

ANNOUNCER

Adams Protestant Reformed Christian School

5539 Byron Center Avenue – Wyoming, Michigan 49519 – (616) 531-0748 – December, 2022
adamschristianschool.org

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. Is. 60:1

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island. From these small beginnings, one of the world’s greatest cities would be born.



Administration & Staff

The First School in America

Mr. Rick Mingerink
Administrator

In 1623, a Dutch trading ship carrying thirty families from the Netherlands landed on Manhattan Island. Only eight men got off the vessel for the purpose of possessing the island for their home country. The remaining families sailed further up the Hudson River where they were taken to the small outpost of Albany to settle. The small band of Dutch left on Manhattan Island would be joined a few years later by a band of forty-five settlers. Five years later, in 1628, two hundred and seventy Dutch people inhabited this huge

Yet, New York City ought to be known for more than its present size or power. What ought to be recognized, too, is that New York City (or New Amsterdam as it was originally called) contained the first school in America. And it wasn’t a secular school. It wasn’t an English school. It was a Dutch Reformed school that flowed out of the educational convictions established by the Reformation and the Synod of Dordt. I think this deserves our high attention.

The Dutch people were fierce promoters of education for their children. The desire to have religious schools is part of the dutchman’s DNA. John Brodhead’s massive history of New York praises the fortitude of the Dutch in their unwavering commitment to the education of her children. He writes the following:

“Neither the perils of war, nor the busy pursuit of gain, nor the excitement of political strife, ever caused the Dutch to neglect the duty of educating their offspring to enjoy that freedom for which their fathers had fought. Schools were ever where provided, at the public expense, with good schoolmasters, to instruct the children of all classes in the usual branches of education; and the consistories of the churches took zealous care to have their youth thoroughly taught in the Catechism and the Articles of Religion.”

I recently obtained a reprint of a book that recounts the history of this first school in America. This school was started in 1633 only ten years after those first eight dutchmen settled on Manhattan. If a settlement is going to survive, it needs blacksmiths, carpenters, farmers and a host of other occupations and skills present in the settlement. For any other nation, these individuals would have been the life blood of the settlement. But the Dutch settlers knew they needed another occupation; they needed a schoolmaster. In 1633, a trading vessel landed on Manhattan Island carrying the first Reformed schoolmaster in America: Adam Roelandsen.

In the colonizing efforts of the Dutch, it was a schoolmaster that would often be sent first even before a preacher. The schoolmaster was able to lead religious services and would often do that in the absence of a minister. Once the settlement established itself with a few buildings and achieved some stability, a minister was sent for. Clearly, the religious education of children was a high priority.

The early Dutch colonies in America were chartered to provide religious education for all classes of Dutch families. Education was not for the wealthy only. It was a classless education. But it was also an education that *“should take any of the heathen children to educate.”* The Dutch were the first to include Native Americans in their educational program. Given the subsequent history of education in America, this would be novel and groundbreaking. A free education program for all classes and all races. At some point early on, the education of the “heathen” must have been abolished because the school’s records show that prior to 1869 enrollment was only for children of the church.

From its beginning, the school was operated as a ministry of the deacons. It was established as a

“charity” school and would remain tuition-free for almost 250 years until the 1880s.

In 1808, the consistory relinquished direct control of the school and established a Board of Trustees to govern it. In light of later Dutch Calvinist school history, they were far ahead of their times in doing this.

For centuries, the Dutch Reformed churches in New York were known as the Reformed Protestant Churches of New York. In time, they merged into one organization known as the Collegiate Reformed Churches. They still exist today, and one can visit their churches in the heart of New York City.

Remarkably, the school still exists today. It is currently known as Collegiate School and is an independent school for boys in New York City. It separated from the Collegiate Churches in 1940 and is no longer a religious school.

We are no strangers to the educational commitments of the Dutch Calvinists. We can appreciate the commitment and the conviction they have had for hundreds of years. It is regrettable that this first Dutch Reformed school in America no longer recognizes God as the sovereign King. It is easy to criticize this. But let us learn instead. The author of the above-mentioned book writes this in 1853:

“Would that the Dutch descendants of the present generation, the recipients of a noble inheritance, and participants of its resultant blessings, were as ardently attached to these institutions, and as zealous as were their forefathers in sustaining and extending them!”

Through God’s strength, may this continue to be our conviction until the Lord returns.

Food for Thought

Mrs. Nancy Decker

Kindergarten

“I’m hungry. Is it snack time yet?” “Mrs. Van Dyke, can you heat up my lunch?” Yay, it’s Pizza Friday!”

Food is important in the kindergarten room! First of all, it fuels these little bodies to perform amazing things—thinking, writing, reading, running, listening—all important skills improving day by day throughout the year. Secondly, food is fun as the kindergarteners take field trips and learn about special foods, accept a “0 treat” from our special “number friend,” rise to the challenge of trying a new

or unusual fruit or vegetable, and thankfully receive a birthday treat from a sharing classmate. And thirdly, food brings with it good fellowship in “Mrs. Decker’s family” in the kindergarten classroom. Come join me on a food excursion with the 5- and 6-year-olds at Adams Christian School!

Our first stop is the Post Family Farm where pumpkins are their specialty. Before our visit to the farm, we studied pumpkins—read books about them, learned and labeled the different parts of a pumpkin, conducted a scientific experiment as we predicted and observed if pumpkins float, drew and painted a pumpkin picture, and then the fun part at the farm, picked our own special pumpkin to take home. At the farm, the kindergarteners used all their senses to see, hear, feel, smell, and . . . taste! Yes, our tastebuds were tickled as we bit into the warm, soft, and sweet pumpkin donuts. Who knew that the pulp part of the orange spheres lying in messy viny fields could end up giving us such a delightful taste? Our adjectives used to describe these donuts were yummy, tasty, and our made-up word “pumpkiny.”

Moving on to field trips yet to come, we will visit a dairy farm and learn about milk and dairy cows, and visit the Critter Barn where the chickens, cows, and pigs will remind us of eggs and bacon breakfasts and burger suppers. While we may not eat all these foods on our excursions, we do learn the importance of farmers and the work that they do to help put food on our kitchen tables.

Kindergarteners eating healthy food? Yes, we try to make that happen as we use a lovely book written by Lois Ehlert called Eating the Alphabet Fruits and Vegetables A-Z. This book’s colorful illustrations and bold easy-to-read type make for a highly appealing and accessible book for students and teachers to devour—and we take that literally—as we sample new foods that begin with the sound of our “letter of the week.” As the back of the book says, “Apples to zucchini, come take a look. Start eating your way through this alphabet book.” In the classroom, eating old favorites (strawberries, apples, carrots, tangerines) or trying new foods (grapefruit, starfruit, olives,) only a small bite, is very, very strongly encouraged. Sometimes we have to get creative with our food as we make old-fashioned lemonade for letter L, and eat my freshly baked date nut bread using an old recipe from my mom for the letter D. As this lovely quote from the back of the book says, “How much of the alphabet can you eat?”

And recently our writing program took us to the kitchen where we learned about eating a vegetable stem—lots of crunching (most kindergarteners think celery is better with peanut butter) and slurping (chicken noodle soup with soft, cooked celery) as we study this cute little poem.

Celery by Ogden Nash

Celery raw
Develops the jaw,
But celery stewed
Is more quietly chewed.

If you join us at the calendar bulletin board, you will see our caterpillar number line is growing ever so slowly adding just one number each day. We learn about the nine digits that allow us to write any number and when a number ends in 0—oh, the fun begins, for it’s Zero the Hero Day! This imaginary figure comes “around the bend, looking at the numbers at the end, when he sees a 0 he shouts hooray, for it’s Zero the Hero Day!” So, for numbers 10, 20, 30, to 100 and beyond, a special treat that looks like a zero is hidden in the room. Zero the Hero knows children like sweets, so Life Savers, Peach Rings, or even gummy worms turned into a zero are perfect treats. I am hoping that someday he will visit the bakery instead of the candy shop and bring us a zero pastry—maybe a donut with a hole in the middle!

And what better way to learn the sound of the difficult short vowel “e” than by attending an Elegant Event? With special plates and goblets, flower center pieces, soft classical music, and teacher/waitresses, the students experience fine dining, kindergarten style. Before arriving at this “restaurant” the entertaining, yet informative book titled Froggy Goes Out to Eat is read and the children are escorted to the room. With napkins placed on their laps, and shared candy dishes passed to fellow classmates, the Pizza Friday food is served. Food brings the two kindergarten classes together and the result is a wonderful time of fun and fellowship.

Finally, and most importantly, all of this study and enjoyment of food is important in the kindergarten classroom as it is a lesson and reminder to the children that all things come from the hand of their Heavenly Father. Our noon time prayer is familiar, short, and simple but yet a wonderful and profound

way for these little ones to express their thanks and dependence on Him.

*God is great and God is good,
And we thank Thee for our food.
By His hand we must be fed,
Give us Lord our daily bread.
For Jesus' sake, Amen*

Count Your Blessings

Miss Heidi Gritters
Second Grade

I Thessalonians 5:18 says, “*In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*” Thanksgiving is a wonderful day that has been set aside to give us an opportunity to think of all of the many things that we are thankful for. God has blessed us with so much. In the second grade, we spent time discussing the things that we are thankful for. However, we also talk about how it is important that we are thankful for these things all the time, not just at Thanksgiving. We see the blessings that God gives to us every day. In school we have been singing the song, “Count Your Blessings.”

“Count your blessings, name
them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what
God hath done;”

This song helps us to see that everything in our life is a blessing, even things that we might not realize are blessings. After seeing what each student wrote, even my eyes were opened to blessings I had not thought of before. Each and every day we can look around and give thanks for the multitude of blessings God has given to us. There were three things that most of the students wrote down as something they are thankful for. They were thankful for the church, the Bible, and Jesus Christ. Even at a young age, they have a love for God and his Word that is so great. They love hearing the Word of God and learning more about it. It is a beautiful thing to see this love and thankfulness manifested at such a young age. That in itself is a blessing! Each student wrote down many blessings they could see in their own life. Here are some of the things that they were thankful for.

Nash Kuiper - I am thankful for the classmates that I have this year.

Levi Bodbyl - I am thankful for the psalter so we can sing God's praises.

Hazel Kalsbeek - I am thankful for my family because they take care of us.

Stella Kerkstra - I am thankful for the guys making our kitchen. They work hard.

Danica Van Ree - I am thankful for the schools because they teach Christian children.

Quinton Bodbyl - I am thankful for the animals because I love that God made them.

Bristol Hekstra - I am thankful for my parents because they care for me when I am sick and everyday.

Jonah Kamps - I am thankful for my family because they hug me.

Piper Engelsma - I am thankful for my family going on a trip because I love to go to Florida. It is fun!

Lucas De Vries - I am thankful for the ocean because there are so many animals.

Mason Jabaay - I am thankful for my home so I can be cozy and warm.

Quinn Buitter - I am thankful for the Lord in my heart.

Stella Van Solkema - I am thankful for books so I can read.

Hudson Van Meeteren - I am thankful for mom and dad because they make meals.

Alaina Schipper - I am thankful for my class because they are helpful to me.

Brynlee Feenstra - I am thankful for hospitals because they help you if you break a bone.

Derek Elzinga - I am thankful for my mom and dad because they get food for me.

Gabriella Lehnert - I am thankful for my family because they love me a lot.

Ka'Mya Dijkstra - I am thankful for my friends because I like to help out other people.

Emerson Velthouse - I am thankful for teachers because God made me to have teachers.

Kate Vanden Toorn - I am thankful for my dog because it makes me think of love and the animals that God has created.

Titus Miersma - I am thankful for the snow because God sent it.

One Good Thing

Miss Lynnae Miedema

Third Grade

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, we can sometimes forget the old adage to “count our blessings, name them one by one.” When we go through trials and tribulations that fill our days with darkness, we can forget to look for glimpses of light. God promises that “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm 30:5). I have found that through prayer and devotions I can remind myself and my students that God is good. He is always good. Every day as the students leave, we confess this truth to one another. If you walk past our room around 3:00 in the afternoon you may hear us saying, “God is good all the time! All the time God is good!” It is necessary to remember that our God is faithful, and He works everything for our good, especially when the world may seem so dark.

There is another activity we do that can also bring a little light to our weeks. Although troubles and hardships may occur throughout the week, every Friday the third graders and I write down one good thing. One good thing from the week that made us smile or made us feel good. Every Friday afternoon I collect these things and save them with the hope to pull them all out at the end of the year and reminisce about the good things from third grade. Reading through them always brings a smile to my face. I thought I would share a few with you as well. Hopefully they will make you smile and remind you to count your blessings, no matter how small they may seem!

- My friends are in my class.
- I got to join the game at recess.
- I saw my little brother having fun.
- We made leaf piles at recess!
- I had fun playing with friends.
- I did good on my Math test.
- My friends played the game I picked.
- That the Lord was with us.
- I got to use the new playground ball today!
- A sixth grader told me I was fast.
- We got a birthday treat!
- Playing games with my Grandpa and Grandma on Grandparents Day.
- That I have good friends.
- We got to learn about John Calvin’s T.U.L.I.P.
- I am thankful for my family and God.

- This week I went on a truck ride with my dad.
- That we could read the Bible.
- A classmate told me I kicked good in gym.
- We could sing Thanksgiving songs today.
- Someone told me I was smart.

“Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion...The LORD is His Name” (Amos 5:8).

Mr. Mike Feenstra

Fifth Grade

In fifth grade we study the kings of Israel in Bible class, and we study the universe in science class. In the middle of the year, we make it to a lesson on King Jeroboam II. During these years, Israel had a time of outward prosperity. The people were building houses of hewn stone and planting vineyards in their fields, and the armies were winning in battle. Although the nation had suffered under the Syrians in the rule of Jehoahaz, we read that under Jeroboam II the nation of Israel recovered Hamath and even took Damascus!

In these circumstances, God sent His prophet Amos out of the fields of Tekoa. Through Amos, God decreed that a word be spoken against Israel. We read, “Hear ye this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel” (Amos 5:1). From a physical point of view, many in Israel thought that it certainly was not time for lamentation, for Israel was prosperous! Furthermore, they “served God” in solemn assemblies, in offerings, and in songs. Therefore, they did not want to hear Amos’ warnings of judgment. Rather, they attempted to silence him and told him to prophesy no more among them (Amos 7).

However, God would have nothing of their hypocrisies. We read in Amos 5:21, “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.” Israel did not thank God for saving them by the hand of Jeroboam II (II Kings 14:27). Therefore, God pronounced judgment upon them: “But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose Name is the God of hosts” (Amos 5:26, 27).

In contrast to idolatry, the prophet Amos called Israel to seek the Lord (Amos 5:6). Later in the chapter, we read, “Seek him that maketh the seven

stars and Orion” (Amos 5:8a). At Adams Christian School, we teach the students to seek God Who alone is the One who created the beautiful stars of Orion. We teach Astronomy at our school because we point to God as the Creator of the heavens and the Earth. In contrast, we reject Astrology which is the false teaching that we can read the stars to tell the future. This falsehood has been around since the time of Amos and before (Amos 5:26).

In fifth grade, we try to have a star party each year in late autumn. In the past two years, Jupiter and Saturn have been visible in the evening sky at these events. One of my joys as a teacher is when my students can view the planets in a telescope. It is exciting to see their expressions of awe at God’s majesty on display in the heavens. At this event, parents, teachers, and students have an enjoyable time of fellowship at our school.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to show many celestial bodies to the students including some of my favorites:

- Jupiter and four of the moons
- Saturn and two of the moons
- Venus in a crescent phase and a full phase (Yes, Venus has a crescent phase at times)
- Hercules Star Cluster
- Andromeda Galaxy
- The craters of the Moon

In addition to our planet viewing this year, we had science activities for the students to enjoy. The activities were Lego Building, Constellation Drawing, and Ozobot robots. These activities are planned especially as a “backup” plan if there is cloudy weather.

In all these activities, God is to be praised. At every star event, we usually read from Psalm 8 or Psalm 19. In Psalm 8, we exclaim, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the Earth!” We desire to teach students at Adams Christian School to seek Him who made the constellation Orion.

Writing Program

Mr. Bruce Koole

Eighth Grade

Our students at Adams are part of a specialized writing program with clear goals. Below is a partial checklist of what is expected of all students by the time they graduate from 8th grade. The overall objective of the IEW (Institute for Excellence in Writing) program is as follows: By the end of 8th grade, the student shall be able to compose with zero grammar and spelling mistakes either an independently-researched, non-fiction essay or a work of gently-guided fiction that is five – eight paragraphs in length by using an objective set of both sentence varieties and key grammar components.

The program starts in the lower grades with the six main sentence varieties, quality adjectives, vivid adverbs, and strong verbs. The IEW program introduces a few elements per year for each grade and emphasizes mastery of that particular skill before moving on to adding additional elements. At times the high-stakes demand for a specific kind of sentence variety (like a #5) seems arbitrary, forced, and unnatural. The reason for these teacher mandates is, first, so that the student, parent, and teacher clearly know what is objectively expected and laid out with clear goals. How does a growing writer know what is or is not “good writing?” Well, either the student exceeded these writing goals or did not meet these goals. Now the student, teacher, and parent can provide a workable plan to help the student achieve mastery of the writing process. Second, the program is an aid in the organic development of the student’s writing skills to help them retain in future years their high-quality writing skills. After the student leaves the IEW program, they will experience what is common to all humans in any work setting over the course of time: skill loss or memory loss. Life is use-it-or-lose-it. Now, with a six-year repetition of sentence varieties (like sentence #3), a student can use that kind of writing in any setting: high-school, college, or ‘real world’.

The checklist is the science. The student composes a piece of written art. The checklist reveals objective goals. The student reveals individualized success. This follows the principle of Proverbs 1:7, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.” This program starts the student on writing covenantally by using Scripture as the only guide of truth. There certainly might be other ways, newer methods,

and slight improvements to developing the best writers. But, this way is a high-quality procedure, nearly unmatched technique, and clear method. After the

student leaves Adams, he or she owns the skill set to develop in Godly writing for all the years they live on earth.

Sentence Openers [#4]	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>
#1 Subject – Verb: He played football at recess.			
#2 Preps: At recess he played.			
#3 -ly adverb: Amazingly, he played all game,			
#4 -ing opener: Throwing the football, he played at recess.			
#5 clausal. www.asia.tub (whether, when, whereas, as, since, if, although, though, unless/until, & because)			
#6 Very Short Sentence (2 – 5 words). He loved football.			
#T – Transition: No, I do not drink pop.			
#Q – Question: Why did Franklin the Turtle lie?			

Dress-ups (underline)	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>
2 Strong Verbs			
2 Quality Adjectives:			
2 Vivid Adverbs:			
1 Who-Which-That clause			
1 Because Clause:			
1 Dual, Triple, or Quad Adv/Adj			

Student Writing

9/11: Our Nation Under Attack

Ava Langerak – 8th

(#2) On a gorgeous mid-September day in the year 2001, 2,977 people were tragically murdered in a terrible act of hatred. The 19 terrorists behind the act were also killed, raising the death toll to 2,996 dead. (#1) The terrorists had hijacked two Boeing 767s and crashed them into the North and South World Trade Centers, which could not withstand that much force because they had only been built to withstand a Boeing 707. (#5) Because this weakness totally compromised the structural strength, the South Tower collapsed first, while the North Tower followed its lead barely an hour after they had been hit. (#4) Following the devastation of the attacks on the towers, a 3rd plane was flown into the Pentagon, killing many military personnel working during that tragic day. (#3) Shortly after, Flight 93 was heroically diverted from its supposed path to Washington DC by heroes aboard the flight. The terrorists evilly crashed it into a field in Pennsylvania. (#6) The impact killed everyone aboard. (3 S.S.S.) Families were mourning. Friends were mad. Americans were murdered.

(#1) Terrorists had slowly been infiltrating the U.S. for over a year. (#4) Training for the attack and learning how to fly gargantuan planes, they became expert navigators of 767. (dec). Did anyone know of these terrorists’ movements? (#5) After Al-Quaeda attacked all three buildings, the CIA confessed they knew of the actions of these terrorists and miserably failed to inform the FBI, stating it violated US civil rights. (#2) Because of this shocking new information, the government soon figured out that the Al Qaeda terrorists’ group, who had been behind these acts, were generously funded by Osama Bin Laden. (#3) Sadly, many people died that day because of this supposed violation called “The Wall.” (#6) These terrorists had planned ahead.

(#4) Outraging millions, this suicidal attack was the deadliest against our nation since Pearl Harbor 60 years previous. (#5) Because the deadly assault occurred in one of the busiest cities, the results were catastrophic, shutting down the Wall Street Stock Exchange. (#6) Millions watched the events live. (#1) President Bush bravely stated that America would make no distinction between the terrorists that committed the acts and the countries who hosted them. (#3) Nearly a month after the attacks, in October 2001, America invaded Afghanistan. In 2003 the army also invaded Iraq, capturing Saddam Hussein, who they thought had Weapons of Mass Destruction. (#2)

Before the invasion of Iraq, President Bush and Congress passed the Patriot Act, which eroded the American citizens' freedoms, while simultaneously increasing the government's illegal surveillance powers. Bin Laden was executed by Seal Team 6 in 2011, ending his reign of terror. Psalm 121:8 states "*The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*" Even though on 9/11 many were terrified by the deadly attacks on our nation, we can trust in God to preserve us. He will.

A Horrible Event

Laci Potjer – 7th Grade

Sadly on September 11, 2001, a tragic attack killed 2,977 Americans. [#1] Nineteen terrorists also died, which sorrowfully raised the death toll to 2,996 people. [#5] When this invasion ended, the nation was stunned. The jihadists shouted "Allahu Ahkbar" after using razor blades in cockpits. [#3] Horribly, millions watched as the two planes smashed into the Twin Towers. [#6] Millions of people were in shock. [#2] After another plane destroyed the Pentagon in Washington, many military personnel died tragically. [#4] Causing more death, another plane amazingly headed for the White House. The passengers heroically altered Flight 93. The Muslims crashed at 550 mph in a field in Pennsylvania, because the heroic passengers almost reached the Muslim Terrorists in the pilots' cabin. This was a horrible day. Many people died. Patriotism grew greatly.

[#3] Stunningly, terrorists lived in the United States for more than a year, enrolling in flying lessons so as to pilot planes. [#2] Right before the dreadful 9/11 attacks, other Terrorists secretly lived in the country for a few months. [#6] Osama Bin Laden funded them. [#4] Tracking the daily activities of the Al-Quaeda terrorists, the CIA refused to tell the secret to the FBI. [#1] The CIA horribly blamed "The Wall," which was a law that supposedly prevented the sharing of secrets between US spy agencies. This would probably violate America's civil rights. [#5] If the CIA had bravely told the FBI of the evil Al-Queda terrorists, then many lives could have been saved.

[#1] 9/11 completely scarred the United States. [#5] Since 9/11 was so deadly, it resulted in the most casualties on American soil since Pearl Harbor. The attacks shut down one of the busiest cities on a busy workday in wealthy Wall Street. Live TV showed each horrific event so millions saw the event and were stunned. [#3] Thankfully, President Bush made no distinction between the terrorists who committed all of these horrendous actions and the countries who supported them. [#2] In 2001, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan. [#6] President Bush passed The Patriot Act. This law disastrously eroded freedoms, and

vastly increased the government's power of illegal surveillance. [#4] Invading Iraq in 2003, the U.S. stopped Saddam Hussein from grasping Weapons of Mass Destruction. In 2011, Seal Team 6 finally executed Usama Bin Laden. We should know that no events can happen outside of God's outstanding, omnipotent, over the top, amazing power. Psalm:73:26 provides comfort: "*My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.*" This verse means that even though my heart and my flesh faileth, God will always be my strength. 9/11 was a horrible event that amazed and shocked the country.

Christopher Columbus

Wyatt Van Donselaar – 6th

[#2] In 1492 Columbus sailed across the vast majestic Atlantic Ocean. [#3] Oddly Columbus thought he could sail west and appear in the east. [#1] The King and Queen of Spain helped him out by offering to give him three small but fit ships for his task, which was to sail quickly to India without running out of food. They were the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria. They were good ships for his task. [#5] Because his sailors weirdly protested that you would fall off the edge of the world or get eaten by sea monsters in the Sea of Darkness, this protest scared people. Would he make it? On October 12, 1492, the sailors finally spotted land. Columbus insisted that they had reached India, but the people were actually Americans. Columbus did not know and called them Indians. The Spanish had reached land, but they did not know that they had stepped foot on a new continent America. We know that discoveries of new continents is for our blessing. Romans 8:31 says "*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us.*"

Identity in Christ (Heb 10: 20-25)

Mrs. Lauren Dykstra
Elementary Music
4/5 Choir Director

16. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21. And having an high priest over the house of God;

22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

24. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another:

Identify and identifying is a hot-button topic in our day. It captures our attention as we see the society around us degrade into allowing children to identify as whatever they desire, even to the point of identifying as a cat. It is rooted in the deeply American sense of individualism and the postmodern idea that truth is conditional, or perhaps, doesn't exist at all. This insidious combination creates a sense that truth is what we decide it is, individually, and if it makes us happy, there is no reason why we shouldn't do, think, or have what we desire. We think we decide what our identities are.

Before we go further, we must understand the concept of identity. Identity is the unique characteristics that describe the essence of what a thing is. Water, for example, is a molecular compound composed of two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen. This is its identity, whether it is in its solid, liquid, or

gaseous state. Identifying and quantifying chemicals or elements is quite simple really. Humans, on the other hand, are much more complex. We hold many identities at the same time. Ask yourself how you would describe yourself! It's an enlightening exercise. We can verbalize our identifying characteristics quite easily along many dimensions: relational, interests, work, or physical to name a few.

The highest dimension, the one that all the rest are nested in, is who we are before God. God has much to say on the matter. So much so, that it was quite difficult to select a passage for reference. I have chosen Hebrews 10: 16-25 specifically because it speaks a bit about, not just what God says we are, but how He has ordained that we develop and maintain the identity He has given us.

In the first verse God tells us that He placed us in a covenant and in vs 20 He tells us He consecrated us. These are identities! The covenant is a relational identity and consecration is a declared definition of who we now are. We did not decide this. He did. He placed these upon us.

God did not stop there though. In His wisdom, He teaches us explicitly how we are to adopt these new identities He has given us. We are to hold fast in our hearts to these declarations. We are to come together and remind each other of our new identities.

When science studies how children learn and form identity, they have found that they do so through activity and relationships as they go through life. They gain knowledge of themselves, their interests, skills, who and what they love, and how they are embedded within the social environment they find themselves in through play and interaction.

Our God is so good to us! He teaches us by Scripture and makes it plain even to the world around us. He removes all confusion. We don't have to make anything up. We aren't lost, wandering around trying to find the truth of ourselves. He tells us and teaches us the way in which we must learn.

These truths set forth in Scripture are so important to a teacher or parent because we are so enmeshed in this process. We are tasked with helping children learn who they are! We know who they are before they do. They are children of God, brought into the covenant as our brothers and sisters. They don't fully comprehend these things and so we need to teach them, often in ways that are deeper than words. Our entire worldview must be through this

perspective, so they have no reason to doubt their identities. Every thought and action must go through that lens before it happens.

We need to interact with them with the respect and dignity due them as our brothers and sisters in Christ. We need to entreat them and exhort them unto good works. We need to delight in their presence in the community of the saints as we gather together.

Every day before I walk into a classroom filled with your children, I keep this knowledge at the forefront of my mind. These children are God's children as much as I am, and they are precious in His sight. I am to teach them that they are saints in the community, called to adopt this in word and in deed. Every word, every action of mine must reflect that truth which God Himself has set before us all. Let us go forth, assembling ourselves together and reminding ourselves of these beautiful identities God has given us. It is a gift beyond measure.

Death, My Teacher

Mrs. Gracia Schipper

6 – 8th Choir Director

Drawn close to the bedside of dying loved ones are memories that cannot be compared to any other life experience, which left a deep impression on me spiritually.

There I sat. Only hours remained before the Lord Jesus Christ would arrive in the same room, and take my loved one to Himself and cross over the veil into Heaven. Death is ugly. It evokes so many emotions. How do I spend this precious, transcendent time I had left with my beloved?

I clumsily broke the silence and engaged them about things going on in my life. They politely acknowledged. Instantly, I regretted talking about such trivial things. Plainly, they no longer cared for anything of this earth and rested, believing and trusting that their loved ones were in God's hands. In their frailty, I and those with me needed to serve and assist them, because they still had a battle going on — a spiritual ambush by Satan and his demons to shake their only comfort in Christ. Their greatest need was to be led into the presence of Christ through His Word. God armed us with weapons of spiritual warfare since we were little, and these loved ones spent their whole life teaching us how to wield these weapons. We lifted our voices to sing the psalms, read

scripture, prayed, and communed with each other, while their body failed and breath slowed.

Spending time with God in these ways proved to be the most precious gift we could share together. Their whole body relaxed, like a calm wave washing over them. Their face brightened, and at times they managed to sing along with the faithful words of the gospel, with a contented smile or sweetly listened with their eyes closed. They seemed unshakeable in their trust for their Lord's promises. There was a real sense that Satan and his deviant workers could no longer lie to my mom, tempt my father, or persuade my sister-in-law...Not while we were singing the gospel, praying the gospel, or reading the gospel together. With a grateful heart, their hand squeezed mine and I understood that we had given them what they needed most! Serving them in this manner changed me too.

Ephesians 5:15-21 has more meaning to me now... We are adopted children of God, therefore we will show a life of contrasts. We will walk wisely not foolishly, redeeming the time, not drunk but filled with the Spirit to heed God's command to speak to ourselves and others in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. We will sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God.

Adopted children of God will do this in the context of a sincere attitude and resolve to die to self, so that they might live in service to others, in the fear of God and conform to His Word.

The Psalms praise God and they teach us how to address our Father with sincere hearts. The Psalms reorient our affections for God and not for our idols. They can change our destructive emotions of despair, anger, bitterness to life-giving joy, deep gratitude, and reverent awe. Praying, singing, and reading the Psalms defend our faith, defeats Satan and aligns us with a huge crowd of faithful witnesses throughout the ages. The words spoken from the Psalms have been spoken thousands—even millions—of times before. As we read, sing or pray the Psalms, remember that Moses, Miriam, David, Solomon, Jesus, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and more—so many more have kneeled and leaned into these authoritative words of God! The Psalms remedy our apathetic hearts to be zealous in our walk with God and delight in Him!

If the only things that matter in our final hours of life are godly friends, praying, singing, and

hearing the gospel, then I need to be more serious about laying aside distractions and growing in my learning and appreciation for them. It is such a privilege to share these blessed gifts with each other now! These are truly heavenly activities!

Whether praying or singing the Psalms, make the Psalm's words our words! As Augustine of Hippo said, *"If the psalm prays, you pray. If the psalm laments, you lament. If the psalm exalts, you rejoice. If it hopes, you hope. If it fears, you fear. Everything written here is a mirror for us."* As we pray or sing the Psalms, we will learn how to pray in every season, whether rejoicing with those who rejoice or mourning with those who mourn.

Ultimately, spending time with God in prayer, singing, and in His Word together or alone, we will become more like the ONE in whose presence we stand. Others too will know we spend regular time with Jesus.

School Board

The Importance of Community

Mr. Matt Velthouse
Board President

In Romans 15:5-7, we read: *"May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that **together** you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God."*

The larger community of ACS is comprised of smaller communities, each of whom is tasked with performing key functions for the benefit of the school. Teachers, staff, school board, mother's club, boosters, association members and even grandparents all contribute to the well-being of the school. Instruction is given, the teachers and students are supported, funds are raised, budgets are set and board members are elected. This isn't done by one or two people. A group of people, a community, executes these basic tasks.

I wonder if we appreciate this gift, fully. When we sit back and look at the current state of ACS, we see many wonderful things. Enrollment has doubled in the last 20 years. We have a teaching and support staff that continues to amaze the

board. Our administrator is diligent, forward thinking and has a great vision for our school. Our fundraising events are well attended and the financial gifts that result are staggering. Having traveled to all of the local Christian schools for the past 10 years for sporting events, I can tell you our building and grounds are the finest in the area. By God's grace, all of these gifts developed through the diligence, patience, labor and best intentions of this entire community and the smaller groups listed above. Do we appreciate the gift God has given us, bringing us together as believers, united to a single cause of the well-being of Adams Christian School? Yes, disagreements occur and opinions differ. Those are healthy. But in the end, all of these individuals and all of their perspectives result in a healthy, united, peaceful and, most importantly, Christ-centered school that God has been pleased to bless now for 70 years.

In closing: I have been affiliated with the ACS community since 1982, when I walked through the doors for the first time, into the kindergarten room with Mrs. Judi Doezema. ACS has been an important part of our family's life, even dating back to the early 1950's when my mother was first a student. During the recent trial we have been led through as a family, we have been overwhelmed with love and support of the Adams community. We always knew Adams was a special place. We see that now, more than ever. Thanks be to God for the love he has given us to give to each other. And thank you for your kindness.

Thankful for all things

Mr. Tyler Pipe
Board Treasurer

Ephesians 5:20 – "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"

What a wonderful time of the year to take a moment and reflect on how blessed we are at Adams! Our covenant children are being taught from a biblical perspective, they are kept safe, we have qualified and caring teachers, they experience the communion of saints, the school is running smoothly, the grounds and facilities are well organized and clean, buses are running, bills are being paid. Our Heavenly Father has truly cared for our school

Our school operates on a budget of \$1,880,298 which was approved at the May

association meeting. The Lord provides two primary revenue streams to support our operation: tuition and the support drive.

Tuition is 70% of the overall budget. Tuition continues to come in. Please keep in mind that tuition is due at the beginning of each month. The Finance committee usually counts within the first 2 weeks of each month. We strongly encourage our families to use ACH which automatically withdraws from your financial institution. Approximately 50% of our 117 families currently utilize ACH. If you have any ACH questions, please notify a member of the finance committee.

The Support Drive goal is \$377,085 which is 20% of the budget. We recently kicked off the Fall Support Drive at the end of October. As of this writing, we have collected \$137,808. At this time last year, we collected \$293,505. We greatly appreciate those who have given and/or pledged to this Kingdom cause. Please prayerfully consider giving to the support drive.

We are truly thankful for this Christian school. It is easy for us as sinful creatures to be thankful during prosperous times. When times aren't as prosperous let us be reminded of Job's witness. Job acknowledges God's sovereignty over all aspects of life after an unimaginable day. He then told his wife that we must accept good and evil. One of the many lessons I take from Job is don't ask 'what reason do I have trials,' but rather, 'what purpose.' That purpose is always our good, which is ultimately Christ's coming.

Rust and Decay

Mr. Dan Kooienga

Building Committee Chairman

With the 2022-23 school year in full swing the building committee has had no shortage of things to keep our hands busy and our meeting agendas full. From the normal maintenance of the building and grounds, to dealing with more involved projects that the school board or association approves, the work of the building committee never ends. The work is both rewarding and taxing at the same time.

As our building continues to age, we must look at some larger maintenance projects looming on the horizon. The first of which is major maintenance or replacement of some parts of our fire sprinkling system. The system we have is a "dry" system,

meaning there is no water in the pipes until the air pressure in the pipe drops to a certain level and then the water valve is opened and the water fills the pipe. This type of system is prone to condensation buildup in the pipes which leads to corrosion and rust, and eventually pinhole leaks in the pipes. As air leaks from the pipes the compressor needs to run to maintain the pressure. Ask anyone from Southeast Church and they will tell you that the compressor runs a lot.

A second major project we are keeping our eyes on is the need for a new roof over the oldest part of school. About two years ago, we had a roofing contractor inspect the roof and he estimated that within five years we would need replacement of that section of roof. Some maintenance was also done at that time in hopes of prolonging the life of that roof. We continue to monitor the conditions of the roof and will be looking for contractors to get the work done probably sooner than later.

We see the effects that time has on our building, and we could better say "it's the effects of sin." Rust, decay, deterioration is all part of God's curse on creation after our fall into sin with our first parents Adam and Eve. In the sweat of our face, we will work hard to feed ourselves and our families, and in the sweat of our face we will maintain our homes and this school which is an extension of our homes. Only God's gracious hand can bless those labors to the benefit of us, His people. Let us put our trust in Him alone and not put our trust and hope in things that are earthly, things that will rust and decay away. This school building is a great blessing from God to us. Let's look at it with spiritual eyes and see what this extension of our covenant homes represents. Our children are taught God's truths here at Adams, anyone who walks these halls can hear our children singing praises to God in the classrooms. It is just a taste of what we look forward to in our eternal home, where we will sing praise to Him continually and we will be taught by our Savior Himself, in eternity.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal:" Matt. 6:20

Christ Centered Education

Mr. Eric Lubbers

Federation Committee Chairman

The Federation consists of 17 different Protestant Reformed Schools throughout the country. These schools are located in the states of: Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, Washington, Minnesota, Indiana, California, Colorado, South Dakota, and also in Lacombe, Canada. All together the federation is composed of 2,274 students and 1,085 families. The definition of “federation” states “the action of forming states or organizations into a single group with centralized control.” The Federation board is a committee of men from several of these schools to develop courses and to assist teachers.

The main focus of the Federation board deals with teacher training. The TTC (Teacher Training Committee) began in 2017 as a sub-committee of the Federation board to teach and mentor new teachers. The committee has been working diligently to accomplish this important step of training and guiding new teachers. The mentor program is a very helpful tool to help ensure that all the schools work together to develop teacher training with one main goal. At the time of this writing there were 11 mentors/mentees currently working in this program. The Federation board stays active in making sure all the schools have the same goal in mind, namely, to teach a Christ-centered education. We give thanks to the TTC committee, the mentors, the Federation board, and all who help make this program a success.

The most important aspect of the Federation of the PR schools is that all 17 schools strive to prepare students to glorify the one true God. These schools teach that the Bible is the one and only infallible and inspired written word of God. The Bible is the book that is different from any other book and should be the only book to guide and govern our lives. Every one of the 2,274 students are taught to hold fast to the one true confession that our sins are forgiven through the precious gift of our Savior Jesus Christ. Every day our good Christian schools begin and end the day with prayer, adding several more prayers throughout the day. What a blessing to have prayer be a normal routine in our Christian Schools! In Genesis 9:9 God says, “And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.” This is one of many passages that reminds believers of the importance of a Christ-centered education. Thanks be to our Heavenly Father for covenantal

instruction at all 17 schools. These are just a few examples of why Christian education is so important. Let us never take Christian education for granted and pray that God will continue to preserve our good Christian Schools.

What a blessing it is that our teachers, staff, parents, supporters, and all involved in the Federation are of one mind. Ephesians 4:4-6 “*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*”

We must give God all the praise that the goal at Adams Christian School and every other school, has always been to teach Christ first. The importance of a Christ-centered education is summed up best in the Adams Christian Basis of Belief policy. Page 1 in the directory, under the Basis of Belief, article 2 states, “*The Christ proclaimed in the Scriptures is the redeemer and renewer of our life including, therefore, our teaching and learning. Consequently, in a school that seeks to provide a Christian education, it is not sufficient that religion be a separate subject in the curriculum, but the word of God must be the basis of the education program.*”

Thankfully, the goal of the Federation board is to assist all the schools in seeking a Christ-centered education. What a blessing!

Psalm 133: 1 “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity”!

Transportation Happenings

Mr. Derek Kuiper

Transportation Chairman

I set out to write an article on the busing routes this year, of Adams transportation and how the children arrive here.

I tried to think of something new that no one’s heard before,

I tried to write a funny story or come up with something more.

Cause if I’m being honest when it comes to this small section,

Many give a glance or two with not really much affection.

And so instead I thought I’d write a simple little poem,

Of how our buses and their drivers travel to each home.

Our four lovely drivers get up each day before the sun,

About seven in the morning, they leave the school one by one.

Some go north, some go south getting kids both big and small,

Stopping at each driveway to gather up them all.

The parents send them off with a wave and smile,

With a certain peace of mind as they are gone for a short while.

For though our buses need repair and parts from time to time,

They safely bring our children home seemingly just fine.

It may seem like a little thing to have a busing system,

But without this privilege there'd be many who would miss them.

It brings a great relief to mothers all around,

Knowing that their children get to school safe and sound.

And so, we thank our drivers for lost without them we would be,

But on that note from time to time we have a certain need.

I ask that you consider for a moment and/or two,

If driving bus could be something you'd be able to do.

And if your answer is a yes and you find that you'd be willing,

Contact Melissa right away for future positions that may need filling.

And so, to wrap this up we're glad transportation is going well,

Maybe in the next issue there will be more exciting news to tell.

Other News

Knowing What We Don't Know

**Mrs. Kelly Dykstra
Mothers Club President**

One of the things our 4th and 5th grade choir director likes to say after running through a number is, "Okay...now we know what we don't know!" She then proceeds to guide the children to a better understanding of the music and technique, and an appreciation for God's gift of song. In the end, the choir reaches the goal of performing the selection to the best of their ability.

The quip is a good one for me to live by. Some personal examples of learning what I don't know are: "helping" a child with math homework during Covid (remember the Wednesday homework drops and pickups?), hearing a well-known passage of scripture explained in an entirely new way, or realizing I've been mispronouncing a word in my head my entire life when hearing it said correctly (one example "hyperbole"). There are also many challenges in my calling as a wife and mother, and now the opportunity of serving in a role for Mothers Club. Shouldn't I be a bit further along after these 51 years? Shouldn't the depths of my spiritual and intellectual understanding be plummeting deeper? Shouldn't my knowledge of how things run at school be complete? Shouldn't things be getting easier?!

Positively, knowing what I don't know leads me to gaining knowledge! It leads to leaning on others and their experience, talents and knowledge. Learning what I don't know evidences itself at each meeting of Mothers Club as we discuss with each other many aspects of serving our school. Many good insights are shared with a spirit of willingness to learn from each other, recognizing we all have strengths and weaknesses. I am thankful God sees fit to use the Mothers Club as a way to work and learn with fellow sisters in Christ, serving in His kingdom.

May God continue to bless the efforts of our Mothers Club, and may we continually and humbly learn "what we don't know."

Proverbs 4:7 "Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore, get wisdom: and with all thy getting, get understanding."

REMAINNG 2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR

December 22 – Christmas chapel (1/2 day)
December 23 – January 2, 2023 – Christmas Break
January 9 – 19 – Aimsweb testing
January 13 - School Spelling Bee
January 20 – Records Day (1/2 day); end of first semester
February 9 – Soup Supper
February 24 – Parent/Teacher Conferences (NO school)
March 7 & 14 – Kindergarten testing (next year students)
March 24 – Spring Program (1/2 day)
March 31 – April 7 – Spring Break
April 18 – Kindergarten Round-Up (next year students)
May 3 – Kindergarten Program
May 8 – 19 – Aimsweb testing
May 22 – All-Schools Band Concert
May 29 – Memorial Day Break
June 6 – Last day of school (1/2 day)
June 6 - Graduation

The 2022-2023 school year calendar has not been approved yet.