

### FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Mr. Pete Adams

Greetings-

As I write, it is about time for school to begin. It seems everyone around me is eager to remind me that indeed my summer of fun is concluding, and now I have to work like the rest. I guess I am able to convey an outward semblance of ease even while a dynamo of work energy churns away hidden inside.

Seriously though, the school is currently a center of activity as the staff is busy in cleaning, re-arranging, cleaning, preparing for courses, and doing some painting and cleaning. But throughout these summer months, there have been staff meetings discussing schedules, classes, special needs, calendar dates, etc. The Educational Committee has been meeting, dealing with teacher evaluation forms, curriculum issues, etc. The Board has met involving itself in enrollment matters, policy issues, and finances. Even in a compact operation, such as Eastside, much varied work is involved throughout the year by many varied people. Though we are not a church, I think that what the Apostle stated regarding gifts and abilities applies to us too. We are to think soberly and deliberately as to what the Lord has equipped each of us to have in order to serve others (Romans 12). There is much evidence of that occurring here in our midst. Let us continue to seek His blessing on our work together of nurturing and raising the covenant children He has given to you parents first of all, and to us as students in our school.

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### FROM THE DESK OF KAREN

Karen Ophoff | School Secretary

Wow, summer is coming to a close and the school year will soon begin! When I am not busy with the secretarial duties, I assist the teachers with various tasks. These are a few quotes the kids shared with me when I asked them what they liked at Eastside Christian School.

- My teachers are really nice
- I have awesome Christian friends
- We will go on a bike trip to Grand Haven in September and this will be my first year
- We have an orchestra and I am learning how to play the violin from Mr. Phelps
- We sing fun songs with Mrs. Pipe
- We can pray without persecution

Soon the doors will open and the pitter-patter of footsteps and bright smiles will fill our halls. What a blessing it is to send our children to a Protestant Reformed Christian School. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," writes Solomon. "And knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (Proverbs 9:10)." As our children begin a new year and pursue the knowledge of math,

science, and music in a Christian setting, they are really chasing after the knowledge of God. And the by-products of such an endeavor—wisdom and understanding—are the God-given rewards for which our children must strive.

God expects us as teachers and parents to plant and nurture His word in the hearts and minds of our children. How wonderful and what a blessing that we can send the SAME message in our homes, churches, and schools teaching God's truth with **CLARITY**, **CONVICTION**, and **CONSISTENCY**. Our education uses God's word as its foundational text and does more than produce spiritually mature Christians. It makes them wiser and more knowledgeable. It forces them to be better thinkers. Is not that the GOAL of our education in the first place?

Let us be reminded that our teachers are a school's heartbeat. Its pulse!!! They are also among the most influential role models in our students' lives. So as we unlock the door on the first day of school, please pray for us at Eastside Christian as we will pray for you, asking the Lord to give each and every one all that we need for the coming 2014-15 school year. Blessings!!

## EVERYTHING WE DO IS UNTO THE LORD

Bruce Miedema | Board President

I think the 2014-15 Eastside Christian School theme is going to be a very special one! You might recall an article I wrote in a previous Eastside newsletter in which I commented on memorable annual school year themes. I think this one will surpass many if not all from the past. This year's theme is based on Colossians 3:23 which reads, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." It is special for two really good reasons. First, this passage can be "completely" summed up in a phrase with seven words, "Everything we do is unto the Lord." Second, this year's theme is an amazing responsive phrase!

Profound (biblical) statements are often times brief and very clear. "Everything we do is unto the Lord" is brief yet it is packed with amazing content and it is very clear. The smallest of children can understand this statement and the wisest of students (age not withstanding) will not exhaust the breadth of its meaning. Seven words says it all with not one wasted.

Colossians 3:23 begs a response. Read the passage and then say with confidence and a smile on your face, "Everything we do is unto the Lord!" Do it again, and again! Your Father is this Lord! You are His covenant son or daughter. Feel a powerful emotion of joyfulness swelling within your heart as you respond with these words, "Everything we do is unto the Lord." Believer young or old, shaken or steadfast, in the valley or on the mountain top embrace this response.

How will this theme be developed this school year? I'm thinking of shirts with the theme, "Everything we do is unto the Lord," written on them and maybe that the wording might even be written in Latin, one of the subjects taught at Eastside. It may be that robust songs or emotional and soothing songs which work off this theme are found and learned so they can be sung in an Eastside program. These songs may be hymns which speak to the idea of our theme, or maybe even a new song with strong theological lyrics and wonderfully composed music for string accompaniment performed by Eastside students. English composition assignments such as poetry and two page researched writing assignments can help us learn the depth of "Everything we do is unto the Lord."

While I'm thinking about this, even a newsletter article that kicks off the school year should speak to the school theme. So if you read Colossians 3:23 as a question, what is your answer?

LOOK FOR MR. MAHTANI'S BANNER AT SCHOOL:

AND Whatsoever YE DO,  
DO IT HEARTILY,  
as to THE LORD, AND  
NOT UNTO MEN  
Colossians 3:23

## FACES OF EASTSIDE - PAST AND PRESENT

We are grateful for eighteen years of God's covenant faithfulness to our little school, and recognize that God has provided support from many people to make our school a possibility. In this series we will hear from some of the teachers, volunteers and former students about their history, role or experience at Eastside.

### Debbie Baldwin - Eastside Parent

A year ago our family entered a new phase of life when our oldest started kindergarten at Eastside. As a mother, I traded long, unstructured (and sometimes seemingly-endless) days at home with three kids for the hustle and bustle that comes with school-aged children. Days that used to drag on at times were suddenly scheduled from morning to evening. Going into the school year, I was apprehensive about the busyness and new work that awaited. I had somewhat of an idea what to expect, since our son had gone to one semester of afternoon preschool the year before. But the new morning routine was a big change, and I wasn't sure if I would thrive on getting one child to and from school while wrangling a 3-year old and a baby. I did okay—even good at first, and then maybe not so good as winter hit, the mornings were dark, and the roads were icy. I found solidarity in the fact that there were other parents all around me in this new life phase, all facing the same morning challenges. And I also found a carpooler ... that helped!

Whenever I talked with other Eastside parents about transportation, without fail, they always presented what they found to be the positive side—they get to spend more time with their kids, and *they* are the ones influencing their children on the ride to and from school. As the year went on, I found this to be true as well. For every morning that I wished there was busing, there were plenty of afternoons where I was glad to see my son at 3:05 instead of closer to dinner time.

The other aspect of work that I was a little anxious about—the volunteer work for Eastside—turned out to be very enjoyable, with a good spirit pervading the parents and staff who gave their time and efforts. Serving hot lunch a few times gave me a chance to be at school during the day and see what goes on around lunchtime. For fundraisers, I noticed that everyone was quick to accommodate for mothers who had small children at home, and also align volunteers with their skill sets to maximize efficiency and make the work more enjoyable. I have noticed that people tend to volunteer for what they are interested in, and it's often said among Eastside parents and staff that if there is not enough interest or time to do the work of a certain fundraiser or event, the school will do without it. I thought this showed a healthy balance, where parents are willing to put work into the school but also don't feel the need to get work done at the expense of family and spiritual life.

Whatever work I put in as a mother, I more than reaped in reward when I saw the education the students were getting. A phrase comes to mind that is close to capturing what I observed about Eastside; **"The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."** If you could take a piece of paper and quantify all the attributes, pieces & parts, and strengths & weaknesses of the school, it would add up to something less than the experience Eastside provides. I noticed a synergy among the Eastside body, where the strengths, quirks, and personalities of the staff, students and parents resulted in a fantastic educational experience and afforded some very special moments. The hardworking students under the direction of Eric Phelps were able to pull off a small orchestra concert just two months after taking up their instruments for the first time. Socially, my son benefited from interacting with all of the students at Eastside, both in organized activities like the field day or snow sculpting contest, but also informally every day on the playground. It hit me at the end of the school year that it did not seem unusual to him that he would receive positive attention from a 6th or 7th grader who knew him well after one year at school together. I enjoyed the leadership of Mr. Adams, who has a unique way of presenting things—with a wit and dry humor that the student body and parents have come to expect. I appreciated the work of the teachers and the effort they put into their classes. Even with my son only in kindergarten, I could see the different styles of teachers and how their individual strengths rubbed off on the students and the overall educational experience. Most importantly, I appreciated the Godly perspective that was weaved through every subject, found every day and evident in every classroom.

I left the year excited to be a part of this school, and it struck me that some day, when this chapter of my life is over and my kids have all moved on to high school, college and beyond, I will miss this little school. Yes, it requires "blood, sweat and tears"—as all our Christian schools do—but as parents entrusted with God's covenant children, what better place to focus our time and efforts than ensuring they are educated in a Christ-centered school. My husband and I are looking forward to the new school year, as our oldest is now a 1st grader. We eagerly anticipate the spiritual, intellectual and social support that Eastside will continue to provide for our family's growth and development.



FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Tim Hop

The beginning of a school year also marks the beginning of a new fiscal year. Even though not every number has been calculated quite yet, we are able to gladly report that that we have successfully remained within the budget for the 2013-2014 school year. We want to thank everyone who made this possible. We are greatly helped by our Foundation, supporters, volunteers, committee members and all who give of their prayers, time, money, and talents to make Eastside Christian School run year after year. Also, a special thanks to the hardworking Promoters for helping to provide many great items that cost beyond what the scope of the school budget could afford.

As we begin another journey through a school and fiscal calendar, I encourage everyone to enlist in the endeavor to make Eastside successful again this year! Remember, our collaborative effort will be used by God to provide our students with one more invaluable year of Christian education!

SCHOOL CALENDER

Thursday, October 16

Promoter's Meeting

October 23-24

Teacher's Convention

Saturday, November 1

Stop&Shop

Friday, November 7

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, November 12

Grandparent's Day

Thursday, November 20

Promoter's Meeting

Wednesday, November 26

Thanksgiving Chapel

November 27-28

Thanksgiving Break

Thursday, December 18

Choir/Orchestra Concert

Monday, December 22

Christmas Chapel

December 24-January 2

Christmas Break

Special welcome to our new students and their families:

Grant Hop - 2nd

Jacob Hop - K

Josiah Korsmo - Pre-K

Drew Pols - Pre-K

Judah Rodeheaver - Pre-K

Tyler Tanis - Pre-K

Jimmy Whiteley - Pre-K

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL - SEPTEMBER 2



## FACES OF EASTSIDE - PAST AND PRESENT

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### FORMER EASTSIDE STUDENTS

**Jeremy Monsma** | Jeremy graduated from Eastside in 2001 and works for Advanced Green Architecture, designing and installing LEED-certified green roofs.

Eastside Christian School provided a wonderful experience that helped shape me into the person I am today. I attended Eastside when the school first began and since the beginning I knew I would be receiving a unique experience. Eastside Christian gave me the opportunity to learn and interact on a more intimate scale. With classrooms—and the school as a whole—being smaller in size it allowed for meaningful relationships to develop not only between fellow students of all grades, but also with the educators as well. I am thankful to Eastside Christian School for providing a God-fearing environment that made my time there full of lasting memories that allowed me to grow in my faith and as a person overall.

**Audra Miedema** | Audra was a student at Eastside from Kindergarten through 8th grade (until 2008). She is currently studying accounting at Calvin College.

Young people today spend many hours communicating with electronics and technology. They are texting, social networking, and using devices as part of their social interaction. Even in our technology-rich society, the art of communicating face-to-face is still an important skill to cultivate! School is a place where students can learn valuable social skills in a person-to-person setting. Eastside taught me at a young age to interact with students of a wide variety of ages. Many years we had three grades in a classroom. While it could get busy and distracting, it taught me to be a more focused student. When I got to high school and college I used the skills I learned at Eastside to make friends and interact with students of different ages. Good communication skills are important in church, school, and the work place. I too enjoy communicating through technology, but connecting with those I care about is much more meaningful when I talk to them in person. I hope that the students continue to learn this and other important and meaningful skills through their time at Eastside.

### PICNIC ON THE PATIO

The 18th-annual Picnic on the Patio was held Thursday, September 4, hosted by the Eastside Foundation. It was a humid day with the threat of evening rain, so the "picnic" was held in the air conditioned church basement.

It was a very nice evening for both the seasoned Eastside supporters and the new faces and families that came. Special thanks to the Foundation board members for all their work on this!





## GRADUATION SPEECH

Rev. Haak spoke at Eastside's graduation of Olivia Meidema last spring. He spoke on the class text of Proverbs 18:24: "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Below is a transcribed excerpt from his introduction.

"Now we've noticed something tonight. There is just one of you. Just one. But you must not feel awkward about that, but you must feel greatly privileged. And Eastside must not feel bashful or ashamed about that, but Eastside Protestant Reformed School should be profoundly thankful for first of all, God, when He is going to do something great, or when God is about to reveal the strength of His glory and power, God will often have *just one*. When He was going to prepare a home for Israel in Egypt He used *just one*, a young man called Joseph. When He was going to demonstrate to the devil that He is able to keep His children He used *just one*. 'Have you considered my servant Job?' When He was going to show again His power in Persia, He used *one*—Daniel—who prayed three times a day. When He was going to declare that He Jehovah is the only God of salvation then He used one unnamed Israelite girl who was taken captive by Naaman the leper, who said to his wife 'There is a God in Israel who could heal Naaman.' And then the Apostle Paul and his first answer in Rome was *just one*. He said, 'Nobody stood with me.' It was just one. The bible tells us of 3000 that believed in the Lord Jesus Christ on one day, 5000 on another day, but more often when you read the bible you'll read of one. Because when one young woman walks with God and confesses God's truth and does what is right in God's eyes, then *one* is to the glory of God.

"The second reason why you should not feel awkward or anyone should be embarrassed about one graduate tonight is because of your class text. And your class text—if I understand it, let me read it, 'A man that hath friends must show himself friendly and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.' If I understand that text then that means that there never really is just one. *Just one* is always two. According to the bible there's never *just one* child of God. No. There's always two.

"Now, I haven't been talking to Mr. Adams before about some bewildering mathematical equation that goes through his mind. When I was in Lynden he referred to that, and he reminded me of this mathematical theory that a negative times a negative is a positive. And I'm still working on that one, because that's not the way it works with my checkbook, but he assures me I'm going to get to that point—a negative times a negative. Here we have some scriptural mathematics. One in the scripture, one believer is never one, but always two. 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I now live I live by faith and the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Christ (Colossians 1:27), Christ in you, the hope of glory. You must never, ever be afraid to be numbered with the numbering system of the world as one. And the school, and the school board and association must never be afraid of standing before the world with one student. Because it's never one. It's always two. We have a faithful friend. So do you tonight, who is in you!%

Listen to the entire speech at Eastside's website (found on the homepage under "Newsletters") or request a cd copy from Brian Baldwin ([brian.baldwin@eastside-christian.org](mailto:brian.baldwin@eastside-christian.org)).

## SUMMER BREAK - PRSO ORCHESTRA CAMP

Many Eastside orchestra students participated in a summer camp put on by the PRSO (Protestant Reformed Student Orchestra). The camp consisted of two day-long sessions in George and Michelle Bodbyl's barn in Hudsonville. The students spent time rehearsing and also took time out for games and food.

Led by Crista Phelps, the camp was a time for the younger and new members to be introduced to the PRSO in a fun setting.

