



### FROM THE PRINCIPAL

**Mr. Jim Holstege**

Eastside Christian School is using as our theme this school year: Walking in the Way of Love, based on I Corinthians 16:14 "Let all your things be done with charity". We intend to use, the Lord willing, the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians to guide us along the way. If you happen to stop in, be sure to check out the bulletin board in our hallway! We have discussed in our school devotions together, thus far, the truth that love suffers long (is patient) and is kind. Prof. Doug Kuiper spoke to us about speaking the truth (over against lying), in love.

If ever there was a time in our lives when instruction from God's Word, exhorting us to walk in the way of love, has relevancy, it is now, is it not? Satan, our grievous enemy, is hard at work causing confusion, bitterness, hatred, and division within the world in which we live, both from afar and close to home. We who are God's people, together with our children, also experience Satan's attacks and are not immune. We are called with urgency to counter these attacks by walking in the way of love. By God's grace, we will endeavor to do exactly that as we move through this year.

With gratitude to God, Eastside has begun her 25th year. Where have the years gone? We celebrated our special anniversary at the annual Picnic On The Patio, earlier in September. Thank you, Eastside Foundation, for a wonderful evening! In anticipation of this year's picnic, Miss Agatha Lubbers reminisced just a little about the early days, producing an eighteen-page composition down memory lane. We include a taste of her article in this newsletter. We are happy to give you the unabridged version if you desire. Just call the school, and we will get it to you.

We continue to be blessed with growth! We are very happy to welcome Joseph and Valerie Kamps, with their youngest daughter, Anna, who joins the 8th grade. Anna has two older brothers and an older sister. Tim and Liz Thompson have enrolled their oldest of three daughters, Lily, into the Kindergarten class, and Alex and Dana VanderSchaaf come with their daughter, Frances, into Preschool. We also welcome the John and Jessica VonDoloski family: Kaylee and Kelsey (8th), John (5th), Joab (4th), Asher (3rd), Isaac (1st), and Justus (K). In addition to these seven children, John and Jessica also have three more daughters and two more sons, who are high school and college age.

*continued on next page ...*

### SEEING DOUBLE

Kaylee, Kelsey, Kiley, Kirsten ... say that three times fast! Eastside currently has four sets of twins at our school; Kaylee and Kelsey VonDoloski, Kiley and Kirsten Holstege, Elizabeth and Chloe Kuiper, and Simeon and JohnOwen Griess. The Holstege and Griess twins are fraternal, the Kuipers are identical twins, and the VonDoloski girls are mirror (identical) twins. Together they make up 10% of the student body!

Left to right: Simeon & JohnOwen Griess, Elizabeth and Chloe Kuiper, Kelsey and Kaylee VonDoloski, Kiley and Kirsten Holstege

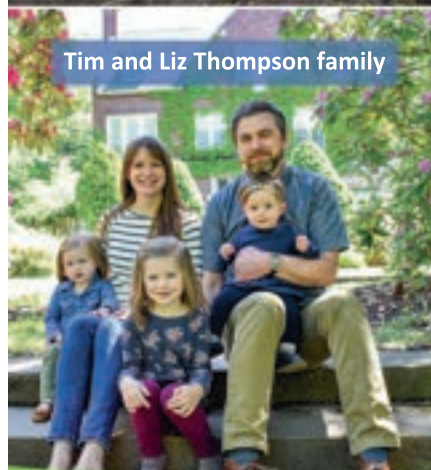


We are glad to welcome back to Eastside, the Brent and Katlyn Tanis family, with Tyler (6th), Amelia (3rd), Noah (2nd), and Ian (1st). Brent and Katlyn are expecting the birth of their ninth child this fall. We have also been blest in the year 2021 to have the Rev. Dan and Leah Holstege family in Eastside, while on their furlough from The Philippines. Gabe (4th), Kirsten and Kiley (2nd), will be returning to the South Pacific, the Lord willing, in November with their parents and two younger sisters.

So, what else is new at Eastside this year, you ask? First of all, let me tell you what is the same: our teachers! Oh, what a blessing and gift from God they are, not to be taken for granted! The first noticeable change, I heard expressed from many: "The hallways are painted...they look nice!" Yes, they do look nice. Thank you, Promoters for funding that and helping to keep our building looking fresh. Another change that took place over the summer, is the switching around of classrooms; bringing Mrs. Anita Haak's 1st and 2nd grade next to the library area, and Mrs. Kristi Thompson's 3rd and 4th grade nearer the upper grades. The biggest and most significant changes, however, are Mrs. Debbie Baldwin and Mrs. Lorelei Thompson joining our staff, who replace Mrs. Karen Ophoff as school secretary. Debbie and Lorelei: welcome! We appreciate you!

Thank you, dear supporters, for your prayers and gifts. Thank you, Board members and all who give freely of your time and abilities. God is blessing us with unity and peace, as we walk together...in the way of...love.

## NEW FAMILIES







## FROM THE FOUNDATION

Jerry VanBaren

*Below is a portion of a speech Jerry gave at Picnic on the Patio in September.*

The Foundation was established in 2004, spearheaded by Tom Newhof. Thank you, Tom, for your foresight in setting up the Foundation. The goal of the Foundation is to invest various gifts and use the resulting interest and dividends to ease the financial burden of running Eastside school. **In a very real way the Foundation functions like the widow's cruse of oil; the Foundation has donated money generated by investments to the school, but the Lord continues to bless the fund such that the principal has not been diminished.**

The Foundation relies primarily on donations to build up the principal which then is invested to produce the funds to donate to the school. The donations over the years have totaled just over a million dollars. 87% of that was donated via estate gifts, 9% was donated directly to the fund, and the remaining funds came from memorial gifts and fundraising activities. In addition to the donations to the fund, the return on investments have resulted in a current fund balance of about 1.5 million dollars.

The Foundation helps Eastside in two direct ways; in 2007 the Foundation started donating towards the operational fund drive and continues to do so every year. This eases the financial burden on all the supporters of Eastside. In addition, in 2013 the Foundation started a "tuition assistance grant" which donates money to directly reduce the tuition of the families who send their children to Eastside. The goal is to keep the good Christian education at Eastside sustainable and affordable.

Over the years Eastside has donated 1.1 million dollars to the school; about  $\frac{3}{4}$  as operating fund drive donations and  $\frac{1}{4}$  as tuition assistance. **This means that, over the years, we have emptied our "cruse of oil" (and then some)... and yet it is still full.** The one million dollars of donations have grown through investments to allow the Foundation to donate over a million dollars to Eastside and, in addition, the cruse itself (the fund balance) continues to grow.

In addition to being the school administrator, Jim Holstege is also the Director of Development for the Foundation. He is happy to work with you to facilitate donations either via estate planning or as direct donations. As the Eastside school grows and as its financial needs grow, the Foundation needs to grow too. Please keep this in mind as you plan your charitable contributions and do your estate planning.

**We are immensely thankful to God for the great blessing of good Christian education for our children and grandchildren, carrying out God's command to teach our children and children's children even those not yet born and leaning on the promise of God to bless us in this way to the third and fourth generation.**

## FIRE SAFETY LESSON



On October 11 the Grand Rapids Fire Department visited Eastside for their annual fire safety talk. The Kindergarten through second grades went out to meet the truck and talk with the firefighters. After a good look at the truck and adequate fire safety instruction, the GRFD left with sirens blaring. The visit made an impression on the kids, especially the kindergartners - a number of kindergarten families were the recipients of fire safety lectures that evening.



## THOROUGHLY FURNISHED

Brad Duistermars | Education Committee

There is much one can overlook or be unaware of when considering the inner workings of Eastside Christian School (ECS). If asked to describe what this important calling is, one might readily suggest the significant work that our teachers perform day after day. Indeed, what a tremendous blessing it is that God grants to parents and families in the way of faithful teachers who diligently teach and instruct our covenant children every year. Another thought might be the dedicated efforts of our Principal who manages the daily activities within ECS. In this way too, God has graciously provided a man who leads with a servant-type attitude and sets forth a godly example to both teachers and children. Along with him are other staff members who work diligently to create and maintain a spiritually healthy learning environment at ECS. Our Children may very well be another answer given when asked to describe this important activity. Our children are performing good, profitable work at ECS. They are learning and studying many different subjects all with a view to become more and more prepared to serve and glorify God in the calling He has for them.

All of these examples would be a fitting description of the valuable work involved at ECS, they give faithful evidence to the calling that we as parents have in II Timothy 3:17, *“That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”* The words “thoroughly” and “furnished” are striking when considering the Reformed Christian education of our children.

To do something “thoroughly” carries with it the ideas of carefulness, completeness and accuracy. To be “furnished” speaks of one being equipped, supplied and provided with what is needed. So with that in mind, I want to shine some light on two recent developments as to how ECS is attempting to make progress and improve in providing for the needs of our children and our teachers.

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

The first area of development is the Academic Support Program (ASP). For quite a few years now, Anne Miedema has been assisting with the standardized testing program at ECS. The Aims Web test is administered to each student 3 times per year in order to monitor their academic progress. Anne’s role has been to administer the test individually to Kindergarten and 1st Grade students while also supervising the 2nd Grade online testing. These

tests provide valuable information about the progress of our students not only throughout the school year, but also over the course of their time at ECS. After the testing is complete, she meets with our teachers to help them understand the scores and to identify students that may need further work in one or more areas. She also assists those students that are excelling and who might need further enrichment.

This work was incredibly beneficial to the school and resulted in Anne being officially hired to assist with our ASP. She works under the guidance of Jenna Zemaitis from All Belong to provide support for our teachers and students at ECS. Briefly put, All Belong is a christian school support service that helps in meeting the educational needs of students at all levels of abilities. Now Anne meets monthly with every teacher at ECS to identify academic needs. Together they work on possible interventions, further assessments, and accommodations to ensure success in the classroom. She also provides additional instruction or remediation to students who need further help.

As parents, we often see and enjoy the differences of our children, as I Corinthians 12:19 says, *“And if they were all one member, where were the body?”* So it is with learning. Our children have many different strengths and weaknesses that sometimes become manifest in the classroom. Therefore the ASP has an important place at our school. Having the ability to identify a need and then to act upon that need in a profitable way is a valuable resource.

### CURRICULUM TRAK

We now turn to the second area of development we call Curriculum Trak (CT). Our focus now shifts from helping students to helping teachers in the way of mapping out & organizing their curriculum. This is not to say our teachers are disorganized, not at all. In fact the very opposite is true. However as technology improves, we too look to see how we can improve and the CT program provides a great opportunity to do this. Mapping the curriculum is laying out all the material in each course for one school year...what concepts will be covered, how long each lesson or unit will take, what materials will be used, and how the students will be assessed (tests, quizzes, projects). Once the mapping is complete, we will be able to see what every student should be taught during their time at ECS. It will also help to identify holes in our curriculum that need to be addressed. Additionally, having the courses mapped out will allow better



continuity between teachers. A new teacher will not have to figure out how to fit all the material into the school year because the previous teacher had it mapped out already. Each teacher will still be able to modify the courses and teach them his or her own way, but replacement teachers and long-term subs will have a very helpful starting place for their planning.

Earlier this year, Liz Thompson was hired as our Curriculum Trak Coordinator. Liz, a former high school English teacher, is familiar with the teaching vernacular and is also quite computer savvy making her well qualified for this position. Her job entails helping the teachers through the mapping process in the CT program. Much of Liz's work will be upfront, and very daunting. Not to mention that teachers are asked to use a program unfamiliar to them. Liz will be the teachers' point of contact if they need help or direction. She will also work with the CT support staff if questions or issues arise. Liz will be there to train, encourage, and help in any way that is needed. She will also work with Anne Miedema, Jim Holstege, and the Education Committee to set goals and ensure we actually get the courses mapped. Further work will include updating and customizing the maps to each teacher and subject.

An important note should be added here, we have just begun to roll this out. We recognize that it will take some time to achieve both full implementation and have our teachers comfortable enough to use this program consistently. However, once much of the initial work is completed, we believe that utilizing this CT program will be a very beneficial and effective way to manage the curriculum at ECS.

Exciting things are happening at ECS! Exciting because we see evidence of God's faithfulness as we work to help each student and teacher succeed in the classroom. Anne and Liz have both expressed much joy in their work at ECS. We are thankful to them as they provide an undercurrent of support to our talented teachers and hard working students. At the same time we are grateful for our administrator, teachers, volunteers and staff for their faithful labors each day.

As parents, grandparents, teachers, and as a school board we have a high calling to equip our children for a life of good works. A life of godliness. A life that ultimately serves and glorifies God. Continue to pray for our school. Pray that our Faithful Father in heaven grants us the grace we need so that in the way of faithful Reformed Christian education our children might be thoroughly furnished.

## LOWER GRADES CLASS TRIPS



The 3rd-4th graders went to the GR Public Museum

The 1st-2nd graders went to Boulder Ridge Animal Park



## REFLECTION ON 25 YEARS: A LOOK THROUGH PAST YEARBOOKS

Agatha Lubbers

Through the providence and grace of God, Eastside Christian School commemorates the first 25 years of existence as the school year 2021-2022 begins. That Eastside Christian School established by covenant parents is able to celebrate this anniversary is the result of the faithful and godly resolve of covenant parents, grandparents, other relatives, and 80 graduates.

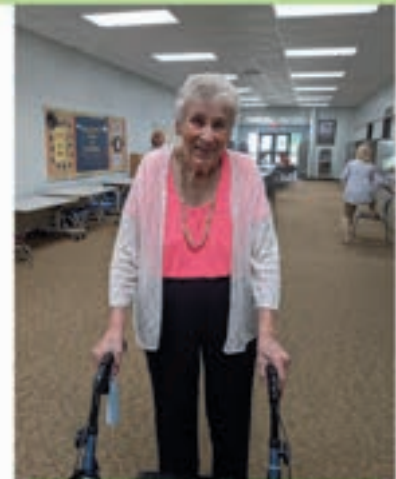
The mission statement during the twenty-five years has been NURTURING COVENANT CHILDREN TO REFLECT THE MIND OF CHRIST. This Scriptural truth and insight concerning the mind of Christ can be found frequently in Scripture. Paul writes by inspiration in I Corinthians 3:16 that "we have the mind of Christ." The mind of Christ is more than intellect. It is the entire mind, soul, and strength. Christian students can be nurtured to reflect in their lives the mind of Christ. They are not their own but with body and soul, mind and spirit they are willing and able to live as those who belong to Christ.

This has been the goal of Eastside in the entire instructional program. Students reflect the mind of Christ in their lives at school and in every area of the curriculum, and the teachers nurture the students so they will understand and develop the mind of Christ.

I write these reflections twenty-five years following my spending the summer of 1997 in the lower level of First PRC preparing for the school year of 1997-98. Many challenges rose as we prepared for the opening of Eastside in September of 1997. It was books, equipment, teaching supplies, beginning a new library, etc.

This was where the school met for the first five years of the life of the school. A large number of folk, far too many to mention, are continuing to be very active and responsible for the school and its many functions.

THE IMAGES began in 1997-98. The twenty-four years of publishing the IMAGES is the only readily available record of the activities, administration, the teaching staff, the students and many other aspects of life at Eastside. Following my review of the twenty-four IMAGES I have come to the conclusion that a completely accurate account of events recorded in the IMAGES is not possible. I recommend that an examination of the printed copies of the twenty-four yearbooks that record faces and activities of 1997-2021 will stimulate memories of the twenty-four years of the existence of Eastside.



Miss Lubbers visited Eastside to drop off her yearbook reflections, which was her gift to the school.

The first year began and I recommended strongly that work and planning should immediately begin to implement a pictorial and verbal record of the school year. This would be the most important record of the first year and would be the first of a continuous record

## PRSO CARAVAN

Eastside Orchestra students have the opportunity to play in the extra-curricular Protestant Reformed Student Orchestra (PRSO) which draws students from all of our area PR schools. The PRSO rehearsals take place at all four area grade schools. For the past few years, the Eastside students were all transported to these rehearsals in the Kleyn's 12-passenger van. This year we have outgrown the Kleyn van, so the parents take turns driving a second vehicle in addition to the 12 passenger van. It is quite a site on Wednesday afternoons to see all the orchestra students hurriedly stuffing their instruments where ever they will fit and cramming into the vehicles to make it out of the parking lot in time!





in future yearbooks. Few at the very beginning thought that a record of the history of Eastside would be available for the celebration of the 25th anniversary. This continuing record in the annual yearbook was appropriately named IMAGES.

Each of the eleven years I served as principal and administrator I contributed a message from the principal or as a response to the dedication of the yearbook. This summary includes abbreviated selections that have appeared in the yearbooks.

**1997-1998:** The first IMAGES was dedicated to all those who worked diligently for the establishing of the school. Without those who dedicated time, donated finances, and expended personal effort, Eastside would not have been prepared for the first year of classes. With the Psalmist we unitedly say, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Psalm 127:1a.

Convocation Sep 3, 1997 opened the doors of Eastside. The Convocation began with the reading of the words of King Solomon in I Kings 8:57-58; "The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers ... That he may incline our hearts to walk in his ways..."

**1999 - 2000:** "The Lord is my light and my salvation; The Lord is the strength of my life." Psalm 27. The yearbook was dedicated to teachers and staff who had been instrumental in teaching the students for three years. The following were recognized. Agatha Lubbers who provided leadership as Principal; Kristi Thompson who held the school together; Vicki Dekryger who was a godly example; Mark Ondersma who inspired us to be creative in regular school work but especially the Eastside Times, and IMAGES; Ruth Dykstra who devoted forty six years to teaching in PRC Christian Schools.

**2000-2001:** The first faculty member change occurred in this year because of the retirement of Ruth Dykstra. Her replacement was Kristin Brands Kleyn. Seminarian Rodney Kleyn was pictured speaking about the Good Samaritan at the February chapel. In 2021, Seminarian Kleyn became the pastor of the First PRC. As was predicted in 1997, IMAGES was becoming and continues to reflect life and is recorded history since the beginning of Eastside.

**2002-2003:** August 22, 2002 the newly constructed building was dedicated. The student body numbered 54. During the first five years classes were held in the lower level of First PRC. During school years 2001-2002 the school building was constructed and we looked forward to our move to the new building that included a gymnasium. We looked forward with great anticipation to move to the new school building during the last month of the school year. What a day it was in May 2002 when teachers, students, parents, and friends of the school moved the desks, chairs, and many possessions that had accumulated since 1997 from the lower level of the church to the newly constructed school building. We ought to note that alumni students at Covenant Chr. High in 2002 assisted in this move. Our thoughts and hearts are turned to the class text and theme. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be children of the light." John 12:35-36.

**2006-2007:** Twenty-six students were enrolled for the first year of Eastside, 1997-98. The number of students had increased to 50+ students by 2007. As the school year came to an end the administrator, Agatha Lubbers, noted that the initial ten years were an era of progress and change. These were years of the faithfulness of God to the teachers and students as they worked together. "So let there be on us bestowed the beauty of the Lord our God; the work accomplished by our hand establish Thou and make it stand; yea, let our hopeful labor be established evermore by Thee."

**2007-2008:** Eastside numbered 45 students. Four of these students, the Class of 2008, would be graduating. Administrator Agatha Lubbers would retire following eleven years. The Class of 2008 had the distinction of being the first class during which Agatha Lubbers served as principal. The class thanked Agatha for the 11 years she dedicated to Eastside.

**2008-2009:** The student body had decreased and numbered 32. Agatha Lubbers had retired from Eastside, so the helm was capably taken by Mr. Pete Adams - Principal, and Judy Feenstra - Administrator who piloted the school until 2012.

*Because of space limitations, this is just a sampling of Agatha's write-up. Contact the school if you would like a copy of her full article that spans 1997-2020.*

## PICNIC ON THE PATIO 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

By Debbie Baldwin

Picnic on the Patio was especially memorable this year, as it was the occasion to celebrate Eastside's 25th Anniversary. In addition to gathering for dinner, the Foundation put together a program commemorating the 25 years of Eastside's existence. Former staff members and alumni were invited, and the program included meaningful songs and short speeches given by faces from the past. Nate Pastoor, from the first graduating class talked about his memories of that first year, which included climbing up into the pipe organ when he was supposed to be in study hall. Mr. Pete Adams gave an overview of Eastside's history emphasizing our small and quaint beginnings. He started his speech by ringing the original hand-held bell used in the early days of Eastside to call students in from recess, which brought back an immediate flood of memories for alumni in the audience. Very fittingly Psalm 126:3 was chosen as the theme of the evening; **"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."**

The night was infused with praise and thanksgiving to God for all He has done for our school. Alumni Rev. Joe Holstege ended the program by reading Psalm 78:5-7: *"For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children. That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."* Twenty-five years ago a group of parents and grandparents started Eastside Christian School to aid them in fulfilling their calling to make God's testimony and law known to their children. Twenty-five years later those same men and women sat in attendance at the anniversary celebration, now sporting gray hair, and a few using canes or walkers. Second-generation Eastside students were in the crowd with their alumni parents. The noise of babies and toddlers could be heard – many of these babies were the grandchildren of the original supporters. The joy and thankfulness to God for His hand in preserving Eastside was evident on faces across the room. God has indeed been gracious to our school, and we praise Him for it!

