

Herald



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Stones

Mr. Brian Kuiper, Administrator

“And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” (Luke 19:40)

With recognition and appreciation to Rev. Bill Langerak whose recent chapel for HCS staff and students led to my development of the topic in this article.

When the Spirit inspired men to write the Scriptures, many different references to stones were used to illustrate different points. This should lead us to consider this aspect of creation and be in awe of some of these references. Of interest when we consider stones is the fact that they seem only useful because of their enduring qualities. However, we soon recognize that this is why the references are so powerful.

Many times in the Old Testament, the people of Israel erected stone pillars of remembrance. In many instances, these were not altars to be used for sacrifice but piled stones specifically designed to arouse a curious response from the viewer. Stones piled by Jacob and Laban signified their covenant and fellowship as they parted. Stones piled by Joshua at the Jordan River might not have been the most aesthetic architectural structure in the history of the world, but they were effective. We read in Joshua 4:21, “What mean these stones?” We also read that they are there until this day. Wood or other building materials would have broken down over time, but not stones.

There is also a reference in Scripture to a stone or rock providing for God’s people. When the people of Israel grumbled and complained in their thirst, God provided water from a rock for a quenching of their thirst. We would think He would use a tree or a plant that naturally contains water. He used a rock. This showed His power and might in providing water from a source that naturally would not produce water.

In chapel recently, the idea from I Peter 2 of “lively stones” was developed for the HCS viewers. Among other things, this picture supports the idea of the stability and perseverance of the Christian. Like a stone that endures, the child of God will be kept by the Lord at all times. Also, this passage speaks of lively stones. The Old Testament church had the temple made of stones. The New Testament church is made up of stones - living stones. Those who ARE the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Not to be missed in the passage is the reference to the living stone that was rejected by men. All of these pictures point to the Cornerstone Himself who made all of this possible. Because of His un failing nature, we can be called stones. Because of His faithfulness, we can be assured that we will not erode and disappear, but rather be used for the building of the church and the glory of His name.

Our responsibility then is also summarized using the idea of stones. When the disciples proclaimed glory to God in the highest, the Pharisees called upon Jesus to rebuke them. His response is well known in verse and in song. If we do not respond in praise, He will be praised by that which seems least likely to be breaking out in song. We know that because He said so. We also know that one day, He will rend the earth and the rocks all in time for Him to take each of His lively stones to their eternal home. May we watch for that day in faithfulness and in truth.

Insurance Committee Report – Mr. Steve Bylsma

I once read somewhere that needing insurance is like needing a parachute. If it isn't there the first time, chances are you won't be needing it again. Insurance is one of those things in life that we pay for year after year, but hope that we never need to use. It is one of those things that reading about or reading the policies will put most people to sleep. And yet, here we are with an insurance article in the *Herald*. I hope that if you actually fall asleep reading this, you do so in a safe place, so you won't need to use your insurance.

Heritage Christian School works with a couple of different insurance agencies and is well covered in the realm of insurance. Heritage offers health insurance to our staff that is reasonably priced and has increased the last few years at a lower rate of increase than the average insurance policy. For that we are thankful. Heritage also offers dental and vision insurance for the teachers and staff. Looking ahead to next year, I am pleased to say that there is not a rate increase for the vision and dental plans that are offered.

Heritage also carries many insurance policies that are unrelated to the health of our staff. We have an extensive policy on the school

building itself, including the storage barn and the exterior tent. Heritage carries liability and medical insurance for any accidents that happen on school property. Heritage has insurance on our fleet of buses. Heritage has a policy for student accidents that happen at school, covering sporting events injuries, as well as any injuries on the playground that would require medical care. Because we are a Christian school in an age where our religious freedoms are under attack, Heritage also holds a Religious Freedom Protection Policy.

So, assuming that you are still awake and reading to this point, you can be assured that Heritage is well covered in all of our school's insurance needs. We have insurance agents that understand the needs of a Christian school and the necessity to keep costs down. The Business Manager and the Board work with our agents regularly to ensure that the school is protected and that our staff is cared for. As a member of the Insurance Committee and the Board, I thank you for your support. We gladly pay those monthly insurance premiums (as part of the annual budget which is only doable with your financial support), and it is our prayer that we never have a need to use our insurance policies.

Building Committee Report – Mr. Chad VanOverloop

It's been approximately a year since our last Building Committee report in the *Herald*. Our school building and property are wonderful blessings from the Lord that allow us to properly instruct our children. However, a 90,000 square foot building and 35 acres of land come with a good deal of up-keep and maintenance. As a building committee, we meet at least once per month to review the month's activities and also try to project any upcoming repairs or renovations. The current building committee is comprised of Steve Bylsma, Jordan Dykstra, Scott Ensink and Chad Van Overloop.

In the past year, we've had a healthy workload to handle. Most notably, is the addition of our new facility manager, Jeremy Lubbers. Jeremy, his wife Tressa (Boverhof) and family attend Byron Center PRC, where he is currently serving a deacon. Jeremy comes to us from Velco Plumbing, where he had worked for almost 24 years. Having an in-house master plumber has proved to be an enormous help to HCS so far. Jeremy has settled into his role nicely and is doing a great job managing the janitorial staff and keeping the school running smoothly. This is no small task when you consider all of the added Covid cleaning and disinfecting protocols that needed to be implemented. Welcome and thank you, Jeremy!

Also, at this time we'd also like to thank Jon Van Dyk for all his help at school during Jeremy's transition. Jon spent many hours this

summer working to make sure the building was deep-cleaned and ready to be passed along to Jeremy. Thanks, Jon!

This summer, Protestant Reformed Special Education (PRSE) converted a storage room near their classroom into an additional office/classroom. This additional room (next to Mr. De Boer's room) affords them some much needed, additional space. HCS was given several pieces of large playground equipment by Katerberg & VerHage Landscape. The building committees of both HCS and PRSE are discussing options on how some of these components might be adapted to accommodate students who have certain physical limitations.

This summer, a retaining wall was added along the sidewalk by the elementary wing. This retaining wall allowed us to make the sidewalk 5' wider, making drop-off and pick-up times safer for the children. We were also able to integrate the roof drains into the storm sewer. Previously, the sidewalks would become very icy in the winter.

A lot has changed over the last 12 months, but one thing remains the same, the faithfulness of our God. None of our efforts amount to anything apart from His blessing. *"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yeah the work of our hands establish thou it."* Psalm 90:17

Long Range Planning Committee Report – Mr. Brad Dykstra

The Long Range Planning Committee for Heritage Christian School functions at the request and under the authority of the School Board. The majority of the six current members of this committee began our service soon after we began meeting in the current location in 2015. Current committee members include Brad Dykstra, Steve Bylsma, Cara Dykstra, Scott Koole, Brian Kuiper, and Gary Lubbers. For some time Deb Bleyenberg served on the committee as well, and we thank her for her service. At the

beginning, most of us probably anticipated that not a lot would be expected from our committee since we just moved into this large facility. Little did we know that an addition of five classrooms, an educational support room, and a new teacher's lounge would be a part of our beginning work on this committee.

Most of our work consists of answering these questions put before us by each other and the Board: How many students can this

current facility effectively handle? How large do we want Heritage to become? What should our next step(s) be to plan for the anticipated growth over the next five to ten years? Should we look into having a separate middle school? We provide reports and recommendations to the Board and then that group of dedicated men make decisions on the future of Heritage, with final approval coming from the Society if necessary.

Our current recommendation for Board consideration was submitted in April, 2020. That recommendation was that we could utilize our current property for a future expansion if student enrollment continues to grow. Remember, this is only in the idea

stage, not something that is set in stone, and stated here to give just one idea of options that we have at our current location.

As with any involvement with our beloved school, a new appreciation quickly develops for the many details and effort it takes for the daily operation of a school of this size. There are student, teacher, staff, administrator, and building requirements that are constantly changing and they need to be considered and dealt with. It is amazing to see God working through the lives of all of those involved here for the building up of our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks for God's faithfulness to this school over the past 36 years, and pray for His continued blessing and guidance for many more to come.

From the Foundation Board

Greetings Heritage Foundation supporters,

The Board of our Heritage Foundation again would like to convey its appreciation for your support over the past year. Even with all the uncertainty and unknowns the Board continued to carry out our mission of managing the assets of the Foundation for the benefit of our Heritage Christian School.

As you know we were not able to hold our Evening of Praise fundraiser due to the Covid restrictions on large gatherings. However, an alternative fundraising plan was initiated that turned out to be very successful for our Foundation. This was due to a matching dollar-for-dollar effort that resulted in being able to raise \$96,000 for our Foundation. As you know these cash funds are deposited into our Foundation accounts, invested wisely, and grow in value, so that over the coming years the Foundation can contribute to the annual operation of Heritage Christian School. The Board appreciates the generosity of the donor and donors for this alternative fundraiser.

This year the Foundation was able to grant \$55,000 to the school. For the next school year, 2021-22, we anticipate granting \$71,000 to the school. Your Board is grateful to be able to grant these

amounts to Heritage Christian School and again thanks all those who support our Foundation.

Please note also that besides cash gifts and donations that are received through our fundraisers, the Heritage Foundation is set up to receive non-cash gifts such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, life insurance or other assets. You may contact one of our Foundation Board members, and we can develop a plan with either the Barnabas Foundation or our Foundation financial advisor. Either way we hope you feel free to reach out for information or options for gifting non-cash assets.

We thank our Heavenly Father who "...upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, and all things come, not by chance, but by his fatherly hand." Heidelberg Catechism LD 10.

Your Foundation Board,

Kevin Gritters, Tomm Heyboer, Justin Koole (Treasurer) , Jeff Scholten (Secretary), Jared Van Baren, Titus Kamps (Vice President), Wesley Koops (President).

Trendy or immodest?

Recently teachers asked the Education Committee for clarification on ripped or torn jeans. One reason our dress code policy does not prohibit rips in pants is because of the likelihood of elementary students wearing hand-me-downs.

In an era of manufactured ripped jeans, please ensure that the pants are modest and rips are not above the knees. If this rule is followed, staff will not have to make judgements on appropriate clothing.

Thanks for your partnership in this matter.

Best Birthday Wishes!!! – Mrs. Brenda Pastoor

I recently celebrated my birthday at school. Let me tell you, Kindergartners get very excited about birthdays, and they were counting down the days as soon as we returned from Christmas Break! The day did not disappoint. My wonderful room mothers turned out yet another fun and engaging class party - all while maintaining social distancing. Now that's a trick! After a little snack and singing and some charades, they set the Kindergartners to work on making a book for me for my birthday. It was rather insightful, and I know how you love to hear what these sweet kids think and say all day, so I decided to share.

Each student was given a template with space for a picture at the top and then the following fill in the blank statements.

I think Mrs. Pastoor is _____ years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is _____.
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I _____.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is _____.

Following are their wonderful answers! ;) Enjoy!

From Thomas:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 100 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "This is the Day". (We sing this song every morning!)
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I sing.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she gives us fun papers.

From Abby:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 100 years old. (I must have looked a little tired that day!)
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I make jokes.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she helps me.

From Brielle:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 13 years old. :)
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jehovah Reigns in Majesty". (We learned this song as a class, so we sing it quite often!)
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I clean up.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she's a good teacher.

From Brady:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 26 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Great is Thy Faithfulness". (A year-round Kindergarten favorite!)
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I color nice.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she is my teacher.

From Brendan:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 47 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Go Tell It on the Mountain". (A year-round Kindergarten favorite!)
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I color nice. (It is a skill we have to work on in Kindergarten!)
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she reads us a story.

From Emily:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 38 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Hallelu, Hallelu". (Another song we sing every day.)
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I play nice.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she reads us books.

From Everett:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 30 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "The Lord is My Shepherd".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I sit down!. (Cringe! I might have to work on not saying that so often!)
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is that she teaches me. I Love You!

From Garett:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 20 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "This is the Day".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I say "I love you".
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she is my aunt. (Being related to the teacher kind of makes you an instant celebrity - at least in Kindergarten!)

From Graham:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 17 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I listen to the Bible.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is when she reads a book.

From Ivy:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 36 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Happy Birthday".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I be quiet. (Again, this is a skill we all have to work on!)
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she is nice. I love you!

From Jacob:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 40 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I do homework.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is that she teaches us.

From Joelle:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 14 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I draw a picture for her. (I do save every picture I get the entire year!)
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she gives us birthday treats. I love you I love you!

From Kenzie:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 21 years old.
Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".
Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I write nice.
My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she helps me.

From Keturah:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 20 years old.

Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".

Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I sing.

My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she lets us have stuffed animals.

From Kinsley:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 20 years old.

Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".

Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I give her hugs.

My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she is my teacher.

From Lachlan:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 20 years old.

Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "Jesus Loves Me".

Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I do a good job.

My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she has a nice voice.

From Thatcher:

I think Mrs. Pastoor is 90 years old. (His first answer was 60, but then he said, "No. Wait. You are WAY older than that!")

Mrs. Pastoor's favorite song is "This is the Day".

Mrs. Pastoor likes it when I want to go to school.

My favorite thing about Mrs. Pastoor is she lets me stay in for recess.

These kids nailed every single answer, with the exception of the age and possibly the "nice voice" unless he meant when I was reading a story. I have been known to really get into making the voices of the characters! But there you have it: why I love teaching so much! The honesty, the joy, the love. Oh, the LOVE I receive from these sweet children! I just hope they feel it in return.

A Reminder from Johnny – Mrs. Kelly VanOverloop

Several weeks ago a slightly horrified student came up to me and told me Johnny had said Mrs. VanOverloop was the meanest teacher he ever had. Now I'm a relatively thick skinned 42 year old, but the statement still stung, and I immediately pulled Johnny aside and asked if he had made that comment. Johnny didn't say a word, but I could see in his eyes that, yes, he did indeed say I was the meanest teacher ever. I was met with silence when I asked Johnny if he could tell me why he said what he did, even after I explained that I would like to know what I needed to work on so I wouldn't be so mean. He finally acknowledged me with a small nod when I asked if he was tired of me telling him to sit down and stop talking.

Perhaps I shouldn't have even approached Johnny about his comment. Perhaps I should have just said to the horrified student, "Well now, that wasn't kind was it?" and let the comment roll off my back. But I was bothered by it for several days, and I wondered why I let a seven year old's comment, who hadn't even had a vast repertoire of teachers, unsettle me. I'm in no competition with my fellow teachers to win the "nicest" award, but it still matters what others think of me. Even adults want to be liked. Upon hearing the initial comment it had flitted through my mind that I once had been dubbed "the nicest girl ever" (never mind that it was back in high school), and couldn't Johnny see that? After all, I teach six and seven year olds and some days I feel like I spend more time mothering (tying shoes, encouraging nose blowing and not picking, spill wiping, sock finding, etc) than actually teaching. While that may be a slight exaggeration, couldn't Johnny see I actually am a nice and patient person, or so I thought?

Now Johnny may have quickly forgotten that this exchange ever took place. But my thought process was just beginning. Johnny's world is going to get bigger as he gets older. And there will come a time when Johnny may be on the receiving end of unkind words. The teen years are coming when emotions are fragile and unkind words can drive a wedge in his confidence - not merely confidence in his athletic or academic ability, but in who he is as a child of God. Even kids that have grown up beside Johnny may be mean

and hateful. There may even come a time when someone questions his godly character and deems him worthy of hell. Right now Johnny has the confidence and awareness that he is God's child. He has the beautiful faith of a child that I am so privileged to witness, along with 18 other students on a daily basis.

But what will Johnny do, or any of us do, when unfounded, unkind words are spoken against us, when our confidence of who we are in Christ is shaken? The devil is a sneaky beast, using seemingly mild words to shake us and plant doubts in our minds of our worth, worth as a teacher, a person, and it spirals into doubts of our worth in Christ. And trials and afflictions will come. Attacks may come from many sides. As adults, many of us have the emotional and spiritual maturity to remain confident in our worth as Christ's children, but if adults can go through periods of anxiousness and despair too, how much more so will an emotionally fragile or spiritually weak teen or young adult be?

Well, what can we do? We certainly don't look to social media to see how many 'likes' we get on a post. And we don't measure our worth on the adoring gazes of other students or even a hurtful comment from a seven year old. When we hear the whispers of the devil telling us we are unworthy, we look to scripture. The Bible tells us we are sinners, wretched and ugly in our sin. The older I get the more aware I am of my sin and misery and it brings me to my knees. But thankfully scripture doesn't stop in identifying me as a sinner. "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8) Christ died for me. My identity is first in Christ. Not in being a mean teacher, and not in being a nice teacher.

So, Johnny, thank you for reminding me in a very roundabout way, whom I belong to. Hurtful words will be spoken to me again. I myself will speak hurtful words. But Johnny, as you grow up and sin against others and others sin against you, I pray you remain steadfast in remembering to whom you belong. Despite being a sinner, so unworthy of salvation, you find joy and peace in knowing you were chosen by God and belong to Jesus.

Lessons from the 3rd Grade – Miss Erin VanBaren

“How’s teaching going?” As a first year teacher, this is a question I get asked often. I am told that first year teaching is naturally difficult - new curriculum, new environment, and new responsibilities. This is obviously compounded by the situation we find ourselves in. With the stresses of political uncertainty, trials in our churches, pandemic restrictions, and more, teaching has been, at times, overwhelming this year. However, as in all trials, God is working and teaching. Although I have done my share of teaching, I have also learned a lot, and I wanted to share fifteen lessons, both fun and serious, from third grade.

1. My plan is not always God's plan. I have made plans so many times over the last year that have been completely interrupted, changed, or turned upside down. God has better plans for us than even the best ones I can come up with.
2. Third graders can tell very entertaining stories. I have heard some very good ones about falling out of bunk beds, cross country skiing, caring for chickens, dog “zoomies,” and so many more.
3. Our school is so blessed with our school board. They are so dedicated to making sure our students have a good, Christ-centered education while also balancing all of the other situations that are happening around us.
4. Writing using a dry erase marker makes literally anything more fun (at least if you’re eight or nine years old).
5. Teaching gives a very unique perspective on God’s working through generations in His covenant. It is so beautiful to see my students as image-bearers, reflecting Him in their work, their attitudes, and their kindness. They are clearly being raised by their parents in the fear of the Lord, and it is a blessing and privilege to play a small role in that.
6. Desks can get incredibly messy in just one week. However, if you make the students clean them every single week, they get tired of cleaning and start keeping them a little neater (or so I tell myself, anyway).
7. Parental support of students is incredibly important. Your students need you, and they will flourish if there are people invested in them and their growth, academic and spiritual. Your support and work at home is very appreciated from the teacher’s perspective!
8. Students will not have pencils when you need them to have pencils. Where do they go, you ask? I still have no idea. Ask me again at the end of the year, and I might have it figured out.
9. Being intentionally grateful has been crucial for me this year. As I mentioned before, it has been easy to get overwhelmed. There is always more grading, more lesson planning, more classroom decorating, more organizing. Being intentional about slowing down and listing the things that are going well and that are appreciated has made me realize how blessed I truly have been, even in this challenging year.
10. Related to #9 - I have a new appreciation for Hebrews 13:8, “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*” In the face of so much uncertainty, it is a blessing to know that Christ remains the same. As always, God is working all things for His glory and our salvation.
11. Be wary of allowing third graders to choose the name of the class fish. The name “Miss Van Baren Jr.” might make it a little farther than you’re comfortable with in the fish naming bracket.
12. We truly do not know what will happen tomorrow, and we can only worry about the things of today. Has there ever been a time when more plans were changed or discarded? I am continually learning to let go and trust that God’s plan is the best one.
13. To be more intentional about praying for the needs of others. At least once a week, we do a “popcorn prayer” in our classroom, where each student can add any prayer requests they have. These prayers sometimes go on for five minutes, as they add more and more people. What a blessing it is to be a part of the body of Christ!
14. If a student falls off their chair, do not acknowledge it. It happens at least once a day.
15. That our schools are such a blessing! Being on the teaching side for the first time has opened my eyes to the amount of people involved, working hard, to educate our students and to help them grow as God’s children. It is a beautiful example of the body of Christ, with many pieces working together for His glory.

Become a Teacher? Why? – Mrs. Erika Aalsma

Almost every Sunday, ministers pray about the need for young men to enter into the ministry. This need is also evident in our Christian schools. Every year the bulletins fill with announcements for teachers needed. I can guess that school board members are anxious come March and April as they interview, seeking to fill classrooms with qualified teachers. What can we do to encourage our children to seek out these callings? How do we cultivate the gifts of teaching and preaching in our young people?

Having been in the classroom for 22 years does not make me an expert. I’m not going to give you a list of ways to encourage young

men and women to pursue teaching as their career. Neither am I going to give you a list of skills and abilities needed to be a teacher. Certainly there are necessary skills and qualifications for being a teacher. Yet, different talents and abilities are what make a school environment special. Over the years I have worked with a wide variety of teachers. Some whose soft spoken nature made them effective, loving teachers, others whose boisterous, booming personalities filled their rooms with enthusiastic learning. Just like a variety of students make for a wonderful classroom, teachers with different gifts and abilities create a positive school environment.

So, instead of a list of qualifications, let me share with you my *don't's* and *do's* for becoming a teacher.

- DON'T become a teacher to share all you know about science, geography, or social studies.
 - DO become a teacher to watch students enthusiastically listen as they learn new things about God's creation.
- DON'T teach to use your toolbox of strategies to get your students to master their multiplication and division facts.
 - DO teach to see a student's joy when after months of hard work, their name is on the "Multiplication Master" wall.
- DON'T teach so that students can correctly answer every question on their Bible test.
 - DO teach to hear a student say "I love learning about God."
- DON'T teach so that students bring you beautiful book reports or perfectly formatted essays.
 - DO teach so that when you thank a student for a thoughtful gift, they say "I knew you would like socks like this because you like to wear little tennis shoes."

- DON'T teach so that you see your former students become doctors or nurses.
 - DO teach so that you see former students in the grocery store and they smile and say hello.
- DON'T teach so that you can be an influence in your student's lives.
 - DO teach so that they can be an influence in yours.

Encourage those young people in your lives to become teachers. Watch your soft spoken daughter patiently help her younger siblings and envision her someday with her students. Listen to your son encourage and cheer on his teammates, and imagine him cheering for a student who worked hard to earn that B- on a math test. Look for these gifts in them and pray that God will direct their path. "*Commit thy works unto the LORD and thy thoughts shall be established.*" Proverbs 16:3

Using IEW to Communicate Faith – Mrs. Jane Woudenbergh

The purpose of IEW is to help students broaden their vocabularies, which helps them to think, to reason, and to communicate orally and in writing. One of the most important reasons for learning to write and speak is to communicate faith in God. Psalm 66:16 says, "*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.*" In obedience to the third commandment, which teaches us how to speak God's name, we are called to bless the Lord by saying good things about Him.

I thought it would be valuable to have students use IEW concepts to proclaim their faith in God and communicate what the Bible teaches them about the Lord.

The students included dress-ups in their writing. Dress-ups are parts of speech such as strong verbs, -ly adverbs, and quality adjectives. My students have also begun to include clauses and prepositional phrases with their dress-ups. The students' dress-up and phrases are in bold type.

Molly Bergman: Our Father **grants** us **tender** mercies.

Brielle Bomers: Our **excellent** God **created** the world and **made** you also.

Devin Bruinooge: Jesus Christ **leads** us **faithfully** and **supplies** us with all we need **because** he **loves** us.

Miriam Cnossen: Our Savior is the **Great** Shepherd, **who** never leads His sheep off the **good** path.

Kate Decker: The Holy Spirit **works** faith **in my heart**, so that I **proclaim** the **wonderful** works of God.

Addison DeGram: The Holy Spirit **dwells** in me and **works wonders in my heart**.

Makayla Doezema: The Holy Spirit **abides in my heart** and **causes** me to **believe** in God.

Cole Drnek: The Holy Spirit **assures** me of **eternal** life.

Norah Dykstra: God **joyfully forgives** our sins and does not **lead** us **into temptation**.

Parker Griffioen: Our Father, **who made** heaven and earth, is the **one** and **only true** God.

Carson Gritters: The **almighty** and **powerful** God **loves** us.

Alayna Hassevoort: God **helps** us **in our troubles** and **forgives** our many sins.

Jacob Karsemeyer: God's Son, **who was innocent, willingly surrendered** himself to die on the **painful** cross, and **redeemed** us from destruction.

Levi Kleyn: The Holy Spirit **comforts** us and **abides** with us forever.

Devin Kuiper: We have an **eternal, wondrous** God, **who created** nature.

Kierra Looyenga: The Holy Spirit **works** many things **in my heart through the Gospel**.

Emma Nead: The **wonderful** Father **loves** His people.

Paige Noorman: Our **gracious** Father in **heaven, gave** His Son to die **on the cross** to save us **from our sins**.

Hudson Pipe: Our Mediator **hears** our **suffering** cries **because** He is **plenteous** in mercy.

Mallory VanBemmel: Our **spiritual** brother, Jesus, **saved** us from our sins by **dying on the cross**.

Charlotte VanderKolk: The **gracious** Lord **strengthens** me, and has become my **continual** salvation.

Peyton VanderZwaag: When I **pray**, God **always answers** my prayers.

Brandon VanTil: Our Lord Jesus Christ **graciously saved** us, and **by his stripes** we are saved.

Cameron Wieringa: God the Father **created** us **fearfully** and **wonderfully**.

Mental Pictures – Mr. Doug DeBoer

South America is south of North America – right? Not really. Look at a globe. It really is almost completely east of North America as well as being south of us. It should be called Southeast America. If you go straight south from Hudsonville you will never reach South America. You will travel over the Pacific Ocean, and the continent of South America will always be to the east of you.

How much of the continent of Africa is north of the equator? Did you guess just a small portion? Many of us picture most of Africa to be south of the equator. Not so. Most of the continent is north of it. In fact the northern part of Africa is as far north as Virginia.

In our minds Europe is usually placed much farther south than where it is actually located. We tend to think of it as being directly east from the United States. It is in reality lined up much more closely with Canada. Paris is located at 49 degrees North and Hudsonville at 43 thus making Paris over four hundred miles farther north of the equator than Hudsonville. We are about the same distance from the equator as Rome. Mentally we don't think of those places as being that far north.

Which is bigger in size, Brazil or the United States? If you guessed the U.S. you are right, but only if you include Alaska. Brazil is actually larger than the lower 48 states. Because we usually look

at a flat map that has been made of a round object, the size and shape of land masses is distorted. Think of smashing an orange peel. It will squish and wrinkle in the middle. That's what happens when you put the round earth onto a flat map. It gets pinched in the middle and the land masses become elongated as you move toward the poles. Thus Greenland, which is only 1/8 the size of South America, appears to be the same size as that continent on a flat map.

Sometimes teachers and parents also form mental pictures that are inaccurate. Sometimes teachers form misconceptions about students or have only a partial picture of a student's needs. Parents may have an inaccurate picture of what goes on in school or may have a picture that is incomplete or distorted. It would seem that the more we are able to communicate, the fewer misconceptions and inaccuracies there will be. So I encourage us to ask questions and inform one another of what we perceive is happening in order to make our mental pictures of the classroom and the student more accurate. A more accurate picture will help us to better do our work of raising the children the Lord has entrusted to our care.

I Teach, but I Learn – Miss Liz VanDrunen

Did you know that more Monopoly money is printed in the United States than real money? The white sturgeon is the largest freshwater fish. North Korea and Cuba are the only places you can't buy CocaCola. These are a few of the things my students have recently taught me.

I distinctly remember my professor telling us in college that we were going to graduate as teachers, but we needed to be prepared to be learners too. This was valuable advice that I noted to be true year after year of teaching. One major reason I love teaching is because of all the things my students teach me! It is fun to see the various interests and talents of each student. Teachers and students enter the classroom with experiences that offer great insight and wisdom. The amount of Bible knowledge found in a classroom of 22 amazes me.

Students not only teach me some things, but they end up teaching each other too. I've learned that when a student doesn't understand a certain math concept after I tried to explain it a few times, often a fellow peer can do a great job of explaining it in a way that might make more sense to them. When a student is in need of a new book recommendation, the best ideas often come from their peers who have learned their classmate's reading style over the years.

I had my students write a list of things they learned from their peers. Here is a list of a few:

- how to be a better artist
- how to figure out a tricky math problem
- how to play hard and cheer others on
- what books are good
- how to get rid of brain freezes

- a kind word can make a difference
- dodgeball strategies
- how to play psalter numbers
- the importance of taking notes in class
- to be happy even in sad times and make the best of things
- try to always include others
- patience is important
- when you point a finger at someone, four others are pointed right back at you

I'm thankful for the encouragement my students are to me and also to one another. When I get asked what grade I teach, often my response of "6th grade" gets followed by a concerning look along with an apology of some sort. I respond by telling them that actually 6th graders are really wonderful people who are a lot of fun to be around.

My students have taught me to find joy in the little things, to admit when I make mistakes, to be proud of the talents God has given me, to remember things people say and ask them about it later, that a card during a difficult time can mean a lot, that curiosity makes life a lot of fun, a smile and hello are always a good idea, and so much more. I am grateful for the wonderful, encouraging students we have here at Heritage, for the ways they teach and challenge me, and for the ways they positively influence each other both academically and spiritually. I am thankful for the godly parents behind each student who do a great job raising them up in the Lord. I am appreciative for the opportunity I have to teach and learn along with my 6th graders at Heritage each school day.

I Know What the Bible Says, But... – Mr. Matt Kuiper

I know what the Bible says but... is this becoming a more and more common thought among Christians? There are so many uncertainties in the world today, and our Christian faith is being tested today as much as ever before in my lifetime. I am sure that during the Depression of the 1930's, it was tough, probably tougher than today. The World Wars and the Gulf War, especially if you knew a person fighting, were very trying to the faith of Christians. But I am talking about today, urging you to put aside our feelings and to look to what the Scriptures have to say about our current trials. Keep in mind, I am not trying to take sides on any issue. I am simply searching the Scriptures and seeing what the Bible says. There are so many ways I could apply this to today. Sabbath observance comes to mind. What do the Scriptures say? What do the Scriptures say about various controversies in the church of Christ through the ages? But, there is one thing I want to concentrate on in the article: the pandemic, specifically on politics and respect for authority.

As you read this, please be assured that I am not judging anyone based on their beliefs. The purpose of this article is simply to get us all, myself included, to think about our thought processes and the Biblical basis for them, or rather, are there Biblical bases for them? I am not a minister, one who is able to fully explain the Bible, or a doctor, able to fully explain medical issues; rather I am someone who is looking to the Scriptures for answers.

Respect toward authority and politics often go hand in hand. Historically, when a president that we agree with politically is in office, we tend to respect them more and honor them. I think back to President Obama and President Clinton. It seems like Christians, even though they did not necessarily agree with them in all things because some things were purely anti-Scripture, still respected them in their office more than we do now. When President Trump was in office, the vast majority of Christians I know supported him as President and respected and honored him in his office. There are some who fully supported him and others who saw his weaknesses and supported him a little less enthusiastically. However, a measure of respect was shown all along. What Christians witnessed from some, however, was pure hatred and a lack of respect for President Trump. Nothing was good from him and, of course, the pandemic came and it was his fault, according to his detractors. We saw disrespect for authority on so many levels that it seems to have maybe bled into our beliefs to some degree. Currently, President Biden, by God's decree, is in office. Was it possibly illegal or a little unscrupulous at best? Maybe, maybe not. Does it matter according to Scripture? How are we doing respecting him? How are we doing respecting our Democrat governor? Does the Bible give us an out for showing disrespect by disobeying, talking bad about them, spewing conspiracy theories on social media, or teaching our children disrespect by our talk and actions? I don't want Christians to fall into the trap of the world and think it is okay to be disrespectful since all the other side did was show disrespect for four years. Can we fall into the evil of the world around us? It can happen, so let's see what the Scriptures say.

There are so many places I could start. I am going to pick a verse from Scripture that deals with this issue commanding us to disagree. I start with Daniel 3:16-18 since it talks about when Christians SHOULD disobey those set over us by God. This part of the Bible talks about Daniel and his friends and their refusal to bow down to the idol. They were specifically being told to break God's law, and they refused to listen. This happened a few different times

in the book of Daniel. I pray we dare to be Daniels someday when we are told to disobey the law of God. There can be no disagreement from Christians that Daniel did what was right and that we should do the same if told to break God's law. Acts 4 and 5 also refer to the apostles being told not to preach the gospel. Their response to the leaders was that they were to obey God rather than man. Of course they were right to disobey since they were being told to disobey God's law.

The rest of the verses that I am going to use are commanding us to respect those over us, instead of finding a reason not to obey. I am limiting this to only five verses.

- James 2:10 - "*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*" The one point this could be referring to is honoring those in authority over us. The law refers to honoring father and mother, but when the fifth commandment is preached from the pulpit, we are repeatedly reminded that this goes beyond mother and father, but to all those set in authority over us. This includes our pastors, consistories, parents, teachers, school board, and yes, even our president, governor, and the Department of Health and Human Services and many more. Are our children hearing this respect from us?
- I Peter 2:18 - "*Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*" Froward is an adjective meaning "of a person difficult to deal with; contrary". This could apply in so many different ways. Some bosses meet that description. Some presidents or governors could possibly meet the description. However, we are commanded to be subject to them unless told to sin. Do these "masters" appear to be good Christian people? Most of our leaders have proven to be foul mouthed and borderline or outright anti-Christian. That isn't an excuse to not obey and honor.
- Titus 3:1-2 - "*Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.*" I hope this is what we are teaching our children. I hope this is what we are doing in our own lives as Christians. I hope we are not learning from what we have witnessed in the past years. None of the hatred that is spewed towards conservatives and Christians gives us the right, according to the above passage, to brawl (no not physically, but with words) and show a lack of meekness. We are called in I Peter 1:15 to be holy in all manner of conversation, including our conversations about our leaders and other authority figures.
- Romans 13 - I am not going to quote the whole passage but take the time to read it. Read verses 1 and 2. "*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers...The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.*" This gives us no room to have a "but" when talking about respecting our leaders.
- Luke 11:28b - "*Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*" I end with this verse and it needs no explanation.

I could keep writing more and more passages from God's holy Word about obeying authority. Google it sometime. There are over 80 passages that showed up on the topic. Some were more on point than others, but I could have picked five or ten more that

were similar to the ones above. As I close this article, I again want to assure you that this is written for me as much as I am writing it for you. It is so easy to get caught up in what is deemed fair or not in our minds. Then out comes our old man of sin, reminding us of our own wants and desires, and we forget what the Bible says. I urge you all to remember what we are commanded to do in

Scripture. We are commanded to obey those put in authority over us and we are commanded to teach our children the Scriptures and the fear of the Lord. When our children hear or see us disregarding and disrespecting authority, we teach them by example. Let's make it a commitment in our lives to not allow the words or ideas of "I know what the Bible says BUT..." to creep into our minds.

Rearing Our Children in the Last Days – Mrs. Sue Bleyenburg

Rev. Haak recently delivered a sermon on Matthew 24:17, part of Jesus' Passion Week sermon on the last days. I thought it was a good reminder for all of us. These days are the last days and the Savior is warning of this. The Bible warns us many times, giving us many examples of this in Hebrews 11. We need to hold these treasures of Christ to our hearts instead of treasures of the world. He that has ears let him hear and open eyes to see Him.

Christ warns us in the passage but also comforts us in His word. We must teach our children to have this devotion in their hearts and teach them to be godly and compassionate one to another. Our children must know the most important things in our lives and know Jesus Christ and His infallible word. We must teach them a life of godliness and to serve in the church. They must see we are

content and satisfied even when we don't get our way. We also must teach our children to be generous in service and monetarily to church and school, willing to serve others and live a life of service. We must be a happy and thankful people, not murmuring and complaining. We have a high calling and can do this by way of prayer. We must also teach our children to pray for these things.

Finally, we must prepare them for the trials of the last days and the hate of this world. There will be persecution of the church. The days will be shortened as the passage mentions and the world quieted for the elect. But our salvation rests alone in Him. We have the love of Jesus in our hearts. Be not afraid and pray that our children learn and know these truths.

10 Misconceptions about Special Education – Mrs. Jordan Pettit

Special Education. It's a term with many stigmas, a lot of misconceptions, and even a bit of fear from others. Many people go off things that they have heard, read online, or experienced in the past. Even those who have been around various aspects of special education are guilty of believing some of the misconceptions regarding special education. I hope this article will cause others to think and challenge some of the things they may have believed about special education or those with disabilities.

1. **Misconception Number 1: Only kids with severe intellectual or physical disabilities can be in special education.** Our special education program includes students with various learning challenges, varying severity levels, and diversity of diagnosis. While some of our students do have disabilities that result in a severe intellectual or physical disability, most of them do not. Most of our students in special education qualify with what is known as a Specific Learning Disability. If you were to look at prevalence for various types of disabilities in the school setting, on average, you would find that 46.2% of students in special education have a learning disability, 19.7% of students have a language impairment, 8.4% of students have an intellectual disability, 7.9% have an emotional impairment, and 8.5% qualify under other Health Impairments. Learning disabilities commonly affect a student's ability to learn in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, or math. What is difficult about learning disabilities is they are often known as the "invisible disabilities" because by just looking at the student you would not be able to tell that they have a disability. But just because you can't see it doesn't mean it is not there.

2. **Misconception Number 2: Kids in special education can only receive instruction in the special education room and can't learn in class with their peers.** In special education, we often talk about two types of support: pull-out and push-in support. With pull-out support, our students come out of their general education classrooms to receive accommodated or modified instruction. Push-In instruction is when I or one of the Para pros goes into the general education classroom with the student and helps with note-taking, following along with the lesson, and working on the same activities that his or her peers are working on. In our program, we work hard to have the students in their general education classes with their peers for as much of the day as appropriate for them and strive to find opportunities to be independent learners.
3. **Misconception Number 3: Kids in special education aren't held to high standards or expectations.** Our students are held to high standards and expectations just like any other student. The Special Ed staff wants each student to achieve to the best of their ability. I push my students because I know they are capable of it. I don't want to sell them short or assume because they have a disability that they cannot do or learn something. That means that our Special Education staff also works hard to provide a quality education for the students in our program to learn and grow in all skill areas.
4. **Misconception Number 4: Kids can only get diagnosed with a disability at a young age.** While some students are diagnosed with a disability at a young age, some before they even enter grade school, there is no age limit for getting diagnosed with a disability. At Heritage, general

education teachers work with Special Ed and Academic Support/DC to monitor all the students at school. We discuss students who are struggling and may be flagged on a watch list as a student who may have a disability affecting their ability to learn. This is often the case with students who are diagnosed with Learning Disabilities, Autism, or ADHD. While we work hard to catch students early, there are often many factors that can contribute to students getting diagnosed later in their school years. This is why parents need to mention concerns to teachers when they notice them as well, no matter what grade the student is in. Communication, both on the teacher's and parent's part, is critical in our students' success.

5. **Misconception Number 5: IEPs are one-size-fits-all, and all special education instruction is the same.** An IEP stands for an Individualized Education Plan. The focus of an IEP is for it to be individualized and based on the specific individual educational, emotional, and behavioral needs of each student. When writing up an IEP and goal plan for each student, the student's particular strengths, weaknesses, and present level of ability are looked at, and the best plan for that student is crafted. It includes goals, objectives, accommodations, modifications, what, if any, alternate curriculums are being used, and best ways to support the student. Everything about the document is explicitly tailored to that student's needs to make sure that the student can be successful.
6. **Misconception Number 6: IEPs can never be changed or altered.** Each year a student's IEP is looked at, evaluated, and updated with new goals and objectives by all of those involved. Every three years, a re-evaluation is done with extensive testing to see if a student still qualifies for special education and updates goals, support, and data on how the student is performing. As students' needs and ability levels change, so must the IEP to ensure that our educational plan for each student meets those needs and abilities.
7. **Misconception Number 7: Students in special education can't get a diploma in High School or can't be successful after school.** While graduating with a diploma is not an option for all, many students in special education, especially those who have learning disabilities, can graduate with a high school diploma. When a student transitions from Heritage to Covenant, Amanda Haney, the special education teacher at Covenant, and I meet to discuss the student's present level of performance, the

supports they receive, and how their disability affects their learning. We then meet with parents and discuss the student's potential to graduate with a diploma or graduate with a certificate of completion.

8. **Misconception Number 8: Their disability defines students.** If a child has a disability, that is just one part of who they are. Our students have many gifts and talents that God has blessed them with, and it is essential to recognize those and celebrate those. A disability does not define what a student can learn but rather guides how students are taught. In our classroom, we choose to focus on the able rather than the label. We realize that a disability is not a one-size fit all box for each student. Not every child with a learning disability is the same, nor is every student with Autism or Down Syndrome. When we focus on students' abilities and look for ways to support students with disabilities, we work on focusing on them as individuals with gifts and talents.
9. **Misconception Number 9: Special education only focuses on life skills and behavior, not academics.** Life skills and social and emotional regulation skills are something that I work on with many of my students. However, it is not the primary focus for the instruction of my students. In our program, we are driven by academics and work hard to develop ways to learn and master the general education curriculum.
10. **Misconception Number 10: Kids in special education can outgrow their disability or take a pill to cure them.** Unfortunately, there is no magic pill or strategy that can be used to cure or change a disability. While medication can help manage symptoms or effects of a disability, medicine does not cure a student. For the same reason, glasses will not cure a student of dyslexia. That is why we work hard in Special Ed to develop the right strategies, accommodations, and modifications for students so that we can allow each student to be successful.

Working with individuals in our program who have disabilities is one of the greatest blessings. Our students are smart, funny, kind, energetic, and amazing in their own unique ways. I love being challenged as a teacher to provide the best education I can for them, and to advocate for them in all settings. Understanding Special Education as a program working to ensure the complete success of a student is critical. Our children have been blessed with many gifts talents and abilities and watching them grow in those talents and abilities brings glory to God.

Running the Course – Mrs. Sue Looyenga

The word curriculum has its origin in the Latin language. Derived from the classical form *currere*, meaning “to run; to move quickly”, the term came into Modern English in 1834, referring broadly to the fixed course of study at a university, college, or school. Today, in most educational institutions, curriculum denotes not only the knowledge, skills, and desired understandings taught in a school, but also the way in which these instructional goals are presented in the classroom, experienced by the students, and assessed for their effectiveness.

Interestingly, Scripture often compares our lives here on earth as His people to running a race, or “running our course”. In Ecclesiastes 9:11, the inspired writer notes that, in general, the race does not always go to the swift, because time and chance- a pair of conditions that even the best of runners cannot control- happen to them all. Those who run the course prescribed by God for His children, however, participate in an entirely different course, because not a single moment or circumstance encountered by a child of God is ever outside of His sovereign control. Therefore a

victorious end is assured before he or she even begins, because that child is His by water and blood in Jesus Christ.

What a tremendous comfort that is to parents, teachers, students, school board members and curriculum coordinators at our Christian schools. Especially in a school year such as we are experiencing-filled with what we might regard as “poorly-timed obstacles” or “unexpected happenings” that threaten to throw everything we’ve so carefully planned off track, we can find peace and joy in our courses, each of us, as part of God’s perfectly designed curriculum. Because God is with us, through Jesus Christ, and by His outpoured Spirit, there is no “remote learning” with its attendant communication difficulties and feelings of alienation. He is ever near, ever attentive, ever strong to help us in time of need. What a blessing that we can embrace this and impart this to our precious covenant children in their time of need!

God’s goals for us to obtain not only knowledge, but wisdom, are perfectly wise and just, even when ours must be hobbled together at times to fit into an online format that just can’t do what we can do face-to-face in the classroom. He knows each of us so perfectly,

that every word He brings to us, every experience we undergo, every understanding we need is clearly expressed and lovingly given at exactly the time and place it needs to be taught for His purposes.

And He- only He- can guarantee that every child of His will persevere to the end, will win the ultimate prize. Thus we can continue to run the race this year, all of us, because of His continual presence in our lives, His perfectly wise curriculum design, His sure promises that by Him, we will fight a good fight, finish our course, keep the faith, and win the prize (II Tim. 4:7-8). All things are of Him, through Him, and to Him. It cannot fail, even though we, His children grow weak at times and weary in our own efforts and in the situations that seem to arise continually to circumvent them. Let our daily prayer be that of the psalmist:

*In mercy turn and look on me,
Thy servant true, Thy chosen one;
Let me Thy great salvation see,
And strengthen me, my course to run. (Psalter #234)*

Remaining 2020-2021 School Calendar

April 2-9, 2021 - Spring Break, no school
May 17-21, 2021 - MAP Testing for Grades 3-8
May 20, 2021 – Possible 5-8 Band and Choir Concert date
May 31, 2021 - Memorial Day, no school
June 3, 2021 – Graduation, last day of school

Partial 2021-2022 School Year Calendar

August 30, 2021 - School begins
September 3 & 6, 2021 - Labor Day Break
October 21 & 22, 2021 - Teachers’ Convention
November 25 & 26, 2021 - Thanksgiving Break
December 23 - January 2, 2022 - Christmas Break
February 18, 2022 - Mid-Winter Break
April 1 - 8, 2022 - Spring Break
June 1, 2022 - Graduation

For your reading edification:

Perspectives in Covenant Education is a publication of the Protestant Reformed Teachers Institute (PRTI), an organization of Protestant Reformed teachers. The magazine is a Reformed education magazine, and is a worthy publication for our parents to subscribe to.

You may view some previous issues of the publication at <https://www.prcs.org/perspectives-in-covenant-education>
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