The Lynden LINK

December 16, 2018 Volume 17, Issue 3

Cornerstone Christian School

~ Chairman Report ~

The Reason for the Season

It is that time of year again. What time of year? Christmas. When we reflect on "that time of year" and "Christmas" – what comes to mind? To many people these words mean a host of different things.

All around us we can experience "the season", but what does that mean? What does it mean to "celebrate the holidays"? We live in a very secular world. A world which is very man-centered. A world which focuses on things that make people feel happy. There is "Christmas" music (or is it holiday music?) in the air. There are parties going on. There are decorations to put up and an abundance of festive food to eat. Then there are the presents. Is it better to give than to receive? There is the "spread of good cheer" and the "joy of the season". There is very little about the historical event that we recognize and celebrate with the birth of Christ.

Many celebrate the season and mask the realities of life with the pleasures that the world has to offer. The focus is on enjoyment, entertainment, and self-fulfillment. The focus of the birth of Christ is exchanged for Santa Clause, who reliably shows up once a year and he knows exactly what we want? Instead of an all-knowing God who we are faithful to, there is a jolly man who gives us what we want.

As part of my job, I spend a fair amount of time at various public schools. The focus at these schools mirrors that of society. There is little or no recognition of the birth of Christ. Instead it is all about enjoying life, seeking pleasure, and living for the day. They make "gods" of created things and honor traditions based on self-pleasure.

How do we celebrate Christmas? Is our

focus on being thankful to our Lord for sending his Son into the world to save us from our sins? How do we show this thankfulness? Is it in praise to God our Father? Do we pray and reflect on the greatest gift that God has given to His people? Do we worship together with the communion of saints, in recognition of the birth of Christ? Do we reflect upon the humble beginning of the birth of Christ rather than the "richness" of the holiday season?

One of the reasons that we need to ask ourselves about how we celebrate Christmas is the thought that how we celebrate Christmas reflects what is in our hearts. This thought can be very humbling. Is this something that we think about? Is this something that we reflect upon at this time of year?

This is something that is very important to think about as parents. As you can see in public schools the values of the children mirror that of society, so in Christian schools the values and the priorities of the children often reflects that of their parents (while recognizing there is also a strong secular/societal influence). As parents we need to be vigilant in teaching our children about what we celebrate and why. Equally important is that we need to be examples of what we teach our children and what we believe. We all have to look inward and reflect on what we do and be convinced of what we do and why we do it and how this fits with the Lord's will for

As we reflect on Christmas, let us all give thanks to our heavenly God and Father for the wonderful gift of his Son. Let this be our focus. Let us remember the humble birth that has changed the world. We need to remember to



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Upcoming Dates

Dec. 21-Last Day of 2018

Dec. 21- Jan 4-- Christmas Break

Jan 7 - First day of 2019

Jan 18- HS 2nd Qtr Reports

Jan. 21- Martin Luther King Day

Jan.22/23 -HS P/T Conferences

Jan 25- Prof. Devt. Day

Feb. 14/15 - Mid Winter Break

purposefully push back against secular ideas and celebrations which take away from the richness of the blessings that we have in Christ. When someone mentions Christmas, what should come to mind is how great our God is that he sent his Son into the world to save us!

As to matters related to the operation of the school: By the time that this submission is published – Cornerstone will have had it's Christmas Concert. We can be very thankful to hear the sound of our children praising the Lord and recognizing all the He has done for us with the birth of His son.

I would also like to recognize all the members of the school's College and Careers Committee. As a school society we are very thankful for your work. We are very blessed with individuals with various talents and life experience that will help our children gain a better understanding of post-secondary education and careers and the different opportunities with this. Thank you for the latest information evening and for your continued work with our children!

For the past while at the school, the internet has been spotty. There have been various challenges with the existing systems to make them work for our school. I would like to commend the IT committee (especially Eric Brown) for their diligent efforts to improve the internet operation in the school. Thank you for your diligence in finding the "gremlins" in the system. No doubt your efforts are appreciated by all who use the internet at school!

As part of the continued work with the Strategic Plan – a "land-use subcommittee" has been struck to investigate options on how best to utilize the vacant land next to the school. Currently Raymond Faber and I have been tasked with this and we have solicited some help from Tim Faber. We are currently looking at some potential options, which includes working with the Inspire group, to utilize the land in a way that is beneficial to the school society. There are plenty of options to consider. We will continue to look at these options and work with commu-

nity members to get the best usage for our land. We will also continue to look at rezoning the land (currently it is zoned residential) to give the school society more options in the future.

A new Athletic Committee has also been formed to help with the operation and the smooth running of the school sponsored leagues. This committee is made up of Darryn Kleyn (athletic director), Janita Willis (teachersponsor), Kyle Lodder (coach), Harvey Pelleboer (society member), and myself (board liaison). With this committee we hope to relieve Darryn of some of the bigger-picture duties and responsibilities and provide a forum/procedure for working with issues that may arise with the operation of the leagues. It is always great to see the community involvement with these leagues and many of us really enjoy watching the games.

A quick update on the progress of the Greenhouse – currently we have electricity running to the greenhouse and the lighting is operational! Thank you to John Heystek and his crew for their work on this. Soon we will also be installing base flashing around the perimeter of the building, attaching the doors, patching some wall panels, re-wiring the interior, running a water line and installing interior and maybe exterior hydrants. There is a lot of work to do with this and the help we've received so far is greatly appreciated! It is wonderful to see all the energetic and talented people that come to help with this project. If you have some skills and some time – feel free to call Marty V. and I am sure he can put you to work!

Once again, we continue to be blessed with the smooth operation of the school and a great cohesive environment. We can be very thankful to the Lord for this. On behalf of the school board and staff, we hope that you all have an enjoyable Christmas break as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.







~ Treasurer Report ~

Greetings!

I'd like to extend thanks to Steve Hofford for his past three years of service as the school's Treasurer. It's evident that the books and finances are maintained in good order, working alongside our capable bookkeeper. Thanks Steve! It certainly makes the transition to a new Treasurer quite easy!

One friendly reminder: Any expense reimbursement should include the Expense Reimbursement form along with copies of receipts. The form is available at the front

desk or digitally if you request from Karla (bookkeeper@cornerstoneschool.us).

We are quickly approaching the end of the calendar year. Any outstanding pledge donations should be received by December 28 if you wish for us to include with your 2018 charitable donation receipt. Furthermore, it's certainly helpful for the school's finances to receive the pledged payment sooner rather than later.

Wishing you all an enjoyable Christmas Season. Kyle Lodder







~ IT Report ~

The IT Committee continues to be busy with the adjusting, updating, planning, and securing of the school's digital infrastructure. After an initial trial by fire, what was a ballooning list of to dos, is now starting to deflate to an occasional turn of the wrench here and lubing of a squeak there.

Recently, the content filter, which dictates what is allowed to be displayed on the screens via the internet, was upgraded. The old filter worked well at filtering, but not so well at doing it quickly, so this was one of the steps in our overall plan to make the network more speedy. A metaphor might be 30 cars trying to leave the church parking lot in a period of 5 seconds, and each needs to have their plates run before they leave and searched upon return. A shout out to Eric B. here for the extensive research done to make the process of switching over with very few hiccups. Only a fender bender or two that could be processed quickly.

Speaking of overall plan we have enlisted the help of three very talented individuals to provide long term ongoing direction for the IT needs of the school. Welcome to your life membership in the IT consulting group Steve H., Jeff B., Ray B, and Eric B. Well ok, maybe not life, but we certainly appreciate your willingness to serve.

The IT consulting group will help to provide a steady direction forward in a straight line as it relates to weighty IT decisions, rather than what might reflect a squeaky serpentine belt on a Ford Focus as IT committee members come and go.

Ironing out what those decisions are will be the focus of the IT committee over the next several months, along with the regular tasks of connecting computers to printers, projectors, and peripherals and making sure proper content effectively reaches learning, inquisitive minds.

For the IT Committee, David Kruyswijk

~ Education Committee Report ~

I recently had the opportunity to make a school visit with one of our board members. We continue to be impressed by the positive atmosphere at the school. Teachers and students are actively engaged in the instruction and learning process. There is so much to be thankful for!

Our two senior students along with one junior student have begun their senior projects. We wish you much success in this endeavor and we look forward to the final results.

Every year the Education Committee reviews different subject areas taught at the school. We've completed the Language Arts review and have just begun a review of the Music and Art programs. We are thankful that our students can develop their talents in these areas as well. We've also recently reviewed the school's homework policy and will continue with the status quo.

Report cards have gone out and parent teacher interviews have followed. Hopefully parents and teachers were able to use this opportunity to meet with and encourage each other. You are a team; don't be intimidated by one another. Good communication is so helpful for

both parents and teachers. A quick email from the teacher or to the teacher can be a really good tool in ensuring that your student is on task. The staff at Cornerstone certainly care about our students, and continually need our prayers and support. Parents: volunteer in the classroom when you have the chance, the students are a delight to work with and you'll get an insider's view on what's expected from your child. Remember that the main goal of our school is "to assist parents in educating the children of the covenant as a part of their preparation for a life of Christ-centered service and stewardship in the kingdom and Church of God." How thankful we can be that God has blessed us with so many talented, caring, and enthusiastic, teachers, staff, and volunteers to assist us in the education of our children.

As we head into a winter break let us remember the reason for this Christmas Season and reflect on the blessing that God's Son came on earth as a man. He suffered and died, taking our sins upon Him and today sits at God's right hand interceding on our behalf. Glory to God in the Highest!

For the Ed Comm - Bernice Vreugdenhil





~ CBM Report ~

The CBM continues to operate behind the scenes keeping the school in good operating condition. One of the projects we are working on now is upgrading the lighting in a couple more rooms to LED Lighting. This process helps reduce maintenance and operating costs and based on the positive reviews of the GYM lighting upgrade earlier this year we intend to continue down this path.

In other news, each CBM member serves a 3 year term

and as of November Kam Veldman has arrived at that milestone. We would like to extend a big thank-you to Kam for his years of willing service! Your time and willingness to get things done were greatly appreciated! To fill the void left by Kam, the CBM has added a new member, Jeremy Bouwman. Jeremy, thanks for being willing to serve in this capacity!

On behalf of the CBM, John DeBoer

~ Principal Report ~

Welcome to the December issue of the LINK. Time flies! A few weeks into January and we'll already be at the half way point of the school year. I can thankfully report that we've been blessed with a very smooth start to the first half of the school year. There is a positive vibe in the school and a willingness from Board, to Ed Comm, to teachers, students and volunteers – to row in the same direction. It's a wonderful environment to serve in and one that ultimately benefits the growth of our children. Praise the Lord!

Social Dynamics

During our summer staff meetings, the teachers explored the question: What inhibits student learning? We ran through a brainstorming process to discover some of the key areas that impact student learning - particularly at CCS. One factor that made its way to the top of the list was 'social dynamics'. That is: the behavior and interactions of individuals or groups of students that directly impact the learning environment in the classroom. I'm sure it's no surprise to anyone that negative attitudes and poor behavior can pull a classroom culture down. On the other hand, a positive, upbeat attitude and godly behavior will contribute in a big way to a flourishing learning environment.

This past week, at our staff meeting, we explored this topic a little further and asked ourselves the question: what can we as teachers do to impact the social dynamics in the school? While by no means an exhaustive list, we suggested the following as worthy of our focus:

- The teacher/student relationship is one that needs to be fostered in the classroom; the teacher sets the tone by being friendly, kind, helpful and supportive of the students in their learning.
- The teacher sets clear boundaries by upholding high standards for behavior and attention and holding students accountable when poor behavior or attitudes come to the fore.
- Class collaboration on special events can really help a class bond as they work together towards a common cause. For example, the grade 5/6 class worked together to put on a Thanksgiving play and that brought a lot of joy, comradery and excitement to the classroom.
- Having grades 1-12 under one roof brings possibilities for the older students to lead and set a positive example for the younger students. The student leadership team promotes positive relationship building through the (team) events they run. The reading buddy system brings older and younger students together; when older students demonstrate maturity and a love for the younger students – our younger kids develop a desire 'to be like them one day'.
- We'll further explore the buddy system format as a year-long prospect rather than just during reading

month (November).

We recognize that this doesn't cover it all and ultimately it's the Holy Spirit that works a desire in the hearts of our children to contribute positively to the classroom environment. However, we believe there are things we can do as teachers to make CCS a cohesive, positive and exciting place to learn. We'll continue to explore this topic and engage the students in conversations on how a positive social dynamic can be maintained.

It was also mentioned that there are intangibles that the teachers cannot impact (and nor is it always our place!). We cannot impact friendships, family dynamics, social events etc. that happen outside the school which can directly affect a student's attitude or behavior.

So, what can we as parents do on the home front to have a positive impact on the social dynamics of the school? A few thoughts:

- Promote academics. Teach your kids to work hard, to
 do their best. It's their God-given job at this stage of
 their life. And some parts of the job are just plain difficult and some tasks are not as enjoyable as other
 tasks. That's life get used to it!:)
- Hold your kids accountable for disruptive behavior and negative attitudes. Check in with your kids' teachers from time to time to see how they are doing in this regard.
- Encourage your kids to use their gifts to serve the student body through the opportunities that are promoted by the teachers and student leadership team.
- Help your kids to communicate in a positive way to resolve relationships that have become strained.
- Ask your kids how their behavior is in class. Do they listen while the teacher is talking? Are they engaged by asking/answering questions? Are they seeking to understand?

Where are we at?

So, how are the social dynamics at CCS? The teachers agreed that, on the whole, we can be delighted with the positive tone in our classrooms and in the hallways this vear. The relationship between students appears to be wholesome. The students are, for the most part, engaged in the lessons and striving to do their best to turn in quality work. We see much evidence of the Spirit's work in changing and renewing behaviors and negative attitudes. We acknowledge that we will never 'arrive' at the perfect environment. The devil will continue to do his utmost to sew discontent, bitterness, slackness, negativity etc. to pick apart the social dynamics in the school. We need to be on guard but at the same time acknowledge and be thankful for God's work in the hearts of our children. Parents: thank-you for the encouragement you give on the home front. It makes a big difference to the students and the teachers. Let's continue to work together to promote a positive learning environment in the school and one in which everyone feels safe to contribute and do their best!

Special Events

Here are a few highlights from the past few months:

- Our College and Careers Committee hosted an evening for parents and HS students with a choice of a variety of workshops. Really neat to see a number of our alumni 'giving back' in this forum.
- Cross-grade Bible Bowl with teams competing in the gym in front of the rest of the school
- Ed Comm hosted an evening to begin a discussion on screen technology and its use in our homes. A viewing of the documentary *Connect* was followed by discussion groups.
- Our Book Character Day pancake breakfast at the end of November was a great opportunity to farewell Mr. Jack Marissen.
- Our 'new' greenhouse has landed on a foundation and is being fitted out for a planned opening in

- March, 2019.
- Our senior boys and girls' basketball teams are booked (and excited!) to fly to Edmonton on the weekend of Feb 1 for some basketball games with PICS and Neerlandia. (Swoop Airlines is where the cheap tickets are at!)
- We're looking forward to inviting the dads to the classrooms in the New Year. We've chosen the morning of Wednesday, January 16 at 8:15. It's our way of giving you the opportunity to see the classes in action which many of our moms see on a regular basis. Let me know if you're interested in attending and I'll setup a schedule – so that everyone doesn't end up in the same classroom at the same time. J

I wish all our readers a blessed Christmas celebration and God's blessings for 2019!

~ Ladies Aid Report ~

Merry Christmas! We are blessed to celebrate this time of year remembering the birth of our Savior. We have had a pretty quiet last few months on the Ladies Aid. Keep your eyes open for our 2019 coupon book coming out in the new year. Get a game plan for how you will sell the most! Blessings for the New Year.







~ SAVE THE DATE ~

Fine Arts Evening

Our biannual Fine Arts Evening will be held **March 15, 2019**. Grades 1/2 and 3/4 will both be performing a short play and there will be music played and sung by the students. There will also be a Lego competition (your own creativity; not from sets) with prizes for different levels.

This year we are inviting members of the community to enter pieces of artwork that have been completed in the past two years. There will be more details forthcoming about a photography contest. Stay tuned!

~ From the First & Second Grade Classroom ~

~ From the Endowment Fund Board ~

Dear Membership of CCS,

We are writing you this update to summarize the information we presented you at our last membership meeting in October. In the past year the Endowment Fund received \$11.557.27 in donations and has grown to a balance of \$59,264. We as endowment Board can now consider investing it in other financial accounts other than a Savings Account or a CD since the balance is now over \$50k. We are open to ideas from the membership on an investment proposal or investment strategy to present in the future for membership approval with this growing amount.

Earlier this spring a member of the society wrote us a letter challenging the Board to grow the balance of the Endowment account to \$1,000,000.00 (1 Million) in 5 years time, so a balance of 1 Million bearing 8% interest could generate \$80,000 to the school budget annually. The member encouraged us to find way to do this and make it a priority so this Endowment Fund could take off, be legitimized and self-generate interest for growth. This encouragement got us thinking on some more concrete plans and so we have come up with 3 focuses or initiatives for the membership to consider.

- Work diligently to maximize the advantage of the CND charity we have set up in BC so our Canadian families can easily donate to our school.
- We propose that our society join and become members of Barnabas Foundation, so we have professional help with estate planning and to help us grow this Endowment Fund .
- 3. A fund raising drive to get the Endowment account up to \$100K by years end.

In the past year our Canadian foundation or society Foundation for Reformed Education (FFRE) received its charitable status from the CDN government. The wonderful implication is that FFRE can now already be used to receive donations and can be used to supplement Cornerstone's operating budget. Talk to your Canadian family about this and if they are interested in supporting Cornerstone, they can write a check to FFRE and receive a CDN tax receipt. The Endowment Board Treasurer Tim Faber or the School treasurer can receive these gifts and ensure we get you a Canadian Tax Receipt.

The Endowment board also proposed that we as a school membership take up membership with the **Barnabas Foundation** to help our members plan their estate giving and bequests in their wills and during the years going forward support their planned giving to the charities of their choice. We are proposing this as <u>a</u> valuable service for our members and that the school could benefit greatly when the member chooses the Endowment Fund in planned giving and in the final estate bequests in their will.

This Comprehensive level of a Barnabas membership however does have a significant membership fee of \$8000 per year for our school society. We as Endowment board do feel that this Barnabas membership has great potential to kick start our journey to the 1 million dollar goal. We propose that we could evaluate the

effectiveness of this membership after 2 years to determine actual value to the membership in relation to the annual membership fee, and if we decide we can easily stop being a member.

Barnabas provides in their Comprehensive level membership three main areas of support. 1) A minimum of four face to face private family meetings with a Christian estate planning lawyer to help with Estate (Will) planning, unusual or complex gifts, and planned giving, in addition to donor consultation and support via telephone and email, 2) a number of Marketing services that the Endowment board could really tap into, and 3) coaching and training events to build our competence in promoting and managing the Endowment fund.

As a result of the presentation at the membership meeting we have had some feed back from the membership on this Barnabas proposal. The feedback has varied greatly, from it is a very unattractive and a needlessly costly idea to feedback that it is time to do something professional with Barnabas and grow the Endowment Fund. We as board also listened to the feedback at the meeting and are soliciting references from folks who actually have used Barnabas in our Lynden community. We are also going to solicit feedback from our membership to see if there is actual interest and need for our members to use Barnabas estate planning services. If some of our members already have done estate planning locally there may not be enough need to justify a Barnabas Foundation membership. Please consider this proposal further and do not hesitate to contact the Endowment Board with your concerns or support. The Endowment Board will discuss this proposal formally with the School Board for a final decision early in the new 2019 year.

Finally the Endowment Board proposed that we do a Fund Drive to get our fund balance to \$100k by the year end of 2018. One benefit of reaching a \$100k balance, we as board are then required to have an Endowment Board to be made up of five members. With more members we may be able to better do some more self promotion. And with a bigger balance we may be able to start generating some interest income for the school. In this regard the Endowment Board is going to contact all the members over the next while to see if we can generate \$40k in donations by year end to reach the \$100k Please consider the Endowment Fund in your year end giving if you have been so blessed to be able to consider some extra giving over and above what you have already pledged to your school and other important Charities.

Thank you for your consideration, The Endowment Fund Board.

Treasurer - Tim Faber - timfaber.us@gmail.com Secretary - Jim Bareman - jbare62@gmail.com Chairman - Jan Kottelenberg - jan@trivan.net

On behalf of the Endowment Fund Board, Jan Kottelenberg

2018/2019 School Calendar

Aug. 28 - First Day of School

Sept. 3 – Labor Day

Oct. 4 - In-Service Day

Oct. 5 - Fall Break

Oct. 8 – Columbus Day

Oct. 17 – PSAT Test Date

Oct. 26 – HS 1st Qtr Reports

Oct. 29 & 31 – HS P/T Conferences

Nov. 12 - Veteran's Day Observed

Nov. 21 – Elem Term 1 Report Cards

Nov. 22 – Thanksgiving Day

Nov. 23 - Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 26 – Early Release (11:55am)

Nov.26, & 28 – Elem P/T Conferences

Dec. 14 - Christmas Concert

Dec. 22 - Jan 4 - Christmas Break Jan. 7 – First Day of School 2018

Jan. 18 - HS 2nd Qtr Reports

Jan. 21 - Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 22, 23 - HS P/T Conferences

Jan. 25 – Prof. Development Day

Feb. 14, 15 - Mid-Winter Break

Feb.18- President's Day

Mar. 1 – Elem Term 2 Report Cards

Mar. 4 - Early Release (11:55am)

Mar. 4&6 – Elem P/T Conferences

Mar. 22 - HS 3rd Qtr Reports

Apr. 1-5 – Spring Break

Apr. 19 – Good Friday

May 3 - Public Speaking Contest

May 27 – Memorial Day

May 30 - Ascension Day

May 31 - Sports Day

June 3 - Quad School Track Meet June 7 – Eighth Grade Graduation

June 14 – Last Day of School/Sr. Graduation

Board

Chairman: Darren Leyenhorst Vice Chairman Marty Vreugdenhil Secretary Raymond Faber Treasurer Kyle Lodder Ed Comm Liaison: Jon Dykstra Staff & Membership Admin Rick DeMooy Marty Vreugdenhil **Building Liaison**

Building/Maintenance Committee

Jeremy Bouwman John DeBoer Jan VanSabben Mark Veldman

Marty Vreugdenhil

Education Committee

Jeanette Bouwman Jon Dykstra Darryn Kleyn Christine Hofford

Bernice Vreugdenhil Rianne Kruyswijk

IT Committee

Eric Brown Dave Kruyswijk Marty Vreugdenhil Reece Lodder

Finance Committee

Nathan Chase **Brian Hendricks** Steve Hofford Katrina Lodder Leanne Veldman Jon Kruyswijk

Library Committee

Ellen Davis Shona Doornbos

Debbie Johnson

Ladies Aid Committee

Janice Dykstra Katrina Lodder Leanne Veldman Sharon Veldman **Administration Staff**

Darryn Kleyn Principal Karla Leyenhorst Bookkeeper Kari VanDiest Secretary

Teaching Staff Grade 1/2:

> Shari Kruyswijk Bible, Math, History, Art Janet Faber LA, Music, Science

Darryn Kleyn

Grade 3/4:

Debbie Johnson Bible, Math 3, LA3, Science

Ellen Davis LA 4, Music, History

Stephen Houweling Math 4 Darryn Kleyn PΕ Marian Haller Art

Grade 5/6:

Lynette Van Hofwegen

Ellen Davis Music Janita Willis PΕ

Grade 7/8:

Stephen Houweling

Janita Willis History, PE Debbie Faber Art Gavin Willis Science

High School:

Wayne Chase Bible/History/Math

Debbie Faber

Darryn Kleyn PE, Per. Finance, Bus. Math

Janita Willis English, Yearbook Gavin Willis Science, Math Darlene VanStaalduinen Spanish Sharon Veldman **Culinary Arts** Jolene Vreugdenhil **Culinary Arts**