

Herald



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Trust - Mr. B. Kuiper, Administrator

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust! Such a simple concept, and yet, sometimes difficult to put into action. The past 10 weeks we have been asked, commanded, reminded, and encouraged to trust. Trust the government. Trust the health experts. Trust the Lord. Today, the word of the Lord comes to us by means of the class text chosen by the graduating class of 2020. What a fitting text! We must trust that this was chosen providentially for today's circumstances.

Teachers, trust that your daily efforts this school year will be used for the good of the Reformed community and the good of the souls and minds of God's children. In normal circumstances, this is sometimes difficult to do. Laboring daily with students in the classroom sometimes affords us doubt as to the effectiveness of our labors. Recently, laboring with them through the work of the parents and remotely has perhaps brought greater doubt. Be assured - trust - that God will bring fruits on the labors gone by.

Parents, trust that God has blessed your efforts throughout the year, but especially in recent weeks. He Who gives children to us also equips and fashions us to raise them for His glory. His purpose is never to harm them, but to polish them for His service. He has and He will continue to use you to keep them safe and advance them in their love for Him and His kingdom. You have been thrust into the realm of teacher. You did not ask for this. I did not wish this upon you. Trust that even your weakest effort will be rewarded by His words, "Well done" (Matthew 25:21).

Students, trust that all will be well again. If you watch the news and read the papers, you might be hearing or seeing the phrase "never return to normal". Or, "the new normal". What the future holds we do not know. But this we do know. God will allow His church to gather in some way for the spiritual food and fellowship we need so badly. He will allow the school to gather in some way for the instruction of His seed. Heritage school community, trust that God will provide the way and the means for us to gather for these reasons again.

So, what will August bring? That's the prominent question on most minds. The answer is clear - today we do not know. What we do know is that we will do what we are told to do to prepare the teachers, curriculum, and the building to receive students for in-person instruction in late August. This is what we are called to do. If the CDC, the Michigan Department of Education, the Ottawa County

Health Department, or some other organization gives us other instruction, we will respond and be ready. Improvements can be made to the distance learning model we have been using. We have and we will learn how to better teach in the classroom, or not if need be. At the May Board meeting, we created a committee to begin to look at all of these things. That committee will have teachers and staff members, as well as Board committee members from Education, Transportation, and Building Committees. As we get more information, we will use the resources we have to interact with that information, and then apply it to the processes we have in place. In so doing, you can trust that we will be ready for a Fall of education at Heritage Christian School!

We bid farewell to the following families who have been a part of Heritage Christian School for quite some time. While your youngest graduated, and you will no longer be a Heritage “family”, we know that you will always be a part of the Heritage community. Dean and Heidi Boven (Grayden), Jon and Michelle Bult (Karen), Randy and Heather Dykstra (Cole), Joel and Kristi Engelsma (Megan), Jordan and Amy Engelsma (Madalyn), Scott and Kelly Ensink (Alayna), Todd and Lisa Groenendyk (Lily), Jeff and Jocelyn Miedema (Jillian), Kevin and Barb Poortinga (Michala), and Tom and Beth Schimmel (Abigail). Our prayer is that the Lord has used our time together for the good of your family, and the strengthening of His kingdom. Our trust is that He has!

Salary Committee Report – Mr. Tom Holstege

As you may have heard, we are very blessed in that all of our teaching positions for next year have been filled. We are also adding a third section of 7th grade next year. Since I don't want to be the spoiler for any other articles, I'll let you read who was hired for teaching positions in other reports.

Teaching contracts were handed out in the beginning of March. Salary increases were 2.0% for those with 13 years of experience or more. Teachers with experience of fewer than 13 years were given increases based on years of service. The committee used the Christian School International Report as a guide to help make the decision of what increase our teachers would receive this coming year. This is common with the other Protestant Reformed schools in the area and the other local Christian schools. The Board is thankful for the teachers we have who have taken the calling of teaching our covenant youth here at Heritage Christian School.

The school budget for next year was just recently approved at the Society meeting which resulted in a tuition increase of 2.0%. The budget is established such that the revenue equals the expenses, so there isn't a surplus of cash to pay expenses when the revenue and specifically tuition doesn't come in as required. The board encourages that you continue to pay your tuition in a timely manner enabling the board to see to it that all the bills and salaries of the teachers are paid.

The Salary Committee is thankful and we praise God that He has provided for us very willing and extremely capable teachers to train our covenant youth. We pray that God continues to bless our teachers during the remainder of this school year and as they begin the 2020/2021 school year next fall.

Education Committee Report - Mr. Matt VanOverloop

As the 2019/20 school year has drawn to a close it provides an opportunity to reflect back on where we've been. And what a year it's been! Last year “polar vortex” was a buzzword and the Education Committee was meeting and deciding what to do after missing nearly two weeks of school. That seems like such a long time ago. And this year...no snow days.

Now...two weeks almost seems like nothing. With buzzwords like “COVID-19”, “social distancing”, “quarantine”, and “pandemic” our school building has been closed to the “regular routine” of Christ-centered teaching and learning since March 13, 2020. As parents, a “regular routine” is what we greatly desire to have again.

Still, in His providence we are being reminded of the great gift that we have been given here at HCS in formal, Christ-centered education. What a gift!

This year, the Education Committee has been busy in overseeing that education. We can report with thankful confidence that our God is using our teachers and staff to assist you in fulfilling the vows you took to train these children in His Name. Teachers and staff - thank you for your faithfulness in obeying your calling to instruct our children. Thank you for using the gifts that God has given you for their growth and showing them Christ in the different subjects. Thank you for showing them each day what Christ is like. And thank you for continuing to teach during this difficult time.

We thank you too, parents, as you have been placed in a role that you may not be comfortable or familiar with. That role being the day-to-day instruction of your children in Bible, Math, English, History, etc. Yet, as we look back over our shoulders, God's sustaining hand is carrying us with grace sufficient.

As the year closes we bid farewell to Deb Bleyenbergh (nearly 10 yrs), Marilyn Bylsma (21 yrs), Greg Gritters (2 yrs), Andy Kamper (35 yrs at HCS), and Pat Lanning (31 yrs). That's a lot of experience! 99 years to be exact. Thank you all for the service that you have given to our children. Thank you for your wisdom and your friendship. God be with you in these new chapters of your lives.

Truly, God in his faithfulness continues to provide. We thank Audra Bruinooge and Denise Uittenbogaard for teaching Deb B's second graders the balance of the year. Marie Schipper was hired to replace Marilyn B as a teacher aide. Dianne VanPutten and Amy Langeland will share the Librarian duties. Matt Elzinga will be directing our bands and three recent college graduates have signed contracts to teach in the 2020/21 year; Kennedy Kaptein, Joshua Moelker and Erin VanBaren. We welcome all of you to the HCS community.

This year, too, many teachers, students, and staff endured notable hardships, suffered afflictions, walked in valleys, and witnessed the completed race of loved ones. God, in His providential care, continues to gently lead many of them through those valleys. During these summer months as we are apart we pray for His continued, step-by-step, guiding care and love.

In addition, there continues to be much work on the Curriculum. This work is briefly explained in the Secretary's Report. The Education Committee has also spent significant time working on our policies. This, too, is in the Secretary's Report. I would encourage you, as

parents, to familiarize yourself with the policies at HCS. Be assured that the teachers and staff are committed to them. Their adherence to them will be shown annually as they now give their signature of commitment to all policies at HCS at the signing of contracts.

In an effort to continually improve as an organization a survey was once again conducted with the teachers and staff. The responses were carefully reviewed and the comments and suggestions were sent to various Board committees for their consideration.

A Parent Survey is also normally administered at this time of year. However, because of the current circumstances we will forgo it this year. If you do have any comments of feedback regarding the teachers and DC staff please email them to Brian (bkuiper@hchr.org) or myself (mvo197310@gmail.com). Your constructive comments are appreciated and can help us to improve.

Finally, in preparation for the coming 2020/21 school year, the Education Committee is continuing to plan for what the school year will look like in light of our current situation and government regulations.

What a year! God has provided!

Through this all He draws us closer to Him. Our Father uses Heritage Christian as an instrument to assist us in our vow to raise our children in fear of His Name. Though we don't know what the future holds, we are confident that He holds it and goes before us.

Annual Secretary's Report to the Society – Mr. Kevin Gritters

[The following report is adapted slightly from the Board Secretary's report delivered at the online Annual Society Meeting in May.]

As we near the end of this 35th year of instruction at Heritage Christian School, we pause for a few minutes to reflect on God's covenant mercies in the line of generations. In many ways, this has been a unique and unprecedented year – with school and with all aspects of our lives. But also, in many ways, we recognize that God is constant and never changes. He has continued to provide means for Christian education, even though classes and in-person instruction ended in mid-March this year. We come to you tonight because, though we cannot see you in person, the Board thought it important to speak to you, to inform you that we continue to work diligently for our school, and to ask for your prayers that God grant us all wisdom in these trying and uncertain times.

In 1985, our school started with 105 families and 216 children in grades K-9. (Today, we have more than that many students in just grades K-3.) Three years later, in 1988, enrollment exceeded 300 students. Five years after that, in 1993, we had more than 400. Then it took more than 20 years of growth until we surpassed the 500-student threshold in 2016, and now a few years after that we are already nearing 600. Many of the

parents who are currently enrolling their first children had not been born when Heritage started in 1985. And today, many of the first graduates of HCS have had one of their own children graduate from Heritage. We have continued the high calling of covenantal education of the children God has entrusted to our care. While buildings change, instructors change and methods of teaching and learning change, we have the confidence and assurance that God's mercy to His children never changes. Praise be to God for His unfailing mercies!

We are happy to report that most of our teachers and staff will be returning for the 2020-2021 school year. However, we must also say goodbye to some. We have said or will say farewell to Marilyn Bylsma, Pat Lanning, and Andy Kamper, who retire after many decades of service to Heritage. Farewell also to Greg Gritters, who will be leaving our 3rd grade classroom to take up his calling in Trinity Christian High School in Hull IA. February 28 was Deb Bleyenbergh's last day teaching at Heritage as she, with husband Rev. Bleyenbergh, plan to move to Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, for Rev. to take up his new pastorate there. We extend a special thanks to Audra Bruinooge and Denise Uittenbogaard for filling in to finish the year for the 2nd graders. Matt Elzinga will begin teaching band. One notable change next year will be that the Jr. High band will be a combination of 6th,

7th, and 8th grades. Thanks to God for providing teachers to fulfill the open positions at our school: Kennedy Kaptein (2nd), Erin Van Baren (3rd) and Joshua Moelker (Jr. High) have all signed to fill our open positions next year. Sue Looyenga will share time between curriculum work and DC support. We extend our heartfelt thanks to those who are leaving, and we eagerly anticipate working with our new teachers.

Our current, large 6th grade class necessitates the addition of a third 7th grade class for the 2020-2021 school year. We anticipate adding a third 8th grade class the following year. Beyond that, all enrollment projections point to three classes per grade for the foreseeable future, which means there is a continued need for teachers in our school and in other Christian schools. We ask each of you to encourage your children to consider seriously the great calling to be a Christian educator.

We also extend our hearty thanks to other teachers and staff, to the office staff who do so much to help the Administrator and Board, ensuring continuity from year to year. Many thanks also go to the volunteers, room mothers, fundraisers, TRIP helpers, and so many others.

The work on the Curriculum continues to ensure that all classes at the same grade level are receiving the same basic knowledge. It also makes sure that we are meeting state curriculum guidelines while learning through the eyes of a Reformed Christian. To ensure the safety and protection of our students and staff, the Education Committee has spent significant time both creating and updating our policies, including the Child Protection policy, Sexual Abuse policy, Staff Code of Conduct policy, Parental Student Pickup policy, Restricted Access policy, Volunteer policy, and more.

Long Range Planning Committee has been meeting to look at various models of the projected growth of HCS and to discuss possible long-term options that would be best for the students and staff at HCS.

Technology Committee: Protect Young Eyes presentations at both HCS and Covenant were very informative and helpful. As a Board, we strongly encourage you to be aware of and understand everything to which your children have access. Please, help each other, and help us, to be careful, responsible and wise to use technology in a manner that is pleasing to God.

Our Technology Life Cycle Refresh program continued this year to replace old devices and support the strategic direction for using technology in the classroom. As with all our assets, it is critical to get as much life as possible out of our computers and other devices but to replace them before they become problems. We are thankful for experts in this field that help us plan accordingly. We are also thankful that most – if not all – of our homes have benefited in these past couple months of online education.

Building Committee: The expansion project was completed in time for the start of this school year, and the five classrooms, one general support room, and new

teacher's lounge were fully utilized. We are very happy to report that, due to the diligent efforts of many, the project came in more than \$230,000 less than estimated. Special thanks to Mark Koole, the subcontractors and countless volunteers who worked or donated time or other resources for this significant project. We are also very happy to report that the capital campaign met its goal of \$750,000. In total, this means that we borrowed very little for this entire project and can avoid significant tuition increases.

We made improvements to the parking lot, replaced carpet, added pipe bollards for security at the entrances and locks on classroom doors for safety, improved exterior lighting around the playground, and completed upgrades to the alarm system. Dozens of volunteers helped build retaining walls, install roof drain lines, pull weeds in the playground, do final cleaning after construction, and painted the soccer dugouts, scoreboard building and soccer goals. Many thanks to all who helped in this work!

Transportation is another important resource that (normally) supports the education of our children. The new bus purchase program was implemented some years ago, through which we plan to purchase a new bus every three years to replace aging buses. 2020 is the year in which this purchase is planned. We will be looking closely at the bus purchase this year, especially as it relates to the number of routes and drivers on staff. We are thankful for our dedicated drivers and our transportation supervisor, and this is a reminder that we still have openings for bus drivers for the 2020 - 2021 school year. If you are interested or know of someone who might be, please contact our transportation committee.

You may be aware that a group of our families is in the early organizational stages of starting a new school in the Zeeland area. We intend to allow this group use of our elementary gymnasium for an informational meeting when they are able to gather. The position of the Heritage Board is neutral as it pertains to the new school. We don't oppose it because it is the right and duty of parents to establish and maintain a school that best supports their children's education. This is, in fact, how Heritage was started back in the early 80's, and this is why we will allow them the use of our school building. But neither do we support it in the sense that we are ready to spend financial resources on its development. Our projections indicate that we will have sufficient room at our school for the next 5 years, so there is no immediate need on our part. It is our prayer that our covenant God will guide this group and give them wisdom to know His will in this matter.

Four board members are retiring again this year, and we should take a moment to thank them for their three years of hard work and countless hours of laboring for the cause of Christian education. Jon Bult served on the Building and Federation Board Committees and was chairman of the Technology Committee. Brent DeYoung was on the Transportation Committee and served as chairman of the Building Committee. Bob Drnek served

on the Education, Salary and Transportation Committees, was Enrollment Committee Chairman, and led our Board as President for the past 2 years. Bill VanOverloop served on the Finance, Insurance and Publicity Committees. On behalf of the Board, thank you to these men for their efforts, their expertise, their leadership, and especially their dedication and zeal for Christian education. These men have worked on your behalf over the past three years; please convey your thanks to them as they complete their terms.

Each year, we see our school body pull together and support each other in special ways. We saw this on one of Braydan Bylsma's last days at school before his bone marrow transplant, when many of the 7th and 8th grade boys had their heads shaved in the gym. His class raised funds to buy him a Chromebook so he could try to keep up with schoolwork from the safety of his hospital room and home. We have read the stories in the Herald and school note about our children showing the love of Christ to classmates within our walls and even to those in other schools. What a witness that is! Our 6th grade students also had opportunity to play "global chess" with fellow students at our Hope Redlands school, cultivating friendships across the country starting at a very young age.

Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19): like many of us, you may be exhausted from hearing the weekly, daily, and hourly updates about coronavirus. For that reason, I won't belabor the matter here, except to make two overall statements. First, the Board has been immensely impressed with and grateful for the capable leadership of our Administrator and our many teachers and staff. Their unwavering guidance, commitment to Christian education, and care for our children have manifested themselves in so many ways, and we are confident that we have grown through this trial. Second, we know that in trials like this, the important thing is not what the trial is, but how we all respond to the trial. God calls us all to respond rightly, in all things. Yes, there certainly are challenges and struggles for teachers, students, and families. But overall, we have seen so many students, individuals, families, and other groups respond positively, be resilient, and take this opportunity to grow and help each other. This shows the difference between "reputation" and "character." Reputation is what we are when other people are watching. Character is what we are when no one but God is watching. We have seen and heard so many examples of exceptional character – selfless service, diligent behind-the-scenes planning, care and consideration for others before self, encouraging words spoken in due season. It is our continued prayer that God equip us all to be men of high character as we serve Him, together.

In January, our Administrator sent out a mailing entitled "God's Grace in Trials" which summarized many of the trials our families faced this year. He wrote this: "Daily God sends trials to all of His people. In recent years, it

seems those trials have been more abundant. Perhaps that is simply because they are more abundant. Perhaps it is because we are more aware due to communication and social media platforms. Perhaps it is because of the sheer size of our school. Regardless of reason, the fact is God sends these trials. And He assures us in Isaiah 43:2 "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Not "if" you have trials, but WHEN. And WHEN, God's grace is sufficient."

Providentially, the theme of the All School Program was The Lord's Prayer. And considering the trials we faced and continue to face as a school body, all of this year was characterized by fervent prayer. Many prayers of thankfulness, but especially prayers of supplication, asking for God's upholding mercy on those struggling with cancer. Prayers for safety and protection from sickness and from the fear and anxiety that has swept over our country. Prayers for those submitting to and recovering from surgery. Prayers for single spouses due to death or abandonment. Prayers for the many families that lost loved ones. Just among our students and teachers, the Lord called home a dear mother, a grandmother, father, grandfather, brother, nephew, son-in-law, aunt. Some of them, by reason of strength and God's good pleasure, reached well beyond their four-score years. Others very young – teenagers, a young father – those who, in our earthly eyes, had so much life yet to live. But when we remember our Savior's promise that He went to prepare a place for us, we acknowledge that their place had been prepared perfectly for them. They had completed everything God had called them to on this pilgrimage, and God called them home. To their perfect home, a home with no more death, no sorrow or crying, no more sickness or pain. May we keep this perspective in our abundant trials, and may God grant us grace to teach this perspective to our children.

I encourage you each – when we are able again – to walk the halls of our school, to see the Bible verses and words of encouragement on the walls of the classrooms, to see children building Christian friendships that will last a lifetime, to hear teachers, staff, and volunteers pouring their hearts and souls into the instruction of our children. I think we will all appreciate this in a new and special way. It is the Board's prayer that God continue to bless us with this Christian institution where we may fulfil our baptismal vows; that He give us the means to support the operation of this school; that He continue to supply our great need for teachers; that He give us peace and protection from sickness and from those that seek our harm; and that He grant us One Faith, One Hope, and One Heritage for our children. We have prayed daily for each of your homes, and we covet your prayers as we continue our work to finish this year.

Fundraisers Year End Report – Mrs. Megan Dykstra, Secretary

Another year at Heritage Christian School has come to a close. And while the circumstances look very different than in the past, we can still see that there is much to be thankful for this year. We have been truly blessed with the willingness of so many mothers who volunteer their time and talents to help support our school.

The work of Fundraisers began last spring with the Ways & Means Committee both looking at the needs set before us from the school board and planning fundraising projects accordingly.

Though the fair restaurant only operates for one week in August, work already begins in the spring with planning and preparation for a smooth-running operation. 2019 was another fantastic year at the fair and a lot of fun for all involved. A huge thank you to the Fair Committee, our generous sponsors, the volunteer workers, and all those who came to eat at the Restaurant for making this such a successful fundraiser! In September, everyone was invited to the Fall Family Supper. This is a wonderful opportunity for everyone to meet their children's teacher and enjoy dinner with other families from Heritage. Our annual fall clothing sale was held in September. Grandparents' Day was held in October and enjoyed by both the grandparents and the students. The 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament was held in November. And in March the auction was held and was a very enjoyable night of food and fellowship in support of our school. Many thanks to the committee members, volunteers and sponsors that made the night a success.

Due to the uncertainty of this time, the Spring Clothing Sale decided to cancel the March sale. And the Teacher Appreciation Committee wasn't able to gift the teachers with food throughout the week, but encouraged families to send emails and letters to their teachers instead.

We also have many standing committees that keep us busy throughout the year. Some of these include TRIP, Hot Lunch, Family Fair Direct Your Dollars and General Mills Box Tops. A special word of thanks goes out to the Kitchen Committee for keeping our kitchen clean and up to code year-round.

Much of the money raised by Fundraisers was given back to the school in response to requests from our school board for budgetary purposes. Additionally, new coffee pots were purchased for the kitchen and money was provided to offset the cost of new staff shirts. Fundraisers also continues to provide teachers with an annual allowance to help them get their rooms ready each new school year, as well as giving funds to support teacher birthday party and gifts.

We encourage every mother to get involved. Our purpose is to help keep tuition cost down. During the school year, we meet up to five times for our regular meetings, although there are opportunities all year long to be a part of Fundraisers.

We would especially like to thank all the committee members of each of the fundraisers. The extra time and energy they give to make each fundraiser profitable is very much appreciated - we thank you!

The officers for next year are the following: President- Susan King, Secretary- Dee VanOverloop and Treasurer- Danielle VanOverloop. We hope to elect the Vice-All via an electronic ballot at some point throughout the summer.

Thanks to the retiring President Anne Deemter and Treasurer Lori Duthler for their year of leadership and support. [We also take this opportunity to thank the retiring secretary, Megan Dykstra, for her work this past year.] May God continue to bless our labors that His name may be glorified at Heritage Christian School.

Grab your golf clubs!!

Our Heritage Christian Foundation will be holding their Heritage Foundation Golf Outing on Saturday, July 18 with a shotgun start at 7 AM.

The outing will once again be held at The Meadows in Allendale.

To reserve a spot for your team, please call Kevin Van Overloop at 616-662-4128 or Scott Koole at 616-293-1624.

Cost is \$500 per team. Please call soon as spots fill up quickly!

Learning – Mrs. Erika Aalsma

I am certain that I am not alone when I say that I have learned a lot of new things during this time of distance learning. I've learned that a video lesson goes much faster than a live lesson. I've learned that having 3rd graders blurt out answers during a lesson is something that you miss (yes, really!) when you teach to a screen.

However, some of the most valuable things that I learned had nothing to do with the practical aspect of online teaching. They were found in the appreciation that I gained because of what online learning lacks. When we go back into the classroom I will appreciate even more the time spent singing together as a class. I will be glad when I can talk with the students about random things, and hear yet another story about their weekend. I will be thankful that I have an opportunity to teach as I settle a recess dispute. These things are such a routine part of a school day that I often didn't take the time to value them for the way these little events bond you to the students. You grow together as teacher and students so much during all of the non-academic times throughout the

school day. Yet, despite these missed opportunities, God has worked to still bond my class, and I am certain all of the classes, together during this time. I have appreciated the work that was done at home more than I can say. I am thankful for the relationships with parents, and especially moms, that have come out of the many texts and emails. I loved the pictures of the students hard at work, the cards and notes in the mail, the emails and texts from students. In all of these things it is clear that God was using this for our good. Never before have I felt so strongly the connection between home and school. This was truly a time where we worked together to instruct these covenant children.

While cleaning out a closet (or two), I came across a file of old Herald articles. The below article was written many years ago, while I was still Miss Braaksma. As I read it, it struck me that while instruction certainly happened during these last 9 weeks, being a teacher is so much more than academics. What a blessing that this is true!

Dear Teacher,

I listened

...when you patiently explained a
math problem that we did not understand
...and I listened when you didn't.

I watched

...as you calmly retaught adjectives
and adverbs for the second time
...and I watched when you didn't.

I noticed

...when you were disappointed because we
disobeyed, yet you still controlled your anger
...and I noticed when you didn't.

I watched

...as you gladly cleaned up a spilled lunch
by the microwave
...and I watched when you didn't.

I listened

...when you calmly solved a recess
disagreement
...and I listened when you didn't.

Love, Your Student

Dear Student,

I am reminded

...that you are not only watching me
when I am doing the right thing
...and I am humbled.

I am thankful

...that God has forgiven my
impulsive actions when my patience
has worn thin
...and I am encouraged.

I have searched the scriptures

...when I faced a situation that I did
not know how to handle
...and I have been guided.

I am humbled

...as each day I watch you grow in
the love and knowledge of the Lord
...and I see God's grace.

I have prayed

...that God will bless my efforts as I
work with His little lambs
...and I have been blessed.

Love, Your Teacher

Contentment – Miss Becca Gritters

Philippians 4: 11 is a well-known and often quoted passage: “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” Through the inspiration of Scripture, this is a confession of Paul in his letter to the saints of the church in Philippi. As we finish this school year in a way that we did not expect and look toward what is to come in the next school year, our confession must be the same. We must, by the grace of God, learn to be content.

Contentment means that despite any outward circumstance that might affect our lives, we have peace and satisfaction. This is not peace and satisfaction in ourselves, but it is the peace and satisfaction God’s children have in the knowledge of the providential hand of our Heavenly Father and in the work of our Savior. We know that everything that happens to us is from our Father in Heaven, and we have confidence that God knows all and has foreordained all things. All circumstances of our lives come from God through love, and they are working towards our salvation. Hebrews 13: 5 commands, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” With the knowledge that God is our God, the God of all wisdom, glory, strength, beauty, and power, we can confess that in whatever state we are in, we can find contentment.

In second grade Bible we cover the Kings of Israel to the end of the Old Testament. In our lessons, we learn that the nation of Israel is often reprimanded for its discontentment with earthly circumstances. Far too often our actions and attitudes reflect the same discontentment as the Israelites. We justify

discontentment with the circumstances we face. How can we be content when facing a sickness? Worrying about money? Losing a loved one?

This year has brought circumstances we could not have planned for. As teachers, we can feel discouraged in the material that was not covered and in the hours that we lost with our students. Students might feel as though they have lost opportunities to spend time with friends, participate in sports, and experience the last few memories they planned to make in elementary school. However, are these circumstances the reason for our discontentment? If the end of school had gone exactly as expected, would we then have been happy? Would we have been content?

Scripture provides us with examples of those who, through God’s grace, depended on Him and found peace despite earthly trials and tribulations. When tempted to think that contentment cannot be found in the difficulties that we are facing, one just has to consider the life of Job. In one day, Job lost not just one, but all of his children. He also lost all his earthly possessions. Instead of falling into the discontentment that we are so tempted by, Job falls on the ground and worships God, confessing, “. . . the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21).

If we are waiting for our earthly circumstances to ease in order to find peace and satisfaction, contentment will be unattainable. Only when we are able to rest in the knowledge of our Lord and confess with the apostle Paul, “For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content,” (Phil. 4:7) will we be able to experience peace that passes all understanding.

Teaching and Learning Remotely in 4th Grade – Mrs. Jane Woudenberg

Waking up on Friday morning, March 13, I had no idea that this would be my last day in class with my fourth graders. As usual I turned on the news while getting ready for the day, and was shocked to hear the governor’s order to close all of Michigan’s schools. Once the news sank in, I hurried to school to meet up with my fellow fourth grade teachers and figure out how we would set up our Google Classrooms, and teach the students how to use them. I’m glad we had that last day, and especially appreciate that as a school we could meet together one last time.

That last day was the beginning of a new adventure for all of us, and we are joined by the hard-working parents who are doing an admirable job of figuring out all this technology and curriculum. They have been truly amazing!

Some of the fourth graders are adjusting quite well to schooling at home, and are even enjoying aspects of it. Mila Baatenburg said, “I like to be able to sleep in. I also like to work at my own pace.” Zachary Pols told me, “I like to be on the computer and playing *Reflex Math*.” As

a teacher, I’m grateful for programs like Reflex, that help students master basic math facts. Sydney Brummel said, “I love all the fun websites, like *Spelling City*, *Lexia*, *Reflex*, *IXL Math*, and *Epic*, which immediately allow me to view my score.” Brielle Griess enjoys learning at home. She said, “I get more time to be with my family and play and be creative. I get to paint and do crafts as much as I want.” Cole Visser said, “I enjoy not rushing to school. I also like that I’m usually done by noon. I have more time to play outside.”

The fourth graders miss being together though. Natalie Bylsma said, “I really miss playing on the playground, and I miss my friends who I had so much fun with.” Bryce Schipper is like many students when he says, “I miss seeing my friends, and I miss gym class. I will also miss the *Mini-Olympics*.” Brendan Wigger shared, “I miss the ways you teach our schoolwork, like how you make things easy for me to understand.” I appreciate that Brendan feels that way. I’ve been spending quite a bit of time sitting in my kitchen thinking, *How do I explain how to do that from here?*

I'm wondering about how to ease children's anxiety about Covid 19. These events are bound to cause some children to worry. When I asked about this Jake Koole responded, "I worry that someone I know might get sick with Covid 19. I'm also fearful that this sickness has totally shut everything down and some people aren't able to work." I understand Jake's concerns, and appreciate how well he explained them. But I also keep hearing God's people comfort one another by leaning on God's sovereignty and His love for us. Elijah Horvat said, "I know that God is with us and He will always be with us. Even in this hard time He is with us." Gavin Heyboer told me, "When I hear that people are suffering from Covid 19, I realize how much I need God, and I pray to him." I'm grateful that parents are teaching their children to rely on God and trust in Him, and I'd like to know how I can support them as they continue to do this.

I've been asking my students what the *Stay At Home Order* has been like for them, and they seem to be pretty positive. Josie Brummel told me, "I do homework first, then I play *Legos*, and I play outside a lot." Andrew Engelsma describes his schedule this way, "My day is always: wake up, eat breakfast, do homework, go outside, eat lunch, go outside, have dinner, play video games, play card games, and go to bed." Breydan Doezema reported, "We go and visit Grandpa and Grandma, who are the best!" Janelle Feenstra shared, "My family is learning Psalm 91 every day at lunch time. I don't do piano lessons anymore, and I miss my Aunt Heidi, who is my piano teacher. I do workouts with my mom instead of P.E." I really appreciate the challenges

that the *Stay At Home Order* is putting on families, and I'm grateful for creative parents, who are keeping this time at home productive.

I've been curious to know if this experience has drawn my students closer to God. Many of them say that it has. Morgan Karsemeyer believes that, "God will protect His children during hard times like right now." Cameryn DeBoer confessed, "I can't enjoy communion with the saints or go to church, but we are able to worship at home as a family. We have a lot of good conversations about this situation." Sarah King shared, "I'm learning to be patient and to trust in God completely." Alexis Looyenga noted that, "The *Stay At Home Order* has kept me from worshiping with my church family. I appreciate the technology that God has given me, but I miss worshiping with my church family." It's Claire Geerlings experience that, "During hard trials we trust God more. So it has brought me closer to God by trusting Him and having faith that He will keep me and my family safe and He will hear our prayers." Brady Cleary confidently stated, "I'm thankful that God is in control so we don't have to worry. God will give us peace."

Just as Brady so wisely said, "God will give us peace." As we move ahead with schooling at home, I'm thankful to know that God is keeping the students of Heritage Christian School under His wing. Deuteronomy 33:27 says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." This teacher is learning from her students that the Lord protects, nurtures, and loves us, and He is faithful.

Have Thine Own Way, Lord – Mrs. Kelly VanOverloop

When the need for teachers arose last year, I signed a contract to teach First Grade at Heritage Christian School. I fully realized my life was going to get busier, but I was content with that knowledge. Because while I knew my life would become busier as I juggled home life and school, I knew God's grace would be sufficient. With a little hard work and dedication the year would go by quickly and my work as teacher would end in early June.

But my plans for the school year quickly went awry. Who would have thought Heritage Christian and our class would support a classmate who stood by the grave of her young father? Who would have imagined we would grieve with colleagues who buried their younger brother or their nephew who was taken to heaven at a young age? Who would have thought the last time I said "Mizpeh" face to face to my students would be on March 13? Who would have imagined the ramifications of Covid-19? Online distance learning, online church, limited social contact, loss of work and salaries, alternate plans for graduations and weddings, watching grandparents weaken through the windows of nursing homes. Watching a grandpa die through the window of a hospice room. And, who would imagine a young

mother of Heritage students would hear the diagnosis of cancer?

I'm a planner. I like my ducks in a row. And this was not what I had signed up for. This did not fit my agenda. And as the waves of trials came, I felt confused and helpless. I wondered as Asaph did in Psalm 77, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" And then the guilt came. Guilt that I wasn't doing enough for my students as we navigated online learning. Guilt for not being as patient and present with my own children as I oversaw their online studies. Also guilt for not trusting in God as I knew I should have trusted. I could form no cohesive thought for what was happening around me. I simply had no words.

And while the words couldn't be uttered, the thoughts were coming. I knew assuredly that I was a child of God, a daughter of the King, and I couldn't stay in this despondency. I began to recognize that my plans were never truly my plans. I never was in control of all I thought I was. I began to see my selfishness, and I knew my view of all that was lost needed to be turned to what had been gained. But what had been gained? I

still struggle with that at times but I'm beginning to understand.

I did have the privilege of witnessing first hand the beautiful faith that a child has in God. Was it any coincidence we were learning the words of a well known hymn when a young student lost her father? "And when my task on earth is done, when, by thy grace, the vict'ry's won, E'en death's cold wave I will not flee, Since God through Jordan leadeth me." Although children don't fully understand the consequences of death, they do understand the full assurance that our loved ones are with God. How can that be bad? There is something an adult can learn when young children know and display the full assurance God's children have of the victory over death we have in Christ.

I also had the extreme joy of telling 90 Bible stories as children gathered around me. With the exception of gym and recess I would dare say Bible time is a favorite for most First Graders. It certainly was my favorite part of the day. How can I forget the excitement and wonder on their faces as they heard about creation and the saints of old (Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the judges)! I was able to tell 23 stories over the computer. No, it wasn't the same as seeing their eager anticipation, but was it any coincidence the stories were of Samuel, Saul and David? The stories of David had me turning to the Psalms where the whole range of human emotions are expressed. I found great comfort in hearing those doubts and fears, the cries for help in times of distress, and the words of joy and praise. How often did I read of David begging God for saving help, for mercy, when he was fleeing from Saul? And how often did those Psalms turn from pleading to God for saving help to prayers of praise and thanksgiving? In Psalm 56:1 we read, "Be merciful unto me, O God, for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me", and then in verses 10 and 11 David writes, "When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back; this I know: for God is for me. In God will I praise his word; in the Lord will I praise his word. In God have I put my trust; I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

I began this year believing that I was going to be teaching the students. But my students and circumstances of life have taught me more. I am so

weak, selfish, and prideful. I would dare say I knew this and perhaps you know this about yourself as well but did we really think we would be tested like we are being tested? But what a reminder we all have had this past year! Life isn't about what you or I want or what makes us comfortable. Life is about taking the focus off ourselves and looking up to giving glory to our Creator. And when the doubts and fears come, it's okay to experience sadness, but we cannot stay in the pit of despair. God in His Word tells us "my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

A highlight of the school year was a beautiful chapel done by Rev. and Mrs. Bleyenberg. We were shown a video of artists crafting large pots made out of clay. The artists used various sharp tools to make intricate designs and in some cases, actually hit the pots with paddles to create designs with dents. And while the pots went into the fire seemingly unimpressive, they came out of the fire stunningly beautiful, beyond exquisite. And so the trials we face are the sharp tools and paddles, and when we come through the fire, we are made refined and beautiful in His sight. Isaiah 64:8, "But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."

Then, how cannot the words come? How cannot we sing the songs of Zion? I know, you know, as Paul writes in Roman 8, "For who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

These doubts and fears that troubled me
Were born of my infirmity;
Tho' I am weak, God is most high,
And on His goodness I rely;
Of all His wonders I will tell,
And on His deeds my tho'ts shall dwell.
Psalter 210:5

6th Grade Perspective – Miss Liz VanDrunen

I asked my students to write a journal for English to update me on how their time at home has been going. It was refreshing to see what they have been up to and to hear their perspective on things. I appreciate their honesty, positivity, and visible trust in the Lord through this time of uncertainty. Though I get to stay in touch daily through Google Classroom, and see them in regular Zoom meetings, it was a lot of fun to hear some more details about their extra time at home. The English program we use at school is called IEW (Institute for Excellence in Writing) and gives students guided

structure that helps them develop confidence in the writing process. Stylistic techniques are taught incrementally to help guide students from basic writing techniques to more sophisticated writing. Here are some excerpts from my student's journals. For this writing assignment, they were to include a strong verb, an -ly adverb, a colorful adjective, and a who/which clause. See if you are able to point out any of these four parts of speech in excerpts from their writing below.

"When the stay at home order began I was super happy. No school for two weeks I thought, great

right? Wrong! Staying at home and doing nothing is tremendously dreary, plus you can't do anything with your friends. Doing school online is occasionally stressful, when you don't have the friends and teachers to ask the little questions you might have it sometimes can make you stuck.

We know that God is in control of everything and must not grumble and complain. God is in control over those in authority, who make these orders, and even the twisty rivers."

"On that disastrous Friday, everything changed. Suddenly we had no school, we couldn't go anywhere, and we couldn't see our friends, all because of one little virus called COVID. Although this time has been hard for me, I think that I have learned about waiting upon the Lord, and that God sent this time for our good."

"I've gotten 4 nasty gashes from building things. My mom, who is trying to be indefinitely patient, is good. It was fun at first but now it's really really really boring."

"Last night we played a mysterious game of Clue. Sadly I didn't win but my dad who is very competitive won one and my mom won the other. I don't mind school online but I would rather be back at school. I just miss seeing everyone!"

"I like that I can do the Zoom calls where I can virtually see the class. I know that school is almost done so I'm not going to lack on my homework and I'm going to do the most I can, and not the least."

"I liked having school better at school because it is easier to learn and comprehend things better. Frequently we go on the tramp so we can get outside."

"During my time at home, I have done a lot of new things. I have started painting, drawing, and coloring a lot more than I used to. I have also been reading outside after school, and happily sitting in the sun. I have started writing and typing letters to my friends and cousins. I have done lots of sprinting and

biking. My time at home has been fun, but I can't wait to start school next year!"

"All afternoon, I go outside and chill on our hammocks that we hang in the trees by our creek. Often, I take our dogs for a walk in our neighborhood. When I get back, I patiently hunt in my backyard. My brothers and sister and I jump on the tramp usually each day. We love to go fishing at the gravel pits by our house. It's crazy to think that school will soon be over."

"Over the past seven weeks I have been very active. I really wish I was back at school to see all my friends, who I haven't seen for a very long time. I really miss my friends and teachers and I will be extremely excited when I can see them again. Thanks for all your hard work and keeping us in a positive mood."

"I learned some sign language, I painted more, I started to draw more, I started to actually read, and I learned to be more thankful. It is probably really hard to be thankful right now, but we are called to be thankful through all. One thing I am very thankful for is to have a family and christian schools that are still trying to teach us even through this pandemic."

"I miss school, I miss my teachers, I miss my friends, but most of all I miss being able to learn easier. Learning online is kinda hard and going to school in person makes it easier to understand in all subjects. Overall, not being able to go to school has taught me to always be thankful that we have an education and are able to learn. I never realized how much I enjoyed school and seeing my friends until covid-19 came. I hope more people realize how important school is and how much it helps us."

Excerpts taken from:

Annikkah Brower, Ellie Eriks, Camden Gritters, Tyler Gritters, Toby Holstege, Jordyn Kalsbeek, Landon Koole, Kinsley Mowery, Morgan Vanderschaaf, Brielle VanOverloop, Caleb Vink

See the Able, Not the Label – Mrs. Jordan Pettit

With a group of my students in English this year I taught a lesson on the difference between character traits and physical traits. We learned about how physical traits describe our outside appearances, and they are what people see when they first look at us. In comparison our character traits, or personality traits as we also liked to call them, were words and attributes that authors use when describing what type of person the character was. We looked at this in depth with an activity where we drew pictures of ourselves, labeling the physical traits that someone might see when they look at us on the left half of the page. This included things such as our hair color, eye color, what we were wearing that day, any freckles or moles we might have on our face, or even the glasses we were wearing. On the right side of the page we began listing the things people would say described us. This included things like smart, kind, creative, caring,

imaginative, shy, funny, and many more. We all enjoyed helping each other come up with the personality traits of one another because we enjoyed pointing out things that we loved about those around us.

As I reflected on this lesson I began thinking about how often we are labeled in society. What we do, think, and say shapes others' opinions and assumptions of us. Unfortunately for my students, the fact that they have a disability often shapes other peoples' perceptions of what they can and can't do. Often times students with disabilities tend to get put into a one size fits all box, especially with more well-known disabilities. People make assumptions about the students in the Special Education classroom often based on what they know of their diagnosis, or what they may have heard about a certain disability.

One of the best parts of my job is seeing the individual strengths and talents of the students in our program on a regular basis. I am constantly blown away by just how much my students CAN do. The students in the Special Education program at Heritage amaze those in our room daily with all the things that they are able to do. Those “ah ha” moments when things click and the pure joy on their face when they get to show off something they learned or are proud of are some of the most powerful moments in my day. I always love when others stop in our class throughout the day and get to see the amazing things our students are doing first-hand, because they are able to see the gifts and talents God has blessed my students with. I have heard others exclaim a few times “Wow! I didn’t know they could do that!” followed up with how proud they were of the student for what they were able to do. Just ask me, Andrew Koerner, or any of the many paraprofessionals in our program, and we will all tell you that we have been moved to tears of joy regularly by the things our students are able to do. Our students surprise us daily with the ways that they learn, what they learn, and the way that they tackle challenges head on.

Of course there are things along the way that are also a challenge for our students, or may seem to others like something that can’t be done. In our classroom, however, we love the word “yet.” When looking at something that is challenging for a student, we often like to say that they can’t do it “yet”, but that we are going to do everything we can to help them try to get there. The road to getting there may be a rollercoaster of ups and downs with unique supports, but we want every student to have the chance of getting there. All of my students are capable of learning, and time after time they have shown me and those around them just how much they can learn. By looking at the gifts and talents God has given each of the students in the Special Education program, we are able to see how they learn, the strengths they have, and the unique abilities God has given them, and are able to teach in a way that benefits them and allows them to grow in all aspects of life.

Psalm 149: 14 says, “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and

that my soul knoweth right well.” Just because the students in our classroom happen to have a diagnosed disability does not mean that God has not blessed them with other talents and abilities. It also does not mean that something is wrong with them or that God made a mistake with them. As someone who personally has struggled with dyslexia all my life, I am thankful that my learning struggles do not define who I am as an individual or a teacher. I am very open about this with my students, because I don’t want this to be something they feel they need to be ashamed of, or that it is something that is “wrong about them.” Yes, the way they learn may look a bit different, or take a bit longer, but I want them to know and believe that they are fearfully and wonderfully made and are capable of so much.

Looking back at the lesson I did with my students, I am so thankful that none of them put the fact that they had a disability or were in Special Education as something that defined them. Not because it is something to be embarrassed or ashamed of, because it is not, but because I believe it is not the sole defining factor of them as an individual. I loved that they saw themselves as a child of God first. They chose to describe themselves with the gifts and talents God has given them, things that they are able to do and are proud to show others they can do. While their disability may influence and impact the way in which they learn or approach something, it does not determine whether they can or cannot learn.

I am so thankful that God has opened the door for me to be in the Special Education setting. Each day I am in awe that God has blessed His children so richly, and through my students has blessed me. God has blessed the body of Christ with unique and marvelous individuals who all serve an important role in His kingdom. I encourage you to look at the gifts and abilities of those around you and to encourage them in all that they are doing. And, if you ever want to pop in and see the amazing things our kids are doing, please do! We can’t wait for them to show you their ability, not just their label.

School at Home – Mr. Doug DeBoer

The fifth graders were asked to write three paragraphs about the schooling at home that they have experienced since March 13. The first paragraph was to be an introduction followed by a second describing how schooling was different and ending with a third concerning how school was similar at home. They were assigned to hand in a first and second draft. Their paragraphs lack a title and a fourth and final paragraph to sum up and restate their main point. The reason for this lack is me. I failed to tell them to do that. I didn’t catch this oversight on my part - some may call it a mistake - until the parents had dropped off their child’s papers. It was too late. If we were having “normal

school” I would have handed their work back to them, and we would have added titles and a fourth paragraph, and all would be well. Alas, I could not because my students were at home, not at school. Therefore in the unedited version their writings appear below. I wish I could report that that was my only deficiency that showed up since March 13; however, that would be inaccurate. Thanks to all my students and their parents who kindly put up with all my shortcomings, especially those in the world of technology. Your patience was immense. For the amount of success that was reached, thanks goes to Principal Kuiper. Out of my 21 students, 9 of their writings were selected to be representative of

the stay at home schooling experience brought on by the Coronavirus. See you back at school in the fall. D.V.

In January of 2020 there was this disease spreading to the entire world. It is called the Coronavirus. At first I thought it would be great because there is no school but you also got to worry about health issues. Getting groceries is even hard.

School is still the same because we have to do homework and watch videos.

School is different because we have to wait for technology when you need it. When we have a question you may not ask the teacher but must wait until a parent is available. There are also quite a few distractions at home. You can also do your homework at any time. I can also cuddle up with my dog. I do not need to pack a lunch, instead we can eat when we want. We still have to work to the best of our abilities.

Brennen Gritters

We are at home because of the CoronaVirus. The governor told us we couldn't go to school. I was happy when school got out because I thought I would be able to play at home a lot. The bad thing was that all of the fun things were cancelled. I was especially disappointed about the end of the year sale. We also couldn't finish our art mural, and we couldn't do the basketball tournament we were going to do in the gym.

This is similar to school because we sometimes see our teacher on videos where we learn things about all the subjects. We also watch Science and Social Studies videos. We do computers; we hand work in, and use our textbooks.

School is different too because I can wake up late and not at 7:00, and we don't have to get in our car. Also I don't sit in a classroom next to all my classmates. I don't have recess, gym, or choir. Also we have to look at our work on email. I do my work next to my brother and sisters; I don't have a desk; we don't work with partners, and some of our work got easier. I eat breakfast in between work. Sometimes we do art and we can do whatever project we want to do. My mom can help me instead of my teacher. I like learning at home, but I miss school too.

Peyton Hopkins

March 13 was the last day of school at Heritage Christian. The coronavirus meant that we could no longer have school with our friends at Heritage so we took up our schoolwork at home. Today it has been 8 weeks since we were able to go to school.

In some ways school at home is not bad. I usually start my schoolwork by 9:00 and am done by lunch time. I still have the same subjects, and I still get to see Mr. DeBoer on videos. Sometimes he makes me laugh.

School at home is very different than at Heritage. I have more time to play outside because

school is not as long. My mom is harder than Mr. DeBoer. I miss seeing my friends. Sometimes I eat lunch while I work. Some of my tests are easier because I can use my notes. I really want to go back to school and see my friends.

Keegan VanDyke

People in China ate bats and got covid-19. It spread across the world and now I am in quarantine so people don't spread it more. I was sad because everything was cancelled. I couldn't go to school or church. All the sports were cancelled.

I learn the same stuff at home that I would learn at school. I watch the same videos. I see our teacher (on video). I use the same books.

I don't see our teacher or class in person. It is way more distracting at home. I don't get as much information as I would in school. It is boring doing work at home. I don't have chapel, choir, gym, or art, but I play more outside. I hope we can start 6th grade at school next year.

Colin Corson

Governor Whitmer closed schools because of a growing epidemic. My teacher Mr. DeBoer said, "School is not going to close!" Then a few days later Governor Whitmer closed schools. At first I was excited, but then as the coronavirus grew I became less excited. People are dying left and right. I think Governor Whitmer did the right thing to close schools.

We do the same stuff at home that we do at school. We watch videos, do papers, and take tests. Mr. DeBoer even sends videos of him showing us what to do and how to do it. To sum it up - it's almost the same thing.

The way it is different is that we don't have school for six hours. We don't see our classmates face to face or even talk with our friends. We also don't see our teachers face to face.

Matthew Korhorn

Hello my name is Shelby Kuiper. I am going to tell you why I am doing school at home. Coronavirus started in China. I'm not sure how it started, but it did. This virus spreads very quickly. Personally, I think this is a scary thing, and many people are getting sick and dying.

What is it like for me? Well, it's very weird. I wake up at 8:00 and check the email that my teacher, Mr. DeBoer, sent me. I print the papers and get to work. I work on my school work until twelve o'clock or so. I set up my own small table in a corner to do all my school work.

How are the two different? Many ways! At school we sit in hard desks, but at home I can lay in my bed and watch the videos Mr. DeBoer sends. One thing

I think is cool is that I can pause my teacher and get some food or some water. It's different also because at home it is harder to focus. I miss my school friends a lot. I don't think it is necessarily better at home; it's just different.

Sometimes it is stressful to always be home with my two brothers and two sisters, but I am glad that this happened. I have spent so much time with my mom, dad, and siblings and now know them better. We enjoy things like working with our animals, riding the golf cart, and hiking on nature trails. I am glad that God gave me every one of them. God has blessed my family very much.

Shelby Kuiper

We are having school at home because of the Coronavirus. I thought it would be fun because it was going to be only 2 weeks but it ended up being the whole year.

I am using the same book and have the same teacher with the same homework. My teacher sends out videos so I still see him every day.

It's different because I do not have to wake up at 5:45 AM every day, and I don't have to ride the bus. My mom does not know how to teach my math very well. I am doing my homework by myself more than before. We are not at school for 6 hours. If I work hard then I am normally done with "school" before lunch. I miss my friends and teacher a ton. I can't wait to be with you all again.

Isabelle Steenwyk

Friday morning I woke up and heard my family talking quietly in the kitchen trying not to wake my younger sister or me. I went to go see why. I heard my three high school sisters say they didn't have school today and for a few weeks. I would be off starting on Monday. I was excited to have a break (since there were no snow days this school year) not knowing Friday would be my last day of school in fifth grade! I thought it would only be a few weeks of not seeing my friends. When the news reported all schools in Michigan are

closed for the year, I realized it would be an extra long break of not seeing anyone, and that was not exciting.

Even though there are lots of disappointments the bright side is there are some things better. For example we can sleep in a little instead of being woken up at 6:30. Tests are open book, and it's a shorter school day. We get three meals a day with the whole family! Plus, we can do facetime more often!

But lots of things are a lot different. I can't sit with my friends in class or even see them. There seems to be more tests than usual because we are moving through classes faster. Lots of us know online school is much harder, and we would rather be at school again. I think most of us miss regular school and are ready to go back!

Lauryn Looyenga

Early in 2020 a new virus broke out in China and soon spread to the U.S.. In March of 2020 on a Thursday, the Governor of Michigan made an Executive Order that all Michigan schools needed to close. School was open yet on Friday, but after that we were no longer able to go. I had been sick with the stomach flu the whole week before so I didn't even get a chance to say goodbye to my friends or teacher.

We began to have school at home on March 16. There really isn't a lot of ways that school at home is like going to school in the Heritage building. To me the main way it's the same is that I am still not a fan of school. We still have a lot of homework. We still have the same teacher. We still get to have recess and brain breaks.

School at home is different in many ways. Homework doesn't take as long as a regular school day, but it is harder to do. I don't get to see my friends, except when we do video chats. My mom has become my primary teacher (I like Mr. DeBoer better - shhhhh!). One good difference is that I actually get screen time on school days - before we only got screen time on Friday after school and on Saturday.

Derek den Hartog

Things I Have Learned From Distance Education – Mr. Matt Kuiper

For six and a half months, from September to the middle of March, school marched on without a hitch. We didn't even experience one snow day. Oh, how we longed for just a day or two off from school for just a little break. Then suddenly, almost without warning, school as we have known it forever ended. In God's infinite wisdom, He allowed COVID-19 to become something that shut the doors of our beloved, Christian schools. But, we could not let that stop education. With some planning by the Education Committee and much learning and planning by teachers, school marched on in a whole different way. Online education, something teachers may

have dabbled in a bit, became the new norm. During the last ten weeks, I have learned a few things from my experience with distance education that I would like to share with you.

Distinct Christian Education

At Heritage Christian School, teachers try hard to teach about Christian principles in all the classes they teach. With the new way of learning, I feel like this is something that was lost. Fortunately parents were home with their kids so this became a little less important for teachers. However, in saying that, I know I did not do a good enough job of incorporating Christian principles into my

online classes. With the busyness of planning lessons, making videos, answering emails, and checking Google Classroom, I forgot about the goal we have as teachers towards Christian education. Sure, I continued to teach Bible, Earth Science, and Math as well as I could. Teaching the content became paramount since it was so difficult to gauge the understanding of the children. Too busy!! That's the excuse. Professor David Engelsma wrote about two goals of Christian education in his book *Reformed Education*. First, teachers are to assist parents in teaching children the praise of God in eternity. This comes out in the Baptism form where parents agree to have their children "piously and religiously educated... to the end that they may eternally praise and magnify thee." The second goal deals with the child's life on this earth, the here and now. When we are in "normal" school, these things are much easier to do. We are able to talk with students outside of class about life in general, but we can also incorporate the need to "eternally praise and magnify" God in all parts of life, including Math and English and whatever other subjects we teach. While I hope and pray this distance education does not have to return, if it does, I know I will do a better job of attempting to fulfill my calling to rear covenant children properly. I, and I am sure other teachers as well, can't wait to get back to the classroom where Christian education can happen in a much more natural way.

Strong Parental Support

Wow! I can only marvel at the support I received during this time "away" from school. I am not talking about anything that was said or done, even though I did receive many encouraging notes from parents which were appreciated. The support I am talking about was dealing with the hundreds of emails that were sent out during our time away. I am talking about the countless hours many parents, probably mostly moms, spent with their children teaching them. Public educators could not make their students learn. The distance education was

voluntary and participation in school lessons was minimal. Did I have to hunt down some late assignments on occasion? Yes. Was some work done by students much more poorly than they would have done in school? Occasionally. But overall, parental support has been overwhelming, and I am not the only teacher to feel this way. Teaching is hard, and parents did a great job of stepping in and helping. I am so thankful for the opportunities I have had over the years to teach at this school with its strong support.

I Miss the Kids!

In the introduction, I mentioned that we, both students and teachers alike, were longing for a snow day to give us a mental rest. A day or two away is great, once in a while. But ten weeks?? I always knew that I loved my students. Hours and hours are spent with students in the years that we teach them. Some kids are quiet, while others are more outgoing. Some start quiet and then never stop talking! Each kid is different and it is a wonderful privilege that I have as a teacher to get to know each one of them. I know many people say they could never teach, but I wish you all could have the opportunities teachers have to interact with fun, energetic, and best of all, Christian young people. Google Meets and Zoom are great for some interaction but it does not come close to the face-to-face interaction that is necessary for proper, Christian education and the building of relationships. I miss sitting down and answering questions people have or simply talking with kids about their weekend spent with their families. I miss the kids!

There are more things I learned that I could have written about including being thankful for technology, thankful for our Principal and school board, and simply realizing my love for teaching. The three main points above are the most important, though. I know things will get "back to normal" and I trust God that He will allow our schools to get back to teaching, in their distinctly Christian way, once again.

~ PARENTS – Some items to take note of ~

- **Report card pick up dates** are June 9 and 10 here at school. All items will be in the main gym lobby for pick up according to the schedule we have used for other pickups.
- There will be tables in the gym lobby for textbooks, Chromebooks, school uniforms, band shirts, library books, or any other school supplies. Please return them.
- **2020-2021 class lists** will be emailed out the day after the August *Herald* is distributed. The email will be sent to the 1st of the two email addresses supplied to us on your forms at enrollment time.
- **TRIP summer dates** are (from 9-10:30 AM): June 9, June 23, July 7, July 21, August 4, and August 18. Regular TRIP hours will resume on September 1.
- **Room Moms** sign-ups will happen in the fall (so that you are aware which class your children are in before you sign up). Watch the first memo of the school year for info.

Thank you for volunteering your time at
Heritage Christian's Fair Restaurant

Here's what you need to know before you come:

From the Health Department

- * No tank-tops, open-toed shoes or sandals allowed
- * Long hair must be tied back, kitchen help must wear a hat, or we will provide a hairnet
- * Food from home may not be stored in the restaurant kitchen. If you wish to bring in food for your break, please keep in your vehicle until break time.

Dress code and Suggestions from the committee

- * Expect your clothing to get dirty, particularly if you are working in the kitchen.
- * Neat, modest, clothing is always appropriate. Wear comfortable tennis shoes.
- * Shorts are permitted by the Health Department, and suggested by the committee, since it is usually hot in the building.
- * Please do not bring large purses or bags with you for your shift. We have limited shelving, so take only what fits in your pockets or a very small bag.
- * Other Important Things to note
- * Children may not accompany parents to their shift at the restaurant or the food prep day. We could be shut down by the Health Department if this rule is not followed.
- * If you are working in the kitchen, expect to wear gloves for most of your shift. We will provide latex-free gloves in two sizes.
- * You will have a short break on your shift and may order from our kitchen at half price.
- * Per the Hudsonville Fair Board, our volunteers are required to pay the regular gate admission fee of \$5. Please consider this a donation to our school. If this is a hardship, contact a committee member during your shift for reimbursement.
- * Have fun! Be cheerful! Remember, we will be representing Heritage Christian School to many people this week!

You should get a reminder from Sign Up Genius confirming the date and time of your shift.

We are counting on you!
If you are unable to make your shift,
please find your own replacement
and notify a committee member of the change.

Thanks again for volunteering your time! We are looking forward to another fun and successful week at the fair!

The Fair Restaurant Fundraiser Committee

Cara Dykstra, Megan Dykstra, Danae Karsemeyer, Susan King, Tara Koole, Ronda VanBemmel, Lori VanOverloop

2020-2021 School Year Calendar

August 31, 2020 - School starts
September 4-7, 2020 - Labor Day Break, no school
September 14-18, 2020 – MAP Testing for Grades 3-8
October 3, 2020 - HCS Fall Clothing & Toy Sale
October 22-23, 2020 - Teachers' Convention, no school
November 12, 2020 – All School Program
November 18-19, 2020 – Parent Teacher Conferences
November 26-27, 2020 – Thanksgiving Break, no school
Dec. 24, 2020 – January 1, 2021 - Christmas Break, no school
January 18-22, 2021 - MAP Testing for Grades 3-8
February 3-4, 2021 - Parent Teacher Conferences
February 19, 2021 - Mid-winter Break
February 25, 2021 – 5-8 Band and Choir Concert
April 2-9, 2021 - Spring Break, no school
May 17-21, 2021 - MAP Testing for Grades 3-8
May 20, 2021 – 5-8 Band and Choir Concert
May 31, 2021 - Memorial Day, no school
June 3, 2021 – Graduation, last day of school

Congratulations, graduates!
Heritage Christian School
Class of 2020

*“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;
and lean not unto thine own understanding.
In all thy ways acknowledge him,
and he shall direct thy paths.”*
Proverbs 3:5-6

2020-2021 School Supplies

Kindergarten Supplies - all labeled

Backpack
Lg size Pencil Box (> 4" high)
2 Large Erasers
2 Large Solid Glue Sticks
Thick Washable Markers
Crayons (24 or less)
Good Quality Scissors (round-tips)
1 Sturdy Folder with Inside Pocket
Gym Shoes (Velcro or Slip-on)
Art Shirt
Small Pillow (14" or smaller)
One pair socks
Picture of your kindergartener

1st Grade Supplies – all labeled

School Box – Large Size
10 Pencils
1 yellow highlighter
1 Large Eraser ("Pink Pearl")
3 Large Glue Sticks
24 Crayola Crayons
Colored Pencils
12 Thick Washable Markers
4 Dry erase markers
Fiskar Scissors
1 **wide** ruled spiral notebook
Paint Shirt
Gym Shoes
2 Strong, Durable Pocket Folders
Earbuds in a small bag/pouch

2nd Grade Supplies - all labeled

KJV Bible
Psalter
12 **Sharp** Pencils
24 Crayons
24 Colored Pencils
10 thick washable markers – standard colors
1 Yellow Highlighter
4 Dry Erase Markers – black or blue
1 normal pink eraser
Large Plastic Pencil Box (w/ Snap Lid)
Fiskars **Sharp-Point** Scissors
3 Large Glue Sticks
2 Hard Covered Composition Notebooks
2 Strong, durable Folders
Earbuds in a labeled bag/pouch
Art Shirt
Gym Shoes & Extra Pair of Socks

3rd Grade Supplies

KJV Bible
12 - #2 Pencils
Earbuds in a small bag/pouch
Fiskar Scissors
2 Red Pens

3rd Grade Supplies, continued

4 dry-erase markers
2 Glue Sticks. 1 Glue Bottle
Art Shirt
Small Pencil Box
12" Ruler w/Inches & Centimeters
2 Blue or Black Erasable Pens
1 yellow highlighter
Small Notebook for assignments
2 Black Flair pens (Papermate brand, fine point, non-permanent markers)
1 Black Sharpie marker
Crayons (~48)
Markers, Colored Pencils
3 Wide Ruled Spiral Notebooks
3 Single Pocket Folders – incl blue
Loose Leaf Paper –Wide Ruled
Psalter
Large Eraser
Gym Shoes

4th Grade Supplies

KJV Bible
Psalter – in Good Condition
Crayons
Red pen
2 Black Sharpie markers (1 fine and 1 ultra-fine)
Thin washable markers
24 pack of colored pencils
10 sharpened #2 Pencils
2 large glue sticks
Yellow highlighter
Large Eraser
12" ruler with metric and customary measurements
Pointed scissors
Zippered 3 Ring Binder/Trapper
Wide ruled loose Leaf Paper
Gym Shoes
1 wide ruled 1 subject spiral Notebook
6 2-Pocket PLASTIC folders (w/ holes)
Earbuds
2 dry erase markers

5th Grade Supplies

KJV Bible and a Psalter
Zippered 3-Ring Binder/Trapper
6 Folders
Colored Pencils
Markers
#2 Pencils
2 Red Pens
Blue or Black Erasable Pen
1 Yellow Highlighter
Large Eraser
Loose Leaf Notebook Paper
5 wide ruled spiral notebooks
Ruler (w/Standard & Metric)
Pointed Scissors

5th Grade Supplies, continued

Calculator
Gym Shoes
1 Large Glue Stick
2 fine tipped Black Sharpies

6th Grade Supplies

KJV Bible and a Psalter
Pencils and Eraser
Pens: Blue/Black for Work
Pens: Red for Correcting
Black Thin Tip Marker
Colored Pencils
Markers
Highlighting Markers
5 spiral notebooks (70-100 pgs)
Calculator
Gym Shoes
Ruler with inches AND centimeters
Glue Stick
Scissors
Zippered 3-Ring Binder/Trapper
5 Folders w/Pockets
200 pg. loose-leaf paper

Junior High Supplies

KJV Bible and a Psalter
Multiple Pencils and Pens (mechanical pencils preferred, but not necessary)
Colored Pencils
1 good eraser
Rubber cement
White-out
Scissors
5 3-Ring Binders (1" rings) with dividers
Three Spiral Notebooks
5 Folders w/Pockets
Folder for Art
Loose Leaf Notebook Paper (400 pages)
Ruler with Inches & Centimeters
Compass
Protractor
TI-83 or 84 Scientific Calculator (optional for DC Math students)
Highlighter (optional)

