

WINTER 2024-2025

# THE TORCH

A Kalamazoo Christian Schools Publication



# THE TORCH

The TORCH is published twice a year with the purpose of fostering strong ties between the school, alumni and friends in support of Christian education.

Published by Kalamazoo Christian School Association.

Please inform the Association Office of address changes.

**BY REBEKAH HISLE, Communications Specialist**

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## MISSION

To be an academically excellent, Christian community equipping, inspiring and challenging students and staff to love and serve Christ in the world.

"I am thrilled with all the teachers' compassion, kindness and dedication. The school is amazing in how each person pours into my kids. I cannot say enough about how my kids love school and run in everyday. I love the thoughtful planning and partnership with parents. My kids are thriving at KCS."

- Kalamazoo Christian Parent



Selfie taken at "All School Chapel" in September 2024.

## MOMENT WITH MARC

Kalamazoo Christian's nine Faithlines—"Image Reflecting," "Kingdom Building," "Beauty Creating," "Stewardly Living," "Faith Nurturing," "God Glorifying," "Creation Caring," "Justice Seeking" and "Truth Pursuing"—are Christian practices that we want our students to understand and develop an appreciation for as they go through our school system. Our goal is that these Faithlines become part of their worldview and shape how they view and interact with those around them.

During the 2024-2025 school year we have been focusing on "Truth Pursuing." This intentional focus has led us

“The lessons and values that we are trying to teach our children at home and that they are learning at church are being supported and taught at school. They are learning that every piece of this world belongs to God.”

- Kalamazoo Christian Parent

“My highschooler is enjoying the teaching approaches in his classes and has commented how effective they are. We love how the teachers care for the students entire well-being.”

- Kalamazoo Christian Parent

to engage our students in new and challenging ways, including our weekly devotional through the “New City Catechism,” which allows students to read about the Heidelberg Catechism in both historical and contemporary testimonies.

We want to help our students navigate a world where truth is becoming harder to identify as personal ideologies and cultural mandates change biblical norms.

Students are inundated by social media and influencers, spending less time in church and youth groups. While we are putting more emphasis on “Truth Pursuing” this year, it is a common practice for us to hold daily devotions, weekly Bible classes, Bible memorization opportunities, regular chapels and service opportunities. The more time we can share with our students the importance of God’s word, the more we can help them navigate the challenges of life.

As you enjoy these articles on student growth and achievement, keep praying that our students will continue their pursuit of truth from a Biblical perspective. Pray that their understanding of the truth will grow deeper and their love for their Savior will become stronger.

In His Service,

Marc Verkaik  
Head of School



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# FAITH FORMATION UNIFIES CAMPUS

“The New City Catechism,” published in April 2017, asks 52 questions about faith alongside two theologian’s perspectives about a given topic. It is presented in a way that is easy to understand in modern language, thoughtful for discussion and able to be memorized.

This catechism presents three sections: Part One—God, creation, the fall and law—Part Two— Christ, redemption and grace—and Part Three—Spirit, restoration and growing in grace.


It is a shortened version of several contributors, specifically the “Heidelberg Catechism” and the “Westminster Catechism.” “The New City Catechism” has a corresponding edition for ages 4-11 called “The New City Catechism for Kids” and has been translated into Spanish.

“The New City Catechism” was chosen by the faith formation team at Kalamazoo Christian Schools to challenge students in faith formation and align with the school’s theme for the year: “Truth Pursuing.” Students in elementary school, middle school and high school are using the age-and-language-appropriate book as a study in their homerooms.

Meghan Van Lente, Kalamazoo Christian Schools’ curriculum coordinator, said, “In our 2023-2024 Bible curriculum review, our team identified the need for faith formation coordinators, teachers who are focused on the opportunities and learning goals related to our faithlines and spiritual growth at Kalamazoo Christian Schools.”

In response, the Faith Formation Team at Kalamazoo Christian was created including coordinators from each building, principals from each school and the curriculum coordinator. The team’s goal is to plan opportunities for students to be “active hands and feet of Jesus” on the Kalamazoo Christian campuses and in the community.

Tyler Van Shepen, elementary school principal, said, “A rhythm of having our students be engaged with biblical truths throughout the year was a tangible way for us to engage students in the core foundational truths of the Christian faith... At times, the catechism can still be a little high level for the students, but it has also fostered good conversation and questions from our students. Some classes also shared that the topics within the questions and answers paired well with what the class was covering in Bible class, making a natural connection for the students.”



The case in the atrium entrance of Kalamazoo Christian Elementary School hosts a pixelated depiction of an image that students have been uncovering since the beginning of the school year. Each time an elementary class finishes a discussion question from “The New City Catechism,” they place a sticker into the picture, completing it further. At the end of the study, the image will be displayed in full.

## CATECHISM PROMPTS DISCUSSION AT HOME

When the students started going through “The New City Catechism,” families were invited to follow along and were given the student’s schedule as a guide to continue conversation at home. Read the Voldrich’s story below.

# IN STUDY CASES

Joe and Jess Voldrich are parents of two students at Kalamazoo Christian Elementary School. Their children have come home from school enthusiastic when their class gets to place a sticker in elementary school atrium’s case (above) and guessing what the image would reveal. As their family started to talk, the Voldrich’s opened up their home to discussions about the content of “The New City Catechism” and why it is being studied in school.

“Sometimes when you grow up in a Christian home or Christian school, you can take your faith for granted, or you can go along with things and not really know what you believe and why you believe it,” Jess said. “Our desire for our boys is that, above all else, they come to know, love, enjoy and glorify God with their lives.”

Kalamazoo Christian aims to instill this concept in their students alongside the families of their students and the churches they those families attend.

“Kids are like sponges at this age,” Jess said, “and it is incredible to be able to talk with our boys about the purpose of our life, the God we serve and how God’s word is truth.”

Jess notes the opportunity her children have to “understand the Christian faith, so they can make a choice to follow Jesus and know why it is truth.”

The Voldrich’s use the parent information resource that Principal Van Schepen provided to follow along with what their children are discussing at school. Joe and Jess ask their sons what questions they have been answering, allowing a space in their house where they can share their own experiences.

Jess encourages other families, “Keep praying even if you don’t see immediate results. Keep choosing to share your faith at home, how you have seen God’s faithfulness in your life and why you choose to trust Him in the good and hard.”

**“Seeds are planted all the time with  
your children. And they will grow.  
And they will last.”**

Although Kalamazoo Christian Schools is comprised of attendees from many churches, the Bible of the Christian faith is the same. Jess said, “You can’t read the Scripture and not have a global outlook. You can’t read the Scripture and not see that God is the Creator of the world. All people were made in His image and He sent Jesus to die and rise again so *any* that believe in Him will have eternal life. Our school should reflect the diverse nature of our local community. Our school should be a place of belonging that represents the unifying impact of the Gospel. Our school’s commitment to the doctrinal truths in God’s Word can uphold both the unity and diversity within the body of Christ.”

One Middle School teacher created a time for interaction and leadership in their classroom. “In 8th grade, each student signs up to lead the class in devotions for a week. Our weekly pattern looks like this:

**Motivation Monday** - How can you challenge us with God’s Word?

**Terrific Tuesday** - How can we praise God?

**Worship Wednesday** - Choose your favorite worship song for us to sing.

**Thankful Thursday** - What in our lives can we give thanks for? What does God say about this?

**Faithful Friday** - What freedoms do we have because of our relationship with Jesus Christ?

However, if a student is moved to do something different, we are glad to see what God has given them. Students have done visual demonstrations to help their peers understand a concept. They have created slideshows, or talked about personal experiences. Using “The New City Catechism” has provided one more way for students to engage with the Word of God and what it means to follow Christ. Some students read it on one day to the class while others will take a whole week to discuss it. It has provided us with another way of discussing our faith.”

## HEAR IT FROM THE TEACHERS

“From ‘The New City Catechism,’ students can learn some of the foundational information about our God, our faith, the Commandments and how these can apply to our everyday life. Hearing these truths in a traditional way helps to ground our faith practices in the classroom.

In our classroom, we dig into ‘The New City Catechism’ questions during our morning devotional time. The students hear the question, have the opportunity to share their thoughts about what the answer might be and then we hear the answer and a Bible verse that confirms the question and answer. Often, we discuss what these questions and answers could look like in our everyday lives and in the way we interact with others.”

- Elementary School Teacher

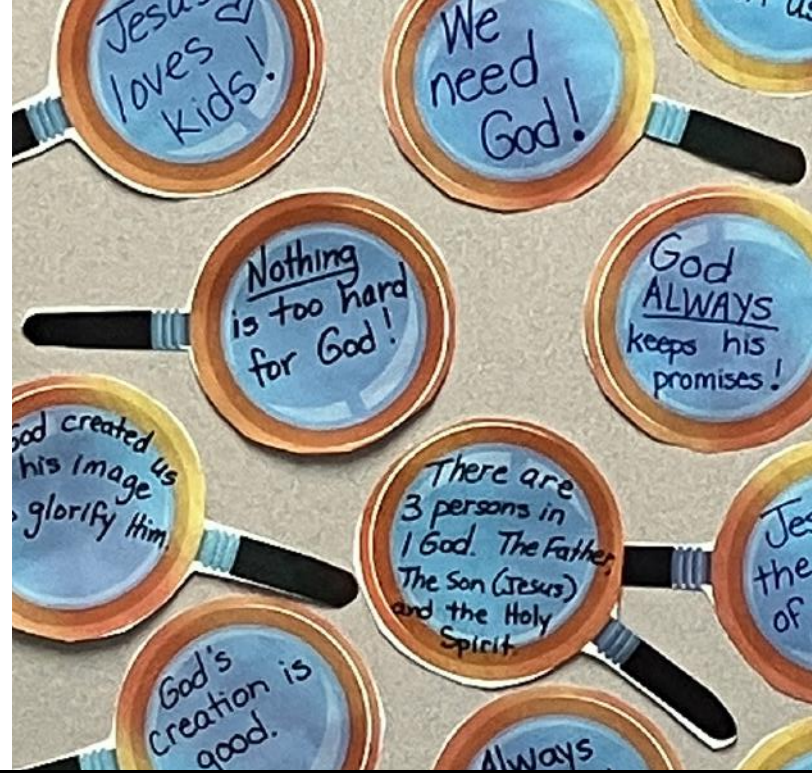
“I’ve been impressed by what they [students] know already and have also been surprised at what they don’t know, that I assume they’ve already been told. Sometimes it is important to go back to the basics to build a solid foundation and center our beliefs on what we know to be true.

As we have answered these faith questions together; students have been able to put up stickers on a “mystery picture” that will be revealed once all of the stickers are placed. This is a good picture that God can continue to reveal himself to us and that we continue to see the “big picture” more and more each day. Students are excited to see what the picture turns out to be and I hope they are even more excited to learn about God everyday!”

- Ashley Penninga, Fourth Grade Teacher

"In our first grade classroom, we are "Truth Detectives." At the beginning of the year we made a detective badge. During our "Theme Thursday" devotions, we look at two questions. We are using the children's version. With each question, the students think about an answer, and then we discuss it. The students like the songs that come with the power point. We pick one truth to write on a large paper magnifying glass and tape it up on our display. It is a good system to introduce some basics of the faith."

- Melissa Baas, First Grade Teacher



"The New City Catechism' provides middle school students with a clear understanding of the foundation of their Christian faith and equips them to share it effectively. Its structure offers practical guidance, helping students internalize essential truths and communicate them confidently. By studying the catechism, students are equipped with the tools they need to live out their faith daily and serve as the hands and feet of Jesus.

Each week, we explore the catechism's questions and answers during devotion time. These sessions involve thoughtful discussions about the meaning of each question, its corresponding answer and the devotional content that provides further context. This approach allows students to connect deeply with the material and reflect on how it applies to their lives.

Eighth-grade students engage with the New Testament throughout the year, which naturally complements the catechism study. Scripture passages connected to catechism questions are woven into classroom discussions. Additionally, students analyze literature in Language Arts through the lens of the Biblical storyline, using the catechism to deepen their understanding of God's redemptive work.

The impact of the catechism is evident in the way students integrate its teachings into their daily lives. As we conclude our study of Romans, eighth graders are preparing a Plan of Salvation project. In this project, they partner with first and second graders to explore the Gospel message."

- Middle School Teacher

"In Bible, I have the students listen to a chapter of the Bible each day. Yesterday, we listened to Deuteronomy 13, which is about Moses warning Israel against worshiping other gods. In my homeroom, we had read Question 17 [from 'The New City Catechism']: 'What is Idolatry?' that morning. A couple of students were able to connect the Catechism to the Bible, which was pretty cool.

- Elizabeth Niedbala, Seventh Grade Social Studies and Bible Teacher



# HONING YOUR CRAFT

**FEATURE STORIES OF  
KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN HIGH  
SCHOOL STUDENTS USING THEIR  
TALENTS TO GLORIFY GOD.**





## ART IN EVERYTHING

For Marykate Thomas, art is in every aspect of life.

Marykate Thomas transferred to Kalamazoo Christian High School for her sophomore year and is now a senior, but she's been an artist since she was five years old. When her older brother got bored with his "How To Draw" book, Marykate Thomas picked it up. At the time, the doodles she learned took on a whimsical, cartoonish style that she has continued into more advanced artwork today.

She said, "I've started to branch out and enter into other styles of art, but I'll always have a special place in my heart for that beginning."

Thomas comes from a family of artists. "My mother is into abstract paintings, whereas my sister does realism landscapes and still lifes."

Artwork creates a community and basis for relationships in Thomas' life. She said, "I also do art because it makes the people I love happy. As I've entered the college search and begun forming an art portfolio, I've realized that it's pretty scant, as most of the art I've ever made has been for other people. And I wouldn't want it any other way. I love being able to give the people I care about something that means so much to me."

Although Thomas comes from a family of other creatives, she had to learn patience along the way. She found herself putting the "How To Draw" book down time and time again with frustration that her drawings didn't perfectly reflect the ones on the page. She couldn't stay away though, and came back to the drawing with a perspective of grace for imperfection and the drive to create something new.

"Doing art forces me to confront that I am not perfect, every single time that I do it," She said. "This conflict is a lesson I love—and hate—getting to learn every time I pick up a pencil, and it has taught me to have grace for myself in areas beyond art."

Thomas uses mostly pencils and oils, but has also dabbled with clay, ceramics and painting.

"For me, art is about doing whatever brings me the most joy, and that special spark of creativity," she said. "I work with whatever sparks my interest and usually will do one to two projects within that sphere until I'm ready to try something new. To be an artist, you just have to find what it is you love and work at it. Don't ever force art into something you hate."

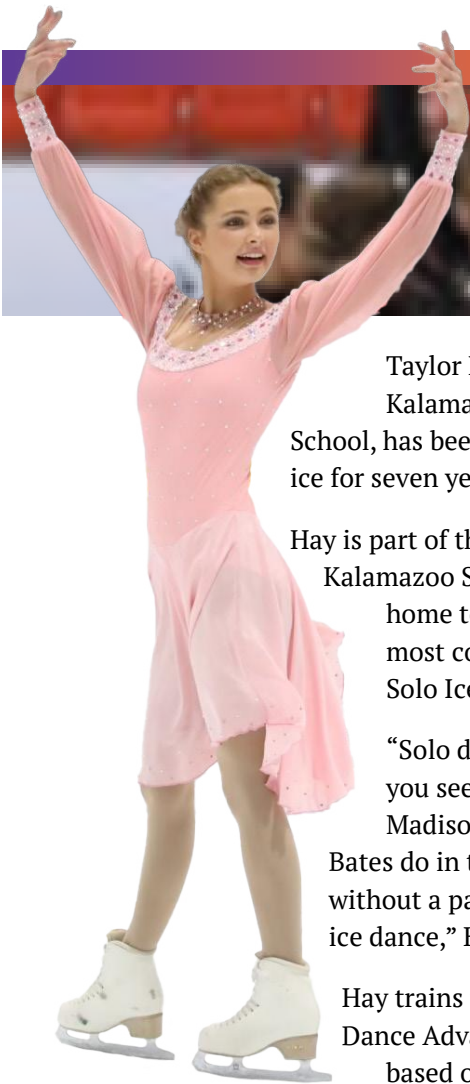
Thomas' practice in art is an immersive experience. "My favorite part of doing art is the energy that takes over my whole body as I work... There's a part of my brain that flips on when I do art that I can't access in any other way... It's a fizzy mix of joy, excitement and determination. All of my favorite pieces were fueled by this rush."

Thomas' artwork has been featured in Kalamazoo Christian School art shows several times and has been working on a mural in the high school art room for a few years.

"Art infiltrates every part of my day. I find myself doodling on whatever is in front of me, no matter the class or time. I bring a creative outlook to every subject that I'm a part of. Art makes your brain work differently than some peoples', and I think that being artistic and creative is an awesome reflection of the facets of God's personality playing out."

Without knowing the direction her future will take, Thomas is sure, "I will always be an artist... Even if I do something that doesn't explicitly involve art in my life, I know that I'll still be someone who creates and sees things artistically."

If she's not enrolled in an art class, Thomas said her favorite subject is English. She enjoys running, participating in Kalamazoo Christian cross country and track & field teams, reading and spending time with her family.



## RHYTHM ON THE ICE

Taylor Hay, sophomore at Kalamazoo Christian High School, has been competing on the ice for seven years.

Hay is part of the Greater Kalamazoo Skating Association, home to one of the most competitive clubs in Solo Ice Dance.

“Solo dance which is what you see the skaters like Madison Chock and Evan Bates do in the Olympics, only without a partner, hence *solo* ice dance,” Hay explained.

Hay trains through The Solo Dance Advantage (TSDA), based out of Ann Arbor,

MI, under Dean Copeley, Jenn Boucholtz and Addy Luke.

Hay also skates with TSDA’s intermediate synchro group, the highest competition team TSDA offers, dancing simultaneously with her teammates. Synchronized skating is a collegiate sport at many universities, and Hay notes WMU’s program as particularly strong.

With an average of 25 hours a week on her craft, Hay’s commitment to her sport takes up a significant part of her life. Usually her schedule permits two hours a day for solo practice on ice and three hours, twice a week, with her team.

“Skating has taught me a lot about time management and how important it is to balance a work/skating relationship,” Hay said. “No matter how long I am at the rink until, I come home and do my homework, which unfortunately sometimes results in not a great amount of sleep, but I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

Competition season for solo ice dance runs through spring and summer, wrapping up in August with the National Solo Dance Final.

Hay has competed in the National Solo Dance Final each year she has competed in solo dance. “My first year competing in solo dance I qualified to compete in the final hosted right here in Kalamazoo.” The following year, she placed seventh amongst the top 18 skaters of the country. The most recent solo Dance final, hosted in Clearwater Florida, Hay had advanced to fifth.

Some of Hay’s favorite competition locations include Chicago, IL, Southport, WI, Detroit, MI, Dallas, TX, Salt Lake City, UT and her favorite, Lake Placid, NY.

“I am so blessed to have had the opportunity to have skated in Olympic Cities such as Salt Lake City, and even on the Olympic Ice in Lake Placid [home of the 1932 and 1980 Olympics],” Hay said, “Some household names that have competed there include Sonja Hennig, and, of course, it was home to the miracle on ice hockey upset of the Americans over Russia. Lake Placid is an awesomely, adorable little Olympic town.”

This year, Hay competes in the Intermediate Combined level and the Silver level with hopes to be one of the 18 skaters in the country invited back to nationals. In addition to her solo skate, Hay’s team has moved up to the intermediate level and aim to compete in the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships hosted in Colorado Springs, CO.

“Skating has given me a whole great big family. I am so blessed with such awesome teammates that double as best friends,” Hay said.

At Kalamazoo Christian High School, Hay is a student of the Spanish Immersion Program and is currently enrolled in the WMU Spanish Immersion class. She said, “The Spanish Immersion program is really awesome, it has given me a whole new perspective on the world, it’s a really great program.” Along with Spanish, Hay’s favorite subjects are World History and Math.

# CHOICES &

# PREDICTABILITY

## A GLANCE AT LEARNING TECHNIQUES IN A KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM.

When engaging with her students and assessing their progress in the classroom Jennifer VanderMolen, preschool teacher, recalls eight styles of learning: **musical, body-kinesthetic, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, naturalistic, intrapersonal and visual-spatial.** VanderMolen introduces her students to these styles by a series choices throughout the day.

Preschool classes at Kalamazoo Christian Schools follow a routine, posted on the wall of the classroom by visuals and words. During the day's activities, VanderMolen incorporates music and movement, story time, counting, letters, nature and play time, touching on as many learning modes as possible.

"Preschoolers definitely like thriving on routine because, if you're in a strange situation, at least knowing what's going to come next is always going to help," VanderMolen said. "We start with circle time, then we go to play, then we eat snack, then we do team time, then we go outside. The kids always know this is the plan."

A Preschool classroom at Kalamazoo Christian is divided into areas which are labeled so that students can begin to figure it out what the purpose of that area is. For example, students in VanderMolen's class know that if they go to the area of the room labeled "house," with a picture of a house, they will find "house-related" items. Even if VanderMolen replaces the toys, the students will be playing pretend in that space, providing the opportunity to introduce them with more items associated with "house."

VanderMolen started at Kalamazoo Christian Preschool in 2021, founding the nature program. She teaches 3s and 4s English and nature classes. Because some of her students carry over A.M. to

P.M. classes or from year to year, they become extremely comfortable in her classroom, "which lets me have that really solid, foundational relationship with kids." When they already know what the routine looks like and what to do, they are able to learn and grow deeper.

"Every kid does come in [to the classroom] different because God made them all unique. Some kids walk in and own the room right away, and some kids need a month to feel secure before they can really show their actual personality. It is really just a case-by-case basis, seeing what each kid needs and what each kid is comfortable with."

One of the ways VanderMolen helps her students transition into the classroom is offering different opportunities so they can choose to experience within their comfort level.

"One of the main truths of preschool is that kids learn best through play and hands on things, and being able to physically see things and touch things and interact concretely," VanderMolen said. She stresses the importance of engaging in learning through all of the senses.

At the annual pumpkin party (see photo on p.11), students each bring in a pumpkin and use descriptors to differentiate them (e.g. bumpy, smooth, round, tall). Then VanderMolen gives her students the choice to experience the feel of the inside of the pumpkin or to observe.

"I had a kid that wore his backpack every day with him all day long for the first month, because that was what helped him feel safe and secure enough to be in class." VanderMolen is happy to let a student carry that "little piece of home" that they feel comfortable with as to allow them to try new opportunities safely. She refers to this as a good relationship foundation, "You can feel safe here so that you can make the connections and that



you can start to learn what's in front of you.”

Because many students attend both A.M. and P.M. classes, the mid-day switch can be a growth opportunity. “Our program is really full and really wonderful, but it mostly involves, a large portion of our kids going from being in a morning class to being in an afternoon class,” VanderMolen said, “They’re doing a full day with sometimes two different teachers and sometimes two different environments. Our morning classes are all inside, and then when they’re with me, in the afternoon, we go outdoors to nature.”

VanderMolen’s solution: offer choices in predictable areas. When the students are ready to go outside, which is part of the routine, she asks them how they would to get ready. Whether the child is putting on their shoes or their coat first, they will still be prepared to change environments.

In accordance with moving students along in school and being prepared to update parents and guardians in their child’s learning, VanderMolen has learning goals and assessments to do during the school day. One of the ways she assesses her students is observing their play time.

While learning numbers, VanderMolen may ask a student playing in the kitchen, ‘How many pizzas

have you put in your basket?’ When a student rote counts the toys or lays out the food to count it again, VanderMolen knows that student is capable of that skill.

For a more kinesthetic approach, VanderMolen will allow a student to jump around the ABC rug. Then she may ask, ‘What letter did you land on?’ and ‘Can you jump to the next letter in the alphabet?’ If a student is able to, VanderMolen knows the student is on track to learning their letter sounds and the alphabet.

She said, “It’s using what is already in the environment to point out, ‘You didn’t even know you were learning, but you are.’”

These empirical records compliment formal assessments where VanderMolen works through flashcards with each student individually.

“Some kids do really well with that, because they want to impress people... Other kids are like, ‘Well, I’m not going to tell you, but I know it’ and so I have to be really sneaky and watch.”

VanderMolen’s patience to stick alongside students as they learn comes from the mentality: “they’re three and four, and that’s how their brains are made right now. Yes, there are times that are uncooperative... but that’s what their brains are supposed to do there. They don’t get it right away, and that’s okay.”

Developmentally, during their preschool years, children are recognizing that they are individuals and can “have influence over the world.”

“Modeling the behavior is the number one thing I can do to get them to take note,” VanderMolen said. “It doesn’t always work—I never pick my nose, but somehow all the kids do...But, I will always say modeling behavior is the main thing at this age. Kids learn by watching.”

VanderMolen uses technical terms or appropriate jargon with her students even if it’s above their understanding now. This allows the student to know there are things happening around them and those things have terms.

Providing different ways for children to learn means being present and thinking on their toes for teachers like VanderMolen.

# 10

## TIPS FOR TIME WITH YOUR PRESCHOOLER

By Laura Manting, Preschool Director and Teacher

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1. **READ, READ, READ** Read picture books that the children pick out, re-read favorites and read signs and labels as you drive and while at the store!
2. **GET OUTSIDE** Don't feel the need to provide toys or specific games. See what interests your child, and follow their lead. Encourage independence in allowing them to get ready themselves.
3. **WRITE TOGETHER** When you write a note or a list, invite your preschooler to watch you. Talk about why you write!
4. **FREE PLAY AT HOME** Set aside a part of your day where they know they will be expected to choose for themselves. Sometimes, it helps to set a timer for 10 minutes, play together to get them going, then leave when the timer goes off. Play is how a child processes the world around them!
5. **COUNT THINGS** Count as they set the table, as their sibling brushes their teeth, the birds you see on a walk, or as you pass a ball back and forth!
6. **BAKE OR COOK TOGETHER** Yes, your kitchen will be a disaster, but your preschooler will learn things like counting, measuring, reading, following directions, step-by-step processes, and chemistry. Their sensory needs will be met by touching flour, oil, dough, and more. Washing dishes together afterward is another great sensory experience, and preschoolers LOVE to help!
7. **USE LOOSE PARTS** Try to find toys that can be used in many ways instead of one. Blocks, MagnaTiles, beads, Legos, sticks, rocks, acorns, beans, pom poms, pattern blocks, art supplies, etc. are all great ways to use fine motor muscles and creativity simultaneously.
8. **PLAY GAMES** Uno, Candy Land, Chutes and Ladders, and more are great for building sequence, counting, 1:1 correspondence, taking turns, color and/or number recognition skills and more. Bonus points if they use a dice to begin to learn the patterns for each number! These are easily played in Spanish, also, if in Immersion classes!
9. **SCAVENGER HUNTS** This is a great way to include scientific words that describe and sort. Use descriptive adjectives like "red, bumpy, long, smaller than" etc. and send the kids off to find things-- this works great indoors or out!
10. **PRAY TOGETHER, READ THE BIBLE, AND SPEAK TRUTH TO YOUR PRESCHOOLER CONSISTENTLY** Remind them that they are special, valued, and loved just for who God made them to be. Sometimes being a preschooler is hard, they have a lot to learn!

The Kalamazoo Christian Girls Golf team was named the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Division 4 State Champion for the 2024-2025 season.

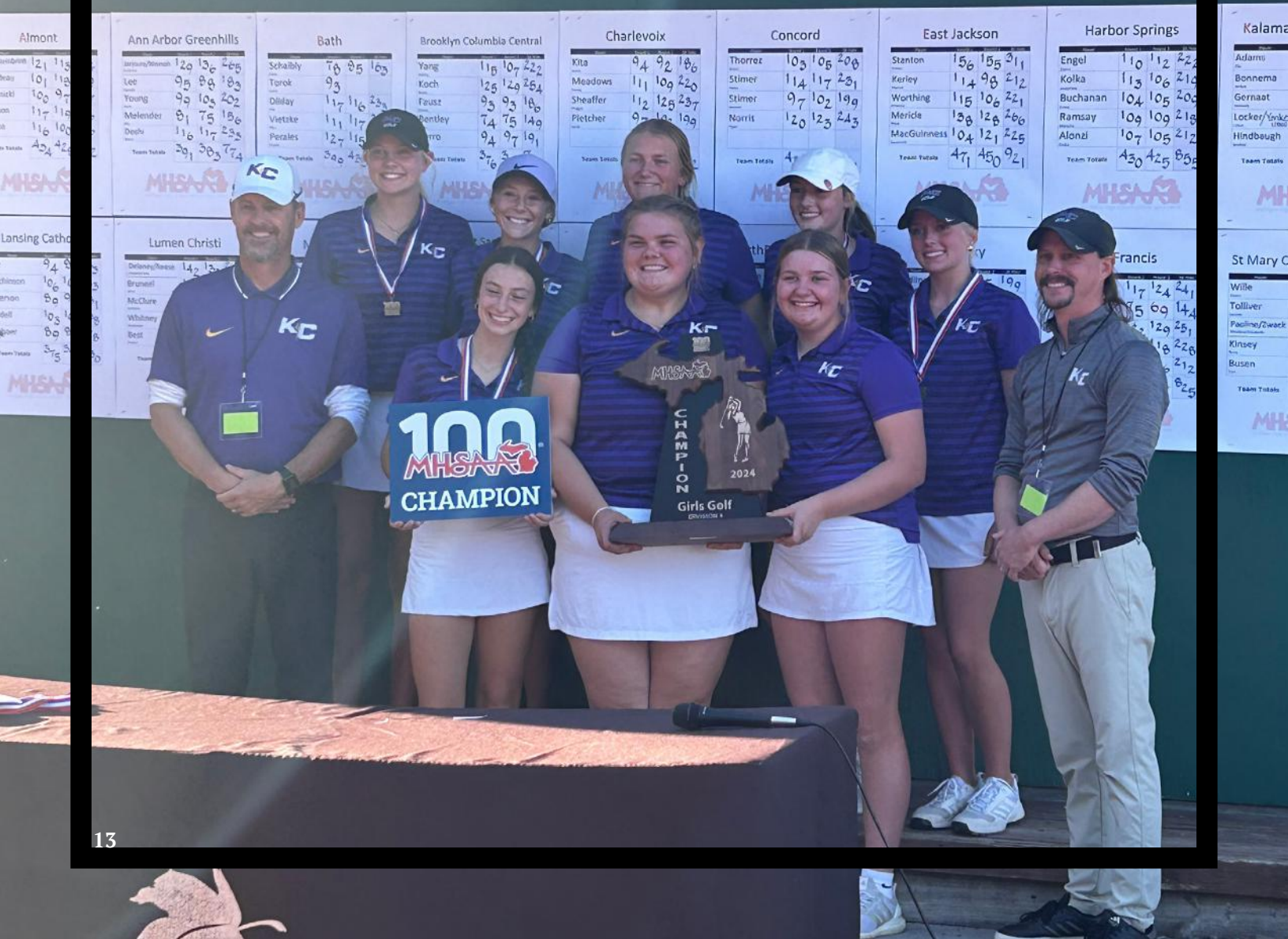
At the state final on October 18-19, 2024, the varsity team finished with a score of 732, placing first by 16 strokes. Senior, Jordyn Bonnema, slid into 4th place individually and senior, Kennedy Gernaat was in a three-way tie for 10th place individually.

The Girls Golf team was led by Seniors, Ella Adams, Jordyn Bonnema, Kennedy Gernaat, Scarlett Hindbaugh and Kyah Klok. Also competing throughout the season was Junior, Elizabeth Yonkers, Sophomore, Lillian Locker and Freshman, Rylee Slater.

Competing on the JV squad was Sophomores, Jennifer Browning and Naomi DeVries and Freshmen, Delaney Campbell, Tessa Chairs, Sydney Earley and Gabriela Martinez Peralta.

Girls Golf is coached by Mike Schield (V) and Ben Neal (JV).

After coming in as the State Runner Up in 2023, the girls were able to secure the first Girls Golf State Champion title in school history.



# GIRLS GOLF CHAMPIONS

## FALL ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Girls Cross Country .....	7th in conference, 5th in regionals
United Football (V) .....	SAC Valley Champions, MHSAA District Champions
United Football (JV) .....	Record: 5-3
Girls Golf (V) .....	SAC Champion, District Champion, Regional Champion, MHSAA Division 4 State Champion, Academic Team All State, 1 individual regional winner
Girls Golf (JV) .....	3-1st places, 2-3rd places, 1-4th place, and 1-5th place
Boys Soccer .....	SAC Valley Champions
Boys Tennis (V) .....	2nd in regional; 2 Doubles regional winner, 8th in the state
Boys Tennis (JV) .....	Record: 9-0
Volleyball (V) .....	SAC Champion, District Champion, Regional Champion, MHSAA Semifinalists, Academic Team All State
Volleyball (JV) .....	Record: 24-5-5
Volleyball (F) .....	Record: 23-9-1

# ALUMNI CONNECTION



## MEET YOUR NEW ALUMNI DIRECTOR

Trisha Batts stepped into the role of Alumni Relations and Event Director at Kalamazoo Christian School Association in early 2024.

Batts is a 1998 alumna of Kalamazoo Christian High School. Her and her husband have three kids who have all been enrolled at Kalamazoo Christian Schools.

To get in touch with Trisha, email [alumni@kcsa.org](mailto:alumni@kcsa.org).



As we approach 150 years of Christian education in Kalamazoo, we would love to hear about a Kalamazoo Christian event/tradition you would like to see revitalized.

Would you be willing to bring your gifts and talents to help us celebrate? Email [alumni@kcsa.org](mailto:alumni@kcsa.org) to join the alumni committee to see how you can get involved for 150 years of KCS!

### CLASS REUNIONS

TOP: CLASS OF 1979  
LEFT MIDDLE: CLASS OF 1969  
LEFT BOTTOM: CLASS OF 1974  
RIGHT MIDDLE: CLASS OF 1984  
RIGHT BOTTOM: CLASS OF 1958

For more information and resources on how to get involved

**VISIT US AT [KCSA.ORG/ALUMNI](http://KCSA.ORG/ALUMNI)**





Louisa Mae Roode  
June 21, 2024  
Trevor & Megan (Visser)  
(‘11) Roode



Elosie Beauchamp  
July 20, 2024  
David & Lindsey (Gove)  
(‘10) Beauchamp



Ford Wyatt Disselkoen  
September 16, 2024  
Alexandra (VanDyk) (‘19)  
& Jake Disselkoen



Isaac Ford  
October 9, 2024  
Darren & Natalie  
(Deering) (‘14) Ford



Aurora (Rory) Paas  
October 2024  
Michael & Heather  
(Koning) (‘05) Paas



Daniel Scott Fryling  
October 20, 2024  
Beth (Remynse) (‘07) &  
Chris Fryling



Ezra Lloyd Masarira  
October 23, 2024  
Kelly (Haseman) (‘08) &  
Tafara Masarira



Mason Dean Westrate  
October 25, 2024  
Kristen & Tyler  
(‘08) Westrate



Roman Patrick-  
Thomas Vigen  
November 5, 2024  
Whitney & Andrew  
(‘10) Vigen



Arie Douglas Byma  
November 27, 2024  
Stephanie (Herder) (‘11)  
& Nick Byma

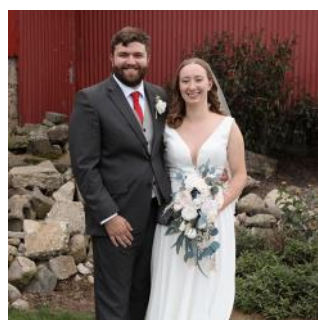
**ALUMNI UPDATES**

Have an alumni update? We want to hear it!  
Email [alumni@kcsa.org](mailto:alumni@kcsa.org).

Need to update your alumni information? Visit  
our website [kcsa.org/resources/favorite-links/  
alumni-updates-contact-form](http://kcsa.org/resources/favorite-links/alumni-updates-contact-form).



Elise VanSparren-taak (‘19)  
& Payton Warner wedding  
September 6, 2024



Leann (Gasaway) (‘17) &  
Ben DeKryger wedding  
September 21, 2024



Kaylee (Klaassen) (‘20) &  
David VanderKamp (‘21)  
wedding October 11, 2024



**NOMINATE AN  
ALUMNI FOR OUR  
IMPACT OR LEGACY  
AWARD TODAY!**



# KCSF

Providing faithful, foundational funding for Christ-centered education since 1993.

## KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FOUNDATION

KCSF provides long term sources of funding for Kalamazoo Christian Schools through endowment funds. This widespread support includes supplemental income for KCSA's operating budget, need-based aid for KCS families, post-high school scholarship funds and special funding for athletics, arts, capital asset preservation, engineering, science and special education programs.

The Dennis Hassing Memorial Science Support Fund, one of the many funds KCSF manages, was established in November 2024 to honor Dennis H. Hassing (9/12/1947 – 2/13/2023), a 1965 graduate of Kalamazoo Christian High School. Dennis graduated from Calvin College in 1969 and then served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam era. After his discharge from service, Dennis returned to Kalamazoo and worked in pharmaceutical research at Upjohn until his retirement in 1987. Dennis enjoyed golf, remodeling projects and working in his yard. He was known by all as an amiable and loyal friend.

This new fund will provide support for teaching and other needs within the sciences at Kalamazoo Christian Schools. KCSF is grateful to the Hassing family for establishing this fund and are honored to receive donations in memory of their loved one, for the benefit of the sciences at Kalamazoo Christian Schools.

Donations to the Hassing Memorial Science Support Fund or one of KCSF's other funds can be made by check to Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation at 2121 Stadium Drive Kalamazoo, MI 49008, or online at [kcsa.org/advancement/kcs-foundation](https://kcsa.org/advancement/kcs-foundation) (click on "Give").



KCSF welcomes three new board members, Mary Balkema, Camille Hoekstra and Charles Ybema, while saying a heartfelt thank you to retiring board members Dan Ackerman and Dan Huizinga.

Other current board members include Tim Schauer, interim board president and treasurer, Randy Ackerman, interim vice president and secretary, John Bartels, Ron Baylor, Ruth DeNooyer, Dale Shugars, Jackie Vanderkooi and Tim Vanderkooy, KCSA board representative. Larry Stehouwer, executive director, and Lori Halberda, executive assistant, serve as current KCSF staff.

## RETIREE SPOTLIGHT

Dan Huizinga ('70), retiring board member, used his knowledge and experience as a CPA not only within the family business, but also as a volunteer for Westwood CRC, South Christian Grade School, KCHS and Third CRC. Dan is a graduate of Western Michigan University ('74). He and his wife, Karen, have four children, all graduates of KCS as well as grandchildren who currently attend KCS. Dan and his brother John were inducted into the Michigan Construction Hall of Fame in 2018 for their notable work at Allied Mechanical Services, a family-owned business founded by their father, Andrew Huizinga. Dan retires from the KCSF Board after six years of service.

# FROM YOU'RE INVITED • SAVE THE DATE DEVELOPMENT

OUR KIDS 2025 AUCTION - SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2025  
KCSA ANNUAL MEETING - MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025

THE COMET FUND



Our Comet Partners are incredibly important. They believe in showing God's Kingdom through our "Undeniably Christian. Academically Excellent." mission. Would you consider joining this special group and becoming a monthly donor?



#### LONG-TERM IMPACT

Your monthly impact allows us to take a planned, long-term approach to making KCS the best it can be for our students and community. Your gift allows us to make long-lasting improvements.



#### ONGOING MISSION

The Kalamazoo Christian Schools mission is a Kingdom mission. Wherever they are, our students are encouraged to grow in character, faith, and knowledge, leaving our campus with a firm foundation upon which to build their futures.



#### COST-EFFECTIVE

Your monthly investment allows even more families to attain Christian education. Will you join us to accomplish our mission, and to reduce tuition cost by investing monthly?

GIVE TODAY! [KCSA.ORG/COMET-FUND](https://www.kcsa.org/comet-fund)



**KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

**2121 Stadium Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49008**

**(269) 381-2044**

**kcsa.org**

**Facebook: @kalamazoochristian**

**Instagram: @kalamazoochristianschools**