

EAGLE EYE



And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ

Philippians 1:9-10



TIME AND SEASONS

By Al Stefan | Superintendent



For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven... Ecclesiastes 3:1

The 2022/2023 school year is coming to an end. If you are like me, in your reflection on the past school year, you might be tempted to focus on one thing instead of looking at the full picture.

As humans, we tend to fixate on the negative and don't remember all the positive and wonderful things God has done for us. Students, teachers, and parents take a moment and reflect on how God helped you with wisdom, how he gave you strength, how he gave you humor, how he helped you mend that strained relationship, how he gave you peace in the middle of the storm, and how he comforted you when you were hurting.

Reflecting on this year, we have witnessed a lot of growth spiritually and academically at Santiam Christian. With the COVID years behind us, our central focus has been to get our students back up to historic benchmarks at each grade level. I cannot say this has been easy for our students. We have pressed them pretty hard, and they have responded well.

Together the Board of Directors and I laid out a clear vision for 2022-2023, and we have accomplished so much. These are exciting times, and I am so glad to be a part of the wonderful community!

This year we graduated another group of fantastic students. Let me share a few insights about these graduates that warm my heart. All of our 56 graduates will be walking in our ceremony. The average GPA is 3.49, with 11 of our students graduating with a 4.0 GPA and 32 graduating with honors! That is a huge testimony to the work ethic of these young men and women. Now, 75% will be going to a college of their choice, 16% are entering a trade or certificate program, and the rest are weighing their options.

Like the SC graduates before them, they will impact our world in positive and transformative ways. We know the Lord will go before them to give wisdom, courage, and grit as they tackle the next chapter in their stories.

Finally, let me say a few words about our beloved friends and colleagues, Dr. and Mrs. Villers. For twelve years, they have led our community toward excellence. Their passion for the Lord was demonstrated in all the efforts they put into building a school culture that represented Christ in spirit and practice. Each, in their area of expertise, God has used to bless countless students in their educational journey.

Mrs. Villers has been a wonderful example of grace and dedication. The ASL program at SC has thrived under her direction. Out of this class, she has created an outreach ministry that goes beyond the classroom to impact the lives of others here and abroad. Thank you, Mrs. Villers; we know that your work wasn't in the classroom alone; your support of Dr. Villers in his role at SC has been a testament to all who share a ministry with their spouse. We cannot thank you enough for all you have done.

Dr. Villers, you have guided our school through an economic collapse and COVID gracefully and purposefully. You didn't ask for those challenges, but God had the right man in the right position at such a time as this! You also guided our school in advancing in so many ways academically. Our program rivals any in the state, and your attention to detail and teacher development demonstrates your love for our students, parents, and staff. It is hard to put into words all the accomplishments God has used you to spearhead over the last 12 years but know this, a grateful community has been blessed by your leadership. You both will always have a special place in our hearts and a home in our community.

I am always a bit sad when the school year season comes to an end. You see, as educators, we do love our kids! We will miss them this summer, well, not the first few weeks, but by mid-July, we start to look toward September with a renewed sense of anticipation.

For each of our SC families, I hope the summer season is a time to refresh, relax, remember, and replenish your soul, mind, and body with the peace of God.

Have a great summer.
See you next year!
-Al



If you like to talk to tomatoes... Dr. and Mrs. Villers pose with Bob and Larry at an SC event.

Dr. Villers addresses the senior class at Senior Seminar. SC Family honored Dr. Villers upon the completion of his doctorate.

THE WORLD NEEDS

Who God Made You to Be

Never lose your sense of wonder. Keep asking questions, make new friends, try new things, and always keep your love for Jesus. You each have such amazing gifts from God that I get to see in you every day. You are funny, kind, loving, hard-working, persistent, helpful, and brilliant in a hundred different ways.

My wish is that you always choose kindness and look for the best in everything. Know that you always will have a special place in my heart and that you are truly amazing and one of a kind. My biggest wish is that you continue to walk with God and discover the amazing plan that He has for your life.

Lots of love,
Mrs. Doyle

I have loved listening to you speak, grow, laugh, dance and play. I have watched you grow and flourish and become strong. I have watched your acts of kindness and bravery, and I have seen you rise up to be great, even though you are just 5 and 6 years old. Just like the flowers that unfold in brilliant beauty and the birds that sing and soar above it all, YOU, dear children, still laugh and dance and play. Run with abandonment and FLY! Dream BIG. Believe and trust in God, and soar above it all.

“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”
Numbers 6:24-26

With love and blessings,
Mrs. Stefan

CLASS OF 2035



*Kindergarteners reading "The World Needs Who You Were Made to Be"
By Joanna Gaines*

ATHLETICS: YEAR IN REVIEW

By Jay Barton | Athletic Director

Sports play a vital role at Santiam Christian, providing students with the opportunity to stay active, build teamwork skills, and represent our school. Here is some athletic information you might not know and a review of Santiam Christian athletics for this past year that I hope you find interesting. We may be a relatively small school, but we are active, successful, and dedicated.

This year, Santiam Christian Schools (elementary, junior high, high school) established **48 sports teams** with the support of over **90 coaches**. These coaches have dedicated their time and effort to assist our players, contributing countless hours to our programs.

At the junior high level, between **50% - 60% of the students participated** in a sport each season. At the high school level, there has been an incredibly high participation rate in sports. According to my records, **78% of SC students participated** in at least one sport in the

past year, which is the highest I have seen.

There are **16 sports options** for high school students to get involved in football, volleyball, girls soccer, boys soccer, girls cross country, boys cross country, cheer (fall sideline), wrestling, boys basketball, girls basketball, cheer (competition), cheer (winter sideline), boys track and field, girls track and field, softball, and baseball.

Our teams were competitive this year. Each of our **14 playoff-eligible teams competed in state playoffs**. Our football team made it to the state quarterfinals, the boys' cross country team finished 3rd with Benjamin Bourne as the 3A State Champion, competitive cheer took 2nd at state, our girls' basketball team placed 5th in the state, and boys' track and field took 2nd in state with our 4x100 relay team winning state, breaking the state meet record and our school record that was over 30 years old.

TOGETHER WE GROW

By Steve Jagich | Director of Development

In our last issue of the Eagle Eye, we provided a glimpse into some of the security upgrades that we will be working on around campus this summer. We are incredibly grateful for the generous contributions that have been made towards these projects. Your generosity has enabled us to begin much sooner than previously anticipated. Over the past few months, members of our administration and board have been working together to evaluate and plan the next steps of these upgrades and have been meeting with local companies to address the security needs of our campus with the goal of having our first phase of upgrades completed this summer.

This will include:

- Security fencing throughout the campus with monitored entry and exit points. This will secure the many different buildings on site and allow us to control who is on campus throughout the school day.
- Updated key systems to allow for better tracking and monitoring of who is accessing what buildings on campus as well as fully updated systems being installed at our key entry and exit points.
- Upgraded announcement and intercom systems throughout campus that will provide all call access and the ability to communicate across all buildings and into each classroom.
- 3M Security Film will be installed on specific glass doors and windows on campus to increase safety and security in vulnerable areas such as main entrances and glass doors that face out to public areas.

As this first phase of upgrades is completed this summer, our board and administration team will continue to evaluate the security needs of our school. Thank you again for the incredible support you have provided and for making these upgrades possible.

If you have any questions or would like more information about any of the upcoming projects, please feel free to reach out to me. I would be happy to meet with you.

Steve Jagich | Director of Development
jagichs@santiam.org | 541-745-5655 ext. 211

INVEST IN OUR SC FAMILY

Your support of SC helps us to provide Christ-centered education to current students and future generations. Visit santiamchristian.org/giving to find out how you can get involved.



JAMACIA MISSION TRIP

By Gretchen Villers | ASL Teacher



2023 Jamacia Team heading out on their mission trip.

Less than 2% of the Deaf worldwide know Jesus, so they are considered an unreached people group. This statistic includes the Deaf in the United States. I had been praying and dreaming about taking an ASL mission trip. I wanted somewhere my students could sign, somewhere we could learn about another culture and we could partner with for the long term. Sign language is not a universal language, so I knew it had to be a country that used ASL or had a similar signed language to ASL.

When I started the ASL program, I had 11 students, 4 of them seniors. A few months into teaching, one of my students shared that his dad was a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults), and he was learning ASL to sign to his Deaf grandma over Skype. Shortly after, I contacted his dad, Jon, to see if he would come to share in my class. We settled on a date in early Spring.

It had been a super rainy Spring similar to this one, and on a cold rainy afternoon, I googled Caribbean + Deaf + Mission, and the first thing to pop up was Christian Caribbean Center for the Deaf: CCCD. I explored the site

and began to get excited about the possibility of someday going somewhere like this.

Jon came to my class the next week, he began sharing about growing up as the youngest of four boys with Deaf parents. He shared that his mom was the first documented Deaf woman from North America to travel as a missionary. She went to Jamaica and helped found the Christian Caribbean Center for the Deaf! After class, we began to talk about SC and CCCD and dreamed of teaming up to take a group there.

In 2018, we took our first trip. It was better than I imagined. I felt an instant connection to the people and the place. It was as if so many random pieces and paths God had brought into my life fell into place. In fact, Grace Gilder was in my first ASL class and on that year's team, and next year she will join the SC faculty as an ASL teacher.

In 2019, we had another amazing trip, joined by my husband, and I fell more deeply in love with the island and our people at CCCD. Again, we came home and booked our next trip for the Spring of 2020. The week before

we were to leave, the world shut down, and our trip was canceled. It was devastating for the students who had worked so hard to go. We grieved, sent our money, saved our gifts, and continued to pray and dream about being at the mission again.

This year was our first trip back, and included in our team were two members of the 2020 team, and our son, Ty (SC Class of 2015) was able to join as a chaperone. He was our only family member who had not been to CCCD. We had an incredible experience. Our Deaf friends at the Jamaica Deaf Village (JDV) kept telling me, "this is your best group yet." We did have a great group of kids, but I also know it was because of the previous SC groups that paved the way for us. Out of 30 teams that go in a year, we are one of the only teams that know sign language. That allows us to participate in a more meaningful way with the residents of the village. They know SC and know our team will sign, so they were waiting for us as our vans rolled into the village. This year, we were able to help clear land that was later planted with 3000 trees in a grant from the European Union. This will allow the village to become even more self-sustaining in the years ahead. After being on this trip, my team wants to go on a reunion trip, and four members of our team have chosen college and career paths that will enable them to work with and serve the Deaf community. God worked in mighty ways on our behalf, and we saw answer to prayer after answer to prayer. It was a very moving experience with a great group of people.

For those of you who prayed, gave, and supported us over the years: Thank you. You have been part of the SC team that will be forever connected to a remote Deaf village in Jamaica.

Video: Jamaica Recap



A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Emily Heisinger | Senior

The most impactful part of our trip was visiting kids at Knockpatrick. It felt like I was only there for thirty minutes when it was three hours. I spent the whole time playing with these three girls playing pretend kitchen or pushing them on the swings. There was a time when two girls had run off, and I was left with just one. Instead of playing as we had for the last hour, she only wanted me to hold her, rub her back, and sway her like a baby. This struck me hard in my heart.

I know that the kids are blessed with the opportunity of being in this school, but I feel sad for their lack of connections with not only the world around them but from their own families. I think that impacted me the most. After leaving school and returning home, I knew I needed to attend college to deepen my ASL studies and skills. Since then, I have been accepted into the college of my choice with an excellent ASL program. I'm not sure what job awaits me, but I know I want to connect with people who struggle with connecting with the world.

LEAVING A LEAGACY

By Raelyn Riedlinger | Director of Admissions

When you sit down with a group of SC faculty and ask questions about their heart and passion for the process of learning, for our kids, and for Jesus, you will come away feeling a renewed sense of purpose yourself. That was certainly the case for me when I visited with Esther Knaupp, Tim Eby, Sherry Brown, and Brenda Buhrkuhl. The deep sense of responsibility, wisdom, and care that these teachers shared was humbling. Even more impressive and exciting is that if you sat down with any of the teachers here at SC, you would hear a similar heart. The Eagle family is extremely blessed to have so many exceptional teachers who understand that their various subjects are really just various avenues to teach about the love and grace of Jesus.

This panel of teachers brings 104 combined years of teaching experience and excellence. This isn't an "a year here, a year there" kind of experience. Most of those years were invested right here at Santiam Christian. So, it's not just passion, but passion for years! What a legacy!

One of the things that many alumni comment on when they bring their own kids back to SC is the way that things have stayed the same, like the deep sense of community and family and the partnership that exists between parents and teachers.

They also immediately notice that so many things have changed, like the integration of technology and adding exciting new course offerings. Those things are what teachers like this panel bring to the Eagle Family. It is a legacy of academic excellence, community, character, and love for Christ lived out in front of Eagles across the years, but also a commitment to continue to improve and become even more for the Eagles that are still to come.

Take a few moments to hear the heart of our Eagle teachers as they share their thoughts, passions, and some experiences from their years at Santiam Christian.

Video: Legacy Panel

JOIN OUR SC FAMILY

As we prepare for the 2023-24 school year, SC has some exciting job opportunities. View job postings and apply at santiamchristian.org/job-opportunities



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

By Tracy Laurance | 6th Grade Teacher

In May, the 6th graders of SC had the wonderful opportunity to attend outdoor school at Camp Yamhill. The purpose of this trip was to allow the class to connect with nature, bond with each other, and explore their relationship with God. During the days, we participated in various environmental science classes and team-building activities.

We also enjoyed morning and evening campfires where we were entertained by skits and songs presented by the cabins. The campfires always ended with a devotional that brought us closer to God. This year, the class and chaperones wrote personal testimonies that we shared in small groups around the campfire. It was amazing to hear how God is working in and through these young people.



Video Recap of Outdoor School



CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2023

Wisdom was one of our recent character traits at school, and because Solomon, in Proverbs 2, says we should search for wisdom as hidden treasure, I thought it might be wise to reemphasize this vastly important trait.

Proverbs 9:10 says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” What does it mean to fear the Lord? I believe the fear of the Lord is the realization and recognition that God, the all-powerful, is the one who has control over our eternal destiny.

We have a sense of respect and awe for authority here on earth, whether it be a police officer or judge. These authorities only have control over our flesh and blood, the here and now. How much more respect and awe, should I say “fear,” should we have for the authority over our very soul? C.H. Spurgeon defines wisdom as “the right use of knowledge.” Wisdom is seeing all things from God’s point of view. From the eternal perspective. I truly believe that a wise person is someone whom God has blessed with the capability to see things from an eternal perspective and makes decisions in life with eternity in mind.

To piggyback off of what Caden Trimmer said at chapel, service and self-sacrifice is a perfect example of putting away what we feel and want right now for that which will have an eternal impact.

James 3:13 says, “who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.” Being humble and loving your neighbor, the true definition of love, putting their needs above your own, comes from wisdom.

Some of you may be thinking that you are not a wise person. In all honesty, we all fail in wisdom. But do not be disheartened, for James also says in James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.”

So, I will leave you with this. After this chapter is over and you move on, what will your next chapter be? What will be the central theme? I am praying that, for each of you, it will consist of you fervently asking God for wisdom, and being humble, self-sacrificing Christians that will not live for today but for eternity. Making decisions with everlasting and eternal impact.

Good luck and Godspeed.

- Mr. Ferguson (Ferg), 2023 Class Advisor



But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded. 2 Chronicles 15:7

It has been a privilege to complete this journey with you. I am so proud of the amazing young men and women you have become. Please remember the hopes I have for you that I shared at Baccalaureate. Be kind. Love others. Don't procrastinate. Have Fun. Continue your walk with God. I know that each and every one of you will accomplish great things in so many different ways. My door is always open, and I look forward to seeing your smiling faces in the years to come. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your story.

Love,
Mrs. Kniebuehler (Kniebs), 2023 Class Advisor



Video Senior Walk

BACCALAUREATE

By Sami Beam | Registrar

The end of senior year can be a whirlwind of fun and activities – Junior/Senior Banquet, State sports competitions, drama performances, band/choir concerts, senior trip, and more. But as we approach graduation and all the celebration that comes with it, we hold a Baccalaureate service to bring our focus back, to pause and reflect on all God has done in the lives of our seniors, to honor them, to share wisdom and advice, and to pray blessings over them as they prepare to leave the halls of Santiam Christian.

It is tradition that the senior class chooses the speakers and parents who will pray the blessings over them. Class Advisor Tracy Kniebuehler provided remarks on her history with the class and encouragement for the future, while Matt Nosack was selected by the seniors to deliver the Baccalaureate Address, and senior Lauren McCool was chosen to share a senior testimony. Parents Elise Hohensee and Pastor Seth Trimmer offered the closing prayer and blessing over the students. Special music for the praise and worship time was performed by seniors Justine Bontrager, Samantha Kelley, Nate English, Danny Simili, and Colin White, and accompanied by Mrs. Hannah Riddle.

Our school draws families from many different cities and even more churches. One of the most special aspects Baccalaureate provides is the opportunity to lift our hands and voices collectively one last time in thanksgiving, prayer, and worship with the families, friends, and staff who we have spent years raising our children with during their time at Santiam Christian.



GRADUATION

By Hilary Paulsen | Academic Advisor

Santiam Christian's commencement ceremony stands on decades of tradition, weaving in special moments that celebrate every student and their unique story. The class history presentation, written by graduating seniors, highlights each student's journey at Santiam Christian, including when they arrived on campus (between preschool - 12th grade) and the unique contributions they've added to the flavor of their class.

Then you get to watch them grow before your very eyes during the slideshow, which displays pictures of each student from childhood through senior year. As each graduate crosses the stage to receive their diploma, you can read about their future plans, scholarships they received, and marks of character that their peers, parents, and teachers recognize in them.

More than academic and athletic achievements, as a Christian school, we also celebrate character. The highest award that Santiam Christian designates is called the Timothian Award. This award, voted on by faculty and fellow seniors, honors students who embody the charge from Paul to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12,

“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

The Class of 2023 is a bold and brilliant group of young men and women primed and eager to take the world by storm. They are tenacious, creative, and resilient – starting off their freshman year skidding to a halt, transitioning to online school, and then graciously riding the waves of many iterations of education with grit and grace. They are not strangers to adversity. This year's valedictorian, Jared Mehlschau, and salutatorians, Benjamin Bourne and Colin Longballa, all spoke of the realities of a harsh world waiting for them but the ability to conquer all things with Jesus as their guide.



Photo: This year's Timothian Award recipients Caleb Ness, Lauren McCool, and Jared Mehlschau.

Video: 2023 Commencement Ceremony

DAVID FADDIS | CLASS OF 2010



Photo provided by David Faddis

Freedom is not the absence of restrictions but the presence of the right ones. Just as a fish is not really “free” without the walls of its aquarium, it would flounder and die on the ground. I believe SC allotted me the perfect amount of structure (and space) to grow during my formative years.

When my family moved from the Los Angeles area to Corvallis in 2006, I was starting my 8th grade year as the new kid at SC. I admit it was a cultural shock! Instead of inching behind Range Rovers on the 101, we were now stuck behind combines on 99. Yet I was truly embraced by my classmates and the faculty at SC, and quickly began to feel at home.

Of the many wonderful people who took me in, there were three faculty members in particular whose wisdom swirls around in my head to this day - even in my thirties.

Steve Bittner, my Jr. High Principal taught me how to be a good man. Eric Peterson (HS Ethics, Physics) taught me how to think, and Joseph Cook (AP US History) taught me what to think about.

CONNECT WITH SC

Sign up for Alumni updates at
santiamchristian.org/alumni

These mentors directly impacted my field of study in college (I have a BA in 20th Century History) and, more importantly, showed me that being a Jesus follower is actually very countercultural - and perhaps should be so.

I was an incurable cynic during my high school years. I had to question everything. And I'm glad I did! Patiently, they taught me how to arrive at a conclusion of faith with intellectual vigor. I learned that countless times in scripture, Jesus begins a sentence with "consider this," meaning think. Relieved, I did not have to check my brain at the church doors; I would never have to pit logic against faith. Outside of class hours, these teachers introduced me to the great Christian minds: Chesterton, Lewis, Tozer, and took the time to discuss my extracurricular reading with them. I am so thankful for their gentle guidance past my intellectual barriers to faith.

I am in the entertainment industry now. I have some awards, and I live in Beverly Hills with my wife and son. Feels a bit random, doesn't it? But when I look back at my high school years, the most fun I ever had was making silly films with my friends at SC, and the faculty was patient enough to screen them at school pep rallies and banquets. I'm not sure where I would have ended up if I hadn't had that kind of support and encouragement at the time, but I can certainly draw a straight line from then to now - and I am grateful.



David Faddis, student body president, and principal Mr. Wilbur Starr proudly hold The Oregonian Cup which was presented to Santiam Christian High School. Competing with 295 schools, Santiam has received this honor eight out of its nine years. (above) The football team



David Faddis
Hannah Bittner



Hannah Warner & David Faddis
"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young; but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12



Seniors Kaz Dyer and David Faddis display their mouse trap vehicles after the physics class competed in the mouse trap race. Kaz and David were the first to build floating mouse traps.



At Santiam Christian, we partner with parents to provide a Christ-centered PreK-12 education.

Santiam Christian Schools
7220 NE Arnold Avenue
Adair Village, OR 97330

santiamchristian.org

