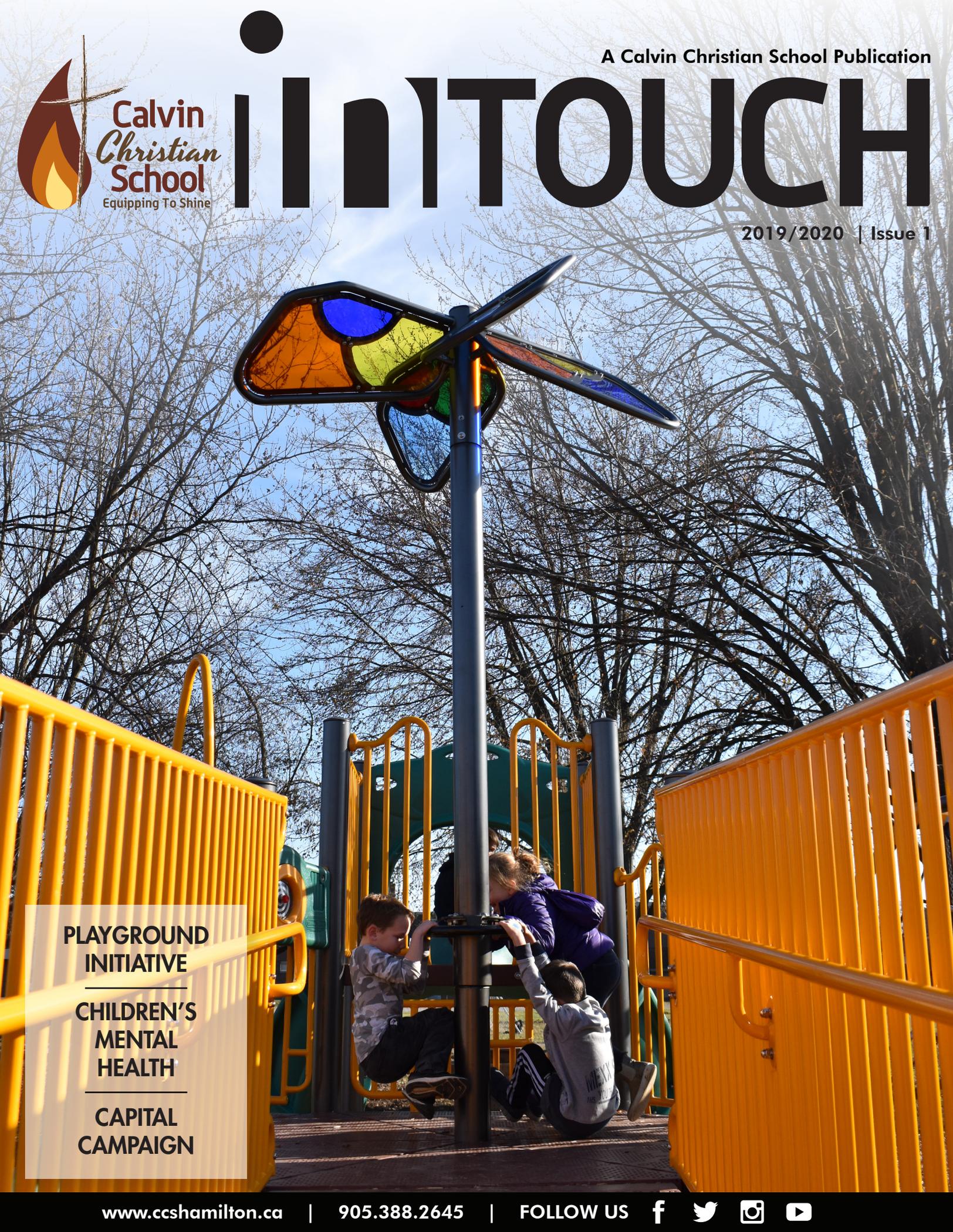




A Calvin Christian School Publication

iINTOUCH

2019/2020 | Issue 1



**PLAYGROUND
INITIATIVE**

**CHILDREN'S
MENTAL
HEALTH**

**CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN**

ABC – Arn Boonstra Connections

by Mr. A. Boonstra, Principal



Art by class 7b

As I write this latest ABC communique, I can't help but reflect upon the amazing opportunity that lies ahead for the Calvin Christian School community. At our Fall Membership Meeting, the membership approved the purchase of a second campus for the CCS society. The approval was based on the need to provide more Christian school educational opportunities for families seeking a Christ centred learning environment. CCS has been struggling for years with

capacity concerns and has been exploring different options to address those concerns. We have finally landed on what looks like an incredible opportunity. The CCS membership voted specifically to purchase and renovate a school building located on 32 Unity Side Road in Caledonia.

It should be noted that this decision was not made lightly. The CCS Board of Directors and the appointed ad hoc Compass Committee have been working for years in trying to determine the best solution for going forward. At times the exploration of a solution to our capacity challenges felt like a roller coaster ride, with many ups and downs and twists and turns. However, finally being able to say that we are ready to take the next step in providing a solution to increased Christian educational demands is a blessing.

What does that mean going forward? Well, there are too many questions to answer in this short space. However, what I can tell you is our desire to continue to assist parents in equipping their children to shine, which is a statement directly related to our vision statement. Calvin Christian School has been equipping students to shine in the greater Hamilton area for over 67 years! The journey that we have been on lately in regards to the establishment of a second campus has been truly amazing. We have been supported by so many sister organizations and schools, and we know that this is the right decision. I have had countless conversations with long time supporters of CCS, as well as with more recent supporters, about the need to take on this exciting project. The sentiment shared by all these stakeholders has been fairly unanimous—move forward in dependence on God and trust that he is leading the process. I have been reminded by others that that dependence and trust is not unlike the dependence and trust that the original founders of CCS had 67 years ago.

These conversations have been a great encouragement, mainly because the task of establishing a second campus is not a simple one. I believe that both the CCS Board of Directors and the supporting community have shown great courage in taking on this task. I have witnessed first hand how so many people and organizations are rallying around us to assist in the massive job of launching this second campus. Edvance, which is the umbrella organization

of Christian schools, has been instrumental in providing expertise and guidance in answering some of the basic questions in the establishing of a satellite campus. Their resources and personnel have provided guidance for establishing a governance model for running two schools as well as for curriculum design. It has been exciting to participate in the discussions that will bring us to the launch of the second campus. CCS board and community members have risen to the challenge to address all the concerns when it comes to the finer points of a school launch. Some of these board and community members have attended countless meetings, written dozens of reports and discussed many logistics. It is through these tireless efforts that we have arrived at this exciting juncture.

Much more hard work is ahead of us, including the hiring of teachers, the renovation of the building, the enrollment of children, and the campaign for financial support. It won't be long before we ask members of the supporting community to explore how they can help expand Christian education in the broader Hamilton area. It is our hope and prayer that families will continue to rally around this amazing opportunity and that 67 years down the road, someone will write a similar communique that reminisces about the dedication and commitment involved in the launch of this second campus.

We know this endeavour is a leap of faith. It is my hope that God will be pleased that we acted with boldness and decisiveness when attempting to further his kingdom. The CCS community has been given the opportunity to further Christian education in our area, and together we can provide the necessary steps to make Christian education a reality for hundreds of other children. Pray for continued wisdom in decision making, for support in raising the necessary funds to support this endeavour, and for God's leading in all decision making.

I love the fact that our JK and SK teachers take their students to the forest a few times a year, rain or shine, warm or cold. The teachers are encouraging their students to persevere in the face of challenging weather conditions and to overcome. There is no

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VISION Calvin Christian School's vision is that all God's children are "thoroughly equipped for every good work."
2 Timothy 3:17

MISSION The mission of Calvin Christian School is to assist parents by providing for each student a Bible based elementary education in a supportive Christian classroom community that nurtures growth in knowledge, maturity and commitment to God for sharing in the life and work of his people in the world.

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New Playground Opening at CCS

by Krista Dam-Vandekuyt

When Calvin Christian School in Hamilton, Ont., hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open its new playground Sept. 13, they celebrated the realization of a vision for an inclusive playscape where all students could play safely, learn while playing, nurture belonging, and enjoy God's creation. The school was helped by the Grade 10 Venture class at Hamilton District Christian High School, which took the project from concept to reality in just one year. The playground has been designated as a PlayCore National Demonstration Site, the first Hamilton school playground to receive this designation.

"Our school mission is 'Equipping to Shine,' and we really want to equip students of all abilities with the opportunity to shine," said school principal Arn Boonstra. "This new playground offers that opportunity!"

The high school's Venture class is part of a three-year career exploration program that uses community projects as a way for students to develop a range of employable skills. The students worked with a playground planning team at Calvin, conducted a survey of the site, researched other playgrounds, and gathered input from Calvin staff and students. They consulted design professional Carissa Borowitz from Park N Play to learn about inclusion and accessibility in playground design.

"Some of these concepts are abstract, but the students were able to understand and catch the vision for this playground," said Richard Van Egmond, Venture teacher at Hamilton District Christian High. "I was impressed by the students' capacity for empathy in the needs and various abilities of the (Calvin) students, making sure it would be accessible."

The new playground was possible because of funds raised through the capital campaign, donations from corporate sponsorships, and the Re-Source Thrift Shop. Parent volunteers helped assemble the structure during the summer.

"The community really stepped up and rallied around the project. It was amazing to see the support," said Boonstra. "It was a big investment, but we are investing in the growth of our children."

"It's so fun to watch the students play," said Sandi Tigchelaar, a parent and paraeducator at Calvin. "Children play in different ways, and everything was designed for inclusion. There are hideaway places for those with sensory challenges, and there are really challenging aspects, like the rock



wall, that students can work toward as they feel ready."

Second-grader Christian Joosse, who uses a wheelchair, said his favorite part of the playground is the boat, called the Rock N Raft. His mother, Julie Joosse, is thrilled about the new playground.

"It's incredible that the school talked about this and then made it happen," she said. "This makes it possible for Christian to play with everyone." 🔥

Krista Dam-Vandekuyt is a freelance news correspondent for The Banner. She lives in Jerseyville.

"Christian School's New Playground Earns National Demonstration Designation for Inclusion, October 4" Copyright © 2019. The Banner, Christian Reformed Church in NA. All rights reserved. Used by permission. // TheBanner.org



"The Orange Fence is Gone!"

RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY by Mrs. J. Hagen

The skies threatened rain but that could not dampen the spirits of young and old as they gathered together at the Back to School BBQ, to commemorate the new accessible playground which is now a National Demonstration Site. The orange construction fence that surrounded the playground, meant to keep students out of the construction site, was now removed. "The orange fence is gone!" declared one four year old. That evening the children slowly inched forward waiting for Mr. Boonstra's speech of dedication and appreciation to finish. Since school started in September that orange fence was a meeting place where students would gather to admire and discuss what playground apparatus they would like to try out first. On the night of the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony the Board members, many volunteers who helped construct the playground, school staff, the Playground Committee, students from the HD Venture class and our excited students, gathered to thank God for his faithfulness. Our very own Christian Joosse cut the ribbon while other students encouraged him. If you were there that night you would have heard laughter and happy conversation as children played together, enjoying the new accessible playground. 🔥

A Beautiful Problem

REMEMBERING THE FAMILIES WHO ARE NOT “IN”

by Dan Postma, BOD Vice-Chairman

“By your words I can see where I’m going; they throw a beam of light on my dark path.”

At time of writing (Remembrance Day 2019), this translation by Eugene Peterson captures the power and hope of the moment for me, and for Calvin Christian School. Winter’s come early. Daylight is short, yet the hand of God on our hearts here and now is bright and strong.

The hallways of 547 West 5th burst with beauty and grace. Calvin swells each weekday with 480 children, bubbling with energy and passion. A staff of 50 teachers and administrators deliver the best academic, spiritual, emotional, and social formation we can achieve. Every day is imperfect, with hurt feelings and failures. Until Jesus returns, we are forming our children as best we can, in what Peterson would call a “long obedience in the same direction.”

Yet as we look at the families who are “in,” we must specifically remember the families who are not.

The board of directors worried for years as the waitlist for CCS grew. First 10 families were turned away, then 20. It was not a disaster—these families drove to more distant schools, or settled for other school options. This created a tug for us as a board. In striking up our Compass Committee, we asked for more understanding of what God was asking of the Christian education movement in greater Hamilton. We sought to know what God asked of Calvin Christian School.

Eighteen months ago, I sat with an elderly member of my church, who’d given many

years of his life in service to Christian organizations and the church. He has since passed into glory, but when he heard of our waitlist, his voice was clear and has stayed with me: “Danny, that’s unacceptable. You’re on the board now. Fix it. Fix it!”

CALEDONIA

It’s nearly Advent. The first candle we light in December, also symbolizes how we capture Calvin at this moment: HOPE. We have a chance now for more classrooms, more hallways, more teachers, and more covenant children.

It began with a remarkably unselfish decision by a church congregation in North-west Caledonia.

The hallways and sanctuary of Trinity Canadian Reformed Church are also bursting. They too suffer Calvin’s beautiful problem of needing more space, so they did what every organization does: sold to a developer, leveraged their legacy property for the highest dollar possible, and used the proceeds to set themselves up perfectly in their new spot.

Except that’s not what they did.

What Trinity actually did is leave at least half a million dollars on the table. They accepted a far lower offer from CCS, and they left no doubt as to why, telling us, “We want this space used to educate God’s covenant children.”

IF WE BUILD IT, WILL THEY COME?

With a potential property available, the board turned next to the question of demand. Our guts told us there would be a lot of interest in a new site in Caledonia, but we wanted more clarity.

It didn’t take long.

After a month of surveying, our expert help—Dave Stewart of Hathway Stewart consulting, and CCS parent Kaitlin Hoogland—came back with great news.

Based on survey-declared preferences plus statistical extrapolation, we found demand for 105-180 children if we opened September 2020 offering Grades JK through 4.

We know that survey interest and tuition cheques are different animals. We also know that our current plan, to open at first with only JK through Grade 2, will lower that interest; however, the board feels God’s invitation for us to step forward on this path, with his beam of light showing our way.

“We are thankful and excited for the future of CCS and its expansion!”

“We have been hearing how the enrolment at CCS has been climbing steadily and it caused some worry and almost heartache that there was a potential we would not be able to send our (now 18 month old) son to CCS; the plans you are making provide hope that we may be able to provide our child with Christian education close to home!”

“I think it’s great that CCS is expanding - three cheers for more opportunities for Christian education. And it’s especially cool that there is a demand for it. God is so good!”

—Survey comments from existing and potential CCS families, September 2019

ANSWERING

We step forward. Soon the board will be asking the members of the Calvin Christian School Society to approve a second site. By the time you read this article in February 2020, many details may have changed. Maybe we are building elsewhere. Maybe our proposed renovations are on schedule, or maybe not. Maybe we are sitting tight for a year. Maybe Jesus will return for the final restoration of His kingdom.

At this point, we are confident of two things:

First, Christian schools throughout this area are growing. What a beautiful problem to have.

Second, though there be many moments of confusion and evenings of deliberation, God’s beam of light never falters. By his Word we can see where we’re going. 🔥



Trinity Canadian Reformed Church made CCS a kindred promise.

The Sky Declares

by Mrs. J. Smith

As part of a unit called “The Sky Declares”, students in Grade 1 enjoyed a day of school at the park! The unit included concepts such as the reason we have day and night, the importance of the sun, types of clouds and weather, the water cycle, and the changing seasons. We explored how creation speaks of a God of order and patterns, who created the universe exactly the way it needed to be for people to live here. Students engaged in many different activities as they interacted with each other and the environment. They observed the changing of a shadow as the day progressed, drew pictures of plants and animals they saw, observed the clouds, and created a diagram of the water cycle using sidewalk chalk. They also created Fall artwork, and enjoyed challenging their physical abilities on the nature-themed playground. A highlight of the day was learning about what causes



wind, creating their own kites, and flying them! We came back to school with red cheeks, wide smiles, and memories of a great outdoor education experience! 🔥

Walk-a-thon for Zambia

by Ms. J. DeJong

This year CCS chose to fundraise for Msuzi Primary School in Zambia. At the assembly on October 9, Ms. DeJong showed slides of her summer trip to Zambia. She spoke of the schools, the culture, and also the animals she had seen on safari. Some of her slides showed projects that CCS had helped in the past and the appreciative students and communities there. These projects included the roof at Emusa, the solar panels and the well projects. Mr. Ryan Geleynse of Edudeo then

told how children in Zambia who have mobility issues or other challenges are often not educated in that country. He thanked the CCS community for stepping up to help these children to finally be able to go to school. Mrs. Heeg then challenged everyone to raise at least \$20 in sponsor money so that we could meet our target of \$10 000, and we are excited to announce that almost \$13 000 was raised! What an incredible gift to make education accessible for children on the absolute margins of their communities.

Wednesday, October 23 was a wonderful day on which to do our walk. The sun shone and the fall colours were lovely.

While the younger children walked only 3 or 5 km with their buddy classes the older ones managed to walk the full 10 km. At the time of writing the final tally is not known, but we certainly are thankful for all the funds raised. We pray that God will bless the outcome of our walkathon for Msuzi School in Zambia. 🔥



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Wonderfully Made

by Rachel VandenDool

Think about twenty years from now. What would you like your life to look like?

Would you like to be able to travel, or be active with your kids or grandkids or simply go down the stairs without any pain? If your vision includes being active, pain-free and full of energy, the choices you make today need to reflect this. Here are my top 4 tips for aging well:

1. FUELING YOUR BODY

What you eat now not only affects how you feel today, but also long-term. Approach eating with the mindset of fueling your body with what it needs to perform its best instead of eating whatever your current craving is. This idea isn't reserved only for performance athletes, it's for everyone. Healthy eating improves your immune system, quickens recovery from injury, increases energy levels, reduces risk of depression and osteoporosis and the list goes on. The Canada Food Guide had an overhaul last year with great recommendations: half of your plate should be filled with colourful fruits and veggies, eat food rich in protein and whole grains and make water your beverage of choice.

2. SLEEP

The National Sleep Foundation recommends that school aged children should get approximately 9-11 hours and adults 7-9 hours of sleep per night. You can't wait until life slows down, or you get a little older and have more time, or (insert what you tell yourself for why you think you don't have enough time to get a good rest) – because it may be too late by then. Choose wisely today so you can have a happy, healthy future. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following: 1. Be consistent with the time you go to bed and the time you get up each day. 2. Keep

the bedroom quiet, dark and a comfortable temperature. 3. Remove electronic devices from the bedroom. 4. Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol before bed. 5. Be active during the day to help you fall asleep at night.

3. MOVING

The benefits of moving regularly include: lower blood pressure, decreased depression, reduced risk for many diseases, increased energy and so many more. The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend to participate in 150 minutes weekly of moderately vigorous activity. Do you want to know the most effective exercise to participate in? It's the one you enjoy the most. If you don't like running, don't run. Find something you enjoy doing and you will be more likely to stick with it. Finding someone to exercise with will increase your likelihood of consistency even more. I often show my patients a cartoon of a patient sitting in a doctor's office and the doctor asks: "Would you rather exercise for one hour a day or be dead for twenty four?"

4. MANAGING LEVELS OF STRESS

Stress can manifest itself in so many different ways, including physically. Headaches can occur, injuries take longer to heal, energy levels are diminished. What calms your soul? Is it going for a brisk walk outside, reading your Bible, coffee with a friend, a much needed nap, a good hard workout? Find ways that provide you the opportunity to feel refreshed and clear your mind, and participate in these activities regularly.

How are you doing in each of these categories and where is there room for improvement? You are in control of your choices. Where do you want to be in 20 years? 🔥

Rachel VandenDool is a CCS parent, and works as a Registered Physiotherapist at Origin Physiotherapy. If you have questions, Rachel will be happy to connect with you! originphysio.ca

Living Proof

by the theme development team

Two words, "Living Proof". Students of CCS are unpacking the responsibility of these two words in their daily lives. This year's school theme from 1 Timothy 4:12

challenges students to develop in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity so that they can be a living example to their peers, local community and abroad. God calls both old **and young**. Our students at CCS are called by God to make a difference both here and now. 🔥



Evine T. 8b



Julia N. 8b

LIVING PROOF



1 Tim. 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

Social, Emotional, Behavioral COUNSELLING SERVICES AT CCS

by Mrs. T. Schinkel

My name is Tricia Schinkel and I am extremely passionate about and have been working hard to develop an effective school counselling program here at CCS. Since September, I have been at the school two days a week to provide support for students and teachers in the management of social, emotional, and behavioural challenges.

I am a Registered Psychotherapist and Art Therapist. I completed my Master's Degree in Counselling, specializing in Art Therapy in 2011, and since then I have been working in private practice with children and youth providing mental health services with various agencies. I have

also been instructing the Grade 6 Social and Emotional Health Unit (every January) for the past four years

at CCS. In addition to working at Calvin, I work at a local agency, Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services.

Some of the services that I have been providing include: **Teaching core curriculum classroom lessons** (specific topics related to mental health, Emotional Regulation Skills, Zones of Regulation); **Skill Building for Small groups; Teacher support and consultation; Short Term Individual Support.** The goal for individual support is not to provide long term therapy but to assess and evaluate student's functioning and provide short term solutions and skills for regulating emotions and managing stress. If there

are needs above and beyond the 3-5 sessions, parents may be provided with referrals to community resources to continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of their child.

In September, I introduced myself to each classroom, so that students could become familiar with my face and with my role at CCS. If you have concerns about your child, related to their social, emotional, or behavioural concerns at school, please first consult with your child's teacher, Mrs. VanEgmond, or Mr. Boonstra and they can pass along a referral/consult to me, to determine whether your child could benefit from school counselling services. 🔥



Physical Education EQUIPPING TO SHINE

by Mrs. D. VanEgmond

Recently, the Education Committee and CCS Staff completed a review of the Physical Education (PE) curriculum. The review took the form of restating the PE Theme and Goal Statements, developing student learning targets, selecting grade-specific curriculum, and creating a database of learning expectations for each grade level. Although the database continues to be a work in progress, we are pleased with the advancement in our PE curriculum.

Physical fitness, movement skills, and healthy living are three major strands of the PE curriculum. At CCS, the following student learning targets are integrated in all levels of instruction and systematically advanced throughout the grades, in order for students to develop a deeper understanding that healthy living brings glory to God and enriches their lives.

A. ACTIVE LIVING/FITNESS: I am wonderfully made by God (Ps. 130:14)

B. MOVEMENT SKILLS: God created me unique, with special gifts (1 Cor. 12:4)

C. HEALTHY LIVING: I will honour God with my body (1 Cor. 6: 19-20)

As part of the Healthy Living strand, the Learning About Sex Series (Concordia House Publishing) was implemented across the grades. The series is well designed by Christian authors, and provides a Biblical context for age-appropriate lessons on self-identity, sexuality, and relationships.

If you are interested in a complete copy of the PE Theme/Goal Statements and the Student Target Skills, feel free to contact the school. 🔥

Sometimes it can be so hard to think of what to write. Even though you can write anything, it's picking a good topic that is the problem. In my lifetime I have only ever written one really good story. I love writing action stories, but it's nearly impossible to think of something that doesn't already exist. I could write about being sucked into a book, becoming a superhero, or fighting a dangerous villain, but those books already exist! I should probably just stick to reading.

—Rose H. 7A

Reading is very important but can also be a lot of fun. Reading books can teach you new things or help you in school. Reading is very fun because you can read about different places or things you didn't know existed! You can read it for fun too, you can read about greek gods or cats, from the middle ages to millions of years in the future. You can get a book that teaches you crafts for cooking. You can choose whatever you like, and get a book about it. For all these reasons reading is extremely important.

—Ana V. 7B

CCS Welcomes New Staff



MRS SMITH

GRADE 1A

After spending many years in Calgary, Alberta, Mrs. Smith and her husband moved their family to Ontario in 2018. They miss their families, and skiing in the mountains, but are especially enjoying the seasons in Ontario and all the new people they have met!

Mrs. Smith studied at Trinity Western University in British Columbia, and then went to Simon Fraser University to finish her teaching degree. She taught for several years at Foundations for the Future Charter Academy, and then taught for four years at Glenmore Christian Academy, both in Calgary.

Mrs. Smith loves hiking and biking, and she enjoys some amateur photography. When she has time she enjoys oil painting.

Mrs. Smith is excited to be working at CCS! There is a great community here, and she loves working with students and seeing them grow in faith and in so many other ways. The privilege of sharing Christ with children is something she hopes she will never take for granted.



MISS DEVRIES

GRADE 2B

Miss DeVries graduated from Redeemer in 2014, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Psychology. After that, she went on to get her Early Childhood Education diploma at Mohawk College, and spent a few years working with young children before going back to Redeemer to complete her Bachelor of Education degree.

Miss DeVries loves getting outdoors for a hike at any time of year, or curling up with a good book and a mug of tea by the fire. She is very excited to be able to get to know this wonderful community! She feels very blessed to be a part of Calvin's welcoming community this year.



MR JASTER

GRADE 6B

Mr. Jaster has been married to his wonderful wife, Vicki, for 30 years. They have a talented, beautiful daughter, Noelle, who attended CCS and is currently studying at HDCH. He was born in Edmonton, but grew up in Montreal. He played in a rock band in Montreal for several years, before he became a Christian in 1982, when he moved to the Toronto area.

Mr. Jaster has a Bachelor of Religious Studies from Tyndale University College, an Honours BA in English literature from the University of Waterloo. He received his B.Ed. from Brock University, and a Master of Theological Studies from Heritage Seminary. Mr. Jaster has worked in construction, and he has been a teacher, and worked at Exotic Woods in Burlington. He is also a guitar player, and a singer and songwriter.

Mr. Jaster is an active member at West Highland Baptist Church in Hamilton, where he plays the guitar as part of the Worship Team, and sometimes teaches the adult Bible classes. He has been actively looking for a teaching position, and joining the faculty at CCS is an answer to prayer!



MISS CHAMPAHOM

**BAND INSTRUCTOR
& PARAEducATOR**

Miss Champahom was born and raised in downtown Hamilton, and has always loved music. She has been involved in various ensembles throughout her musical journey including a string orchestra, the McMaster University Concert Band, and praise teams at church. Outside of music, she enjoys painting, reading, and cooking/baking tasty foods. She is excited to marry her fiancé, Aaron, next year.

Miss Champahom received her Honours Bachelor of Music with a minor in English at McMaster University in 2017. Then, studied at Nipissing University in North Bay where she received her Bachelor of Education last year! When she's not at CCS, you can often find her at the Les Chater YMCA where she also works as a Child and Youth Worker.

Miss Champahom is so thrilled to be working at CCS this year. She feels very blessed to be part of a community that is so encouraging. Although it all comes with highs and lows, Amy is thankful that each day is a reminder of undeserved grace and an opportunity to be "living proof" of God's love.



MRS SCHINKEL
SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

Mrs. Schinkel is married to Craig, and they live in Hamilton. She is the parent of two boys who attend CCS, in grade 3 and grade 5. Her family enjoys camping, hiking, hockey, and snowboarding.

In addition to working at Calvin two days a week, she works at a local agency, Thrive Child and Youth Trauma Services. She completed her master's degree in Counselling, specializing in Art Therapy in 2011 and has been working in the field of mental health with children and youth.



MRS PAUL
BUS #3

Mrs. Paul has lived in Hamilton all of her life. She is married, and has two daughters, both attending CCS. She graduated from Delta High School. After graduation she started a career working in a daycare, which she did for



MS PETERS
PARAEDUCATOR

Ms. Peters is a CCS alumni, and she did a Co-op in the CCS Library when she was in grade 11 at HDCH. Her hobbies are music, baking, and being with family. She loves spending time with her niece and nephew and spending time outdoors.

Ms. Peters attended Sheridan College, in the Educational Support Program. After graduation, she was a supply Educational Assistant in the Halton region and at CCS. She has worked during the summer at the YMCA Daycamp program, supporting children with exceptionalities and special needs. She is excited to be working in the school she grew up in, and is enjoying the wonderful CCS community.

the next 19 years. This career made it possible for her to stay at home and raise her children while she worked.

Mrs. Paul enjoys quality time with her family. She volunteers at the school library on Wednesday afternoons, and she loves seeing the children's smiling faces and the joy a book can bring to them. She is very excited to be driving a bus at CCS!



MRS NAGTEGAAL
OFFICE ASSISTANT

Mrs. Nagtegaal was born and raised in Hamilton, and lives in Mount Hope with her husband and three children. She and her husband are alumni of CCS, and their three children are currently students at CCS. Mrs. Nagtegaal enjoys time with family and friends, time at their year-round cottage, reading and crocheting.

Mrs. Nagtegaal attended Mohawk College where she studied Office Administration. She worked at World Renew in Communications and Donor Relations, and in their Free a Family® program, for 5 years. While raising young children, she ran a part-time home daycare, and volunteered in the library at CCS. Mrs. Nagtegaal also works as the Children's Ministry Coordinator at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church on Mohawk Road.

She is very excited to join the office staff at CCS! She is looking forward to getting to know the CCS community better. She is challenging herself to remember the names of all the students, and aspires to match Ms. Gallea's excellent recall, but admits that Ms. Gallea will be difficult to beat!



MR STEPHENSON
BUS #2

Mr. Stephenson and his wife recently moved here from Toronto to be closer to family. He is a graduate of Tyndale Seminary and has spent 15 years working in ministry. He also drove a bus while working at a church plant. When they moved to Hamilton, he was delighted to discover an opportunity to drive a bus at the school where 2 of his 4 grandchildren attend. Mr. & Mrs. Stephenson are looking forward to being enthusiastic supporters of CCS!

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Grade 5 Retreat

by Mr. P. Veldhuis & Mrs D. Reid

We had a great time on our Grade 5 retreat in September. We learned what it meant to be “Living Proof” in our devotion time together. Following devotions, we played Goldmine, went for a hike in the Dundas Valley, and topped it off with some swimming at the Wayne Gretzky Centre. 🔥



Student Vote

by Mr. J. de Schiffert

It may have been a novel experience, as you headed to the polls this October, to know that your children had placed their ballots ahead of you. Don't worry, their votes didn't sway any results. Our grade 7 and 8 students had the opportunity to participate in this year's *CIVIX Student Vote* program with more than 1.5 million other students from across Canada's provinces and territories. They studied the issues and party platforms, discussed Canada's electoral system,

and placed their ballots in a mock election. Along the way, they met with the MP hopefuls from the Conservative, Liberal, Green, and NDP parties for Hamilton Mountain. Ultimately, our students elected Peter Dyakowski of the Conservative Party, with Scott Duvall of the NDP coming in a close second. We closely mirrored the results of the 1000+ students in Hamilton Mountain riding, who voted Scott Duvall in for his second term in office. Thank you to the candidates for spending time with the students and to the teachers for their care and expertise. 🔥



Mike's Miracles

by Mr. J. Hosmar

Over the last 12 years, the grade 6 classes from the Niagara District of Christian Schools gathered at Beacon Christian School in St. Catharines, for a day of soccer in the annual Mike's Miracles Niagara District Soccer Tournament. What makes this event unique is that, on this day, we do not gather as individual schools. Rather, all the grade 6 students in attendance are divided into teams identified by colour, and this collection of students play together as a team. Students who attend this day come away with four great games of soccer, have met several new people, and hopefully made new friends. It is in this manner that we were able to celebrate our unique diversity and skill set for the game of soccer and honour Mike Vandendool, for whom this tournament was named.

Who was Mike? A grade 6 student at Beacon Christian School, and he loved soccer – it was his passion. However, he was also a student who would invite anyone and everyone to come play with him so that no one was left out or alone. It did not matter if this “new friend” was good at soccer or not, as long as he or she felt included.

When Mike was a grade 5 student he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer that had settled into his leg. Over many months of treatment, in and out of the hospital, he was continually surrounded by family and friends from school. He made it his mission to bring joy to his fellow patients in the hospital and this gave birth to Mike's Miracles. Sadly, while in grade 6, Mike lost his battle to cancer, but his legacy still lives on. 🔥

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Grade 7 Retreat

by Mrs. C. Mantel

On a beautiful September morning, the two grade seven classes packed themselves onto a bus and set out to spend the day together. Our goals for the day; to build relationships between students and to serve others with our gifts and abilities.

The first stop of the day was at Mrs. Mantel's house where students were divided into small groups and then set loose to compete in various activities. Students learned to work together on various challenges; puzzles, races, competitions, and even a fun stop at the s'more station. Some activities played to students' strengths, and others challenged them to try new

things. Throughout the game time, students could be seen encouraging each other and learning to work together.

After the Group Challenge, we gathered back together to hear from God's word. Mr. Wensink led us in a devotion focused on 1 Timothy 4:12 about how to set an example of God's love in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. Then it was time to load back onto the bus for lunch at school.

Our final leg of the day was where we enjoyed the opportunity to serve others around us. Connecting to our school theme, "Proof of Your Love," the grade seven students had the chance to show our thankfulness to God by reaching out to serve others. We first gathered on the CCS play-

ground to collect and clean up garbage. Then we walked through the neighbourhood to Captain Cornelius Park and participated in a Team-Up-To-Clean-Up event through the city of Hamilton. The city provided us with gloves, garbage and recycling bags and we provided the hands and feet to get the clean-up done.

Overall, we had a great day together; we strengthened old relationships and build new ones, and we had the chance to put our faith into action. 🔥



Grade 8 Retreat

by Mr. J. de Schiffert

Ask a grade 8 student at graduation what their favourite memory of the year was, and you will invariably get a few responses with the familiar phrase, "the grade-8-retreat." We expect this to be the case this year as well. The grade 8 class enjoyed a day of team-building games,

sports, and free time at the Binbrook Conservation Area this September. Volleyball, soccer, kubb and more were popular choices for free time. Despite fall creeping into the air, students also brought an extra set of clothes and braved the Binbrook splash pad to add even more variety to the fun. A big thank you to the parent chaperones who helped make the day possible! 🔥



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Coding at CCS

by Ms. A. Benjamins

There is a new language in town, and it is empowering students to express themselves in new and fun ways! What language is it? Coding! Also known as computer programming, learning how to code enables children to have control of computers by creating, instead of being passive consumers of digital technology.

What is coding? Very simply stated, coding is writing a set of instructions that tell a computer to do a task that you want it to do. Coded devices are all around us - think about your smartphone, a programmable thermostat, shoes that light up, an ATM, a car engine ... coding is everywhere!

Why should children learn how to code? Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple computers, once said "I think everybody in this country should learn how to program a computer because it teaches you how to think." Coding teaches "computational thinking," a necessary 21st Century skill for future employment opportunities. Computational thinking incorporates a number of thinking processes: breaking down tasks into logical step-by-step sequences, logical thinking, cause and effect analysis, investigation, problem solving, and exploring and communicating solutions to open-ended problems and questions. Computational thinking through



coding can be taught using a variety of online resources, as well as with "unplugged" activities. Coding is often done collaboratively, teaching children how to work together towards solutions.

Where do children learn how to code? Grade 2 and grade 6 students had some coding lessons using a program called "Scratch". Scratch is a free program developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Ms. Christa Love from TechnoKids came once a week from October to April, to teach our students how to express themselves with projects by coding in Scratch. Many of these projects were shared with visitors during Open House week, and at our SHINE Festival. CCS won a free visit from the CodeMobile, a mobile computer lab used to teach coding, with #CanadaLearningCode. Students in grades 3, 4 and 6 attended a 90 minute workshop and also learned how to code projects using *Scratch*.

Coding has been part of the Information Technology curriculum in grades 7 & 8

for the past four years. Students learn to code using Coffeescript, a coding language that is very similar to *Javascript*, through a subscription to a program called CodeMonkey. CodeMonkey systematically teaches the basic coding concepts - functions, algorithms, loops, variables and conditions - in a fun and engaging game format. Grade 7 & 8 students participate in "Hour of Code" activities during "Hour of Code Week," often from resources that are free for teachers. Many CCS students, from all grades, have enrolled in the Robotics club run by Mr. Wensink, where they program Lego Mindstorm robots, starting with simple tasks and working up to far more complex coding structures.

The students are enthusiastic, and excited to learn these new skills. 🔥

There are a number of free options for learning code, both online and in your neighbourhood. Scratch, code.org, codeacademy.com, #CanadaLearningCode are some good places to start!



ABC Connections ...continued from page 2

shortage of opportunities to develop social and emotional competencies. Life is chock-full of challenges and struggles. Some of the challenges can be too overwhelming for teachers, and perhaps even for parents, to be able to support a child. This fact speaks to the reason we as a staff are exploring the hiring of a school counsellor to support our students in all situations. I'm not sure that the struggles that families face are any different than in the past, but I am sure that there is a greater recognition for the need to support students academically, socially, emotionally, and mentally. We are familiar with the necessity to incorporate differentiated learning to foster academic progress and a growth mindset, but we have been typically

less equipped to provide some of the social and emotional supports that children might need.

For those reasons I am very excited about our recent implementation of Responsive Classroom practices, so our teachers can provide the basic supports that are critical for a child's well being when it comes to their social and emotional regulation. However, I am just as excited about the potential to tap into the expertise of a professional counsellor when we encounter a child who has broader social/emotional needs and perhaps even mental health concerns. The CCS board of directors is aware of the cost of providing this support for the students, and they are equally aware of the bene-

fits, not only for their own children when it comes to accessing a counsellor, but for any child who might need extra support to help them overcome some of life's challenges and to be the person God created them to be.

It is my hope and prayer that when I read report cards in the future I will see comments that reflect how well a child is adjusting to the challenges of life in addition to their academic progress. Our society has become far more aware of the need to support individuals when it comes to mental health issues. It is time that CCS and other institutions join in the fight to support students who are also faced with mental health crises that might be reflected in social and emotional challenges. 🔥

CCS Bazaar

by Mrs. A. Dekker

With the first snowfall and the onset of Christmas songs comes an annual highlight in the Calvin Christian School community: The Bazaar. A gathering for all ages, the Bazaar is more than just a fundraising opportunity for the school - it is a chance for family and friends to reconnect, to enjoy the planned rooms and food, and to support and celebrate together.

There is something for everyone to be found at the Bazaar. This year, people were greeted by the sounds of "Deserv- edly So," a local musical col-

laboration, and Brielle Goheen on the violin, playing Christmas tunes as they entered the school foyer, and the fun continued from there. Some highlights included traditional international treats such as croquettes and sushi, baked goods, games and fun rooms, beautiful home and Christmas wares, fresh vegetables, a silent auction, and more. A new room, called the "Kids Only Christmas Room," provided children with the unique, affordable opportunity to shop for loved ones and to leave with a wrapped gift - it was a huge hit. The Bazaar is a great way for families to get a jump on holiday preparations and meet with friends new and old.

It is humbling to consider the time and talents required to pull off the bazaar each year. Many hands come together in the months, weeks, and the days ahead to ensure that the event goes smoothly. There are many behind the scenes opportunities to contribute and to enjoy working together to make this day a success. Over one hundred volunteers are required for set up, serving, running the rooms, and providing support on the weekend. We are grateful for the committee and for everyone who contributed to this year's Calvin Christian School Bazaar. We look forward to seeing you there next November! 🔥



Lunch Box

by Mr. J. Hosmar

Burger's Priest, Swiss Chalet, Toppers Pizza, Pita Pit, and Quesada are coming to Calvin Christian School through our new lunch program from LunchBox. This new, online program is easy to use and convenient for families. Parents are able to order lunches for their children from a series of preselected dates (Wednesday one month, and Thursday the following month), with each date providing for a different food vendor and our milk program.

Currently, as part of our trial run, dates have been selected up to December. More dates will soon be added for the rest of the year. You can order weekly or place multiple orders at one time, cancel orders in advance, or change them. The program even provides a weekly reminder of your order. If you have not yet taken a look at the program, you are encouraged to visit lunchboxorders.com and see for yourself! 🔥



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Did you know?

If you spend \$100 on groceries and \$50 on gas each week for a year using gift cards, you would earn \$390 towards next year's tuition!

Buy Gift Cards. Save on Tuition.

Baby News!

Several staff members welcomed new additions to their families in 2019. We celebrate the arrivals of six baby boys:



**LEVI JEFFREY
KONING**
MARCH 1



**BENJAMIN WILLIAM
VANDENBERG**
JULY 25



**JAYCE THEODORE
HUIZINGA**
JULY 30



**ADAM CLARENCE
STEWART TAEKEMA**
SEPTEMBER 23



**ARMANI ANTHONY
BOER**
OCTOBER 11



**JUDAH SIPKE
DE SCHIFFERT**
NOVEMBER 14



Quotable Quotes

After singing a song about healthy food, a Senior Kindergarten student thoughtfully queried, “Mrs. Wiebenga, I wonder why they call it a “sandwich” when there is no sand in it or any witches in it.”

Primary students racing on the 100m track at recess. “How do you run so fast?” Student points to the built in shocks on his runners, “I have bouncers.”

While on the way to the forest for Outdoor Education on a rainy morning, an SK student said, “Well, I guess we are going to the rain forest today.”

The grade 7 & 8 teachers are always happy to see students using their agenda books, using skills that are intentionally taught in the classrooms. The more detailed the entries, the better! This entry was seen in one agenda book: “Add Gatorade Gx water bottle to Christmas list”

Upon hearing that grade 2B was going to be taking a field trip to city hall, one student exclaimed his excitement at the prospect of meeting the mayor, “Fred Hamburger!”



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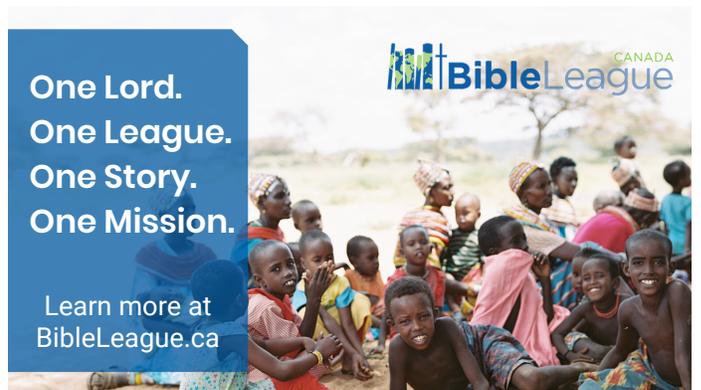
On November 30, 2019, 100 re-Source Thrift Shop volunteers attended an appreciation dinner in their honour. They in turn presented CCS with a cheque for

\$160,000!

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Thank you for your support of the 2019/20 Annual Drive! To-date we have raised **\$58,500** toward our \$100,000 goal!

There is still time to donate! Simply click on the **Donations** button on our website, ccshamilton.ca Your donations enable CCS to maintain our facility and keep tuition affordable so that our children our "Equipped to Shine".



\$100,000

\$75,000

\$50,000

\$25,000



“Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me...” Psalm 25:4-5a

inTOUCH



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