



A Calvin Christian School Publication

in TOUCH

2021/2022 | Issue 1

**BUILDING
UNITY**

**A BOARD
MEMBER'S
PERSPECTIVE**

**LIBRARY:
VERSION 2021**





Arn Boonstra Connections

by Mr. A. Boonstra, Principal

** At the time of writing, CCS was operating with limited Covid restrictions. Over the course of the past few weeks, the school had to adapt to changes in protocol that the ongoing pandemic constantly brings.*



NEXT YEAR, THE LORD WILLING, Calvin Christian School will be celebrating its 70th anniversary. It is a remarkable accomplishment to be able to provide Christian education to families in the Hamilton and surrounding areas for so many years. What makes the anniversary even more special is the fact that CCS continues to grow. We have officially opened our Unity campus in Caledonia this past September, and over 35 students are enrolled in junior kindergarten through grade 2, representing 25 families. It should be noted that the West 5th campus is close to capacity in these grades and that these 25 families may well not have been granted the opportunity to have their children attend a Christian school if the Unity Campus was not an option.

The Unity Campus has been in the works for the past couple of years; however, COVID-19 has slowed down some of the initial plans. After a year of using the building to provide additional classroom space for our grade 7 and 8 students to deal with cohorting concerns, we are now making plans to grow the school from kindergarten to grade 8. Part of those plans include raising enough money to build a new school on the amazing eight acre Unity grounds. As such, our recently formed Capital Campaign Committee has been working behind the scenes to be ready to launch the campaign in the spring. You can find out a little more about the capital campaign in the article entitled Building Unity.

Just as important as the behind the scenes work connected to Unity are the day to day activities at the campus. We have begun implementing our edVenture learning program at the school which provides students in the split grade 1/2 class with authentic learning opportunities that involve a great deal of hands-on experiences and real life applications. Students spend a great deal of time exploring God's creation and drawing conclusions as to what God is revealing to us. The outdoor classroom at Unity lends itself to the edVenture program very well and is getting a great deal of use.

Augmenting that outdoor classroom are some wonderful upgrades to the property, including an amazing play area that a number of volunteers helped construct and the addition of over 40 trees that were generously donated by NVK Nurseries and planted by another group of volunteers. We are thankful for these beautiful additions to our school property and for those who made it possible.

edVenture Learning is an innovative approach in which students are motivated by a guiding question that has them dig deeper in their learning and discover how they can make a positive impact in their community. Students will be invited on a journey of cultivating a wonder of God's creation—gaining wisdom as they discover their place in His unfolding story—through meaningful work with practical implications for building His kingdom. Students participate in field studies and outdoor learning opportunities to further their inquiry and provide opportunities to explore and learn about God through His creation.



Meanwhile, life has returned somewhat back to normal at our West 5th campus, with over 450 students learning in grade JK to grade 8. In addition to the exceptional learning that takes place in the classrooms, our students are once again afforded the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. Soccer, cross country, volleyball, and choir are all activities that students have been enjoying. Although the adjustment to being back in school full time has been somewhat challenging, I am thankful for the fact that we have the hustle and bustle of kids being back in the building. Our outdoor classroom at the West 5th campus is also getting plenty of use, and it has been a joy to have parents join us for the outdoor lessons that have been taking place.

This year's school theme is "The Work of Your Hands," based on Isaiah 64:8 where it says, "Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are our potter; we are all work of your hand." The theme and passage evoke feelings of protection, care, and tender love. Struggling with the ongoing health crisis, we feel this is exactly the kind of message we want to share with our students. The past two years have been incredibly complicated for both our students and staff, what with following protocols, learning from home, and all the social, emotional fallout associated with the pandemic. Yet putting our trust in our God, who cares so much for us that he sacrificed His Son for us, provides us with reassurance and comfort on even the darkest days.

What strikes me so far about this school year, is the resilience of our students, the dedication of our staff, and the support of our community. Things are far from perfect, but we were never promised perfection. God offers his grace and he has stated that it is sufficient for us. Indeed, our God is caring and providing for us during challenging times. Need any further evidence? Our God has blessed Calvin Christian School for close to 70 years and has even provided a second campus so that we can continue to carry out our mission of equipping to shine. ●



inTOUCH

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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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Unity Campus Corner

by Mrs. A. Breimer, Vice Principal, Unity Campus

THIS PAST SUMMER the Unity Campus made the transition from housing the grade 7 and 8 classes to welcoming our youngest learners in kindergarten to grade 2. Coat hooks were lowered, a new sandbox was dug out, shorter tables and chairs were moved in and a new outdoor classroom was set up to prepare for the arrival of our young students. The original desire for CCS to create a new campus for the greater Hamilton area came to fruition this September, as we welcomed 36 students through our doors on the first day of school. We cannot be more excited to see how God works through Unity Campus as it continues to grow!

Prior to the first day of school, much work took place both in and out of Unity, in preparation for the students. Much thanks go to our community who came out and created a beautiful outdoor play space for our students and built an outdoor chalkboard to place in our outdoor classroom. Many supplies and much time was donated in these efforts. We also received many donations for outdoor play and the students have thoroughly enjoyed the space and toys. Mr. Byl and the teachers were also busy preparing the classrooms and learning spaces to create a warm welcome for our new students. We continue to be blessed by our community.

Through the first few months we have been able to host chapels at the beginning and end of each week. We welcomed parents to attend our first chapel where we introduced our theme verse Isaiah 64:8 and shared what it means for God to be the potter. These times together in chapel allowed for us to welcome each other to school, worship our Creator, listen to a message about who God is and share with each other where we saw God in our week.

It has been such a blessing to hear the reflections of our students that they saw God in one another, in the clouds of a storm rolling in, or through the gift of their senses during a field study.

Through the work of the PR committee, we held an outdoor back to school social, where we could come together as a community for one of the first times and be able to meet the families that make up the tapestry of Unity this year.

Our students have enjoyed several field study trips to different outdoor spaces in the local community to deepen their learning and provide opportunities to explore, wonder and ask questions. Our kindergarten students have explored the forest and a local zoo to use their senses and see all that God has created as they studied the days of creation. The grade 1 and 2 students have ventured to many different parks and to the Grand River to answer their driving questions of their first two edVentures: How is the character of God clearly seen through what He has made? How can we, as observers of the sky and river, exhibit God as a patternmaker?

Even though we are only in our third month of learning here at Unity Campus, we have already had the opportunity to reflect and learn about the Indigenous peoples during the Day of Truth and Reconciliation and through our edVenture learning, wear pink to stand up against bullying, take a moment of silence to remember those that fought for our freedom and peace, walk for Open Homes Hamilton in support of refugees coming to the Hamilton area and bring in food for our local Caledonia Food bank. Through listening and through acts of service, students are learning that they can have an impact in their community and can share God's love to all.

We look forward to what God has planned for this upcoming school year and take each day as a gift to be together to continue to listen for God, look for how He is being reflected in those around us and in creation, speak encouragement to those around us and share God's love to those in our community. ●





Unity Taking Root

by Mrs. A. Breimer, Vice Principal, Unity Campus

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH was an exciting crisp fall morning at Unity campus. Volunteers from the Unity community came together to spend the day tree planting. Forty-three beautiful deciduous trees were donated from NVK Nurseries, along with soil from Green Horizons and mulch from Hydro One. The group got right to work and by the afternoon the Unity grounds had a perimeter of beautiful trees. The students were so excited to see all the trees that would create more opportunity for outdoor learning, places to hide when the trunks get big, and shade on those hot days. Later that week the students were gathering sticks from the perimeter of the property and planting their own trees in the sandbox. Thank you to all those who contributed and set an example for our students of working together in the act of service. ●

Outdoor Learning at Unity

by Mrs. L. Ouwehand

IN KINDERGARTEN, WE BELIEVE that hands-on experiences in nature help build stronger, smarter, happier and healthier children. We believe this includes regular opportunities to connect children to God's outdoor classroom. Purposeful learning happens beyond the four walls of the classroom as we head outdoors and use the natural surroundings, including a visit to a local community forest.

Being outdoors provides children with opportunities to experiment and explore, ask questions, make observations, solve problems and build theories. Exploring God's creation more thoroughly with children helps us gain appreciation and wonder of God as Creator. We discuss how being called to be caretakers in God's world is a privilege and a responsibility.

As we travel to the same forest throughout the year, we become familiar with a particular part of the forest, and use our senses to notice the changes that occur through the seasons. While we are in the forest, the children's natural curiosity takes over and questions and observations help extend our understanding and learning of God's creation. After spending time in the forest a student reflected, "God sure gave us lots to learn today!" Thanks be to God! ●



The edVenture Studio

by Mrs. D. Heeg

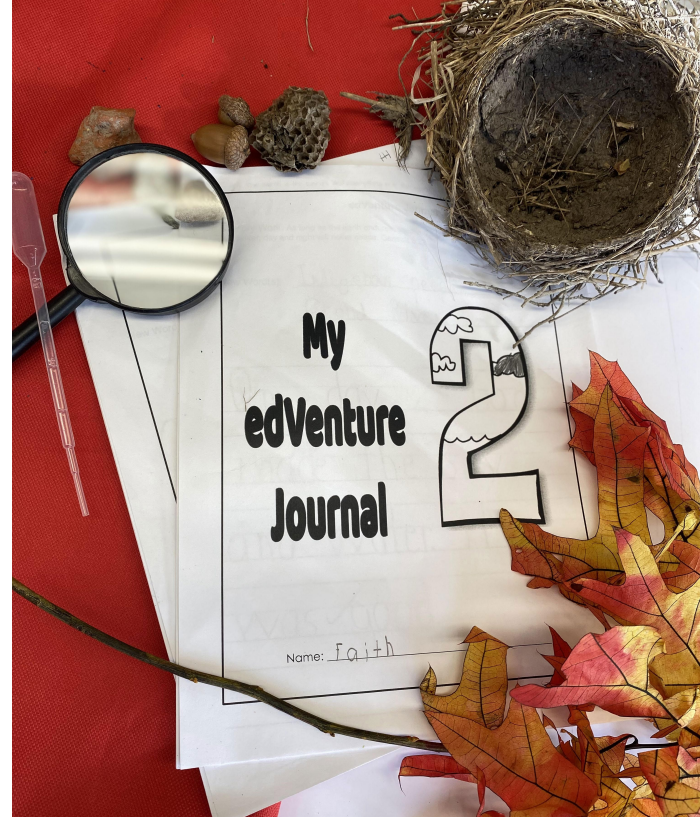
THE GRADE ONE AND TWO STUDENTS were asked to reflect on what makes the edVenture Studio so unique and here is a summary of their responses.

The edVenture Studio at the Unity Campus is indeed a special place in which to learn and to create. It's a regular classroom, that's true, but when we walk through the door each day, it feels like we are entering a special place. The edVenture Studio is like a nature studio. There are two real trees in our room and our nature table is covered with beautiful and interesting things that we have found in God's creation. We like looking at and touching things like shells, an old beehive, leaves, pinecones, driftwood, snake skins, cicada bug casings, flowers, and nests. We like our nature table because it brings the great outdoors inside the school. The walls in our Studio are covered with information about the things we are learning about like clouds, the sun, and seasons. There's also lots and lots of nature paintings. We painted them and it's fun to see how each painting is different from the others.

Our favorite things to do in the edVenture Studio are painting, writing in our edVenture journals, playing instruments, memorizing verses from the Bible, and learning a lot about nature. We have been learning about the different kinds of clouds, the cycles of seasons, and the water cycle. We like learning about water and the Grand River, about how the earth moves, and how important the sun is to God's creation. We discovered that God is a patternmaker and He is faithful to His creation.

Sometimes we leave the edVenture Studio to go on an edVenture Field Study trip. Those have been a lot of fun. We have gone on trips to practise using our senses, to study the Grand River, and to enjoy a fall festival at a farm. Other times, we spend time outdoors on our own school property to study the sky, the clouds, or to do an experiment. We love nature, so it's fun to visit different places to learn amazing things about creation.

Our edVenture Studio is very special to us and we are happy that we get to have this learning space at the Unity Campus. ●





Unity Campus Update

With the school year now well underway, our new campus on Unity Road is proving to be a wonderful blessing, allowing us to continue to serve the growing enrolment demand in the Greater Hamilton Area.

As such, our recently formed **Capital Campaign Committee** has been working diligently behind the scenes getting the Board and canvassing teams ready to start connecting with initial underwriting donors this winter, and preparing for the official public launch of our campaign coming up in Spring 2022!

The **Building Committee** is working with the Capital Committee on initial planning and pre-work for the new campus.

Following a model used when building our West 5th campus, both of these Committees are now connected by a newly formed **Management Oversight Committee** which is working cooperatively with School Leadership to establish a clear vision for the new campus. As the vision is established, the Capital Committee will be sharing that vision with the community when we officially launch the campaign in the spring, and the Building Committee will begin bringing that vision to life in parallel.

Overall, our community is currently a busy hive of preparation activity, and we're excited to share more in the weeks and months ahead as we gear up to begin **BUILDING UNITY!**

7B Active Listening Quotes

Speak up for yourself and your beliefs but also be willing to listen to what others have to say with respect and an open mind.

- Lenie H. & Kiera D.

Listening isn't waiting to speak, it's paying attention.

- Cole V. & Jihoo A.

If you are going to have a conversation, be present.

- Julia N. & Kailyn M.

Listen to others with sharp eyes and open ears.

- Leah G.H. & Adelyn W.

You can't listen when you are talking.

- Deacon M. & Joseph T.



My Unity Campus Experience

by Sarah I., 8B

As both classes boarded the 2 buses the crisp, warm air glanced along my face with winds swaying the trees left to right. It was a beautiful Friday morning at around 9:00 a.m. I was thrilled to be headed back to the Unity Road Campus. I could think of so many memories that waited to be re-lived. When we arrived I stepped foot on the gray-black granite stone. It was just the same as I remembered. We all headed inside for devotions in the gym led by Mrs. Wikk. Afterward, we listened to the theme song of the year, Canvas and Clay, by Pat Barrett. Next, we headed outside for a snack, followed by the most exciting point of this retreat, gaga ball. I only had a little experience playing gaga ball but managed to snag three wins. Anyways, then we had lunch. I sat with some friends from the other class and it was great to catch up with them. After lunch we played some soccer and then had some time to talk with friends and enjoy some free time. It was sad, but our joyous time had finally come to an end. We had been asked to board the buses to head back to our regular campus. Going back to Unity brought back so many memories both the good and the bad. It was a great time for many, if not all of us. I am sincerely glad that it can now be used for its initial purpose.





Sports at CCS

by Ms. A. Dean

WE ARE EXCITED to offer extra-curricular sports opportunities for the 2021/2022 school year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CCS was not able to participate in sports last year, a huge disappointment for many students. Already, we have been able to offer soccer for the boys and girls. Both teams were competitive and participated well in their Niagara District tournaments. The boys' team came home with the pennant and were declared champions for this year. The girls' team placed second in their pool play. We were also able to train a large cross country team, supporting almost 60 students. As tournaments have been refined to meet COVID-19 protocols, we have also been able to offer volleyball, with great enthusiasm from grade 7 and 8 students. We are grateful to be able to provide opportunities in sports this year, and are thankful for the coaches who are willing to develop students skills. ●



Perspective from a Board Member

by Mrs. S. Van Hartingsveldt

THE EMAIL SAT IN MY INBOX, subject line 'CCS BOD nomination.'

Well, that's an honour, I thought, and promptly declined politely. The time commitment wasn't something I felt able to take on at that point. But the idea had lodged in my brain. A year later, I found myself voted in as a CCS board member and studying the operations manual of the school, like a university student cramming before a final exam.

In the five months since that day, I've been challenged and encouraged.

Challenged because I've been able to see first-hand the responsibility of being a board member and the level my fellow board members lead. It's challenged me to lean into the responsibility and prayerfully take on this role as we face a myriad of decisions. How should we run the membership meeting in our current health situation? Do we recommend these names to serve on a committee? What is our priority in terms of vision and time in the next year?

It's encouraged me because the level of professionalism, integrity, and respect among the board members bode well as we move forward. It's encouraging to see fellow parents casting vision for the school, not just for their own children's benefit but also for future generations. It's encouraging to see the willingness of others to sacrifice time and energy because they care about, and believe in, what we are doing at CCS.

Being a board member gives you both a mile-high view of the school's operations and an appreciation for the dedicated day-to-day work of the staff and volunteers. It truly does take a village, and one of my key takeaways as a new board member is thanks to God for the way He has put it in His people's hearts to be part of it.

Nine years in the CCS community has led me to many ways to volunteer, helping in a room at the Bazaar, reading to children in the library, and accompanying a class trip. Those opportunities give you, as a parent, a taste of the flavour of our school and I highly recommend each one.



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Grade 7 Retreat

by Mrs. C. Mantel

We have all experienced large changes in our lives throughout the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, specifically in our ability to gather together as a community in settings that we previously took for granted. As we rejoiced in the opportunity to be able to gather together for in-person learning this fall, we had a renewed sense of appreciation for our opportunity to build and grow relationships in our classroom communities. One way that we do this in grade 7 is by taking a day and spending it together off of school property for the grade 7 retreat. Students have the opportunity to participate in the Grade 7 Team Challenge and various group games; our ultimate game of pool noodle wars is a favourite! We spend time in devotions together, reflecting on our school theme for the year and then we serve our community by participating in a Team-Up to Clean-Up initiative with the City of Hamilton where we pick up garbage from Captain Cornelius Park. Being together as a community is a blessing we no longer take for granted, and we are blessed to be a blessing to others. ●



However, being a board member gives you a chance to be actively involved in your child's education, especially as it relates to leadership and visioning. It's easy to take for granted the gift we have as parents to educate our children in the fear of the Lord as a community, but we shouldn't. It's a gift to be protected and valued. It's a gift to give to others and safeguard the future.

Maybe you've read this and thought, that sounds like something I'd be interested in doing. Maybe you've read it and thought, that's not for me. One thing that you can do, regardless, is to pray for us. We lead as a board of directors, but we are wasting our time and energy if God isn't in it.

I think back to studying the operations manual and realize that I've already learned potentially my greatest lesson as a board member. It's not knowledge retention I need; it's a reliance on the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us together. I have great hope that He is doing just that. ●



Parent Visitors

This fall parents were invited to join their children in an outdoor class on the junior playground. A variety of lessons were taught from contour line drawing in art, to Bible trivia, to band and P.E. Parents appreciated the opportunity to see their children in action in the CCS outdoor playground. ●



Thanksgiving Food Drive

Calvin Christian School has a special relationship with the Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, located in our backyard. Every year during the week before Thanksgiving, students from CCS bring in non-perishable grocery items to be donated to the centre. In spite of Covid restrictions, we were once again able to honour this annual tradition. Ms. Val Louter, a manager at N2N, spoke with the students in three separate assemblies, explaining the good work of the centre. For many years now, Neighbour to Neighbour has been helping people in our neighbourhood who struggle with food insecurity. Over the next week, the students brought in groceries and on Friday, October 8, both grade 8 classes carried 1,559 pounds of groceries to the centre. We are thankful to God for his many blessings and for the opportunity to share with others. ●





Ride for Refuge Walk-a-Thon

by Ms. J. DeJong and Mrs. S. Dykstra

EACH YEAR CALVIN Christian School students are invited to help raise funds for a special cause.

This year our focus was Open Homes Hamilton through IAFR, the International Association for Refugees. Two weeks prior to the event, Danielle Steenwyk-Rowaan and Alison Witt spoke to the students in a number of small assemblies. Students were shown the pledge forms and encouraged to bring in \$10 to help their organization's work of helping newcomers and refugees find safe and welcoming homes. A school goal of \$5000 was set.

Due to the need to walk with only our cohorts, we could not have the older buddies walk with the younger students on the sidewalks this year, so the walk-a-thon distances were shortened. Grades K-3 walked up to 3 km on the school property, or a park near the Unity Campus, while grades 4-8 students walked 6 km.

Unity Campus enjoyed good weather for their walk on Wednesday, October 20, but the West 5th Campus group had cloudy weather, and even rain, for much of the walk time. Despite the damp weather, students' spirits and enthusiasm remained upbeat. Those walking the longer routes happily showed their signs and the Ride for Refuge face buffs while encouraging passersby to honk. It was great to see and hear so many in our neighbourhood respond positively to our walk.

It was very encouraging to see the wonderful and generous support of families and friends. More than **\$13,000** was raised, which was more than double of our school's fundraising goal! We pray that God will bless the use of the money raised, and our school's awareness of the need for coming alongside newcomers in our community. ●

Baby NEWS



ZOE THIPHAVANH KORVEMAKER

Congratulations to Amy Korvemaker, as she and her husband Aaron welcomed their daughter Zoe Thiphavanh to their family on July 15, 2021.



VIOLET ANN VANDENBERG

Congratulations to Megan Vandenberg, as she and her husband Joshua and son Benjamin welcomed their daughter and sister Violet Ann into their family on July 23, 2021.

SCHOOL counselling CORNER

by Mrs. T. Schinkel RP, MC:AT

THE RETURN TO SCHOOL after a challenging two years, came with an expected increase of anxiety and noticeable gaps in learning, social skills, problem solving, emotion regulation, and development due to the impact of COVID 19 such as the restrictions, isolation, and school closures. For families impacted by poverty and racial inequities, the impact is even greater. Many families in our city and in other schools have experienced significant inequity and have lost the support and services normally available through schools. It is important for us to take a moment to consider our own individual position, privilege, and our blessings. With the stability of staying in school, this will be a year of catching up in all these areas, "a recovery year," as I have heard it called. By reminding ourselves of this fact, we can help combat some of the stress and allow ourselves to feel some grace as we recover and recoup.

This is my third year at Calvin as a part time school counsellor. My role as the school counsellor is NOT about providing intense therapy to students; rather, it includes navigating mental health needs, coaching, skill building, listening, problem solving, assessing needs, giving strategies and resources, consulting with teachers and parents, and supporting social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Supporting our students' social and emotional learning is an important part of the school counselling role. This is done by visiting classrooms and providing learning for all students. The hope is that students can understand that mental health is just as important as physical health, and that the two are closely connected. Mental health wellness is essential to a student's ability to learn and succeed in school and in life. The more we talk about mental health and are aware of our emotions, the better we can reduce the stigma of getting support, and can learn ways to manage the stresses of daily life. In fact, good mental health isn't about being happy all the time. A mentally healthy life includes the full range of human emotions—even the uncomfortable ones like sadness, fear and anger (CMHA).

Emotional well-being also includes recognizing what influences our emotions, discovering how our emotions affect the way we think or act, taking action when our emotional responses aren't helpful and learning to accept them (CMHA). Learning self control is essential to emotional wellness so that we can better learn to exercise restraint over our thoughts, emotions, actions, impulses, and desires.

Naming, talking, and writing about our emotions helps us to regulate them by decreasing our anger or fear response.

Relying on others and sharing our very normal feelings of sadness, fear and worry is very important during this unusual time of stress, uncertainty and loss (CMHA).

SO FAR THIS YEAR, I VISITED WITH CLASSES TO SHARE SOME LEARNING ABOUT:

- the school counselling program - who I am and what I am here for (Unity & West 5th)
- "when worries take over" (grade 2)
- learning about normal anxiety, anxiety disorders, and OCD (grades 7 & 8)
- bullying & conflict resolution (grade 4)
- the zones of regulation (emotion identification and regulation) - to all grades throughout the upcoming year (Unity & West 5th)

I PROVIDED SUPPORT AND CONSULTATION TO STAFF:

- professional development: Trauma Informed Schools (August Edvance workshops);
- Supporting a mentally healthy return to school (September prep days)
- Professional development: book study & discussion/application questions about Unconscious Bias in Schools by Tracey A. Benson and Sarah E Fiarman (September prep days)
- Managing anxiety and panic attacks at school (November faculty meeting)

I supported some students individually, related to various needs or when in crisis. When I am here, my door is open, and a number of students have just come in as needed. I am glad that they feel supported in those moments of difficulty by classroom teachers, EA's, and support staff.

Your child may know me as "the emotion lady" or Mrs. Shingle, which always gives me a good laugh! I hope that I am becoming a familiar face, and that students are finding a safe place to share difficult emotions and challenges, and feel supported. To learn more about the school counselling program, visit the webpage under school life. ●

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Library v.2021

by Ms. A. Benjamins, Librarian

WALKING THROUGH THE HALLS this fall, there was an echo that reverberated, saying, "Ms. Benjamins, when will the library be open? Ms. Benjamins, do we have library this week? Ms. Benjamins, can I take a book out even though the library is still closed? Ms. Benjamins, when will library start?" And then, on October 18, the library opened, and the echo changed to giddy giggles and squeals of delight. Finally!

So, why did it take so long for the library program to begin this year? The simple answer is "COVID 19." The longer answer is a story, which started in the summer of 2020.

On a hot, humid August morning in 2020, I received an email from Mrs. Harsevoort. She wrote, "I am currently sitting in the library, enjoying the sunlight coming in through the windows and imagining what this space will look like as my classroom." I knew that the library would be transformed into a classroom, and I have to admit that I had the exact same question! What question? I had no idea what the library would look like once it became a classroom space.

There were more questions than answers, which is often the case when dealing with the unknown. There were a lot of guidelines and new protocols coming to us from the Public Health offices and the Ministry of Education. It was not easy to keep all these conditions in mind, especially because some of them were constantly being changed. Space needed to be made for the student desks, which needed to be spaced as far apart as possible to allow for physical distancing. There needed to be a place where the students could leave their coats, lunches, school bags, and eventually their dirty boots. The teachers, Mrs. Harsevoort and Mrs. Dykstra needed a desk, space for their teaching materials, student supplies, wall space for bulletin boards, and places to put student work. The list seemed endless, and it was clear that it was going to be quite a challenge to transform this space.

With many people working together to think through the logistics, the plan eventually came together. Bookshelves which appeared to be permanently positioned were emptied, moved, and refilled. A lot of books were relocated

to other areas to open up shelf space for the classroom, and other books went into storage. Space was made for students to come in and put away their coats and other belongings. A sanitization station was set up with "Germ Juice" and there was enough space created for desks to be arranged appropriately. I worked in the library office, running the Home Learning Program, and enjoyed being there to watch the grade 2C students learn and play in their new classroom. Over the next few months, the library was not officially open, but teachers were able to take baskets of books to their classrooms for their students to enjoy. In April 2021, when schools were ordered into a full lockout, the library books were scattered far and wide. For a librarian, this was an organizational disaster!

Fast forward to the summer of 2021. We were delighted to be returning to some more "normal" school conditions. The third cohorts were dissolved, and we were planning for our normal A/B classrooms. The previously postponed opening of the Unity Road campus became a reality, and their doors were opened to welcome 36 students in Kindergarten to Grade 2. The grade 2C class moved out of the library, and looking at the chaos I almost cried. How long would it take for the library to be usable again?

They say every cloud has a silver lining, and this situation became another instance in my life where this proved to be true. While we were saddened by the closing of the Family Christian Bookstore in Burlington, we were able to purchase 9 new shelves to replace the shelves in the Fiction section. These shelves are narrower, and on wheels, leaving more floor space and allowing for flexible room arrangements. The teaching area increased in size, making the library space much more student friendly for the older classes. With the help of experienced volunteer librarians, in just six weeks all the books were back in place. We updated the library circulation software, set up the student and teacher accounts. We marked over 100 books that were never returned from 2019 as "Lost." We were ready.

Calvin Christian School is blessed with an army of volunteer librarians, who are so happy to be here to help! Without these volunteers, the library program would not be possible! ●



Grade 7B Personal Memoirs

PAIN AND PIZZA!

"AHHHHHHH!"

The year was 2015, a few months after I jumped off my balcony, and I didn't learn my lesson at all.

I was enjoying my daily summer suntan when I thought, "Hey! Why don't I just jump off my balcony again!" So I climbed over the railing and leaped off! I could fly. I felt great, but then...

BOOM!

I landed on the dirt right on my back!

"AHHHHHHH!"

The pain was swelling. I was ready to start crying when my sister came out and said it was dinner time!

"What's for dinner?" I said,

"Pizza," my sister replied.

"I'm fine," I said. I jumped to my feet and dusted myself off.

- Joseph T, 7B

MY BLUE BIKE

My BRAKES!!!

I was biking down this hill when something so tragic happened! The brakes on my bike weren't working! I didn't know what to do!

My two sisters were biking in front so I yelled, "My brakes aren't working!"

They didn't hear me! I still had no ideas!

I dragged my feet on the ground trying to stop while yelling even louder, "MY BRAKES AREN'T WORKING!"

They looked! They finally heard! I was so happy but now that they heard, what were they planning on doing?

The stop sign was coming up so soon, I was so scared!

My sister had an idea. I could just tell she was doing something. I didn't want to look. I was so scared!

Smack!!!

Phew, it was my sister! She put her bike in front of mine the opposite way so I wouldn't go through the stop sign. That was her plan! I was so happy.

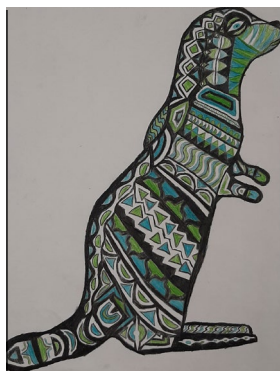
I did get a bit hurt, but not as bad as I would have if I didn't drag my feet or especially if she didn't stop me! I was so relieved!

However, that was the last time I got to use my blue bike.

- Miriam d, 7B



Brayden S, Grade 7



Jessica M, Grade 7

Eric J, Grade 7



quotable QUOTES

A grade 3 student describes their sneezes saying "My sneezes are very sneezy today!"

In band class, a student asks: "Ms. B, how do I play a B without sounding like a car?!"

EA: "What happens if you run in the hall when it's wet?"
"A crisis!" a Kindergarten student replies.

Student A: "How old are you, Mrs. Eising? "

Student B interjects: "My mom said it's not polite to ask someone how old they are!"

Student A: "Okay, how young are you Mrs. Eising ?"

A kindergartener, while walking by a classroom with a lot of umbrellas open in the hallway says, "There sure are a lot of umbrellas these days!"

A grade 5 student was talking about turning 10, and another grade 5 student quips "Double digits - it's not an easy life."

TRIP TUITION REDUCTION INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Thank you for your support of the TRIP program! We are encouraged by the new participants in this year's TRIP program, and thankful for the businesses that

participated for their Christmas gift giving. For those not familiar with our TRIP program, it's a great way to support the school by purchasing gift cards. Simply, you purchase gift cards and the school is given a discount. A percentage of the discount is passed on to the purchaser as a credit towards their tuition, or designated to another family's tuition, or the Tuition Assistance fund.

If you haven't participated in TRIP yet, it is never too late to start saving! Check out the link on our website to our online retailer Fundscrip to get started! Fundscrip offers over 200 retailers to meet your purchasing needs from Dollarama to Esso, Indigo to your favourite restaurant, grocery and home improvement stores, travel and hotel. The online website is very user friendly.

If you are a member of the community at large, this is a great way to support the school throughout the year simply by purchasing gift cards for groceries, gas, Tim Horton's – items you purchase every day.

Please contact Melissa Nagtegaal at mnagtegaal@ccshamilton.ca if you would like to learn more about this great opportunity. ●

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Evan W, Grade 8



Serena P, Grade 8

CCS Welcomes NEW STAFF



ANGELIQUE DEROIN JOHNSON **CUSTODIAL**

Miss Derouin grew up in Stoney Creek, and lives with her mother and grandfather. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends. Miss Derouin graduated from Cathedral High School in 2018, and has experience as a residential cleaner, commercial cleaner, janitor, maid, and office cleaner at a car dealership. She also has a small business selling contact lenses, and enjoys being a make-up artist. Miss Derouin is excited for the opportunity to work at Calvin Christian School, and looks forward to getting to know more people here.



CAITLYN BREUKELMAN **MUSIC TEACHER, GRADES 7 & 8**

Ms. Breukelman is a soprano and a conductor, holding degrees from McMaster University (B.Mus, Vocal Performance) and the University of Alberta (M.Mus, Choral Conducting). While in Edmonton, she was the assistant conductor to the University of Alberta's Concert Choir in 2018 through to 2020, and was awarded the John and Logie Drew Graduate Scholarship in Choral Conducting in 2018, in recognition of her academic success and potential as a conductor. Previously, Ms. Breukelman worked with the Hamilton Children's Choir as an apprentice conductor and rehearsal assistant, and is currently working with many of their groups as an associate conductor. She also worked as a conductor for children's choirs in Edmonton, including the Edmonton Youth and Children's Choirs and the Cantilon Choirs. Ms. Breukelman is excited to be teaching band this year at CCS!



CARRIE FERNS **BUS DRIVER**

Mrs. Ferns was born and raised in Hamilton, and is married with 2 children. She has been driving buses since 1999. Previously, she drove for Attridge, Sharp, McMaster University, and Columbia International College. She is happy to be driving for Calvin Christian School this year. Mrs. Ferns enjoys spending her summers at a campground in Niagara Falls. Mrs. Ferns enjoys all of her passengers, young and old. Their safety is always her number one concern.



COLLEEN BROUWER **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. Brouwer is a teacher assistant in the Kindergarten class at Unity campus, and is enjoying the students and staff, and being a part of the new school. She grew up in Thunder Bay and Jarvis, and now lives near Binbrook with her husband and their 3 children, 2 of whom are students at the West 5th campus and love being there. Mrs. Brouwer worked as an Education Assistant for the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board for 4 years, and has been a bus driver as well. Mrs. Brouwer's family loves being outdoors, camping and travelling down south. They love their Friday homemade pizza nights. She describes herself as a pretty decent cook, who enjoys making good meals, and working together in the kitchen with her husband on the weekends.



GEORGINA HOBBS **PARAEDUCATOR (UNITY)**

Mrs. Hobbs is new to Hamilton, and is excited to be working as a ParaEducator at the Unity Campus. She considers it a blessing to be part of such a loving and caring community. She is a graduate of George Brown College. Mrs. Hobbs has a deep desire to help nurture and make a difference in the life of each child, and has had the privilege of doing so as a foster mother to many children, working as a TA, and as a caregiver in a home-based early childhood program. Mrs. Hobbs and her husband Dan enjoy spending time with their adult children and five grandchildren. Their youngest grandchild was born September 2021, and his big brother Hudson started Kindergarten at CCS at the West 5th Campus. In Mrs. Hobbs's spare time you will find her outdoors, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, or on her paddle board until the first sign of winter. She loves to travel, especially to her homeland of Northern Ireland.



GRACE CHAMPAGNIE **PARAEDUCATOR**

Ms. Champagnie feels grateful and blessed to be working at Calvin Christian School this year as a paraeducator. It is a long time dream of hers to work at Calvin. She has one son. She loves playing and watching sports of any kind. Before joining the staff at CCS, Ms. Champagnie worked as an EA for other Christian schools. She has been a Sunday school teacher at her church for over ten years. Ms. Champagnie is very excited to be working in a position where she can work with students, and challenge them to grow to their fullest potential.



HEATHER VERHOEVEN **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. Verhoeven grew up in Ancaster and now lives in Hamilton with her husband Peter, and their two children Molly and Eli, and golden retriever, Piper. Mrs. Verhoeven graduated with a Social Service Worker diploma from Mohawk College in 2006 and has previously worked supporting youth and adults with developmental disabilities. Mrs. Verhoeven enjoys spending time with her family, going on hikes and other adventures. She also enjoys doing anything crafty. Mrs. Verhoeven is thrilled to be joining the CCS staff this year and is looking forward to sharing God's love with the students and seeing them reach their full potential.



KRISTI CROSSWELL **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. Crosswell was born in New York City and raised in New York. She married her Canadian husband in the states and moved to Hamilton to raise their small family. They have a son in college. Mrs. Crosswell attended the State University of New York and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in French with a minor in English. She also attended La Sorbonne University in Paris, France for her final undergraduate year. She continued her education in Toronto by receiving her Montessori teaching diploma for grades 1-3. Mrs. Crosswell worked for 10 years as a bilingual kindergarten teacher at a Montessori School in Ancaster. She taught for four years in a multi-aged Montessori classroom. She is currently involved in her church community and enjoys walking in the woods whenever possible. She is very excited to be working as a paraeducator in grade 3 and is grateful for the opportunity to work in an environment where God is acknowledged in all learning and where her faith can be joyfully and freely expressed.



MEGAN WOON **PARAEDUCATOR**

Ms. Woon grew up in Japan where her parents were and are still working on the mission field in Tokyo. She graduated from the ECE program at Mohawk College in 2019 but she has been working in childcare for the last 5 years. She was working with Kindergarten students before the pandemic, and she is very excited to be working with this age again. Before studying for her ECE, Miss Woon graduated from the Applied music program at Mohawk College. She loves singing, dancing, and playing instruments. Miss Woon lives with her older sister. They love to go for walks, read together, and go out for coffee.



MARGARET VAN DER MEULEN **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. Van der Meulen grew up in Hamilton and attended CCS from Grades 2-8. She is married and has two teenage boys. Mrs. Van der Meulen's hobbies include crafting (creating wreaths), painting, music, baking and photography. She is also fluent in Dutch (reading, writing and speaking). Mrs. Van der Meulen graduated from Mohawk College, where she obtained her ECE diploma. She has worked at daycare centres at the Hamilton Board of Education and at Redeemer University College. She also worked for eight months in The Netherlands as a nanny. Mrs. Van der Meulen also has years of experience volunteering at churches in their Sunday School programs. Mrs. Van der Meulen is excited to work at CCS, since she loved being a student here and feels very much at home in the classroom, working with children.



MELISSA KONING **TEACHER, GRADE 5B**

Ms. Koning is a Hamiltonian through and through, having been born and raised in Flamborough. While her father attended CCS, she attended Dundas Calvin Christian School (now Providence Christian School) and HDCH. Ms. Koning attended Redeemer University College for her undergraduate BA, followed by a Master of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University. After working for five years as a social worker in children's mental health, she returned to Redeemer University for teacher's college. Ms. Koning is very excited to be part of the CCS community and is getting to know the students and their families. She is also excited to be part of a Christian community where faith is a part of all areas of learning and interactions and where she can help equip each student to shine for Christ in everything they do. Outside of teaching Ms. Koning likes to read, play sports, spend time outside, play games, be active, listen to music, and spend time with her family and her dog, Myla.



NATALEY HYTTENRAUCH **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. Hyttenrauch grew up all over the country. She has been married to her husband, Pastor Brent, for 13 years, and they have 3 amazing children! She enjoys the outdoors, paddle boarding, traveling and spending quality time with her family. She studied Travel and Tourism, and Child and Youth Worker. She has served as an office administrator for over 12 years, and recently was the camp administrator for a camp on Manitoulin Island. She has also pioneered a youth ministry in Waterdown. Her heart is to be a great mother to her children, and invest in children and youth to help them become who God has created them to be. She loves Christian education, and has a heart to serve in a school where we can make an incredible impact, and be a positive influence in young lives. She is blessed to serve at this school!



SONJA VAN DER WOERD **PARAEDUCATOR**

Mrs. van der Woerd is a long term Hamiltonian who attended Redeemer University (BA) and the University of Toronto (BED). After working on several play productions at CCS and supply teaching in various grades, she now joins the CCS staff as a paraeducator in the kindergarten classroom. She finds it a joyful and entertaining place to work, which gives the opportunity to reflect God's love to little people as they learn and grow. Outside of work, Mrs. van der Woerd enjoys camping and fishing with her husband and three daughters, reading, running, and serving as a crisis intervention volunteer.



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CCS Blessed by the re-Source Thrift Shop

Did you know that the re-Source Thrift Shop contributes over **\$100,000** annually to Calvin Christian School? This year the Thrift Shop donated **\$140,000** to CCS! Perhaps you are not even aware that the Shop exists to support CCS and other local charities. The volunteers who work there receive and sell all kinds of goods to those looking for deals. The proceeds raised are channelled to CCS on a bi-annual basis. Last year was particularly challenging for the Shop as their operations were significantly affected by the pandemic; however, they bounced back remarkably to once again bless CCS with their gift of cash.

Given the Shop's unique way of operating (run by volunteers), this allows them to make significant profits for the school. However, since they rely so heavily upon volunteers, they are often looking for more help. Perhaps you are looking for a way to support their mission and our broader community. Perhaps you might consider joining the small army of volunteers by donating some of your time to the Thrift Shop. If so, please feel free to contact the school office to let us know (info@cchamilton.ca). In the meantime, we are so grateful to the re-Source Thrift Shop for their support of Calvin Christian School! ●





"We are the clay, you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." Isaiah 64:8

i n TOUCH



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