait to go again!

~ Joey Doezema

Great Wolf Lodge

A place I love is Great Wolf Lodge. I get there by riding in Dad's truck. At Great Wolf Lodge, I share bunkbeds with Lucas and ride big slides and they are fast! Great Wolf Lodge is special because it is a fun place. We have family time in the breakfast room and it is fun! I wish I could go back to Great Wolf Lodge.

~ Kenslee VanOverloop

Myrtle Beach

A place I love is Myrtle Beach. You get there by riding in a car. At Myrtle Beach, I can swim in the pools and the ocean. Myrtle Beach is special because my Grandma is there. I want to go there again!

~ Max McKinney

My Room

A place I love is my room. You get there by going downstairs, turn left, and then you're there. When I am in my room, I can play with Kadence and I can eat candy in my room. My room is special because I have great fun in my room. I love my room forever!

~ Addison Dykstra

My Cousins' House

A place I love is my cousins' house. You get there by a car usually, not a bike. At my cousins' house, we play Roblox and play with Nerf guns. We also jump on the trampoline and play ball. My cousins' house is special because we get to spend time together. My cousins' house is the best place in the whole wide world.

~ Cole Oosterbaan

South Carolina

A place I love is South Carolina. You get there by driving a car for a long time. At South Carolina, I can get shells. South Carolina is special because I was with all my aunts and uncles. I hope you get to go to South Carolina soon.

~ Rose Brummel

What's Interesting? What's Important?

Miss Joanna Koerner
Second Grade

"Miss Koerner! Guess what I did over the weekend?" What follows is a detailed story of the events of the past days. In a child's mind, each detail is both

interesting and important, and must be shared. I love their enthusiasm, but unfortunately, there just isn't enough time for each child to share every detail from their weekends.

When we first began the IEW program in September of 2016, I didn't realize it could help with the above inconvenience. But one of the things we've been working on lately at the second-grade level is taking a source text with perhaps as many as 15 facts and paring it down to just 5-6 facts to write about. Students write a "topic sentence" at the beginning of their articles, and end with a "clincher sentence." If you have a 2nd through 8th grader, ask them to tell you (with motions!) how the topic and clincher sentences are connected. The facts are supporting details for the topic and clincher sentences. These facts may be very similar from one student's work to another because we used the same source texts and we've been working hard to follow our "Key Word Outlines."

Below I have included articles from my students on various topics, from tigers to capuchin monkeys to farming.

A Strong Hunter

The wild tiger hunts its prey. Tigers can devour 40 pounds in one meal, but only need to eat that much once in a week. He can see clearly in the dark because he has sharp eyes. They can also hear the most tiny sound that is in the pointed grasses. A tiger can almost jump up to 30 feet to attack frantic prey that tries to escape! The tiger can run up to 50 miles per hour to catch animals who try to escape! He has curved claws that are about 4 inches to help him catch his prey. He makes sure to keep them retracted while walking. A tiger is a strong hunter of prey.

~ Audrey Van Donselaar

The Skilled Tiger

The large tiger hunts its prey. The tiger chomps 40 pounds a meal, but it only has to eat that much once in a week. The tiger can see clearly in the dark because he has sharp eyes. He hears the smallest sound in the grass. Amazingly, tigers can jump almost 30 feet to attack their delicious prey! The tiger can run up to 50 miles per hour to catch animals who try to escape. His 4-inch-long curved claws assist him in catching his prey. The tiger is a skilled hunter of his prey.

~ Joash Van Overloop

A Strong Hunter

A tiger hunts prey. He is able to swallow a 40-pound meal, but only needs to eat that much once a week. He can see clearly in the dark because he has sharp eyes. The tiger can hear the most tiny sound in the grass. A tiger can jump about 30 feet to attack its scared prey. The tiger can run up to 50 miles per hour to catch animals who try to escape. The tiger's curved claws are about 4 inches long! A tiger is a hunter and it has to hunt its prey.

~ Penelope Vander Kolk

Mighty Tigers

A large tiger hunts for its prey. A tiger can dine on 40 pounds in one meal, but it only has to eat that much once a week. He can see clearly in the dark because he has sharp eyes. He can hear the dinkiest sound in the grass. The tiger can jump almost 30 feet to attack his chicken prey. The tiger can run up to 50 miles per hour to catch animals who try to escape. The tiger has curved claws, which are about 4 inches long, to catch his prey. A tiger is a mighty hunter for his prey.

~ Kent Elzinga

Nice Monkeys

The capuchin monkey can help people who are disabled. Plus their hands are like humans'. They spend 3 to 5 years in a monkey college to learn to support people. While there, the monkeys listen and learn to turn on lights, brush teeth, and comb hair. They are smart and have wee fingers so that they can operate computers. They can do simple things like slowly scratch an itch. Because the monkeys can live for 40 years, they can help people for a long time. The talented monkey can help people in a very nice way.

~ Gibson McKinney

Skilled Monkeys

The capuchin monkey can help people who are disabled. Their hands are like human hands. They spend three to five years in a monkey college to learn how to serve people. While there, the monkeys listen and learn to turn on lights, brush teeth, and comb hair. They are smart and have dinky fingers, so they can operate computers. They can do simple things like slowly scratch an itch. Because the monkeys can live for 40 years, they can help people for a long time. A skilled monkey helps people.

~ Mike Lubbers

The Amazing, Talented Monkeys

The capuchin monkey can help people who are disabled. Capuchin monkey hands are like human hands. The monkeys stay in a monkey college about 3 to 5 years to learn how to care for people. While there, the monkeys learn to turn on the lights, open containers, brush teeth, and comb hair. The monkeys are smart and have tiny fingers so they can operate computers. They can do simple things like helpfully scratch an itch. Because the monkeys can live up to 40 years, they can help people for a long time. These amazing, talented monkeys help people.

~ Tarrin Kortering

Raising Chickens

Farmers quickly raise chickens because they lay many eggs. They come in many sizes, from 1 to 11 pounds. Chickens are known for having red combs on top of their heads and red wattles, which are found below their beaks. The helpful chickens have red or white earlobes. Chickens have wings, but when they take off, they can't go very far. Chickens can fly away from danger or roost on the rafters in the barn. Hens can talk to their chicks while they're still in the eggs! Chickens are raised all around the world.

~ Hunter Dyskhorn

Fierce and Important Roosters

A rooster is an important part of his flock. Roosters have a spur on the side of their leg that is hard and sharp. A rooster will quickly attack anyone that threatens his flock. Because the spurs can hurt the farmer, they are often cut. Roosters do a tiny dance to show the hens where to find food. Hens yearn after the rooster who has the best dance. Roosters may crow any time of day: morning, noon, or night. Fierce roosters are important to the chickens in their flock.

~ Sofia Bodbyl

Brave Roosters

The rooster is important to his flock. A rooster has a spur on its leg, which is hard and sharp. Roosters bravely attack anyone who threatens their flock. Because the spurs can hurt the farmer, they are often cut off. Roosters do a tiny dance to show the hens where the food is. The hen yearns after the rooster who does the best dance. Roosters crow any time of day, morning or night. Brave roosters protect their flock.

~ Jenna Kamps

Fierce and Important Roosters

The rooster is an important member of his flock. He has spurs on his leg that are hard and sharp. A rooster stubbornly attacks anybody who tries to hurt his flock. Because the spurs can hurt the farmer, they are often cut. Roosters do a dinky dance to show the hens where the find food. Hens adore the rooster who has the best dance. The rooster crows any time of day: morning, noon, or night. Fierce roosters are important to the chickens in their flocks.

~ Jade Dykstra

Bold Roosters

Roosters are important to their flock. Roosters have spurs that are on their legs that are hard and sharp. A rooster willingly attacks anyone that tries to threaten his flock. Because the spurs can hurt the farmer, they are often cut off. He protects his flock by doing a dinky dance to show where the food is. Hens yearn after the rooster who does the best dance. He will crow at any time of day, morning, noon, or night. Bold roosters are important to chickens. THE END

~ Samantha Kooienga

Gardens are Usually Hard Work

People who have a garden have to work hard. They start early in the year when it is still crisp outside. Then it is time to prune and cut down the fruit trees. When the weather is warm and the dirt is not too wet, they till the dirt until it is crumbly. In the summer the family will weed the garden. They watch for insects because they don't want them to eat the fruit and plants. Each member helps pick produce and can the vegetables from the garden. The garden is usually hard work.

~ Chloe Kaiser

Gardens are Hard Work

People who have a garden have to work hard. They start early in the year when it is still freezing. Soon, it is time to trim and prune the fruit trees. When the weather is warm and the dirt is not too wet, they till the dirt until it is crumbly. In the summer, the family has to weed the garden. They watch for insects because they don't want them to eat the fruits and plants.

Each member will help pick, freeze, and clean the produce. The garden is really hard work.

~ Sadie Kamps

Gardens are Absolutely Hard Work

People who have gardens have to work hard. They start early in the year when it is still crisp outside. It is time to trim and prune the fruit trees. When the weather is warm and the dirt is not too wet, they till the dirt until it is crumbly. In the summer, the family weeds. They watch for insects because they don't want them to eat the fruits and plants. Each member of the family picks and cleans the fruit and puts them in jars to freeze. A garden is certainly hard work.

~ Sydney Knott

Hard Work

People who has gardens have to work hard. They start early in the year when it is still chilly. Then it is time to trim and prune the fruit trees. When the weather is warm and the dirt is not too wet, they till the dirt until it is crumbly. In the summer the family starts to weed the garden. They watch for insects because they don't want them to eat their plants and fruits. Everyone in the family helps clean the garden's food. A garden is mostly hard work.

~ Jade Velthouse

A New Beginning

Miss Karina Heynen

Fifth Grade

As I approach the end of the school year, with a new job in a new state on the horizon, I can't help but look back on how it all started. A short four years ago I was searching for a job. Getting a phone call from Rick with the offer of a job at Adams left me overjoyed. Moving to a different state had always been a dream of mine. I think my family knew immediately that I would be moving when I called them with the news of getting a job here. Thankfully, my sister Kalista was ready for a move, so we could experience this new place together.

I will never forget my first day of teaching. My knees were shaking, and I kept waiting for the adult in the room to tell me what to do next. I wondered if the year spent student-teaching had prepared me adequately for the 26 students who were facing me. I also remember the feeling at the end of the day, that those four long years of college were certainly not wasted. The love I had of the students already, the joy of standing in front of them, and the excitement for the coming year could not be measured. I knew that teaching was a passion of mine and the profession to which God had called me. The worry, tears, stress, and business of the last four years had

all been worth it. All it took was one day in the classroom.

Now a quick four years have passed. I have loved every second of teaching at Adams. First and foremost, the students, the covenant seed of God, are a joy to teach. I have memories of every student I taught and can look back with fondness at each one. My students will tell you that we have laughed together, cried together, and learned together. I loved talking about my favorite state with my kids, giving them a glimpse of where I came from, and sharing about my large family. They loved sharing right back, even some things that their parents would rather I not be told! I have felt a close connection to each of my students and will miss seeing them all in the hallways and the impromptu visits I get for a bon bon.

Secondly, I could not have performed my job without the teachers who work beside me and with me. Whether that be our principal, checking up on me my first year, being the shoulder I leaned on many times, or our secretaries, always answering the questions I had. My fellow teachers have allowed me to stay sane in the midst of the craziness of our job. The many chats in the lounge, the hearty greetings as a new day begins, the meetings, the committees, and everything in between have made teaching a blessing in this school. I cannot imagine starting my career anywhere else. To my coworkers, THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart for helping me grow as a teacher and as a spiritual leader to God's covenant children. I always and forever will appreciate what you did and continue to do for me!

Finally, I want to thank the families of Adams Christian School and the church families that I have been a part of. The families at Byron Center opened their arms to my sister and me when we first moved, inviting us over for many Sunday dinners. We were immediately part of the church family. The families at Adams have supported me and encouraged me throughout these four years. Thank you for the many gifts that you constantly give to me and to our school. This school could not exist without your love and dedication, and you are appreciated for it.

Throughout this whole four-year journey, there are a few Bible verses that have stuck in my mind. Lamentations 3:22-23, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." God is faithful. He has been and

will continue to be for the rest of our lives. I am encouraged to know that God has been faithful to me over these few years, and I know He will continue to be faithful to Adams as well. Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” I now know why God called me to teach at Adams, and I know now that God is calling me to teach at Sioux Falls Protestant Reformed School. May God’s will be done!

Thank you, Adams Christian School, for the home you have been to me.

Spiritual Books

Mr. Bruce Koole
Sixth Grade

In a previous edition of the *Announcer*, Mr. Rick Mingerink wrote an article about the jarring shortage of teachers in our schools. To which can be added the fact that there is a jarring shortage of ministers in our churches. How do we raise spiritual children who want to be teachers and preachers? One way is by starting early a library of good spiritual books. These are the kind mentioned by the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 4:13 “*The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.*” The books may have been the OT prophets, and the parchments my have been his own letters that he was writing. Nobody knows for certain what those books and the “chiefly” parchments were, but of a spiritual kind they most certainly were.

There are many earthly hazards we face in our day-to-day lives. Cancer, road accidents, and old age are but a few. Yet, the greatest danger we face is the spiritual temptation to pride. Children are not immune from this challenge. They, too, must lead by word and example that laziness, misbehavior, and rebellion are not acceptable at school. They must be willing to share the consequences of being righteous, which may be getting shunned by peers. This article looks at one way to help develop spiritual children, who must be taught by word and example how to love God’s law and hate sin as much as our thrice-holy Jehovah.

Sadly, there are too few examples in real life that will appeal to boys and girls about the benefit of being the spiritual leaders that the church needs. Businessmen, sports heroes, politicians, and movie

stars all promote a version of leadership that is often entirely devoid of any Biblical morality. Fame, money, power, and pleasure are the rewards to seek. These are the views popularized in the Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and ESPN Lifestyle. With a view to showing young boys and young girls how to lead spiritually as well as make the sacrifices necessary to be a leader, here are some spiritual books for your young child worth reading. This should make a perfect *summer reading list* for child as well as adult.

These books are worth purchasing for a family library so that a child can read and re-read them. There are families who have many of these books in their family library. That is impressive. Some of these books are hard to find but worth the cost and effort.

Many years ago, during my first year of teaching (quite possibly in my first month of teaching), a mother of Israel told me that their family had special Sunday books. To teach their children the importance of the Sabbath and how it ought to be different than every other day of the week, they had Sunday-only books. Their children may read books on Sunday. But they were limited to the Sunday books. I am not making a Sunday-only books rule for your family, nor am I evaluating your family as being on the “weak” side of the spiritual spectrum for not having a Sunday-only book list. As a brief note of explanation, the other side of the spiritual spectrum would be “strong”. I only suggest this method of *Sunday-only* books as a way of teaching young children about the antithetical Sabbath.

How families can help their child be a reader in school is to enact the following four policies. Visit the public library at least once per month. Make sure a child reads on average 20 minutes per day or for one hour every three days. Read to your little children nearly any kind of kids’ books as well as good Bible story books. Finally, be a reader yourself and leave lots of books laying around the house near EZ chairs and couches. Even scintillating books like G. Gordon Girod’s “*The Way of Salvation.*” Have your soul stirred with his moving election exegesis of Acts 13:48 “and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

For the final few years of teaching in Loveland, I had worked (or wrestled) into our daily school schedule a 20-book challenge for the 2nd semester. The 7th and 8th grade students needed to read 1 book per week and write a one-page journal response to it.

It was not a book review – more of a book testimonial. The second half of the school year lasts 18 official weeks, so they need to read just over one book per week. A book is defined at 100 – 301 pages. Two books are 302 – 602 pages. The students had about fifteen different categories to choose from, such as historical fiction, realistic fiction, mythology, non-fiction, poetry, etc... The goal was to get the students reading for pleasure, to develop reading comprehension, and to gain overall student improvement across subject areas. Perhaps next school year the students will need to take part in a book-every-other-week challenge

One of the categories was a spiritual book. By this, I understand to mean a book of a Christian worldview written at a level that a 7th/8th grader can read. This is often Christian historical fiction, but Christian history is also acceptable. Herewith follows the books. Each of these books can be found in our school's library, from Reformation Heritage Books, on the Interwebs, or from some private booksellers. Each of these books is also very enjoyable to an adult reader. I have organized these books from the ancient to modern, from 33 A.D. to World War II.

The Bronze Bow

by Elizabeth George Speare - 254 pages

This book won the Newbery Medal in 1962! How times have changed. Young Daniel lives during the prophecy and ministry of Jesus Christ. Daniel watched his father tragically oppose the Roman occupation and then be crucified to death. His mother dies as an emotional reaction, and his sister becomes a near deaf-mute. The rumor is she is possessed by devils. Five years later Daniel leaves his cruel blacksmith boss, Amalak.

As a teenager, Daniel joins a group of Zealots holed up in the mountains near Galilee. Their leader is the dynamic Rosh who plans someday to lead a militia attack on the Romans. Daniel frees a gigantic black slave, robs the travelling merchantman, and does spy work in Capernaum. He meets Joel and Thacia who help him spy. They also lead him to Jesus. Vividly experience life in 1st Century Judea. The book is gripping from page 1.

The Beggars Bible

by Louise A. Vernon - 136 pages

Thirteen-year-old Arnold Hutton wants to go college in the late 1300s. But he has no money. How does he earn a living? Then, Arnold hits his brother and runs away to Oxford. There, John Wycliffe is teaching the gross, filthy heresy that a man does not need Popes, Cardinals, Bishops or Monks to be saved, only Christ. A plot springs

up and secret informers watch Wycliffe to catch him teaching his heresies, steal all his papers and documents, and stop him from translating the Bible. Will he make it? What happens when Wycliffe is expelled from teaching at Oxford? Learn about Wycliffe's faith and humility in the face of immense trial.

Morning Star of the Reformation

by Andy Thompson. 134 pages

Follow the life of John Wycliffe as he travels to Oxford as a teen in order to become a priest. In part one he lives through the Black Death. He sees all the wickednesses and abuses by the Roman Catholic Church. Their love of filthy lucre is on full display. He regularly visits the local pub for meals with his good friend Anthony.

In part two, we see Tyndale as a man of the church. The Duke of Gaunt protects him for nationalistic purposes. The English used Wycliffe's words to avoid paying any taxes or tithes to the Pope. Read about the humorous Church Synod/Trial that dissolves into chaos and disorder when the opposite sides cannot agree on whether Wycliffe should stand or sit for the duration of the meeting. Wycliffe becomes world famous but gets unjustly expelled from his position of honor and prestige. This teaches the young man what it means to sacrifice for the sake of the truth.

Ink on his Fingers

by Louise A. Vernon - 127 pages

In the year 1441, twelve-year old Hans Dunne wanted to become a scribe and copy the Bible by hand. But, when his father dies suddenly and leaves a large debt, Hans' mother must pay it off. Hans cannot continue to go to Latin School. His dreams are crushed. However, God in his Providence directs Hans to the shop of Johan Gutenberg. Gutenberg is trying to print the Bible with moveable type print. But, the town's greedy banker Herr Fust tries every which way to get the moveable type. He sends the mob after the printing press in the chapter "The Devil's Workshop" (See Chapter 11). Read to see how faith perseveres.

Thunderstorm in the Church

by Louise A. Vernon - 134 pages

Young Hans Luther does not know what he should do when he grows up. He will never be as important as his father. Martin Luther will always overshadow him. Everyone asks Hans what he plans to be. Hans does not know. He will probably not measure up to his famous father. All he ends up doing is getting into a fight with a friend named Blacky. Plus, vicious rumors reach the ears of young Hans that his father was a runaway monk who married a runaway nun.

As he tries to solve all these problems, their home is always over-crowded with guests, who constantly interrupt a regular family life in their home, The Black

Cloiser, which was a former nunnery. Will Hans ever achieve true Christian contentment? Does his own famous father even know of his struggles? Even when God sends another round of the Black Plague to terrorize their house and city? Will he have a good relationship with the church and his father?

Devil in Print

by Mary Drewery - 216 pages

Follow young Thomas Warlingham as his father, a noble, is falsely accused by the King Henry VIII's Star Chamber and loses everything in life. Famous Cardinal Wolsey (nickname Wolfsee or Wolf's Lair) steals his father's library. Young Thomas flees to Germany where he meets up with the great Bible translator William Tyndale. Thomas helps Tyndale as they secretly publish the Bible. The Roman Catholic Church considers the Bible to be the Devil in Print. Hence the title. Close tales of near disaster pepper the book and its chapters. Tense anxiety fills nearly every page. The quality of writing is quite descriptive.

The Bible Smugglers

by Louise A. Vernon - 137 pages

Peasant boy Collin Hartley lives in England in the 1520s. The book starts with Collin's friend giving him an evil book to save it from the spies of Cardinal Wolsey. What is that evil book? The German New Testament of Martin Luther. Carrying it made the owner guilty of crimes against the state and deserving of torture and the death penalty, probably the very painful burning at the stake. Young Collin joins William Tyndale and follows him across the English Channel to hopefully complete the translation before copies are destroyed by the Roman Catholic authorities. Some copies are captured and publicly burned. Will Tyndale succeed? Does he have God's blessing? Tyndale and the boy hide out in Germany to complete the translation. Imprisonment, torture, and death wait around every corner.

This Was John Calvin.

by Thea Van Halsma - 217 pages

Clarence Bouma, long-time conservative Calvin Seminary professor, taught Calvinism to his daughter Thea Van Halsma. She wrote this enjoyable fictional biography of John Calvin. Follow the lad from his Roman Catholic upbringing, to becoming Reformed, to being cursed at by Farel for not helping the gospel, to working at Geneva, to getting expelled from Geneva for faithfully dispensing the Sacraments, to his marriage and heartbreak in having children who died in infancy, to his writing his Institutes & Commentaries, to his many health problems, and to ultimately trusting in God.

Genius in Geneva.

by L. Penning - 392 pages
translated by Rev. B. S. Berrington

Are you a churchman? The man who has his heart moved by Christ's Church will devour the prose that leaps off this page. I find this book one of my favorites. The author writes "The day of the Reformation had come; over Europe passed a breath of God; the ears of men were moved as the sea in a storm. It was a stream that could not be turned aside; it was another Nile stream, which flowing far over its banks, fertilized the arid and sunburnt lands. The stream was irresistible. It knew no bounds; the writings of Luther and his brave helpmates were disseminated like strong germinating seed, over the field of the world" (19-20).

How the heartstrings moan when we read about Calvin's attempt to save the five young missionary martyrs at Lyons in Roman Catholic France. "Calvin wrote with tears in his eyes; "Your fetters have become famous, the tidings of your death will resound far and wide, in spite of Satan, and to the glory of our Lord"... In the lovely month of May, when everything breathes peace and quiet, the five martyrs in ash-coloured clothes and bound with strong ropes, mounted the dung-cart which was to convey them to the place of execution... They mounted the stake full of courage; the youngest first, while Martial Alba, the oldest, came last. He embraced his comrades, one by one, saying "Farewell, brother!" And they consoled each other by saying that their sufferings would soon be over. The fire was lit..." (232). Nearly 400 pages, and everyone worth reading.

The Inquisitor's Secretary

by W.J. D. van Dijck 155 pages

Learn about the ever-growing faith of the Dutch during the time of the Reformation. They had to endure prison, torture, and death for saying that salvation was by grace alone in Christ alone. Learn how they sang Psalms in the face of fierce persecution.

The Escape -197 pages ***The Secret Mission*** -216 pages

both by A. Van der Jagt

Both books follow French Huguenot youths. These stories take place after the 1598 Edict of Nantes during the 2nd or 3rd generation reformers. In *The Escape* three youths seek to escape to the Netherlands so they can worship the Reformed faith. In *The Secret Mission* the boy follows the order of the Dutch princes and returns to France to liberate his father. Arrayed against them are the political class of leaders, the Roman Catholic politicians, policeman, and soldiers. Likewise, all the Roman Catholic clergy try to seek out and capture and kill the kids. Threat of torture is an ever-present fear.

When the Morning Came, Dispelling the Tyranny, The Beggars Victory

by Piet Prins - 152 – 175 pages

A young boy, Martin Meulenberg, fights with the Dutch in the 1570s against the vicious Spanish under constant threat of persecution. My only complaint is the slow pace of translation. There is a fourth volume on the way. But can you imagine? Torture and death would visit themselves upon you for saying that salvation is by sovereign grace alone? What bravery young Martin showed at every corner.

Tempest over Scotland: The Story of John Knox.

by Norman E. Nygaard - 183 pages

The story begins a bit abruptly when John Knox is suddenly abducted by France. Follow him bravely as he navigates the life of a slave and then is freed. Knox was a preacher and preach he did. Without fear of man and the local archbishop, he condemned the popish mass as accursed idolatry. And learn how the romance blossomed between young Marjory Bowes and fiery John Knox. Read of her very romantic requests “Oh good sir, forsooth and anon, tell me of predestination.” “Tell me again of sovereign election”. I exaggerate not. The book concludes with Knox’s battles against Mary, Queen of Scots. I wondered if there were more volumes to the set since it ends a bit abruptly. Very engaging was this portrait of Knox.

Journey Through The Night

by Anne De Vries - 373 pages

This is one of my favorites. These four brief books (combined into one) follow the life of young John DeBoer as he lives through Adolf Hitler’s awful five-year occupation of the Netherlands. Thanks to the Nazis, John suffers family separation, sees the death of friends, and experiences betrayal by those he thought were friends and patriotic Dutchman. Tragedy follows John. The War separates his family, and they do not see each other for years. He shockingly learns that his father was arrested and shipped off to a concentration camp.

John does meet pretty Nurse Rita. Is marriage even possible in the midst of WWII? John’s brother Fritz gets wounded in a gun battle. Will John ever see his family alive again? He doubts whether God is in sovereign control. Only the evil, murderous, and greedy seem to rule. The good seems gone. Learn how the faith of John, Uncle Gerrit, and John’s family grows in this time of sudden and shocking death.

The Shadow Series

by Piet Prins - 130 – 145 pages

The five books that make up this series are “*The Lonely Sentinel*”, “*Hideout in the Swamp*”, “*The Grim Reaper*”, “*The Partisans*”, and “*Sabotage*”. The first book looks at a completely different family than the last four

books. *The Lonely Sentinel* shows how a family helps a lonely Jewish diver and becomes a meeting place for a Resistance cell. The last four books look at a family that navigates separation and solitude while joining the Resistance to defeat the Germans.

These are action-packed books and teach young men how to pray. The *Hideout in the Swamp* books start from the imminent D-day invasion as the family hides some English divers in a swamp, while *the Grim Reaper* looks at what happen when Poons (name spelled backward is Snoop) claims to be a refugee from Rotterdam who must live with them. Secretly, Poons tries to betray them to the Nazis. In the last two books, father Jan Blankenspoor leaves his family, perhaps forever, and joins a Resistance cell to combat the Nazi atrocities.

The final book, *Sabotage*, concludes with an invasion of a town to defeat the last few remaining Nazis holed up in the church belfry tower. Heartache and glory follow in close succession. As a benefit, the descriptions of a Netherlands winter with its gray clouds, piercing wind, and bone-chilling cold during a long, dark winter are quite impressive. The viewer feels the cold. It is reminiscent of some of the gray winters experienced when exiting the glass doors at 5539 Byron Center Ave, Wyoming, MI.

The Scout Series

by Piet Prins - 140 pages for most

Oh, the day when “*The Secret of Swamp*” (220 pages) was finally available at the school library of Heritage Christian School! So many other students hogged that wonderful book, I was once sorely, oh so sorely, tempted to steal that book off the lap of another student (female) while riding the bus home. I would have accepted nearly any consequences just to read that book. How dare they take that which was rightfully mine? But I resisted and waited patiently. All 7 books of this series are worth your time.

Again, have your sons and daughters read these books. And read them yourselves and grow in faith. Have an enjoyable summer.

Students are learning to compile information from multiple sources, add to each paragraph the six sentence-openers and work within each paragraph the appropriate dress-ups. Students also learn to build topic and concluding sentences. We looked very briefly at peaceful sharks and at the carnivorous shark body organs.

Tame and Vicious Sharks

Sharks are vicious, but also could be tame predators. The sixteen feet long tiger sharks kill and swallow some reef sharks. Among the other species, about sixty different species

of reef sharks are vicious. Many reef sharks go in groups on feeding frenzies, tearing into thousands of fish. Basking and whale sharks, which are gentle giants, munch on krill and little fish. Naturally, sharks are some of the nastiest sea carnivores ever.

Sharks have special organs that help them hunt. Two-thirds of their brain is used to smell! And they also have cat-like, mirror eyes! And amazingly, they have lateral line canals that have hair and water in them, to feel if animals or people are in the water. Some organs sense an electric field too. While sharks are alive, they could have 20,000 teeth, and five substitutions per tooth. Sharks live on only 3% of its body weight per day. That is an amazing thing. Since only four people in the United States die per year, this shows we must be on high alert but not to get paranoid. Because of their special organs, most of the shark's body helps to get and eat food.

~ Jessica Gunnink

Gulping Meat-Eaters

Sharks are vicious and tame predators. Surprisingly, there are sixty species of vicious reef sharks. Searching for dinner, the sixteen-foot tiger shark secretly stalks, kills, and swallows the excellent reef shark. Inside the ocean, reef sharks have feeding frenzies where they snack on thousands of fish. When the gentle giants, which are the basking sharks and whale sharks, eat krill and small fish, they refuse to eat humans. Some sharks are nasty carnivores.

Splendidly, sharks have special organs which they use for hunting. Their eye looks like an excellent cat's eye and two-thirds of their brain cells are for smelling. Sharks have lateral-line canals with sensory hairs and water because they alert sharks of their prey's electric field. While they are alive sharks go through 20,000 teeth, have about five substitutions per tooth, and shockingly devour a tiny 3% of their body weight. In the US about four people die a year, and people need to be alert, and not paranoid. Studying sharks, scientists say that these meat-eaters have body parts for eating.

~ Gavin Kuiper

Vicious Predators

In the ocean there live sharks, who are vicious predators, but many are tame. Incredibly, there are sixty species of just reef sharks! The sixteen-foot tiger sharks stalks and swallows the reef shark because the tiger shark needs a snack. If the reef shark have a feeding frenzy then they can secretly catch thousands of fish. Devouring krill, the gentle giant also snack on other fish. Sharks are vicious carnivores.

Sharks use special organs for hunting. In the shark's brain two-thirds of it focuses on smelling. The brain also interprets the visuals in dark light through its mirror cat eyes. Sharks, which have lateral line canals, also have hair and water in them that feel when animals or people are in the water. They also have electricity fields. Amazingly, they have about 20,000 teeth, but when they lose teeth they still have about five substitutes left. A shark eats only about 3% of its own weight per day. Seeing that only about four people per year die from a shark attack, you still have to be alert but not paranoid. Their special body parts amazingly help them devour meat and other predators.

~ Emma Kaptein

Student Devotions

The students also must write out a devotion on a Bible passage of 4-5 verse. They speak devotions right before lunch recess. They read their verse, ask a question, give a brief meditation, and then conclude with a pre-written prayer. This prayer follows the form: Address, Praise, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication, and Ending. Some schools have simplified the form to A.C.T.S. with the 'A' being Address & Adoration. Here are a few examples. Be ye edified.

Proverbs 22:1 – 5: This passage shows to us that we should strive to live a Christian life, honoring and fearing God instead of making our one purpose to lay up earthly treasures. The rich and poor are all the same in God's eyes. A wise man guards his life from the wickedness of this world with God's instruction.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we praise thee for everything that thou hast done. We confess that we are sinful and do not deserve to be thy children. We thank thee for churches, schools, homes, and all of God's children. We ask that thou will be with those who need thee. Forgive us our sins in Jesus' name, Amen.

~ Blake Kuiper

Isaiah 53:3-6: On this earth Christ was despised, rejected, wounded, and bruised. And he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. He died an earthly death so that we could be healed from our spiritual sickness and receive a heavenly salvation with Him and God in heaven. He also says that we are His sheep that wander in sin. And still he loved us so much that He died on the cross for these sins.

Prayer: Our Father in Heaven, We praise thee for thy marvelous greatness that thou couldst move mountains and save sinful people. We confess that we are unworthy sinners of thy grace and mercy towards us. We thank thee for the blessings which Thou hast given to us. We thank thee most of all for thy son who died on the cross to save us so that we could be as white as snow. We ask that thou wilt forgive the sins that we have committed. In thy Son's name alone do we pray, Amen.

~ Elsie Van Til

Isaiah 60:1-5: In vs. 3 it tells us that Gentiles are drawn to the light and kings to the brightness of thy rising. This shows us that the unbelieving may be drawn unto all the riches of this world but in the end that won't matter.

Prayer: Almighty and eternal God, We come before thee to confess our sins and doubtfulness but we know that thou has forgiven our sins when thou died on the cross. We ask thee that thou wilt be with those who are sick and keep us safe throughout the day. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.

~ Jordyn Medemblik

IDEA: Identify. Develop. Expand. Act

Mr. David Harbach
IDEA Coordinator

God has provided Adams Christian School the opportunity to develop and implement advanced math and reading programs through the IDEA program. Our school board took the opportunity to start the IDEA Program in the winter of 2019. At first, the IDEA program focused on developing advanced math. Advanced reading was added a year later. How was this accomplished?

Several weeks of research into advanced math for gifted students formed the direction for IDEA program. After considering the various ways to implement advanced math, Adams Christian School decided on pulling a student out during the regular math class three times a week to move the student through the math curriculum at his or her ability to understand each math concept. Advanced reading began a year later with the pull-out being one classroom period a week. The same type of research was used to develop advanced reading.

IDEA forms were created to keep track of various aspects of the IDEA program, e.g., parent approval, teacher involvement, IDEA teacher actions, principal approval, testing, and plan of action. These forms help to verify the actions of parents, administrator, classroom teacher, IDEA teacher, and student. The testing is used to verify what a parent sees in their child, what a teacher sees in the classroom, and what the IDEA Coordinator sees according to school records.

The testing of an Adams Christian School student who is being considered for the IDEA advanced math or advanced reading programs involves five possible testing vehicles. The SAGES, SIGS, KTEA, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and Aimsweb tests. All these tests considered together give an overall look at a student's academic and classroom behavior characteristics. With consultations between the parents, IDEA teacher, classroom teacher, and principal, a determination is made to bring a student into the IDEA program. A final meeting with the parents gives the approval for the student to begin the advanced math or reading programs.

Advanced math uses the curriculum in the math classroom with one exception. The IDEA student is expected to complete several advanced projects throughout the school year. These projects can expand math into 9 different areas. Four activities are

intended to stretch mathematics across the curriculum: Math & Science, Writing about Mathematics, Literature & Math, and Math & Social Studies. Four activities are intended to develop logical thinking and problem-solving skills: Mathematics Game, Building Project, Logic Problem, and Problem Solving. The ninth activity intends to use data in which the student collects, tallies, and presents data: Data Project.

Advanced reading uses the Jacob's Ladder series of booklets developed for each grade level. The advanced part comes in the use of the ladders which have three parts. With each story, poem, biography, fiction, nonfiction and essay/speech, social studies, or science and math article, two or three ladders out of five or six ladders, are considered. These ladders cover a wide range of reading skills, e.g., literary elements, inference, main concept, details, classification, cause and effect, consequences, creative synthesis, emotion, and reflection. Reading students look at each of these literary works through the lens of scripture.

Mrs. Dawn Feenstra and I teach four advanced math students and by the time of this article, nine advanced reading students. We love teaching our covenant students. We are thankful we can develop advanced math and reading students through the IDEA program.

Recently we have focused on the Act part of the Identify, Develop, Expand, and Act program. We are now considering ways for our students to have opportunity to serve others. The classroom teacher and IDEA teacher work together to put together a plan to serve others in the classroom.

What do we do to teach the Action part of IDEA? Here are some actions we are doing and some we are looking forward to implementing.

1. Student is given scripture references to learn and use in life.
2. Student is expected to be able to communicate to others what he/she is learning.
3. Student will interact with the teacher so that he/she is able to teach each concept.
4. While in the regular classroom, student is expected to help other students in the classroom.
5. Student learns to promote the benefits of being in IDEA.
6. Student communicates these benefits to his/her parents.

7. Student uses what is learned in IDEA outside of the classroom.

8. Student expands his/her IDEA learning outside of the classroom, e.g., projects.

9. Student identifies how he/she can grow in knowledge regarding topics of interest.

10. Teacher shows by example how and why the *Act* part of IDEA is important.

School Board

Education Committee Update

Mr. Jason Elzinga

Education Committee Chairman

*O God, most holy are Thy ways,
And who like Thee deserves my praise?
Thou only doest wondrous things,
The whole wide world Thy glory sings;
Thy outstretched arm Thy people saved,
Though sore distressed and long enslaved.*

*Thy way was in the sea, O God,
Through mighty waters, deep and broad,
None understood but God alone,
To man Thy footsteps were unknown;
But safe Thy people Thou didst keep,
Almighty Shepherd of Thy sheep.*

As this article is being written, another school year is rapidly drawing to a close. At this time of the year, it is good to look back at the past year and also to look forward to what changes we anticipate in the year to come. But before we get into those details, let's reflect on some of the words from stanzas 1 and 3 of Psalter #211, quoted above.

Psalter #211 – taken from Psalm 77 – is the school theme song of ACS this year, and as is true of many of the Psalms, it speaks to the child of God regarding the realities of our experience in this life. The song begins in stanza 1 by declaring the holiness of God in all of His ways. Let us contemplate with the Psalmist the majesty and holiness of our God, before Whom the seraphim of heaven cover their faces and their feet with their wings and cry “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.” Are you in awe of the holiness of God? Now notice verse 3 – sometimes God's most holy way is “in the sea” – His purposes are unknown to us. Sometimes events trouble us greatly and we wonder what the future will hold. Perhaps for some of us, the events of this past year have greatly troubled us, and others of us may look ahead to storm clouds

on the horizon. Let us notice the end of both stanza 1 and 3 – God saves His people! As our Shepherd, God will lead us safely through the mighty waters! Let's learn to trust that God, Who knows the end from the beginning, is caring for us, and learn to walk before Him in humility in all circumstances of life.

At ACS our aim is to provide our children with a Christ-centered education – and by the grace of God, the teachers and staff labored toward that goal again this year. Although the school year started with the threat of a potential COVID shutdown during the school year, we are very thankful that we could hold in-person instruction for the entire school year. Disruptions to learning due to COVID this year were minimal, and we are grateful for the overall health of our students and staff throughout the school year. We would also like to commend the COVID Committee, our Administrator, and all of the staff for cheerfully working through the extra challenges brought about by COVID.

The following staff members are not returning next year, and we want to thank them for their service at ACS: Joanna Koerner (2nd grade), Karina Heynen (5th grade), Grace Hofman (6th grade), Lydia Noorman (Resource Room), Lilly Engelsma (Teacher Aide) and Julie Kaiser (Librarian). We wish them the Lord's blessing in their future endeavors.

Next year, we look forward to welcoming several new staff members. Mary Brummel, who has taught previously at Adams, is returning to Adams as a fourth-grade teacher. Heidi Gritters, a recent graduate of Dordt University and a member of Hull PRC, has been hired as a second-grade teacher. Lydia Kuiper, a member of Grandville PRC, has been hired as a Resource Room para-pro. Sara Potjer, a member at Southwest PRC, was hired as a classroom aide. And Julie Flikkema, a member of Southeast PRC, is joining Ciri Mingerink as librarian. As noted in the Secretary Report, several teachers were also willing to change grade level for next year, and we are thankful for their flexibility. We also give thanks to God for providing us with the teachers needed for next year.

As this school year comes to a close and preparations are made to begin the next school year, let us have confidence that our Almighty Shepherd will keep us, His precious sheep, in His care. Please pray for ACS and for all who labor on behalf of this

school, and may God continue to bless ACS in the years ahead and supply our needs by His grace.

School Finances – Is it worth it?

Mr. Joe Kuiper
Finance Committee Chairman

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” (III John 1:4)

By the time of publishing of this article, you’ve likely received information for the 2021-2022 support drive from ACS. This year the drive amount is \$345,000. The support drive is a huge part of the finances of ACS, as it represents 19% of the year’s total budget. Attaining the drive goal is no easy matter. Many families give of God’s gifts each year to make this goal a reality. And for many, this is no small sacrifice. We thank you in advance for considering giving to the support drive, and for your continued support of ACS.

I must state that the title of is article is not to actually question whether the financial sacrifices to run this school are worth it. I have no doubt that they are. This article is more my personal reflection on just how “worth it”, it is.

One way I thought of this question was “Is it worth it to give of the money God has entrusted me with (which I don’t deserve), to send the children God has given me (who I don’t deserve) to Adams Christian School (which I don’t deserve), so that godly teachers, administrator, and staff (who I don’t deserve) can teach my children all of the curriculum taught at ACS with a proper biblical perspective, and give all of the glory to God (who I certainly don’t deserve to be a child of)?”

And the thought continued on “Is it worth it that my children’s teachers love them? Truly, actually, love them? Not because my children are so loveable (though they are), but that they love my children, imperfect as they are, because they are God’s children. Is it worth it that our administrator and staff love them? Is it worth is that when they walk into math class to study how numbers add, divide, multiply, and all of the rest, that Mrs. Dykstra teaches them about infinity, and not just the mathematical concept of infinity, but how infinitely wonderful, powerful, and loving Jehovah God is!? Is it worth it when my child misbehaves at school (which is genetically a strong possibility), that Mrs. Baas

takes them aside and explains why that behavior is not okay, because that type of behavior is not pleasing to God, and she shows them why it isn’t pleasing to God, rather than just scolding them for the misbehaving act?

Is it worth it to send my child off to school in the morning, with the prayer that they honor God and authority, and in all things love God and their neighbor (praying they won’t behave like I did when I was their age), and then read this in their report card “*Your child is kind and respectful.... Your child shows love for Christ in their words and deeds each day*”?

No thanks to me. Thanks to this good Christian school. And thanks be to God, who in his infinite wisdom chose my children to be His children before he even gave them to me and chose that these children be taught here at Adams Christian School, by its faithful teachers, administrator, and staff, who see my children as God’s children.

Is ACS a good Christian school? Absolutely. Is it worth the money? No doubt about it.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Secretary & Enrollment Report

Mr. Jed Pipe
Enrollment Committee Chairman

The 2020/2021 school year has brought some of the most unusual challenges in our school’s 71-year history. Before the year could even begin, the Board had to continue working through a series of questions related to COVID. Will we have in-person or remote learning? If we are fortunate enough to start with in-person instruction, how long will it be before we are shut down? How can we improve remote learning from the spring? What is the state going to require of us if we do have in-person teaching? Are the students and teachers going to have to wear masks? What type of health screening will be required to enter school? Will we have to do any extra cleaning? What happens when students, teachers, or an entire class are quarantined? These are just a few of the questions the teachers, staff, administrator, and school board were trying to answer. We knew it could all change and we would have to come up with a new plan.

When the first day of school arrived, we were able to have in-person instruction for the first time

since March 13. It was the longest these hallways have not been filled with students. There was a great deal of enthusiasm from the students and the staff. The Aimsweb testing took place earlier than normal due to uncertainty of schools remaining open. The testing showed the younger classes were impacted the most by the inability to attend school. The teachers worked diligently to come up with a plan to get these students back on track. Instruction continued as “normal,” with several students and teachers having to quarantine in November and December. In February, we completed our second round of Aimsweb testing, and the results came back on par with previous years. From Christmas to spring break, we had some of the best instruction of the year with very few students absent. We look forward to ending the school year with the all-school program and graduation ceremony which will take place on the soccer field.

The uncertainty of COVID was only a portion of the difficult circumstances we faced as a school. The separation within the PRC inevitably affected our school as well. With this controversy, the Board was now confronted with the evaluation of policies, review of contracts, changes in staff, and changes to the Board itself. Each difficult decision was made to fulfill our calling to serve God and the ACS Association.

This year we welcomed Miss. Lynnae Miedema as a third grade teacher, Mr. Dave Mahtani and Mr. Bruce Koole as sixth grade teachers, Mrs. Gracia Schipper as a choir director, and Mrs. Sara Potjer as a classroom aide. We also say goodbye to a number of our staff members. Miss. Joanna Koerner, one of our second grade teachers, is moving to Iowa. One of our fifth-grade teachers, Miss. Karina Heynen, is planning on moving to South Dakota. Mrs. Lydia Noorman will be leaving the resource room as she and her husband are expecting their first child, and one of our librarians, Mrs. Julie Kaiser plans to retire. With these open positions, the education committee has been busy interviewing new candidates and is welcoming back Mrs. Mary Brummel as a fourth-grade teacher, Miss. Heidi Gritters as a second-grade teacher, Mrs. Lydia Kuiper as resource room para-pro, and Mrs. Julie Flikkema as librarian. Next year we will be combining our first grade into a single class, and Mrs. Annica Kuiper will be moving to second grade. Other teachers in the building will be moving too. Mrs. Renae Baas and Mr. Mike

Feenstra will be teaching fifth grade, and Mr. Bruce Koole will be teaching eighth grade.

The Education Committee is excited about the updating of the 7th and 8th grade science and US history curriculums. Our current curriculums are over 20 years old, and have a secular perspective. The new curriculum has a Christian perspective, integrates a biblical worldview throughout the textbook, and is of high educational quality. We are also updating the math curriculum for Kindergarten through 5th grade. This year, the new curriculum was piloted in 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade with overwhelming support from the teachers.

The Technology Committee has diligently been working on aiding the education of the students this year as well. Before the school year, several cameras were purchased in order to help the teachers stream their classes as well as record certain sessions. Enough Chromebooks were purchased for each student in 4th-8th grade, with the second and third grades sharing. Having these extra Chromebooks also gave us the opportunity to use Chromebooks to complete the Iowa Assessment testing this spring. In addition to Chromebooks and technology in the classroom, GoGuardian software is used to ensure the students are not in danger of viewing content they are not meant to see. Even with this software the committee continues to monitor what the students are viewing on the Chromebooks. With the additional Chromebooks in school, the teachers of the younger classes realized the usefulness of them as a tool to help improve education. This summer we plan to purchase enough Chromebooks to provide them to all the students in the third grade and up.

For the 2020/2021 school year we have 130 families and 284 students, and a graduating class of 26 students. Our current projection for next year's enrollment is to stay at 129 families but have 299 students, with an incoming Kindergarten class of 39 students. With all the uncertainty this past year, we are thankful for the timely payment of tuition and various other means of support from the supporters.

The Building Committee has been busy this past year as well. The outside of the gym has been caulked and painted to repair some minor leaks. The inside of the gym has also been repainted, with new sound panels and LED lighting installed. This summer we have a couple of projects planned on our grounds. We will be replacing our swings and tire swings, as well as getting a new tire swing. We are

excited to be expanding the northeast parking lot and resealing the existing parking lot. We will be joining our parking lot to Bethany URC's parking lot in order to improve the traffic flow with the drop off and pick up of the students. We would like to thank Doug Mingerink, Sr. for his years of faithful and detailed work volunteering as our Grounds Maintenance Supervisor.

Through all the trials of this year, we are reminded of the words of 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; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."* God has graciously allowed us to continue the high calling of instructing our children in this good Christian school. While we may tend to focus on the difficult aspects of the school year, may we not lose sight of the work that is happening in each classroom every day, as stated in our constitution: students are being prepared to fulfill their principal calling in life, namely, to glorify God.

Building Report

Mr. Tim Van Til
Building Committee Chairman

As another school year comes to a close, I cannot help but look back and be thankful for all that God has done for us, our families, our churches and our school. This has been a hard year with many trials for all of us. These difficult trials have touched every part of our lives, and in many ways we will never be the same. God has used these trials to build us and shape us, to be more like Him. I am reminded of Isaiah 64:8 *"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou, our potter; and we are all the work of thy hand."* Like an earthly building or any vessel, we crack, breakdown, grow weak, we have flaws, and we crumble, and we need help. But God our Maker redeemed and renews us by His Spirit to be more like Him. He is shaping us, and He promises to complete the work He started in us. He is using these trials, to do just that. So, we see and proclaim our God is faithful and good, and for that we give Him thanks.

While our children are at home for the summer, the work of the building committee continues. We are excited to tell you about our parking lot expansion plan which was approved by the board at our March meeting. As Adams continues to grow, so

does the amount of traffic that flows in and out of the school, especially in the morning at drop off and in the afternoon at pickup. During these times, it is quite congested, and we would like to provide a safer option that flows better. We reached out to Bethany URC and they agreed to an easement which would allow us to use their entrance and connect our north parking lot with theirs. This will give us the safe and smooth flowing drop off and pickup we are looking for. We want to thank Bethany URC for making this possible. We know dealing with city municipalities can be sometimes time consuming, difficult, and unpredictable and we are hoping we will have this project completed by the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, Lord willing.

There are quite a few smaller projects that need attention as well. As the playground equipment continues to age, they are showing signs of breaking down. This summer we hope to replace both the swings and tire swings. Also, in the gym, the caulking on the west exterior wall is beginning to show signs of weakness. We are in the process of getting estimates for the caulking and painting of the wall, and if needed we will contract that work to be done.

As a building committee we are thankful for the school God has provided as a place to instruct His covenant children. While we labor to maintain the building, we know it is God who builds up and shapes His people.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchmen waketh but in vain."

Other News

Mothers' Club Annual Report 2020-2021

Mrs. Lisa Kuiper

Retiring Mothers' Club Secretary

As this current school year is quickly drawing to an end, we once again can acknowledge with grateful hearts that our heavenly Father saw fit to generously fulfill our needs, even with all the regulations of COVID still carrying over from last year. Due to the COVID regulations that were still in place, our Mothers Club Ways and Means committee had the tricky job of quickly reconfiguring the recommended list of fundraisers for our 2020-2021 school year and narrowing down the list to the ones

that would work with the current state recommended COVID regulations. With that being said, even though we were only able to have 3 “bigger” fundraisers (along with our regular ongoing fundraisers) God blessed our school abundantly this year through the financial generosity of our Adams supporters.

Here is a list of the fundraisers that were held this year, along with our current number of Mothers Club members.

Sub Sale - \$7, 113.60
 Soup Supper (takeout only) - \$6,768.54
 Byron Center Meat Sale - \$3,118.25
 TRIP (ongoing) - \$5072.73
 Pizza Friday (ongoing)- \$3733.88
 Box Tops (ongoing)- \$170.90
 Adams Apparel - \$1089.67
 Spartan Receipts
 Coca-Cola Rewards (ongoing) - \$38.08
 Amazon Smile (ongoing)

Total number of Mothers Club Members - 88

While the year was in session, a special note of thanks to all the committee members of our Mothers Club fundraisers, mothers in charge of baking for conferences and for teacher’s luncheons, our hot lunch mothers, our room mothers, and to all the other mothers who help in many other ways assisting the needs of our school. Your selflessness and your willingness is valued and appreciated by many!

I would also personally like to give a big shout-out and say a very special THANK YOU to our school secretaries (Judy and Tressa), our President (Sara Potjer) and our treasurer (Paula Kuiper), as well as our amazing 2020-2021 Ways and Means Committee members (Lauren Kraker, Nicole Kooienga, Tara Flikkema, and Brenda Van Baren) for all your support and exceptionally hard work this year. You all had a special hand in making this “rookie” secretary, look like she actually knew what she was doing at our Mothers Club meetings!

It has been a privilege serving as your secretary this year. May we continue to especially keep our teachers, secretaries, Board, and administrator in our prayers as they selflessly labor for the cause of our children’s Christian education.

Thank you!!

As this year wraps up, there are a few individuals who will not be returning next year. On behalf of this school, I thank them for all their work done at Adams.

-Rick Mingerink

Thank you, Miss Koerner!

2nd grade teacher

Miss Koerner joined our faculty in 2016. It is probably hard for her to imagine that her first class of wide-eyed 3rd graders are now adolescent 7th graders. After two years in 3rd grade, she was moved down to 2nd grade. A whole new curriculum needed to be learned with new lesson plans. But Miss Koerner took the change in stride and readily settled in her new 2nd grade home. For five years, she has been working in the elementary grades at Adams teaching our students how to read, how to work with numbers, and everything in between. She did all of this as a godly role model for our students. Her quiet ways in school loudly proclaimed that the Kingdom of God came first in her life. She will be moving to Iowa this summer as she makes a new home for herself among the corn stalks and pig barns. We will miss her here at Adams.

Thank you, Miss Heynen!

5th grade teacher

It typically does not bode well for a teacher candidate to interview over the phone. Especially one that has no connections to West Michigan. I would say that about most interviews except the one we conducted with Miss Heynen back in 2017. I still remember the interview. She was genuine and she had spunk. But we never heard of a last name of *Heynen* before. We heard of *Heyns*, but we were not so sure we wanted that covenant

theology in the school. We heard of *Heinz*, but our ketchup supply was well stocked. But *Heynen*? Never heard of such a name.

Little did we know that Miss Heynen would soon be a name spoken around many a dinner tables in West Michigan. Not spoken in a way like one speaks about last night's casserole dish, but spoken in the way one speaks about a loved family member or a trusted friend. Her personality and her love for her students and their educational growth has left a mark on all of us. As she picks up her labors in the new school at Sioux Falls next year, she will be missed at Adams.

Thank you, Mrs. Hofman!

6th grade teacher

Hired in 2019, Mrs. Hofman finished her teaching at Adams this past April. Although her time at Adams was not long, it was certainly filled with lots of hard work and quality instruction. Her desire to create a Christ-centered classroom was evident from the beginning. She did not simply care about her student's ability to understand the subject matter, she deeply cared about their relationship to God above.

Her time here was anything but "normal". From moving from Indiana, to not being able to get into her classroom until a few days before school started, to marriage over Christmas Break, to COVID shutdowns, her life and work here was filled with much movement and activity. Despite all of this, she held high standards for herself and her students. She will be missed at Adams.

Thank you, Mrs. Kaiser!

Librarian

Mrs. Kaiser joined the Adams library in 2013. That was eight years ago. Like a lot of things in this world, the library was quite different back then. In 2013, the library was in what is now the main lobby. This also served as our computer lab, our music room, and a place for Reading Tutors to work. The librarians desk was tucked in the corner of the room and tall book shelves lined the walls. There were no tables to sit at. There were no computers to look up book availability.

Mrs. Kaiser was instrumental in developing our new library along with getting a computer system to organize our inventory and help aid in checking books in and out. As Mrs. Kaiser leaves her role as librarian, she leaves a much-improved library for the next generation of students. We thank Mrs. Kaiser for her help in making that happen.

Thank you, Mrs. Noorman!

Resource Room para-educator

We hired Mrs. Noorman in 2016. She was fresh out of high school and we needed a classroom aide. At that time, Mrs. Noorman was "Miss Lydia" to many of the students. She was unmarried and living at home. Five years later, Miss Lydia is no longer the high school graduate living at home but is now going to be a mother as she and her husband, Jared, are expecting their first child. Congratulations!

After starting out as a part-time classroom aide, Mrs. Noorman began teaching in our Resource Room when Mrs. Spriensma left. She quickly showed herself to be a great fit for the position. Her ability to learn quickly, her educational intuition, and her quality rapport with her students has been valuable in the Resource Room. She will be missed at Adams.

Thank you, Miss Engelsma!

Elementary classroom aide

Thank you to Miss Lillian Engelsma for her work this past school year. She was hired as a part-time classroom aide at the beginning of this school year. She was always willing to do whatever work was asked of her and she did the work with compassion and love for the children. She, too, will be missed at Adams.

SUPPLY LIST**KINDERGARTEN**

Green medical information sheet
 Paint shirt
 Small pillow
 Pencil box
 Glue sticks
 Gym shoes
 Markers

FIRST GRADE

24 crayons
 Colored pencils
 2 erasers
 Small pencil/crayon box
 3 lg. glue sticks
 Scissors – preferably Fiskars
 2 folders
 Washable markers (no fine tip please)
 Spiral bound wide ruled notebook
 1 old sock for whiteboard eraser
 Gym shoes

SECOND GRADE

12" ruler (inches and centimeters)
 10 sharpened pencils & 10 #2 extra pencils
 10-12 Washable markers
 2 white erasers
 16-24 count crayons, not larger
 12 pack of Colored pencils
 Scissors
 1 folder (not trapper-keeper)
 4 small OR 2 large glue sticks
 1 spiral notebook (wide-rule – 70 sheets)
 Pencil/crayon box
 Gym shoes

THIRD GRADE

1 pocket folder
 Wide rule notebook paper – 1 pack
 12 pencils & 2 erasers
 12 inch ruler (inches & centimeters)
 Crayons
 Colored pencils
 Markers
 Scissors
 2 large glue sticks
 Pencil box or zipper pouch
 1 wide-ruled spiral notebook
 Gym shoes

FOURTH GRADE

Wide-rule notebook paper – 2 packs
 Clear plastic 12" ruler (1/4", 1/2", 1/8" & centimeter markings)
 Clear plastic protractor
 Scissors (sharp-nosed)
 Colored pencils – Crayola, Berol, or Prismacolor brands
 Crayola colored markers
 2 large erasers
 1 composition book or spiral notebook
 1 glue stick
 1 dozen #2 pencils
 4 pens (black or blue ink only)
 1 black ultra-fine fiber-tipped pen (Sharpie) for map work
 Carry-all pouch for pencils, pens, erasers, etc.
Zippered trapper/binder w/ **8** 2-pocket folders (expandable file not recommended)
 Gym shoes

FIFTH GRADE

Assignment book (purchased thru school office)
 6 – two pocket folders
 Wide-ruled notebook paper – 2 packs
 2 wide-ruled spiral notebook
 1 red pen
 1 black or blue pen
 1 box of pencils & sharpener
 2 erasers
 1 clear glue stick
 Colored pencils - Crayola or Berol
 Crayola colored markers
 Fiskars or similar quality (sharp) adult scissors
 12-inch and centimeter ruler
 1 highlighter
 Clear plastic protractor
 1 black ultra-fine fiber-tipped pen (Sharpie) for map work
 Gym shoes

All 5th - 8th students must come the first day of school with money to purchase the following supplies from the office (the school issued planner is the only accepted planner):

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. TI30XIIS calculator (6 th -7 th grades only) | \$14 |
| (6 th grade; 7 th should already have one) | |
| 2. 5th - 8th: Student Planner (assignment book) | \$3 |

6th – 8th GRADES**Accordion style paper storage system with at least 9 divisions**

Red, dark blue, and black ball-point pens
 2 ultra-fine point Sharpie permanent markers
 Highlighter
 Number 2 wood pencils or better mechanical pencils
 12 pk. colored pencils (Crayola or Prismacolor are recommended because other brands aren't waxy enough.)
 4B art pencils (dark, soft lead) - (optional)
 College ruled notebook paper (3 hole)
 4 one-subject spiral-bound notebooks (college ruled)
 Graph paper
 Ruler
 Eraser - white vinyl (gray kneaded is optional but useful for 8th art)

Pink pearl eraser
 Carry-all pouch (for pencils, pens, erasers, etc.)
 1 White-Out tape
 Scissors
 6th grade – Expo whiteboard markers
 6th grade - Compass
 Index cards
 Clear protractor
 8th grade – 20"x30" foam core sheet for art
8th graders must purchase a TI-84 calculator (Plus, Silver, etc. will work). These calculators will be used in high school, too.