

THE  
**HERALD**

a publication of *Eastern Christian School*  
Volume 61, Issue 1

*Embrace  
Community*

SPRING 2020

PLUS  
*Geneva College Approved*



# Embrace Community

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**“Embrace Community” is one of Eastern Christian School’s six core values. It reflects the biblical truth that God created people in his image as relational beings.**

We have had the wonderful opportunity to reflect on the blessing of community this school year guided by our spiritual theme of “Every Nation, Every Tribe, Every Tongue” taken from Revelation 7. We have recognized the incredible blessing of a healthy, vibrant community among students, teachers, and staff members within our school buildings and through our wonderful network of parents, family members, volunteers, and school supporters. We have recognized the blessing that our school derives from being a part of the local communities where our school buildings are located and the broader Christian community in the New York metropolitan area. And we have increasingly recognized the great blessing of being a part of the global community through our relationships with fellow image bearers, families, schools, and churches around the world.

This issue of the Herald examines what it means to embrace community each and every day for the students, teachers, and community members who make up Eastern Christian School. From the elementary students sponsoring Bible translation for people who have never had the opportunity to read God’s word in their own language, to the high school students using technology to tutor peers in war torn parts of the world, and the scores of volunteers supporting the mission of Eastern Christian School through their work at *ditto*, our school is driven by this deeply felt core value of embracing community.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of the Herald as we tell the story of what it means to embrace community!

Thomas G. Dykhouse '76  
Executive Director & Head of School

**About the cover**  
A small group of fourth grade boys display a moment of solidarity during a chapel service.



EASTERN CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOL

# THE HERALD

## EDITOR

Leah (Steenstra) Genuario '97

## FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

David Visbeen '74

## PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

Justin Van Dyke '07

## ALUMNI COORDINATOR

Beth (Youngsman) Milkamp '75

## DESIGN & LAYOUT

Laura Hartgerink  
Signify

## PRINTER

Len Wynbeek '84  
Action Graphics

## EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

50 Oakwood Ave.

North Haledon, NJ 07508

Phone: 973-427-9294

Email: [herald@EasternChristian.org](mailto:herald@EasternChristian.org)

[www.EasternChristian.org](http://www.EasternChristian.org)

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*The Herald* is a bi-annual publication of The Foundation for Eastern Christian School. The purpose of this publication is to share the story of Eastern Christian School and to strengthen the bonds among our extended school community in support of Christian education. **The Herald is mailed free of charge to over 6,500 alumni, families, and friends of the school.**

Our address database is always being updated. If you would like to update your contact information or if you know of someone who would like to receive *The Herald*, please contact The Foundation for Eastern Christian School Association office and we will be very happy to update our database accordingly.

**HERALD MAILING DATABASE CONTACT | Phone:** 973 427-9294 **E-mail:** [Foundation@EasternChristian.org](mailto:Foundation@EasternChristian.org)

## Geneva College approved

Program to open fall 2020



Head of School Tom Dykhouse and Geneva College President Calvin Troup at the Geneva College main campus.

**The State of New Jersey has officially approved Geneva College Eastern Campus (GCEC), a Christian higher education program to open on the grounds of Eastern Christian School in North Haledon, NJ starting in fall 2020.**

The program is a cooperative effort between Geneva College and Eastern Christian School, two long-standing Christian institutions that share a dedication to quality academics within a biblical framework. Starting in the fall, Geneva will offer New Jersey students local access to associate degrees in General Studies, Business and Engineering, and a one-year Pre-Nursing track at prices that rival community colleges and public universities. In addition to appealing to traditional college students, the program is also open to qualified high school juniors and seniors. Students who earn an associate degree at Geneva College Eastern Campus can seamlessly apply those credits toward a Geneva College bachelor's degree or transfer elsewhere.

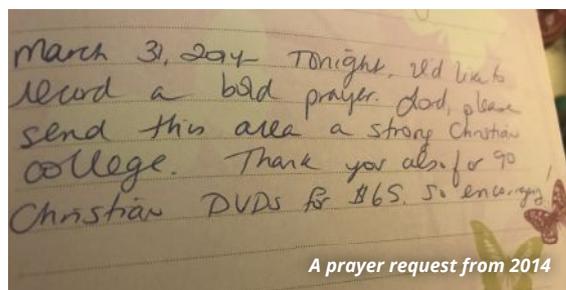


**AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THIS IS THE FIRST PROGRAM OF ITS KIND IN THE NATION"**

"As far as we know, this is the first program of its kind in the nation," shares **Leah Genuario**, EC publications director and the staff member who pitched the initial vision for the program during a school contest in 2017 called Eagles Perch. "Although the work began in earnest starting in 2017, I can personally trace the idea back to times of personal prayer going back to 2014."

Both Geneva College and Eastern Christian School are accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Approval from the Middle States Commission of Higher Education is pending for GCEC.

"Geneva has a long tradition of inspiring students to integrate faith in Christ in every subject, relevant to all aspects of life in the world," notes Geneva College President **Calvin L. Troup**, PhD. "Because of that mission, we have been working with Eastern Christian School for more than two years to offer our ministry of quality Christian higher education to students in New Jersey. And now Geneva College Eastern Campus will be a reality."



A prayer request from 2014

"We are thrilled with our recent approval from the NJ Department of Higher Education," said Eastern Christian Head of School **Tom Dykhouse**. "This partnership allows both historic Christian institutions of learning to further their shared missions of transforming the world in the service of the kingdom."

For more information, visit [www.geneva.edu/eastern](http://www.geneva.edu/eastern).

# ECES aids in Bible translation effort

## Exploring this year's spiritual theme

The video clip of the Kimyal people from Indonesia receiving their first translated copy of the New Testament has been widely shared throughout social media. It's so touching that it's hard not to cry.

Pastor Semea explains how it felt when other people came to the church to teach them: "When they taught from a scripture we didn't have translated, our hearts would be heavy." In anticipation of the New Testament translation, he says, "Our hearts are no longer heavy, they are light."

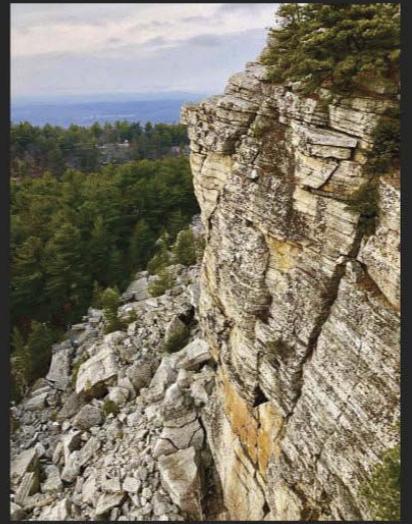
Eastern Christian Elementary School students watched this powerful video during a chapel service in late November. This chapel included several other elements and culminated in a fundraising goal related to Bible translation.

The morning opened with two third graders who read 1 Kings 8:60 in English and Spanish: "Then all the nations on earth will know that the Lord is God. They'll know that there isn't any other god." Following this, Pastor Fred Provencher of Cornerstone Christian Church shared a message



Elementary school students put money into the collection jar in the front office.

*"The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad."  
Psalm 118:24  
(NIV)*



*Psalm 118:24 was one of the goal verses Eastern Christian Elementary Students were raising money for. Nature photography provided by Shorely Good Photos, run by EC alumnus Matt Shore ('18). To order a print, email matthewshore1@hotmail.com.*

related to the school's theme of Every Nation, Every Tribe and Every Tongue and explained that not everyone has access to God's Word.

Students learned about an organization called illumiNations, which is an organization that works with several Bible translators to eradicate Bible poverty.

Eastern Christian Elementary School decided to partner with more than 100 local churches to support the work of illumiNations. Principal **Sandy Bottge** says, "students were encouraged to do chores and earn \$3 to present as an offering to God."

By the fundraiser's end in December, students raised \$420.31, which is enough to translate 12 verses at \$35 a verse.

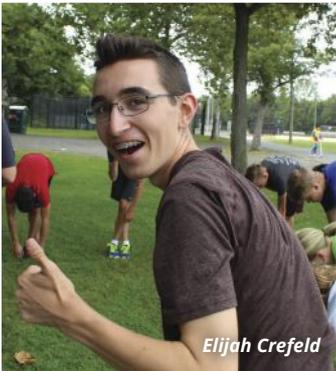
**READ MORE ABOUT THE WORK OF BIBLE TRANSLATION THIS ISSUE ON PAGE 31.**

Watch the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmbTfo1cR6I>

# EC students tutoring kids from war-torn region

**Project merges service, technology and education**

by Jack Skywalker



Elijah Crefeld

**While most Americans spent December 21 preparing for Christmas, on the other side of the world, nearly 20,000 Syrian civilians were fleeing to the Turkish border after bombings in Syria's Idlib province, reported news media Al Jazeera.**

Two days earlier, elsewhere in the Middle East, the same news outlet reported an overnight rocket attack from Gaza and later, Israeli air raids.

Living with this kind of uncertainty is hard to imagine for most Eastern Christian School students, yet many teenagers around the world attempt to thrive in similar circumstances every day.

This year, junior **Jack Skywalker** is looking to start an English-language tutoring program where EC high school students are paired up with students of similar age from a war-torn region. This opportunity for a better future is enabled by the nonprofit organization, Paper Airplane.

Senior **Elijah Crefeld**—an avid student of history, current events and geography—became the first to join the program. Elijah's student is from the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Strip borders Egypt and Israel and is at the front lines of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Since 2007, it has been under control by the militant Islamic group, Hamas.

"I was surprised that fleeing the Gaza Strip wasn't his first thought about the Gaza Strip," Elijah explained. "He loves video games, especially Fortnite. He has a brother and a sister. He loves learning English, probably because mass media is often English, especially [media] about gaming." Since Elijah also loves gaming, he feels lucky to get matched up with someone who shares the same interests as him. Tutoring English to someone whose native language is Arabic isn't as hard as many think. "Sometimes we use Google Translate but we don't have trouble communicating. I just need to speak slowly and clearly," describes Elijah.

Junior **Gabriela Lopez** is currently in the process of joining the program. She recently finished the required training to become a tutor and got matched up with a student from Syria. "With Paper Airplane, I can teach Middle Eastern people my age the English language, so that

*In addition to opportunities like Paper Airplane, students at Eastern Christian School benefit from the perspectives of many international students on a daily basis.*

*For example, on January 8, the high school, led by the Bible and Worship Class and the International Team, held their first international student led chapel.*

*The chapel focused primarily on the Korean culture and included a sermon from Korean pastor Mr. Kang, as well as a number of students and teachers sharing testimonies, leading worship and praying.*

*Isaiah 66:23 states that "All people from every nation will come to worship the Lord...," says **Anna DeJulia**, international student adviser. She adds, "EC, by embracing an international program, has given us a little taste of all the nations. We have the privilege and honor to allow our students and staff to participate in different cultural experiences."*

- Luke Parker

they may go to college and have a better life. I've always wanted to use my knowledge and interests to help other people, which I feel I can do with this program," explains Gabriela.

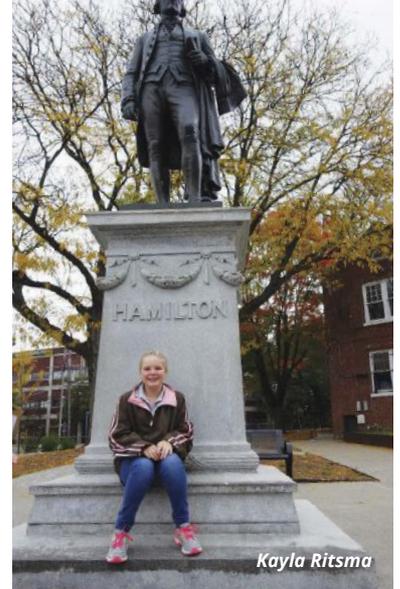
As the theme this year in EC is Every Nation, Every Tribe, Every Tongue, this program offered by Paper Airplane allows EC students to connect and love those that come from a completely different culture with the most eye-opening life experiences. As Elijah said, "Tutoring someone from the Gaza Strip made me realize how similar we can be despite the fact that we are in very different situations."

# Learning by doing

Experiential learning rolls out in sixth grade



*Sarah Castro*



*Kayla Ritsma*

**A quick trip away, Paterson Great Falls stands as a monument of rich natural beauty and fascinating local history. It is also listed by the National Park Service as a National Historical Park.**

This year, sixth graders visited the location as part of a strategic move at the middle school level to incorporate more experiential learning into the curriculum. Experiencing a national park prepared the students for a comprehensive group project where teams researched a national park and then planned and budgeted the trip—the work ranged from mapping a route to calculating the cost of gas.

As one student commented, “It’s like we’re real adults!”

Experiential learning was piloted in one class last year, but has been rolled out for the entire grade for the first time this year. It entails four collaborative units and six field trips designed to give students “new and deeper experiences than we can provide in the classroom,” shares **Jamie Van Buiten**, sixth grade teacher and director of the initiative.

“We chose sixth grade in our educational setting because sixth graders are the perfect balance of independence and engagement in the learning cycle. Just because we focus on experiential learning in our program, this does not mean this isn’t happening throughout Eastern Christian. Although experiential learning is the main focus of this 6th grade program, experiential learning is happening in various ways in every classroom at Eastern Christian School,” Van Buiten clarifies.

Following Paterson Great Falls, the students went to Ellis Island as part of a study on immigration, as well as The Museum of Jewish Heritage, where their tour guide shared an eyewitness account of living in a ghetto during WWII.

Van Buiten comments, “So far, [the experiential learning program] is going great! The students are really responding to this approach to education. I am seeing the students really coming together and growing in their interpersonal skills. They are coming together as a class, and working together very well.”



*Briggs Elvgren and Carter Groen*



1. Joe Scarpa, Aaron Peters, and Journey Pierre  
2. Logan Patel and Giovanni Spoelstra

**EC RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF HANDS-ON LEARNING.**

# Robots and circuits at ECES

## STEAM now in our elementary school

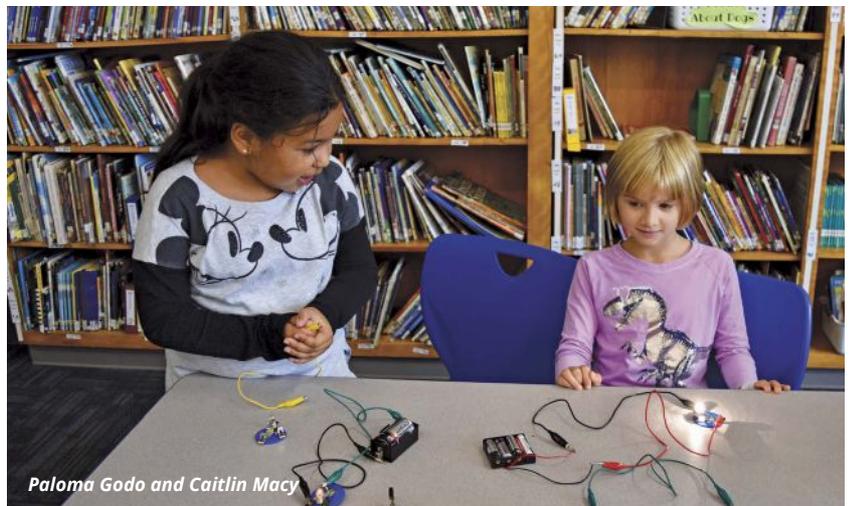
**STEAM—an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math—has come to the elementary school this year.**

The school has adopted Next Generation Science Standards for its K-12 grades, and the early grades are beginning to introduce them through engineering. “The elementary school wanted all students introduced to STEAM learning as early as kindergarten, and the school recognizes the importance of hands-on learning, specifically through the design process,” shares **Meredith Kohlbrenner**, teacher of the program. “Our ES STEAM program allows us to introduce engineering concepts and allows students to practice using the engineering design process.”

This year, every student from kindergarten through third grade comes into a Makerspace class on a rotation of approximately once a month. “There is a

mini lesson on engineering or programming, and then the students use the remainder of the time building,” explains Kohlbrenner. This format allows time for collaboration and creative problem solving, as students are encouraged to revise their design or attempts until they reach a desired result.

Students have been introduced to a wide variety of concepts this year, but Kohlbrenner says some units stand out as favorites. For the kindergarteners and first graders, they have “enjoyed their circuitry rotation. They learned how to power a light bulb using squishy circuits, snap circuits, loose wires and batteries, and digital circuits on the iPads. For second and third graders, it has been using block programming “to drive and program our new Sphero robots.”



Paloma Godo and Caitlin Macy

# Dutch students intern at the Wyckoff campus



During their time in the United States, the Dutch students were also able to participate in a faculty development session at the high school.

## Every Nation, Every Tribe, Every Tongue

**Although its firm commitment to Christian education is familiar, the school is likely unknown to most Christians in the United States.**

According to its web site, Driestar Christian University is located in Gouda, Netherlands and exists to “inspire, educate and support (student) teachers and schools from a Christian perspective.”

A university assignment to observe middle school classrooms in an international setting was the catalyst that introduced Driestar Christian University to Eastern Christian School. In late October, two college students arrived in New Jersey to observe Christian middle school education in the United States.

“We first observed lessons in the middle school, and after that we went to the 4th grade. We learned all about how everything goes, and now we are presenting some lessons about the Netherlands and also some other subjects. We also planned a chapel

service about worshipping in the Netherlands. The goal of our lessons is that we really can teach the children



The interns, Marien and Eric, take a break with the fourth grade to pose for a photo.

something, not for a [short] while, but for a long time,” explained Marien De Waard, one of the interns, during his stay.

**Donna Hoogerhyde**, fourth grade teacher, added that the students’ favorite lessons were the Dutch culture lessons. “Our students learned about cities and cycling in the Netherlands, and the history of the Netherlands. They also learned how, when, and why the dikes were built.”

Marien and Eric’s visit happened to coincide with the school’s annual spiritual theme, which is Every Nation, Every Tribe, Every Tongue. “Eric and Marien were able to share with our students what life is like in The Netherlands in general, but also what it is like to live out their Christianity in The Netherlands. The students also learned some Dutch words and songs.”



**[THE INTERNS] WERE ABLE TO SHARE... WHAT IT IS LIKE TO LIVE OUT THEIR CHRISTIANITY IN THE NETHERLANDS”**

—Donna Hoogerhyde

As for Marien, aside from the opportunity to teach, one of his most interesting observations was the emphasis on some topics over others as compared to what they see in the Netherlands. In the American system, he says he sees an emphasis on reading and science; whereas “In the Netherlands, it is more about math and social studies.”

His final thoughts: “We want to thank everybody for letting us feel so welcome! Some teachers even asked us [to come] for a meal, church and other activities! We think you all should be proud of such a beautiful, Christian school. Please continue teaching the kids about God.”



Moms lead worship in the October 1 chapel.

# Preschool moms lead chapel

## A new worship experience

**On October 1, EC's youngest students packed the Midland Park gym for chapel. Although chapels often include student participants, this one was different: worship was led by preschool moms.**

As the moms stood in front, sweet young voices in the audience shifted seamlessly from English to Spanish. In both languages, the students lifted up the song from Newsboys called *I Am Free*. This worship experience is part of an intentional move by parents to incorporate each preschool student's first language into worship this year. The moms are scheduled to lead chapel approximately once a month through May and will be introducing a new language into worship each time.

"For many of our preschool students, this is the first community that they have participated in outside of the home and church. On top of that, for a few preschoolers each year, this is the first time they are exposed to English," shares Preschool Director **Karyn Baitzel**. "Especially for young children who are forming their cultural identity, we want to honor each

child's culture, and this is just one small way that we can do that."

The idea for preschool parent involvement in chapel stems from Parent Preschool Night on August 29, where parents had the opportunity to worship in multiple languages and learn about the school theme this year, Every Nation, Every Tribe, Every Tongue. Parents were then invited to a brainstorming session in September to discuss how to best incorporate the theme with preschoolers.

Baitzel shared the challenge: "Our preschool faculty strives to make every activity developmentally appropriate for our little learners. For a preschooler, who may not even be able to recite his or her own address, the idea of a global kingdom of God is really big! Our goal is to simplify it to the most basic truths."

Chapel created by current parents seemed like a natural opportunity to reinforce the theme. "I shared the vision for [chapel] in the meeting, knowing full well it is something I could never pull off on my own. The parents really ran with it! They met again on their own the following week and the week after that. They chose the songs, practiced them together, and figured out how they would introduce them," said Baitzel. The result was well received. Baitzel adds, "Our preschool and elementary students love to worship God through song."



**"...WE WANT TO HONOR EACH CHILD'S CULTURE, AND THIS IS JUST ONE SMALL WAY THAT WE CAN DO THAT."**

—Karyn Baitzel

# 2020 girls and the U.S. Army

Women serving our nation

by Grace Kellogg

**Only 0.12 percent of women in the United States have decided or are strongly considering joining the military. Remarkably, in this year's senior class, three Eastern Christian High School girls have decided to join.**

I know first-hand the motivations behind enlistment because I am one of the three girls. I enlisted in the Army in August 2019, one month after I turned 17. I leave for Fort Leonard Wood Missouri the day I turn 18. I have been set on joining the military since I was 11, being inspired by my grandfather who served in the army in World War II. I signed to become a 12 Bravo or combat engineer, which until 3 years ago was only open to men. This does make me anxious, however, I look forward to serving the country that has given me so many opportunities.

Senior **Tricia Owour** has decided on the army as well. Owour was born in Kenya. She says, "I could never see myself at a desk job and I want to be the first one in my family to do something like this." Tricia is confident in her decision and can't see herself doing anything else. "I can't wait to put on the uniform and be a part of the world's greatest team."

Also in the process of enlistment, senior **Victoria Sweetman** is considering joining the Army. Victoria's

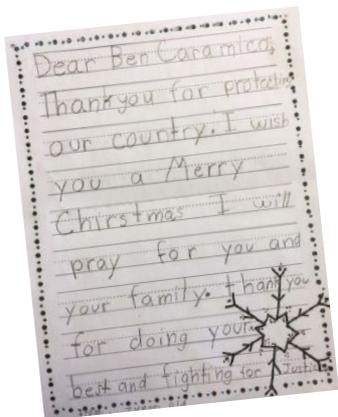
motivation lies in serving her country as well, and she sees it as a great fit for her personality. "It's just so me, it's what I've wanted to do, its physically demanding and an experience," she states. Victoria was also born outside the U.S. She was adopted from Russia, and to many she's the most patriotic person they know. Tuition assistance and the ability to stay near home benefited her, however, what she emphasized most was the experience and how the military was going to impact her.

We all have different motivations and stories; the one thing all three of us have in common is our country and the great things it has given us. Serving our nation is what we feel called to do and I personally can't wait to see the amazing things my friends will do beside me in The United States Army.



*Grace Kellogg is a high school senior who has decided to join the U.S. Army as a Combat Engineer. She is one of three females in this graduating class with future military aspirations.*

## Letters to soldiers



*ES elementary school students wrote more than 100 letters to servicemen. Here is just one of these letters.*

**Motivated by her enlistment, as well as contact with recent Eastern Christian School alumni that are currently in the military, senior Grace Kellogg facilitated a letter and card writing campaign for servicemen and women in December.**

"There are a lot of alumni we want to give support to," commented Kellogg. "The worst part of basic training and deploying is being away from the people you love, and I am doing this because I know I would want the same thing."

Kellogg reached out to elementary school principal **Sandy Bottge** to request letters for servicemen and women. She also helped run a booth during the annual Christmas festival held at the high school, where students from School 24 in Paterson could make cards for soldiers.

Her efforts resulted in more than 150 cards—at least 100 of them coming from EC elementary school students, where they could place letters in a mailbox in the front hallway of the Midland Park campus. As seen by the photos, many of these were personalized especially for recent alumni.

## A community of prayer

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AT ECHS

Journalism students Luke Parker, Rachel Post and Emma Robinson contributed to this article



The Prayer Summit included a gathering of EC teachers, administrators, parents and local pastors, led by the Project Focus team.

**U**nless the Lord builds his house, its laborers labor in vain. And when the Lord builds, he uses his people as living stones. (1 Peter 2:5)

The first stones were largely anonymous. There was the group of mothers who began to pray for their sons' class while they were yet in middle school. Those boys are now juniors. Then later, a little band of teachers and a mom prayed every Tuesday in the high school auditorium during the summer of 2017. Later still, kids in a worship activity period last spring, unaware of any of this, also began to pray. Likely, many more were involved, in the quiet spaces of northern New Jersey with the door closed and reaching out to an audience of one. The groups and occasions were different, but the cries were not: revival, Lord. We need revival.

Late last spring, more living stones came on board—five teachers: **James Uitermarkt, Leah Genuario, Carrie Johnson, Stephen Bailey** and **Lindsay (Pedersen) Hoffman**—who decided together to launch Project Focus, a new spiritual formation and leadership group for high school students that would meet twice a week. It started with other teachers nominating students who had spiritual leadership abilities, and then moved to an application process. In the end, 19 students committed to the initiative. Bible & Worship Teacher

Belen Araneda also joined the team. The foundations were set. Then the calendar turned to fall 2019 and something changed.

It started immediately. On the first day of school, a student approached Stephen Bailey and asked to run a student-led prayer meeting. It was held on the third day—August 30—with about 20 students in attendance and has run every Friday since.

On September 18, Parents in Prayer launched with a sizeable turnout, and continues to meet every other week on Wednesdays. September 25 brought a re-vamped See You At The Pole event hosted by Project Focus. October 8 was the day of an evening prayer walk, hosted by Principal **David Intlekofer** together with Parents in Prayer. The entire school was covered in prayer.

*embrace  
community*

The dates have begun to stream together. There was the National Honors Society retreat, where a large contingent stayed up until 11 p.m. praying and worshipping the Lord...The impromptu praise and worship meeting among high school kids in the auditorium during lunch...The chapel in late October, where Pastor Rob Parker's message hit a chord, and later that day two Bible classes taught by two different teachers had to take a break to give kids time to respond to the chapel through prayer.



*See You At The Pole occurred on September 25*

Along with all of this, there is also the increase of Bible-related SOARs this year, the name for the activity period at the high school. As for Project Focus, which meets during this time, student **Luke Parker** says, "Project Focus is a time for students to meet twice a week for SOAR, where they learn how to be student leaders, but it's also a time to look into your soul and see where God is working in you."

In addition to Project Focus during SOAR, the school now hosts Anchored Bible study for the girls, The Armory for the boys, and Food and Faith, which is a time for students to pray for anonymous requests submitted to an empty locker.

But perhaps the most exciting event to date has been the Prayer Summit, an event hosted by Project Focus on December 4. The prayer and brainstorm event was intended to bring together parents, churches and the schools. In the end, 16 pastors from around the area and a total attendance of about 70 came to seek the Lord. Immediately after, a chapel with an uncharacteristic format for the school—an extended altar call—brought nearly half of the student body to the front of the auditorium to surrender their lives to the Lord. Because of the Prayer Summit earlier, several pastors were in attendance and were able to pray with students.

In regard to the Prayer Summit, "Honestly, I expected it to be a gathering of about 15-20 pastors and leaders, but was blown away to see the collaboration between EC students and staff

along with the parents and pastors/ leaders," shared Pastor Richard Jones of Bridgeway Christian Reformed Church. "There was an openness to hear from God and a heartfelt desire to share with God [the] challenges that the Christian community faces."

Pastor Will Reinmuth of All Souls Community Church said of the event, "I saw students leading administrators, teachers, parents and pastors to come together and seek the Lord in prayer together. There was a joy and unity as we realized that many of us have been praying the same prayers, and experiencing the same call to prayer, even before we gathered. It was wonderful to see the servant leadership of our students, leading with humility, courage and expectation." He added, "I heard confirmation again and again of revival through our youth! There was a strong call to prayer and repentance, accompanied with the zeal for the kingdom to come at EC as it is in heaven."

So what's next? EC is actively looking for ways to increase its partnership with local churches and get more pastors involved in the work of plugging students into lifelong spiritual growth. Project Focus is planning several events for the spring and the expectation is that the Lord will continue to work, including a spiritual emphasis week.

***"I SAW STUDENTS LEADING ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND PASTORS TO COME TOGETHER AND SEEK THE LORD IN PRAYER TOGETHER."***

*– Pastor Will Reinmuth*



*Project Focus is a new spiritual development and leadership initiative this year that meets during SOARs.*

# A community of character

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SCHOOL'S DISTRICT OF CHARACTER APPLICATION

In 2015, Eastern Christian School was named a District of Character by national association Character.org, one of only three districts in the nation to receive the honor that year. This year, the school has reapplied in the hopes of receiving the honor again.

According to Character.org, "Character education is the intentional effort to develop in young people core ethical and performance values that are widely affirmed across all cultures. To be effective, character education must include all stakeholders in a school community and must permeate school climate, culture, teaching and learning." The association's philosophy breaks character education down into 11 principles. Following is the list of principles, along with a tangible example, to illustrate just a few of the ways EC strives to cultivate a community of character:

*embrace  
community*

Principle

1

## Promotes Core Values

*Eastern Christian's core values are Seek Truth, Serve Others, Embrace Community, Exhibit Compassion, Develop Responsibility, Strive for Excellence. They are intentionally highlighted throughout campus and in publications.*

Principle

2

## Defines "character" to include thinking, feeling and doing

*For the past six years, fifth graders have partnered with preschool students to participate in a Trike-a-thon for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. The event includes opportunities for learning about disease and bike safety, mentoring young students, and planning a culminating event. Since its inception, the school has raised \$22,000 for the cause.*

Principle

3

## Uses a comprehensive approach

*Curriculum on all three campuses is intentionally planned via Curriculum Trak software, which enables teachers, departments and campuses to review, revise and implement units strategically.*

Principle

4

## Creates a caring community

*In a 2016 school-wide satisfaction survey, parents identified that Eastern Christian is a "caring and nurturing environment" as the top rating on the survey, achieving a 4.59 out of 5. The school's current spiritual theme of Every Nation, Every Tribe and Every Tongue directly supports community-wide intentional education and activities to encourage diversity and inclusion.*



Principle

5

## Provides students with opportunities for moral action

*As part of the school's service learning initiative, students logged in 19,389 volunteer hours between the time period of June 10, 2017-June 10, 2019. Service learning includes service from elementary school through high school students.*



Principle

6

## Offers a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum

*The school offers a number of different programs for its students, ranging from Owl's Nest Resource Room at the elementary school, to a high school SOAR program that encourages student-led learning opportunities.*

Principle

7

## Fosters students' self-motivation

*At the high school, students in Bible and Worship class do all the chapel service planning. Every week, students lead worship, pray, and speak in a corporate setting.*

Principle

8

## All staff share the responsibility for developing, implementing and modeling ethical character

*Professional development days are planned to monitor progress in integrating core values across all disciplines and aspects of school life.*

Principle

9

## Fosters shared leadership

*The elementary school and middle school hold monthly PTO meetings and offer regular "Coffee with the Principal" meetings for parents. Students hold a variety of leadership roles in all campuses, even in elementary school, where older students serve as reading buddies to younger students.*



Principle

10

## Engages families and community members as partners

*Eastern Christian continues to build strong partnerships with many organizations. For example, the High School's WINGS student internship program has sent students to Valley Medical Center, Hackensack Meridian Health System, Dykhouse Construction, Paramus Chevy, Franklin Lakes Veterinary Hospital, and many others.*

Principle

11

## Assesses the culture and climate of the school

*The Character Education Team—comprised of Jesse Wright, Liesl Botbyl, Mary Faber and Donna Holly--oversees character education and uses a variety of assessments and surveys to gather data about leadership awareness, competence and character.*

*embrace  
community*



*Volunteers and staff at ditto have formed a strong community bond dedicated to serving others.*

# A community of service

THE STORY OF AN UNLIKELY COMMUNITY

**Sue Foote sits on a plastic chair in a little makeshift kitchen at the back of ditto Upscale Retail. Although it is tucked in a corner of a warehouse, homemade snacks on the table and some inspirational decorations on the windowsill make it feel like someone's home.**

The homey atmosphere in the staff-only part of the store is a little hint to the community that exists among ditto's faithful volunteers. "I have made some lovely relationships," Foote explains. She tells a story to demonstrate. Just yesterday, in fact, one of the volunteers sent her a card. "It was a very sweet note."

And with that proclamation, it turns out we have company. "I was going to ask you if you got that!" calls a voice from the hallway. A woman peaks her head in and adds, "I'm glad you got it."

Foote cherishes the friendly exchanges, invites for lunch, birthday wishes, and notes of encouragement. "These are all things that I just never thought about. I came here to volunteer. I didn't expect the camaraderie. That's what keeps me coming back. The volunteering is great;

we all do what we can to help. But when you walk in the door, it feels like this great big hug."

She is one of an army of volunteers that keeps ditto running. On a typical week, 70-90 people volunteer their time, with volunteers representing more than 85 percent of the total ditto workforce. They range in age from middle school students all the way through post-retirement.

Although many volunteers are connected to Eastern Christian School, a large minority are not. Store Manager **Tim Maggiore** estimates up to 33 percent have no prior affiliation to EC before filling out an application—a surprise considering 90 percent of



**"...WHEN YOU WALK  
IN THE DOOR,  
IT FEELS LIKE  
THIS GREAT  
BIG HUG"**

- Sue Foote

*“We open up in prayer every day.”*

- Tim Maggiore



profits support the mission of the school and 10 percent go to other non-profit organizations.

Like Foote, who started serving two years ago largely on a whim, volunteer Patty Tatham had no prior affiliation with Eastern Christian School before volunteering.

Tatham saw a sign ten years ago asking for volunteers while shopping at ditto, and her husband encouraged her to try.

In addition, “A friend of mine who went to Eastern Christian, she said she’d go with me,” Tatham adds.

Tatham still comes once a week, mainly to work in the store front. “I like the people; I like the company. I just enjoy coming here, putting things away, doing my thing. I’ve gotten to know a lot of people in the years I’ve come here.”

In addition to the unaffiliated, some of the volunteers have been faithful to Eastern Christian School for the majority of their lives. **John (‘65)** and **Claire (‘67) White** sent all of their kids to the school and are now retired. Knowing of John’s love for books, they were asked by another former EC parent two years ago if they could help out in the book section a few hours a week.

“I enjoy coming in talking to the people—meeting customers, talking to the people who work here. It’s very relaxing,” shares John. Claire adds, “It’s a great way to support EC...it’s a good way to give back.”

The strong community that exists among the volunteers is not something accidentally contrived; it is the result of intentional cultivation among ditto leadership. Every May, there’s a volunteer appreciation dinner, for example. Around Labor Day, the managers cook up and serve

an appreciation BBQ. There are also special discounted days, organized birthday recognitions, and an entire Volunteer Appreciation Week.

And then, of course, there is bonding that happens around a shared sense of mission. “We are all brothers and sisters in Christ,” says Maggiore, who shares it’s not uncommon for volunteers to pray for customers who come into the store. In addition, Maggiore says, “If you volunteer for at least a year, you feel like you are part of the EC family. You know what we’re here for. You feel ownership and why you’re here, and what our goal is. We open up in prayer every day. We always pray for our kids—and when I say our kids, I mean the more than 800 kids in the three campuses at EC. Every kid who goes to EC is touched by what the volunteers do.”

Although heartwarming, the community of volunteers that has raised up around ditto is often a forgotten story that remains in the shadows of the store’s success. That’s because it has been enormously successful from a financial standpoint as well: ditto has raised more than \$1.5 million for Eastern Christian School since its founding nine years ago.



Do you know about the ditto discount?



# Teachers trained on diversity & inclusion

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY AND ENSURING UNITY

*embrace  
community*

**C**onsidering Jesus' words in John 17, where he prays for unity among all believers before going to the cross, Christians are commanded to take diversity and inclusion seriously. To this end, Eastern Christian School administrators have invited Dr. Michelle Loyd-Paige, Executive Associate to the President for Diversity & Inclusion at Calvin College, to the school this year in a series of events aimed at celebrating diversity while ensuring unity.



Dr. Loyd-Paige speaking at a faculty in-service day

In an October community in-service, Dr. Loyd-Paige spoke to staff members regarding the Three P's of Culture: Products (events, festivals, food), Practices (values, etiquette), and Perspectives (worldview and cultural orientations). The goal was to increase "cultural intelligence," which Dr. Loyd-Paige defined as "the capability to function effectively across various cultural contexts."

She spoke out against the tendency to practice "news blindness and color blindness" in American culture. Instead, she encouraged staff members to always be "mindful or cognizant of oneself, and others, and the cultural context," as well as "exposing oneself to information about cultural differences and similarities, and grasping what this information means as well as its significance." She pointed out that there are many ways to continue to learn, even as an adult—watching news from different news sources, reading biographies, or listening to narratives different than your own, for example.

Using the spiritual theme as context, Dr. Loyd-Paige exhorted the audience: "In order to connect, you need emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence," she shared. "It has to be intentional. It's not just going to happen. It takes everybody who is in this room to have some motivation that this is 'a want to.' What are you going to do in order to make it happen? Just wishing it would happen isn't enough. It must be intentional," she shared.

Repeatedly, Dr. Loyd-Paige in her time with staff has used the imagery of a family. As the family of God, Christians must approach hospitality as letting people of other cultures into every area of our

house. It is a time to understand, share and grow together, even if the process looks messy.

The event closed with practical information for staff members on how to encourage inclusion in the family of God in a way that is age appropriate. For example, at the preschool level, she said, "Be careful not to ignore or discourage your youngster's questions about differences among people, even if the questions make you uncomfortable." Among older students, she explained the importance of providing opportunities for teens to interact with peers from different backgrounds, as well as the importance of challenging intolerance. "If a student says or does something indicating bias or prejudice, don't meet the action with silence," she said. "Remind them, when you talk about someone that way, you are talking about an image bearer of God."



*In order to connect,  
you need emotional intelligence  
and cultural intelligence.*

# Single story: two worlds

## A STORY OF PRIVILEGE



Destiny's senior portrait

**I**n the graduate profile, the school's goal is that an "Eastern Christian graduate is prepared to be a person of Christian vision and influence and seeks to contribute cooperatively and responsibly to God's mission of renewing all creation."

**Senior Destiny Diaz, who intends to be the first generation in her family to get a bachelor's degree, shares she had learned much from her time at Eastern Christian School. She captured in her college admission essay the lessons she has learned straddling two different "worlds".**

**An edited-down version of her essay is shared with permission:**

*"I am privileged; this is my single story.*

*In her popular TED Talk, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie shared the danger of a single story. The danger of a single story is that it creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not only that they can be untrue, but also that they are incomplete.*

*Many perceive my single story to be of a privileged, 17-year-old girl who attends a private school and is really good at volleyball (and pretty much anything else she puts her mind to). But this picture is incomplete.*

*The truth is, I live in two worlds: Worlds that are vastly different, yet come together each day and remind me that I am also different, unique, and strong.*

*My life story began in what I consider my primary world: Paterson, New Jersey. I started as what I will call World 1 Destiny, on a street that is infamous for its drugs and violence, as well as its regular appearances on the evening news. Living in that world, it is difficult to see anything other than what is being displayed before the receiver's eyes. I always knew I wanted more in life than what was being shown around me, but I never had a visual goal or a model of what that looked like. So, when I applied to a private school in a town that was known for its wealth, peace, and overall pursuit of the American*

*Dream, my eyes were opened and my perspective was broadened. I now had the model I was seeking; And in time, this new place would become a second identity.*

*In my second world, I become happy, proper-speaking World 2 Destiny. She does not speak in slang because, although that may make Caucasian students look cool, it makes her look uneducated. This Destiny does not show struggle, she shows strength; she does not explain what a financial stretch it is for her to be here. World 2 Destiny is someone who I strive to be for the rest of my life. It's because this Destiny focuses more on living and not surviving; exploring and not hiding.*

*Despite this striving for better, I cannot forget World 1 Destiny and the valuable lessons I have learned from her—lessons which make me grateful. Even though I have always gone through hardships, I have always gotten through them because of God. Nothing is sad enough, or hard enough that World 1 Destiny can't handle it. Pushing through these difficult circumstances have cultivated grit and determination. It is this view on life—not what might first be assumed by the words "privileged teenager"—which actually makes me privileged.*

*Here is why I believe this: Privilege is having something that others don't; privilege gives a person a head start. My privilege of being from two different worlds gives me a better outlook on life. I know of the good and bad that comes with the combination of my two worlds, and I appreciate both of them equally. I understand both just as deeply, and I embrace both whole heartedly as two distinct, yet equally important, components of my identity.*

*This is why I am privileged.*

*Destiny, in white, flanked by her senior volleyball teammates.*



# Serving the community

ECES ORCHESTRATES A NUMBER OF SERVICE PROJECTS EVERY YEAR

**E**very Thanksgiving, Star of Hope Ministries distributes 'Boxes of Love' to 2,000 families in our area. The boxes—stuffed with food items of many kinds—are hand delivered by a community leader or pastor in the Paterson area.

The effort pulls in churches and ministries throughout Northern NJ, and Eastern Christian School is one of their partners. "The Box of Love is an opportunity for us to partner with Star of Hope Mission to help collect food for those who are in need during the Thanksgiving season. Each class, pre-school through third grade, has a box. Students are then either assigned or they can pick which food item they would like to bring in to help fill their box. I am not sure how long the school has been participating with this project, but the students love seeing their boxes getting filled. They also pray for the families, asking that their box will be a blessing when they receive it," shares **Kelly King**, teacher and leader of the special projects team at the elementary school.

This is just one corporate service opportunity at the elementary school. The elementary school partners with several different organizations every year in order to create a culture of serving others in community. These efforts are led by the special projects team, comprised of six teachers. "The special projects team organizes different opportunities for our students to help strive for excellence, embrace community, learn and have fun," says King.

Aside from Boxes of Love, some of the other regular events are a Winter Coat Drive to support Madison

***I THINK SO MUCH CAN BE LEARNED FROM THE EXCITEMENT OUR STUDENTS SHOW THROUGHOUT ALL OF THESE SERVICE PROJECTS THAT THEY ARE A PART OF"***

—Kelly King



*Preschool and elementary school students surrounding the Box of Love display at the Midland Park campus.*

Ave. Crossroads Community Ministries, the National Day of Prayer, and a Math-a-Thon for St. Jude's.

In regards to St. Jude's, King says, "The elementary school has been involved in the St. Jude Math-a-Thon for 20 years now. Each student is provided a math book with different math questions that they are to answer. They ask friends and family to either sponsor them based on how many answers they get correct, or to give a flat donation. In addition to practicing math questions for a good cause, each grade level has a patient they are asked to pray for. This provides a good opportunity for the students to learn a little bit about what the patients go through while at St. Jude."

King says the enthusiasm around elementary school service projects have been a source of inspiration even for adults and an example that can be emulated. She adds, "Our students are always so eager to help others. They truly enjoy helping and praying for others. I think so much can be learned from the excitement our students show throughout all of these service projects that they are a part of."

# EC welcomes Christian school from Denmark

AN INTERNATIONAL MEET-UP

by Chas Phillips

**It started as an email in the inbox of Eastern Christian administrators, which read: "I am reaching out to you from Denmark, where I am directing a new Christian High School in [the] Copenhagen metropolitan area. This is very rare in Denmark, since we unfortunately are a very secularized nation..."**

*embrace  
community*

The email was ultimately an invitation to meet. This newly formed school—Denmark Christian High School—was only the second of its kind in their nation and the director was planning to send students from the high school/pre-college program to New York City in October. He had heard about Eastern Christian School through a friend.

Though the set-up of the trip was straightforward, its purpose was profound. The initial email from director Sigbjorn Sorensen expressed the hope that students would be able to share experiences

together, as well as discuss cultural, Christian, and political issues. He also hoped to discuss "Christian education in a secularized reality, which is approaching more and more rapidly."

While visiting Eastern Christian High School, students from Denmark were able to lead a chapel worship service, participate in classes, and attend a class trip with Eastern Christian High School's American Studies 2 class. Danish student Tobias Marney, one of the teens who visited EC, shared some of his observations. Although a study from Georgetown University claims Denmark has a higher percentage of Christians than the US, he says, "The Danish culture doesn't really allow for much 'God-talk' and people are generally very skeptical towards religion. Saying something like 'God bless you' would be seen as extremely weird. Most people also identify as Christians, but if you attend church regularly, it's seen as a bit extreme."

Marney adds, "Danish culture is very influenced by the Americans, so we were also quite similar in our clothes that we wore and the movies that we liked. In Denmark [though], it would be unheard of to give any kind of political declaration in classes, like the Pledge of Allegiance...even though we're a Christian school, we don't have morning Bible reading; at least, it's not compulsory."

**Max Harvell**, who served as interim Extended Learning Director and who facilitated the trip, said the trip proved to be an overwhelming success. "I thought it went great. They loved being here...I think our students enjoyed chapel and the difference they brought," he says. "I think it was good for them to see a Christian school in America and see how life is here."



*Danish students and American Studies 2 traveled to The Paterson Museum and Paterson Great Falls together.*



# Community Nights enter sixth year

A CHERISHED PASTIME

*embrace community*

**In the 1970s, an EC basketball game brought in such an enormous crowd that spectators came early to get a seat. The sound of competition was deafening and the opportunity for community was great. It wasn't just at EC; high school sports teams everywhere organically brought in the crowds.**

between soccer, basketball and baseball/softball.

Veenstra reflects on the past six years: "My favorites are the packed gyms or sidelines with an exciting game and loud crowd. Last year's HCA soccer game and boys' basketball win versus Manchester in 2015 are two of my favorites," shares Veenstra. Both of these events were close competitions where EC ultimately emerged as the victor.

Every event is advertised through social media, magnets and posters. Veenstra also involves elementary and middle school campuses through halftime events and triple-headers that include middle school teams. Additionally, high school class councils are invited to join in on the planning.

With new athletic upgrades in store for Eastern Christian High School, coming by the start of school in 2020, more can be done in the future. "I look forward to hosting soccer and lacrosse games here at the high school on the new turf field with lights. I hope to also combine soccer



games with volleyball games on the same site," shares Veenstra.

In addition to the competition itself, community night attendance draws Eastern Christian supporters together. Veenstra adds, "It's great to see alumni come back and support our teams and just enjoy catching up with old friends. Every one is like a mini reunion and it's good to maintain connections. It's also an important social outlet and opportunity for current students who need wholesome options for things to do on a Friday night, which can facilitate making friendships and bonding with classmates."



Nearly 50 years later, the world has dramatically changed. Across the country, newspapers report attendance is down at high school sports games. Yet Eastern Christian School beckons the community to buck the trend and come out to experience good, old-fashioned fun.

Now in its 6th year and under the leadership of Athletic Director **Barry Veenstra** and Director of Marketing/Varsity Soccer Coach **Rudi Gesch**, Community Nights continue to be a cherished pastime for the young and the young-at-heart. Depending on the year, there are usually 7-9 planned events, spaced out



*Scenes from Game 1 of the 2019 Christmas Basketball tournament held over Christmas break. The boys went on to defeat Hawthorne Christian Academy and then Abundant Life Academy to win the tournament. Pictured here, playing in front of a packed house: Chas De Jong, Ben Parker and Danny Bautista.*

# A Foundation primer

## How the Foundation supports EC

by David Visbeen

**The Foundation for Eastern Christian School plays a significant role in funding Eastern Christian School and assuring its continued operations. Despite that, I find that many people, even those connected to EC for years, are unaware of what The Foundation does and how it supports EC. Having been reminded of that fact just recently, I thought it would be good to provide some information on the role The Foundation plays at EC.**

In the late '90's and early '00's, the Eastern Christian School Board of Directors began to realize that it was no longer efficient nor effective for a committee of the board to manage fundraising and events. Prior to this time, individual booster clubs affiliated with a number of churches did the lion's share of fundraising events and even provided tuition assistance to members of their congregations. The board was beginning to transition from a hands on group that was involved in the details of operations to a group more focused on governance and vision. At the same time booster clubs began to disappear. It was evident that a new approach to fundraising was needed.

Around 2006, the Board of Directors established the Strategic Fundraising Committee to evaluate the current fundraising techniques and to creatively think about what fundraising at Eastern Christian School should look like in the future. As a result of this committee's work, The Foundation for Eastern Christian School was formally established in June of 2008. Shortly thereafter, an executive director was hired and some of the current administrative staff was moved into The Foundation offices in the administration building behind the high school.

Today, The Foundation has one full time and four part time staff members. Together, this team works tirelessly to manage events, to solicit and track all donations and donors, to produce The Herald, to oversee ditto of North Jersey, to organize and distribute TRIP orders, to manage capital campaigns, to manage our alumni network, and to maintain our alumni and supporter database.

So what might a typical day at The Foundation look like? I usually arrive first and have a bit of time alone. That quiet time is a good opportunity to pen an article for The Herald or write a blog as well as manage some early emails before the day gets crazy. The rest of the staff comes in and each begins to work on their specific areas of responsibility. Christin begins checking overnight ticket sales for the coming event. Janyce is updating alumni addresses, adding the names of new babies, changing the names and addresses of alumni who were recently married, and hoping she'll have the time to get today's reunion mailing out. Beth might begin by updating banking details from yesterday's deposit slip. And then the mail arrives.

The mail delivery is a really fun part of the day for me. I love opening the mail and seeing who in the community is partnering with us today. As I open the mail, I often write a note or send an email immediately, thanking the donors for their support. From my desk, the mail goes over to Beth who separates the checks by category (i.e. general fund, scholarship, restricted gift, capital campaign, etc.), prepares a deposit and scans all the checks (a requirement of our auditors). Sharon takes over at that point, entering each gift into our donor tracking software and printing acknowledgements and receipts. Every acknowledgement comes back to me for a signature and often a personal note. We want our donors to know that we see and are grateful for every gift that arrives. In the month of December alone, we processed gifts exceeding \$250,000.00.

**THE FOUNDATION...PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN FUNDING EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND ASSURING ITS CONTINUED OPERATIONS.**

Meanwhile, Christin is meeting with someone from the auction team strategizing about how they will solicit gifts for this year's event and how in particular they want to make the auction special this year. Although the auction planning is underway,

*continued on page 22*

*Foundations, continued from page 21*

she is still prepping for the beefsteak in a couple of weeks. Next door, Janyce, Leah, and I are going over the first draft of The Herald, proofing for proper spelling, grammar, etc. Sadly, by the time the actual Herald is published we have read the articles so many times the publication seems like old news.

All of this is happening while the phone is ringing, while preparation is being made to present our monthly progress to the Board of Directors, while class representatives wander in to discuss and coordinate class reunions, while ditto staff and volunteer management is being done, and while ordering new EC bibs for the babies of our alumni. The Foundation office is a busy place.

Our busyness is not in vain. Together, we are responsible to raise about \$1,000,000.00 for direct budget expenses and another \$250,000.00 for restricted funds (i.e. Angel Fund, endowment, scholarships, etc). We also raise about \$1,000,000.00 each year for capital. Every dollar we are able to raise directly reduces the burden on parents by reducing tuition.

We keep busy and we have fun. We love our work because we know that every task we complete helps our students receive an excellent Christ-centered education. We believe that our work establishes a strong foundation, contributing to the success of Eastern Christian School.

**WE LOVE OUR WORK BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT EVERY TASK WE COMPLETE HELPS OUR STUDENTS RECEIVE AN EXCELLENT CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION**

Holland America Line®  
SAVOR THE JOURNEY

**ALASKA & DENALI**

EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Hosted by  
The Foundation for  
Eastern Christian School  
North Haledon, New Jersey

**September 5 – 17, 2020**

**See Alaska and Denali with EC Alumni and Friends aboard MS Westerdam, a Holland America Line ship.**

**Depart North Haledon by motorcoach and enjoy 13 days and 12 nights of gorgeous scenery and luxurious accommodations.**

**For a complete itinerary and details, contact [alumni@easternchristian.org](mailto:alumni@easternchristian.org) or call 973-423-9294.**

# Alumni chapel attendance continues to grow

## Confirmation that EC properly equips students

**For the fifth year in a row, we have seen the Annual Thanksgiving Alumni Chapel grow in attendance. Each year, the Bible and Worship class organizes the chapel bringing back young alumni to lead worship and to speak. And each year, interest in this event seems to grow.**

Students who are home from college for the Thanksgiving break flock into the auditorium, greeting friends and favored faculty members. Some of the alumni arrived home late the night before. With only a few days off from college, they make EC chapel a priority of their visit.

This year's worship team was inspiring and truly brought praise to our God. It was hard to believe

they had only had a short time that morning to practice together. The young alumni speaker was dynamic and engaging, sharing her experiences of sharing the gospel in a hostile land. This was clear confirmation of what we so often share about Eastern Christian School: we are equipping young men and women to engage and transform the world for Jesus Christ.

Following chapel, the alumni gathered in the cafeteria to enjoy a NJ staple: Taylor Ham, egg and cheese on a bagel.

Praise and worship, prayer and teaching, coffee and a bagel. A great way to begin Thanksgiving break.



## Time to Plan

**Thinking and talking about estate planning is something that all of us know we should do, yet many of us shy away from doing.**

Some think that estate planning is only necessary for our parents or older members of the community. That can be a dangerous way to think. If you haven't made a plan, the State of NJ will be happy to make one for you. If you become incapacitated and haven't selected a medical power of attorney, important decisions will be made by strangers. And what about selecting guardians for your children?

*Eastern Christian School can help you with all of these conversations; with no cost and no obligation for you. As members of the Barnabas Association, we have no cost access to professional estate planning attorneys who will consult with you and help you organize all the details necessary for your estate plan. They can explain the complexities of NJ and Federal Estate Law. They can recommend vehicles that can save you and your heirs tax liability, and help you pass your assets to your heirs in ways that make the most sense for you and your specific circumstances. And they will guide you through consideration of charitable planning as well. Again, all of this with no obligation or cost.*

*I have taken advantage of this service and found it to be extremely informative and helpful in my own estate planning. Representatives of Barnabas are here in NJ multiple times each year and we will be happy to arrange for a confidential consult with them at your convenience. Let them help you control all of these important decisions.*

**For more information or to arrange for a private meeting with a Barnabas representative, email [foundation@easternchristian.org](mailto:foundation@easternchristian.org) or call 973 427-9294 and ask to speak with someone about Barnabas.**

## HomeComing 2019

A weekend of fun, faith and fellowship



night before delayed the start of our 44 golfers for just a bit. It was brisk but the sun was shining and **Frank Spoelstra** ('79) was wearing shorts, it was sure to be a good day! The foursome of **Roger Steinginga**,('80) **Bill Soodsma**,('80) Jeff DeKorne and **Greg Hagedoorn** ('05) prevailed against left handed putting, required throwing in place of driving, and unusual scoring (to name just a few of the special rules) to win the day with the low score. Special thanks to **Ben Spoelstra** ('81) for organizing and managing this outing.

**October 18-19, 2019 ushered in Eastern Christian School's 5th Annual HomeComing Weekend. After 5 years you might think that the weekend would become "old hat", but thanks to the creative event planning team in The Foundation office, HomeComing Weekend keeps changing, growing, and getting better.**

As with every event managed by The Foundation, HomeComing requires many hours of planning that literally begins months before the event. And, as with every event managed by The Foundation, HomeComing is prayed over from beginning to end. While we work very hard to make every EC event a success, we recognize that on our own we are bound to fail. But with God's leading and blessing, we can look forward to success. This year was the best EC HomeComing yet. What a blessing!

We recognize that when you plan a weekend in October filled with mostly outdoor events, weather is an important factor. In 2018, our soccer games were cancelled and our 5K was a disaster with rain, high winds, and seemingly freezing temperatures. But this year was the opposite. We were blessed with gorgeous, almost summer like weather the entire weekend.

For the second year in a row, we began HomeComing weekend with an Alumni and Friends Golf Outing at Wallkill Golf Club. High winds the

Later on Friday about 80 guests gathered for our Heritage Alumni Dinner. The food was delicious but it was the time with friends that made this event the most memorable. Although all of our guests were acknowledged, we honored those from the classes of '45, '49, '54, '59, and '64. Our guests enjoyed a slide presentation including highlights from the years they graduated as well as senior pictures of each guest. The Heritage Alumni gathering is a great time of celebration and fellowship year after year.

Off campus, the Class of 1969 held their 50th reunion with a large turnout of classmates from near and far. Saturday morning they met for breakfast and then toured their alma mater. Many had not been back since graduation and were amazed by the



## HOME COMING



*HomeComing featured a variety of events from Friday afternoon through Saturday evening.*

changes on the campus. Check out the reunion photograph on the following pages.

While our alumni were enjoying dinner, our soccer teams were competing under the lights on Willow Field with a great crowd of spectators. The varsity girls lost a hard fought battle against league champion Pompton Lakes, while the varsity boys battled to victory with an overtime goal against Trinity Christian. It was a great ending to the day.

Early Saturday morning our volunteers began preparation for the Betty Davis Memorial EC5K and the Isaac Hennessy Fun Run. The fair weather brought out a record number of participants to support Isaac and to compete in the 5K. First Place overall in the EC5K went to Justin Jenkins with a time of 18.49.52. Immediately after the medals and trophies for the 5K were awarded, the doors to Super Saturday were opened. Kids of all ages were climbing the giant inflatable slide, competing on the inflatable obstacle course, playing all kinds of games, having their faces painted and playing with balloon animals. Parents watched and chatted while the kids had a blast. And all the while everyone was enjoying great food, snacks and beverages from the SWAG Shop. Special thanks to **Amy Brooks** ('90) and her team in the SWAG Shop.



One event that is always a success is the Alumni Soccer Game. This year in addition to a full roster we had a large contingent of fans who enjoyed perfect

weather and a great game. We also broke the gender barrier this year when, like NASA's space walk, two women competitors joined the game. It was hard fought but the senior alums defeated their younger competitors proving once again, that youth is not always the answer. **Dave Dykman** ('88) was named MVP for this year's game.

HomeComing 2019's final event was the 3 v 3 basketball tournament. In only the second year for this event we had six teams competing. The tournament champions were the team of **Max Harvell, Christian De Block,** ('19) C.J. Golding and C. Golding. Congratulations guys. Great tournament.

Our prayers for good weather were answered and the good weather brought out more competitors and lots of spectators.

**WITH GOD'S BLESSING, THIS WAS OUR BEST HOMECOMING WEEKEND YET!**

## Alumni Celebrations

### WEDDINGS



Kristen & Ryan Colabella

Kristen Van Schepen '02 & Chris Padurano  
9/14/19

Gabe Kooreman '08 & Puvi Rajan  
8/24/19

Jubilee Hsieh '09 & Will Rowland  
7/20/19

Josefa Solano-Richante '09 & Casey Timorason  
10/5/19

Allison Dykstra '10 & Ryan Snyder  
11/1/19

Amanda Fenners '11 & Kyle De Jong '11  
10/30/19

Katherine Johnston '11 & Brandon Benfield  
12/21/19

Taylor Leentjes '11 & Matthew De Block  
9/6/19

Danielle Quintero '11 & Andres Vazquez  
11/22/19

Kristen Traub '12 & Ryan Colabella  
10/13/19

Lexy Bishop '13 & Josh Reil  
11/9/19

Francesca Quintero '13 & Isaiah Velez  
7/20/19

Bethany Kuiken '14 & Benjamin Munkittrick  
8/11/19



Jubilee & Will Rowland



Allison & Ryan Snyder



Amanda & Kyle De Jong

### BABIES



Adelynn Atema

Michael & Sharon (Veenstra) Atema '93  
Adelynn Kay 7/29/19

Ben & Rebecca (Baker) Buursma '96  
adoption of their 4th child,  
Molly Alice, age 2 9/16/19

Andrew & Lisa-Marie (Gallagher) Katzmann '02  
Oscar James 7/9/19

Jonathan & Lauren (Jacobs) Harvey '03  
Rhett Tyler 10/10/19

Chase '03 & Katie (Dyksen) Maneri '03  
Jordan Taylor 07/20/19

Steve & Kristin (Dykhouse) Gelenter '05  
Avery Rae 7/17/19

Mike '05 & Suzanne (Tarta) Kraai '05  
Isabelle Elise 7/25/19

Kyle & Meghan (Van Hine) Sensenig '05  
Avery 9/6/19

John '05 & Alyssa (Smith) Van Buiten '06  
Liam John 2/23/19

Michael '06 & Rachel De Waal Malefyt  
Eliana Grace 10/9/19

Andrew & Mary (Tolsma) van der Meer '06  
Adeline Renee 10/4/19

Mark '06 & Kayleigh Winters  
Maverick Alvin 7/9/19

Kenneth '07 & Evonne (De Jong) Malnati '08  
Cooper Daniel 9/4/19

Dom '07 & Caitlin Rivera  
Jacob Dominic 2/28/19

Mike & Terri (De Jong) Canonico '08  
Joseph Michael 06/2019



Avery Gelenter



Liam Van Buiten



Eliana De Waal Malefyt



Oscar Katzmann



Rhett Harvey



Isabelle Kraai



Adeline van der Meer

**BABIES**



Logan Knorr

Steven '08 & Amanda Knorr  
Logan Garret 10/10/19

Jake & Francesca (Gravinese)  
Kramer '08  
Penelope Joy 9/19/19



Penelope Kramer

Mark '08 & Kristen Tolsma  
Theodore James 11/15/18

Kyle '08 & Meghan Vandenberg  
Chloe Elise 7/20/19



Theodore Tolsma



Jacob Rivera



Cooper Malnati

Brian '09 & Kelli Van Der Heide  
Nico Thomas 9/27/19

Ryan '10 & Samantha Dykstra  
Theodore James 7/6/19

Jake & Alyssa (Kuiken) Morin '10  
Trevor Jacob 7/31/19

Travis & Courtney (Martin) Dedrick '11  
Austin Alan 07/2019

Stephanie & Rudi Gesch (Staff)  
Arlo Jack 7/15/19



Theodore Dykstra



Trevor Morin



Austin Dedrick

**"CHILDREN  
ARE A GIFT  
FROM THE  
LORD..."**  
- Psalm 127:3

# Remembering

## FORMER FACULTY/STAFF

**Peter Botbyl**  
North Haledon, NJ 1/29/20  
Bus Driver 2002-2008

**Alice Koster**  
Mendham, NJ 11/7/19  
ECES teacher 1966-2005

## ALUMNI

**Verna Mae (Verblauw)  
Belanus '36**  
Grand Rapids, MI 12/17/19  
ECHS Stenography teacher 1959-1964  
ECHS Guidance Office 1967-1974

**Rena (Zigterman) Bruins '41**  
North Haledon, NJ 10/3/19

**Betsy (Van Halsema)  
De Korne '41**  
Grand Rapids, MI 11/29/19

**Charles Fisher '42**  
Grand Rapids, MI 12/23/19

**Helen (Fisher) Baker '44**  
North Haledon, NJ 11/10/19

**Alice Wisse '45**  
Orland Park, IL 10/27/19  
ECHS English teacher 1966-1969

**Janet (Borduin) Visbeen '48**  
Grand Rapids, MI 1/18/20  
Preschool 1983-1988

**Marion (Fylstra) Warnet '48**  
Midland Park, NJ 1/12/20

**Ivan Tanis '49**  
Midland Park, NJ 8/24/19

**Muriel (Bonnema) Amels '50**  
Wyckoff, NJ 8/20/19

**Catherine "Kay" (Velzen)  
Drukker '51**  
Caledonia, MI 12/25/19  
ECES Teacher 1953-1957  
ECES Librarian 1977-1998

**John Broeils '52**  
Cary, NC 7/24/19

**Anna Jane (Ten Kate)  
Sikkema '52**  
Wyckoff, NJ 11/27/19

**Joyce (Dykstra) Bruining '53**  
Lodi, NJ 10/21/19

**Jacob "Jack" De Jong '53**  
Dyer, IN 11/20/19

**Elaine (Falkena) De Ritter '59**  
Prospect Park, NJ 8/30/19

**Lynn (Bosloper) Kluis '60**  
Salisbury, MD 11/4/19

**Alice (De Haan) Neeb '63**  
Whippany, NJ 8/31/19

**Herman Schoonejongen '64**  
Grand Rapids, MI 4/28/19

**Charles Vander Weit '65**  
Crofton, MD 1/6/20

**Linda (Halma) McCoy '66**  
Gaithersburg, MD 11/23/19

**Faith (La Fleur) Van Halsema '66**  
Grand Rapids, MI 9/22/19

**Melody (Wilkes) Vanderwal '66**  
Wayne, NJ 10/9/19

**Cornelius "Case"  
Lindemulder '68**  
Hawthorne, NJ 10/4/19

**Timothy Palmer '69**  
Lincoln, NE 8/20/19

**David Berghuis '75**  
Goochland, VA 8/20/19

**Ellen (Nieuwenhuis) Davis '78**  
Lynden, WA 11/9/2019

**Charles Williams '79**  
Paterson, NJ 9/11/19

**Our condolences  
are with these families**

# 2020 Reunions

To stay up-to-date, please be sure EC has your current email address. Update at: [www.easternchristian.org/alumni](http://www.easternchristian.org/alumni) or email: [alumni@easternchristian.org](mailto:alumni@easternchristian.org)

## Upcoming Reunions

### CLASS OF 1960 – 60 YEAR Saturday, Oct. 17, 2020

Luncheon - more details to follow.  
Contact Cal Wiegers at [calvinwiegers@gmail.com](mailto:calvinwiegers@gmail.com)

### CLASS OF 1965 – 55 YEAR Planning Stage

Contact: Elaine (Van Dyke) Weiss at: [motherweiss@embarqmail.com](mailto:motherweiss@embarqmail.com)

Please be sure to update your address and email.

### CLASS OF 1970 – 50 YEAR Friday, October 16, 2020

Portobello's, Oakland NJ  
Facebook page: Eastern Christian Class of 1970  
Email: [ECClassof1970@gmail.com](mailto:ECClassof1970@gmail.com)

### CLASS OF 1980 – 40 YEAR Saturday, Oct. 10, 2020

Portobello's, Oakland, NJ  
Email: [ECHS1980.reunion@gmail.com](mailto:ECHS1980.reunion@gmail.com)

### CLASS OF 1995 – 25 YEAR Planning Stage

Watch Facebook, your emails and mailbox for more information.

## HERITAGE DINNER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2020  
at Eastern Christian High School

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1945 - 75 years  
1950 - 70 years  
1955 - 65 years  
1960 - 60 years  
1965 - 55 years

## ALUMNI

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### CLASS OF 1989

**Celebrated their 30-year class reunion on October 19 at Allendale Bar & Grill.**

Front row (L to R): Laura (Veenstra) Steenstra, Roneea Bundick, Sharon (Abma) Donten, Lynn (Holmes) Moorhouse, Sue (Van Dyk) Aalderink, Sally (Sciacca) Marshall, Chris Wisse.  
Middle row: Dave Sytsma, Pat (Tanis) Hagedoorn, Mike Whitney, Lorraine (Hagedoorn) Walther, Luann (Van Der Plaats) Abma, Amy Luyendyk, Lara (Oosting) Ottens, Pam (Borst) Schluter.  
Back row: Bill Van Hoff, Thom Luinenburg, Steve Abma, Fred Ritsema, Ken Post.

### CLASS OF 1969

**A 50-year mini reunion with 10 classmates took place in North Carolina in August 2019. They gathered for a delicious dinner, and enjoyed a fun picnic the following day.**

*(L to R): Al Faber, Roy Vogel, Fenna (Van Leeuwen) Reitsma, Jane (Mulder) Wesdyk, Ruth (Rhoda) Clark, Sharon (Greydanus) Mol, Linda (Breur) Langford, Nancy (Meyer) DeJong and Don DeJong.*



### CLASS OF 1969

**Celebrated their 50th reunion on Friday, October 18, 2019 at Portobello's Restaurant and continued the next morning with a breakfast gathering and tour of ECHS. In addition to New Jersey, classmates arrived from 15 different US states.**

*Row 1 (L to R): Janice (Eelman) Muzikowski, Agnes (Maas) Crean, Barbara (Tanis) Belanus, Cathy (Cimins) Constantinescu, Fenna (Van Leeuwen) Reitsma, Anita (Nawyn) Schelhaas, Pamela (Bandstra) Hagley, Kay (Hommes) Penninga.*

*Row 2: Janice (Hokke) Struwe, Beverly Huck, Linda (Rozema) Ten Kate, Marie (Yskamp) Carsey, Sharon (Greydanus) Mol, Sharon Roon, Sharon (Van Halsema) Traeger, Marilyn (Beversluis) De Luccia, Kathleen Nienhouse, Karel Van Voorthuijsen, Ted Van Voorthuijsen.*

*Row 3: Lois (Hoogerhyde) Smith, June (Rosendale) Bangma, Linda (De Vries) Vogel, John Wispelwey, Joan (Egedy) Walton, Wayne Schaaf, Paul Postma, Ken Vander Wiele, Mark Barber, Bob Unrath, Rich Troast, Paul Schipper, Jim Warden, Paul Malefyt, Carl Steenstra. Row 4: John Everett, John Dyksen, Lee Van Gaalen, Al Faber, Bruce Nelson, Mark Sankey, Jim Vander Plaats.*

# The road to Facebook

**Dawn Wang, Class of 2011**



**Dawn Wang moved to the United States from Taiwan at the age of 10. Soon thereafter, she joined the Eastern Christian community. She initially found her voice through music.**

“When I first came to the United States and joined the EC community, I couldn’t really speak English at all, and playing the violin was my main way to connect with the people in the community,” she shares.

At Eastern Christian High School, she found a home playing in the worship band during chapel. Her senior year, she played during graduation. These memories, she says, are some of her favorites. “To me, it was the perfect way of putting my faith and talent/passion together to create something that I can share with others. We had such a talented group of musicians in our year.”

“

**TO ME, [WORSHIP BAND] WAS THE PERFECT WAY OF PUTTING MY FAITH AND TALENT/PASSION TOGETHER TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT I CAN**

**SHARE WITH OTHERS.”**

—Dawn Wang

Many at the high school remember Wang’s musical talent. Although Wang initially moved to the US to pursue a career in music—and she is currently a part-time professional violinist with The Chelsea Symphony—her life has taken a completely different direction since then. Upon leaving Eastern Christian School, Wang entered Princeton University and studied Mechanical Engineering. Having first served in the finance industry, she was recruited by Facebook early in 2019. She says of the move: “This is one of the best decisions I’ve made!”

As a software developer/engineer, Wang’s work primarily focuses around Facebook’s advertising technologies. She explains: “My daily work usually consists of building/coding and meeting with my team or other teams I am collaborating with for my projects.” She enjoys the versatility, focusing on solutions for not only large, multi-national businesses, but all the way down to small, mom-and-pop shops that need simple, budget-friendly ways to advertise on social media.

Wang has now been in the US for sixteen years, half of which were spent as a student at EC. She says some of her success has been attributed to unexpected opportunities, but also to work ethic and an open-mindedness to trying something new. Looking back, Wang is grateful for the “unique environment [at EC] where we are able to view all the knowledge we are learning in school through this common lens of the Christian faith.” She mentioned feeling especially challenged by teachers Paul Beverly, Jack Wilson, Marla Stout and Deb Andrews. She adds, “Somehow I was able to find a welcoming community—EC—right away and have met all kinds of people within and without the EC community who were super patient and helpful in the right ways and at the right times.”

**Know of someone you’d like to see featured?**

Please email us your suggestion at [alumni@easternchristian.org](mailto:alumni@easternchristian.org) or mail to **Foundation Office, 50 Oakwood Drive, North Haledon, NJ 07508**

# Going into all nations

Doug Higby, Class of 1986



**As a student in high school, Doug Higby was firmly convicted of two things: First, the need for Bible translation was great, and second, someone else should go.**

“God started prodding me towards missions and I began resisting His call. I had a number of influential teachers who helped shape me during this time, and then it all came to a point my junior year of high school. I got fed up one evening and said aloud, ‘Okay, God, I’ll do whatever you want me to do, even if it means living in a mud hut in Africa’. The next day, I felt such peace and I realized that with God in control I had nothing to fear.”

Upon graduating Eastern Christian School, Higby went on to receive his bachelor’s in Religious Education from Kuiper College. With his new bride, Priscilla (Steensma) Higby, they joined Wycliffe Bible Translators, where they completed linguistic training in Dallas and then moved to Belgium to learn French.

Exactly 10 years after his initial promise to God as a high school student, Higby and his expanding family—now including three boys—settled in Africa, eventually into a mud hut in Mali, where, says Higby, “we felt God’s leading and presence throughout.” It would be one of many adventures.

While in Mali, the Higbys served on a team of translators who worked to translate the New Testament into the Fulfulde language of the Fulani people, completing the work in 2005. At his next assignment in Burkina Faso, his role shifted from translation to translation technology. Currently, Higby works in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he serves as International Coordinator of Language Technology for Wycliffe.

Bible poverty is a buzzword in Christian circles today, and Higby defines it as “the inability to access God’s message of love and forgiveness in a language that one understands.” While English-language speakers can turn to one of the 117 full Bible translations, other tongues are not so fortunate. “Many people only have access to the New Testament, and others to only portions of scriptures. Of the 7,350 languages in the world, there are less than 700 that have a complete Bible,” he shares.

Wycliffe states on its web site the goal of “seeing a Bible translation project started in every language still needing one by 2025.” However, the work of translating is complex and moves slowly. For example, Higby explains that rarely will one word in one language have an exact equivalent word in another language. There may be several equivalent words that depend on the context. There also remains the challenge of no equivalent word at all, which he says can happen with a word like ‘altar,’ which may have to be translated with a phrase instead.

This is where technology aids the work of the church. Software can now help translators keep track of the Biblical words and their equivalents in the translation, ensuring accuracy and consistency. Later, that technology helps publish scripture—whether that be in print or through a Bible app. In addition, technology can help keep track of the progress among all of the Bible translation organizations in 3,000 active projects happening all over the world.

Despite advancements to reach the common goal of God’s word in all languages, Higby says, “Technology isn’t the answer to everything. There is a lot of blood, sweat, and tears that go into a quality translation. And that takes time.”



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## Fall 2019 Athletic Program summary



Nicole Foster



Allan Mwirigi

### GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER

Girls Varsity Soccer made Senior Day an afternoon to remember on the last day of the season with a strong winning performance followed by a beautiful tribute to their nine seniors from **Coach Stadlander**. GK **Emily Candela** finished her stellar career with 417 saves, including 179 this season to lead the defense while midfielder **Amanda Faber** totaled 47 goals in her four years. Junior **Nicole Foster** bolstered the attack with 7 goals this season and will lead a young Eagles team next year on our new turf field!

### BOYS VARSITY SOCCER

With strong representation and commitment from the senior class, Boys Varsity Soccer just missed a second consecutive winning season with an 8-10-1 final record. **Ben Parker** led the way, becoming our first young man to receive All County 1st team recognition in many years. Memorable moments for **Coach Gesch** include **Sam Faber** scoring with a 40-yard

rocket shot in an exciting community night win, **Evan Hopeck** dribbling through the entire DePaul defense in a county tournament win, **Matt Cook's** header goal off of **Logan Kang's** cross, and the wild state win on the turf in Wyckoff. This team will also forever hold the distinction of being the last to navigate the unique topography of the high school "grass" field that was home to the league and state champions of Eagles soccer lore.

### BOYS JV SOCCER

Boys JV soccer consisted of 9 freshmen, 11 sophomores and 1 junior who worked hard in practice and bonded together through the course of the season, finishing with a 7-7-1 record. There was never a dull moment with these players, who knew how to play hard and have fun at the same time. **Coach Harvell** believes many of them will be ready to play at the next level in 2020 and looks forward to seeing what they can accomplish!

### GIRLS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL

The most common pregame word thrown around the locker room before a Varsity Volleyball match was "Fight". This season the girls did just that, ending with

### Post-Season Honors

#### BOYS SOCCER

**All County First Team**  
Ben Parker

**Honorable Mention**  
Allan Mwirigi, Evan Hopeck

**All State Second team**  
Ben Parker

#### GIRLS SOCCER

**All County Honorable Mention**  
Sydney Heinold, Nicole Foster

**All-League First Team**  
Emily Candela

**Second Team**  
Amanda Faber

**Honorable Mention**  
Kaitlyn Van Olden



Elizabeth Thomas



County and league honorees

a 9-12 record that saw several matches go to 3 games, including a season highlight performance against a very competitive Glen Rock team. Along with a very strong senior class, captains **Molly Boonstra** and **Cassidy Abma** led the way, ending the season on a high note with a victory over Manchester in 2 sets.

Veteran coach **Steffanie Honore** was pleased that the entire team developed not only skills over the course of the season, but leadership and communication capabilities as well.



Cara Shotmeyer

### GIRLS JV VOLLEYBALL

Led by the hitting of co-captain **Eva Reinmuth** and leadership and outstanding play of 1st year team member **Kelly Steenstra**, the girls enjoyed a solid .500 season. Coach **Kendra Visbeen** points to the gutsy win vs Lodi on a day when the Eagles were missing 5 starters as the game that best showed their character and capabilities as a team.

**CONGRATULATIONS FOR BEING RECOGNIZED BY THE NJIC AND/OR PASSAIC COUNTY FOR THE TALENTS AND GIFTS YOU HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH! MAY THE LORD CONTINUE WORKING THROUGH YOU BY DEVELOPING YOUR GIFTS FOR HIS GLORY!**

### Post-Season Honors

#### GIRLS TENNIS

**All County  
Second Team**  
Cara Shotmeyer

**Honorable Mention**  
Christy Kim, Katie Kuiken

**All-League  
Second Team**  
Cara Shotmeyer

**Honorable Mention**  
Christy Kim

#### CROSS COUNTRY

**All County  
Second Team**  
Kristen Ghinelli

**Honorable Mention**  
Luke Parker, Will Critchfield,  
Anneke Kuperus, Karissa  
Kuperus

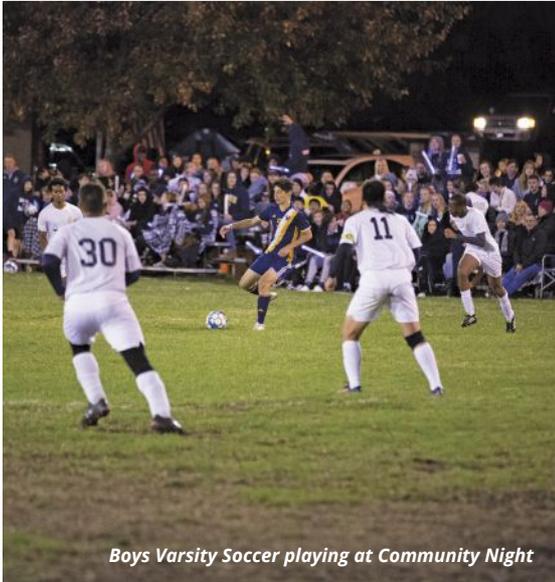
**All-League  
First Team**  
Kristen Ghinelli

**Honorable Mention**  
Luke Parker, Elise Reitsma

#### VOLLEYBALL

**All County  
Honorable Mention**  
Cassidy Abma, Destiny Diaz

**All-League  
Honorable Mention**  
Molly Boonstra



Boys Varsity Soccer playing at Community Night

## VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY

The Cross Country season was “as positive and fulfilling” as any in **Coach Apol’s** recent memory. He points to the preseason service camp, training trip down the shore and EC invitational meet as highlights. While **Kristen Ghinelli** and **Luke Parker** had outstanding individual seasons, the most impressive team statistic was the steady improvement of everyone. The team motto was “Iron Sharpens Iron” and the Biblical injunction to always encourage, aid and build one another up (even opponents) was always evident. Special thanks go to seniors **Elise Reitsma**, **David Visser** and **Elijah Crefeld** for their leadership by example and enthusiasm for the program. Good things ahead next year for this team!

**THE TEAM MOTTO WAS “IRON SHARPENS IRON” AND THE BIBLICAL INJUNCTION TO ALWAYS ENCOURAGE, AID AND BUILD ONE ANOTHER UP (EVEN OPPONENTS) WAS ALWAYS EVIDENT.**

**GO. SOAR. EC!**

## Middle School Cross Country

The department is thankful and blessed to have had coach **Terry Allen** come out of retirement to once again lead the team, which featured 11 girls (4 of whom were 8th graders) and 7 boys, all 6th and 7th, some of whom chose double session training both before and after school! In a sport measured objectively by personal improvement the season was certainly a success as all found a fulfilling challenge and opportunity to achieve. **Alex Culp** led the boys, medaling at the big multi-team Garfield Invitational meet in the season finale.

## Middle School Girls Soccer

First year coach **Kim Meserole’s** shared goals for the season were to have fun while learning fundamentals; to choose and practice respect; to come to practices and games with our best attitude and effort; to better our soccer and communication skills, and getting a day, a week, a game better each time we step onto the pitch. In one of their final games of the season the girls demonstrated all of the above, playing an undefeated Waldwick team to a first half, 1-1 tie with ball possession and courage. And while the game’s final score and the team’s record don’t reflect it by statistical standards, this team—led by a dynamic group of eighth graders—had a very successful year indeed.

## Middle School Boys Soccer

The boys had a great season that provided true examples for individual and team growth. With a squad that was predominantly 8th graders, first year coach **Cory Hoffman** challenged the team to take hold of needed leadership roles and to play “all-out!” Despite some early set-backs, the boys managed a .500 final record and only had one loss in the month of October. The key to their growth and success was understanding that individual talent was not enough and only through team play could they accomplish their goals. We look forward to seeing how the eighth graders will impact the next level!



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