



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.

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MISSION

Kalamazoo Christian Schools: an academically excellent Christian community equipping, inspiring, and challenging students to love and serve Christ in the world.



**KALAMAZOO
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOLS**

Undeniably Christian. Academically Excellent.

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A Note From the Head of School

Over the course of a school year, teachers will have many opportunities to talk with students about their choices, actions and thoughts. One of the joys and blessings of working at Kalamazoo Christian is our ability to talk with our students through the lens of scripture as they work through how they relate with others. This can be very rewarding as students make conscious decisions to make better choices and learn how their behaviors impact others.

Our focus this year has been on our Faithline about being an "Image Reflector." Scripture tells us that we were created in his image and in his likeness - Gen. 1:26. To know that God created us special with an intended purpose gives us meaning. We are able to work with students to help them learn and see how the gifts God has given them can be used to benefit His Kingdom. How they can be a better friend, classmate and support to those around them.

The past couple of years have been difficult on students' mental health and their response to situations around them. Teachers and staff have spent many days learning about, practicing and implementing Biblical principles to guide our students in healthy habits and lifestyles. We know that talking about and making these habits a daily practice is hard work and in some cases takes years for students to fully understand.

I am grateful that we can talk with students about mental health, their choices, and healthy habits from the standpoint that we are made in God's image and he cares for us everyday. This Faithline has had a deep impact in the lives of our teachers and students this year as we face many challenges from a worldly perspective on who we are or who we should be. Thank you for partnering with us on this journey to develop young men and women who know who they are and who they belong to.

- Marc Verkaik, Head of School



Raving Reviews From Our Community

The teachers, staff, classrooms - this whole community is just so amazing! I feel like with each step it gets better and better! We just feel so blessed to be part of this caring, supportive community! Thank you again for everything but especially for always making us feel like family!



We love you, support you, and treasure the support from you in our mission to raise children who will be a light in the world.



I've already received texts from other moms wanting to meet up (never got that before), my daughter has just been ID'd as needing reading resources and scheduled for those right away by her teacher. I don't worry about my daughter at school anymore, I know she's getting quality education and care. It feels very good to be here. Thank you so much for helping us get here!



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**Theme Verse:
Ephesians 2:10**

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

We love our pastors!



On March 3, we hosted our annual Pastors' Chapel, after a reschedule because of the ice storm that hit Michigan. This chapel is always a favorite for the entire school community. We had over 75 pastors join us for breakfast, to hear updates on our school, to worship and pray with our students, and to visit the students in their classrooms. We are grateful for the pastors in our community!



YoungLife Comes to KCHS

Kalamazoo Christian High School is charged with equipping, inspiring, and challenging students to love and serve Jesus. The Christian school community's mission isn't simply limited to the classroom, rather it extends beyond the four walls of the classroom and into extracurricular activities.

Many years ago, KCHS had an active YoungLife club. Now, because of the recent efforts of several adults in the KCHS community, KCHS is again partnering with Young Life and reestablishing a YL club within the high school. Since 1941, YoungLife has been dedicated to reaching out to young people to help them foster their relationships with Jesus. One primary way YoungLife carries out its mission is by working with and within schools while "proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and introducing adolescents to Jesus Christ and helping them grow in their faith."

The first YoungLife club kicked off in January, and the turnout was amazing. With the same great turnouts in the months following. KCHS would like to thank the many staff members and parents who have taken the time and made the effort to bring Young Life to our campus. We're very grateful for their commitment to our students, and excited to see how the Holy Spirit will work through YoungLife and its leaders as they help our students grow in their faith in Jesus Christ. If you have questions about KCHS YoungLife, you can ask teachers; Corey Scheffers, and Tara Macias, or Abbie Chenoweth in the Association Office.

Dirk Walhout, High School Principal

Preschool News

Owl Moon

Nature Preschool had a special night in February! Ms. Vandermolen read the book "Owl Moon" to them in class to understand what the Owl Moon would be like. The students came back to school after dark on a Friday evening with their families and got to explore the trails with them and enjoy a s'more in the firepit in the classyard. What a fun experience for them!



Christmas Program

Our preschool location at Heritage CRC had their first Christmas program! Every student in the class participated by playing a different character, saying a few lines, and singing beautiful songs about the birth of our Savior. Ms. Schneidenbach did a wonderful job directing, with Ms. Zamora playing the piano. All of the wonderful costumes were donated by Second Impressions! These memories will last a lifetime.



New Friends!

NANCY LOPEZ

How cool is this? Nancy Lopez, a world famous golfer, accepted a FaceTime call with one of our fourth grade students - Jaelyn. Jaelyn was assigned Nancy Lopez for her Latin American Wax Museum person in Maestra Sussman's class. Maestra does this project so the students can learn more about the culture and accomplishments of Latin American people.

Jaelyn got to ask a handful of questions, and glean wisdom from Nancy.

Nancy gave tons of good advice, such as, "Always ask yourself if you gave 100%", "Be a leader - don't follow", "If you show respect, you will get respect", and so much more! What a cool opportunity for Jaelyn!



VISITORS FROM ARGENTINA

These students visited the U.S. from Buenos Aires, Argentina, on an 8 week program that started in California and ended in Florida. During their 8-week program, they had a 5-week high school visitation and homestay exchange component with an American school and host family, which is what brought them to the KCS community. They also visited Washington D.C., Orlando, FL, and a few other major U.S cities, before returning home to Argentina.

During their time at KCS, they greatly enriched our campus by bringing their culture through music, games, and more! They livened up our student section at our basketball games with their cheering and school spirit. We were glad to host them here at KCS!

**MARC MORALEZ,
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
COORDINATOR**



Middle School Science Fair

BY BROOKE MULDER, 6TH GRADE TEACHER

On February 9th, students in 5th-8th grades participated in the Kalamazoo Christian Middle School Science Fair. Each grade level had a different topic to explore. Fifth graders worked in groups to come up with an invention to solve a problem. The students created and presented for Innovation Day through Western Michigan University. In 6th grade, students came up with a particular question about everyday products, and then designed an experiment to compare the efficacy, in order to test their hypothesis. In 7th grade, students worked individually to test an independent variable of their choice. Eighth graders designed their own experiment under the topic of Creation Care. All the middle school students organized their data on posters that were displayed during the day in the MS gym. High schoolers that are currently in AP Biology and Environmental Science classes came to view and judge the projects, along with providing valuable feedback. Elementary students took a mini 'field trip' to visit the Science Fair throughout the school day, and community members were able to enjoy all the students' hard work later in the evening. Through this process, students discovered how to ask a scientific question, design an appropriate experiment, present the data, and form conclusions. As with everything in science, the more we learn and explore, the more we can appreciate and marvel at what God has created. Great job to ALL the middle school students



A Praying Community



On February 3rd, our very own 8th grader, Sam Ekkens, had a procedure done on his heart. During the Middle School chapel, all of the students gathered and prayed for their friend and classmate. Students are learning the power of prayer, and getting to practice it first hand right here in our Comet Community. They could all thank God together as Sam came out of a successful surgery and were so excited to welcome him back to school!



Winter Athletics



BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL:
11-12, 4TH IN CONFERENCE

BOYS JV BASKETBALL:
13-8

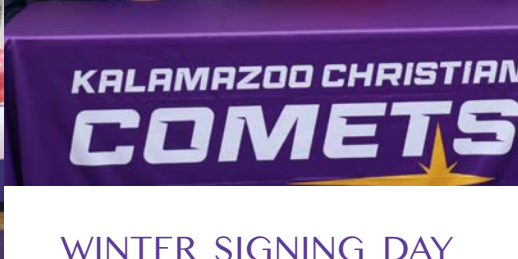
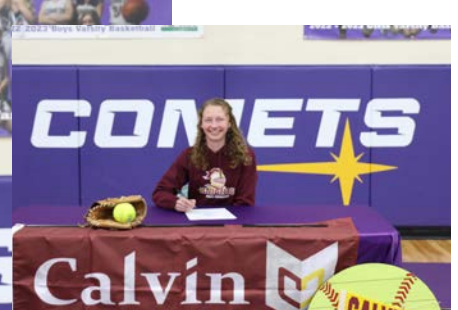
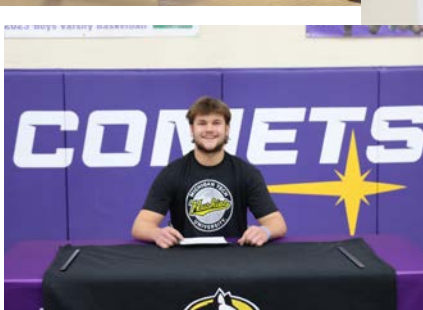
BOYS FRESHMAN BASKETBALL:
7-11

GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL:
NO RECORD AT TIME OF PUBLISHING

GIRLS JV BASKETBALL:
19-1, 1ST IN CONFERENCE

BOYS BOWLING:
3-10-1

GIRLS BOWLING:
7-5



WINTER SIGNING DAY

OLIVIA PENZOTTI, DAWSON ZUIDERVEEN, AMIRAH GOODE, AUBREY HERDER

New High School Office

BY DIRK WALHOUT

According to legend, the discussion began about 30 years ago. Many people said it couldn't be done and that it would never happen—even though it made so much sense. But now, thanks to the patience and persistence of a team of K-Christian staff and supporters, we're proud to say that the main office in the high school has been relocated! And it's not hard to find; it's immediately to the right as you enter the high school building!



The office relocation project accomplished three main goals: 1) To increase school safety; 2) To provide a more comfortable & efficient work space for staff; and 3) To provide convenience. Because the office is located directly adjacent to the main entrance, during school hours, people entering the building must walk through the main office and talk with the office staff before entering the main areas of the building. The move helps to establish a single point of entry and gives staff more thorough knowledge of who enters and exits the building. With the move, the principal and administrative assistants have a brighter and more spacious place in which to work. The new office areas provide larger work spaces for administrative assistants, more storage, and a meeting area. Additionally, moving the main office to the front of the school makes it easier to receive visitors and deliveries, and allows staff to keep a closer eye on the outdoor facilities.

The Kalamazoo Christian High School faculty and staff is grateful to the following people who were able to make the new office a reality: Bruce VanderWeele, Chris Batts, Dave Williams, Laura Heethuis, Luke Doorlag, Ryan Boender, Allied Mechanical, BSN Sports, Hazelhoff Construction, Sackett's Flooring Solutions, Webster Electric, and West Michigan Office Interiors.



The Traveling Dum Dums

Our very own 2022 grad, Lily Offringa just returned from her five month excursion with YWAM (Youth With a Mission). During her time at KCSA, Lily would always stop in the Association Office and visit Connie VanDerSlik, where she would always grab a dum dum sucker for the day. There is where she built a relationship with Connie, and could be encouraged. At her graduation party, Connie decided to give her a few large bags of dum dums. She decided to throw these in her bag and she ventured to YWAM.

At the beginning with her fellow YWAM team, consisting of young adults from all over the world, they had a "culture" night. Here they would share stories, and tell of their own homes and cultures. Lily couldn't think of what to bring. What did she do? She pulled out her dum dums to share. To her surprise, her team from other countries had no idea what these suckers were and were amazed with them.



This lead her to be able to talk about her high school, home, and culture, and encourage new friends with a simple sucker. The traveling dum dum.



Image Bearers, Right

BY AARON

In March of 2023, KCHS put on its annual spring musical, directed by me and musically directed by a friend. The show is a fun and nostalgic classic *The Music Man*, starring senior Connor Tuin as the endlessly charming con man. Connor, who has been in the program for four years, was born to play and it was such a joy to see him really flexing his acting and comedy skills. He was joined by a newcomer to our program Norah Bray, who starred as leading lady librarian Marian Paroo. These two were backed up by a full company of sensational performers, including Zoie Eckert as the bumbling Mayor Shinn, and our incredibly harmonizing barbershop quartet of Conley, Connor, and two others. I can't mention every single other member of the cast here but lack the space. Suffice it to say that the show was a success.

Hopefully most of you who didn't get to see the show in person will be familiar with this story. *The Music Man*, though delightful, is a strange one in many ways for a Christian school to be doing. Our hero is a con man, stealing from everyone, and yet we fall in love with him, as does the whole town. I believe that God sees past all of our brokenness to the reflection of himself deep inside of us. Harold Hill, God sees past all of our brokenness to the reflection of himself deep inside of us. He sees that Tommy Dyer is actually a great kid deep down. He sees that the feuding school board members could be better people.

All of this makes me think of our school spiritual theme this year, Image Bearing. The Bible says that we are to be the image of God and therefore have worth and dignity and goodness deep down inside of us. Harold Hill, God sees past all of our brokenness to the reflection of himself deep inside of us. We are all deeply loved by Him whose image you bear.

It is always such a joy to put on these productions for our KCS community and our program. The show is set (thanks to Dave Visser) and dancing (thanks to Shawna Wilder) since I took over the program. It is directed by nature preschool teacher and assistant director for this show Jennifer VanderMolen. I am supporting the arts at KCS and God bless.



LIES ABOUT H MIDDLE SC



at Here in River City!

N POTTER, HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER



ected by high school choir teacher, Carolyn Whitaker. Our show this year was the charming
atic con man Harold Hill. This was the role Connor, a mainstay of our program for the past
comedy chops to their fullest extent up there on stage. Giving an equally delightful star turn was
If you didn't know she was a freshman, you would never be able to tell under all that talent.
kstein giving a superb Irish accent as Mrs. Paroo, Robbie Denison being absolutely hysterical
y Kakabeeke, Duncan Wheeler, Janetta Boel, and alumnus Ryan Lubben. I could and should
at in my heart, you all slayed (teen slang for "did good").

ory. If not, I highly recommend the 1962 movie version starring Robert Preston. This musical,
ro is a con man who has come to River City specifically with the purpose of lying to and
his is because, despite his cynical worldly exterior, Harold Hill actually has a really good heart
ilas isn't just a hoodlum but an inventor and a leader. He sees that Winthrop is not broken and
make great music together, that Eulalie could be a dancer, and that Marian is loveable.

teaches that every human being is tarnished by sin but also that each one of us is made in
us. This good can be extremely hard to recognize, both in ourselves and in others, but like
us and he calls us good and beloved. If you are reading this, I hope you know that you are

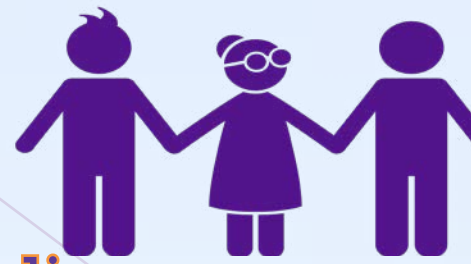
m only continues to grow. *The Music Man* was our most ambitious show to date in terms of
ogram in 2020 and next year we even plan to add a second show to our season, a fall play
olen. Be on the lookout for announcements about that coming soon. Thank you all for



HIGHSCHOOL HOOOL PLAY



THE ALUMNI connection



Babies & Weddings



Abby (VanDongen) '17 & Sam Sarchet



Dempsey Coleman 12/11/22
Tricia '02 (VanDerSlik) & Marcus Coleman



Ford VanderPloeg 12-13-23
Hannah '13 (Wolthuis) & Mike '08 VanderPloeg



George Wassink 11-29-22
Jenny '08 (TenBrink) & Brad Wassink



Zachary Westrate 1-10-23
Kurt '04 & Sam Westrate



Henriette Krueger 1-29-23
Kate '02 (DeNooyer) & Will Krueger



Kennedy West 11-11-22
Brooke '13 (Petro) & Jake West



Oakland VanDyke 6-17-22
Olivia '08 (Holmes) & Brad VanDyke



Rex Fletcher 2-9-23
Rachel '10 & Mark '10 Fletcher



Sawyer Midwood 2-7-23
Lauren '12 (Jackson) & Cary Midwood



Serena Sportel 11-14-22
Raquel '03 & Nate Sportel



Tanner Gould 8-25-22
Shelby & Stephen '08 Gould



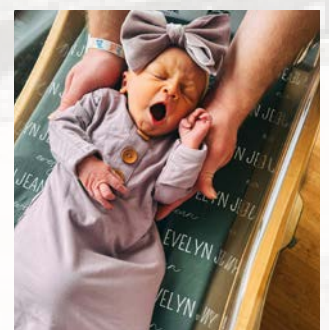
Olivia Disselkoen 1-22-23
Lexi '19 (VanDyk) & Jake Disselkoen



Tucker Sportel 11-5-22
Maddie '10 (VanOosten) & Charlie '11 Sportel



Hailey VanDam 12-20-22
Mandy '08 (Engbers) & Brett '09 VanDam



Evelyn Cocks 12-13-22
Sarah '11 (Wolfe) & Tyson Cocks



ALUMNI
AWARDS



Alumni Who Have Passed

Name	Grad Year	Date of Passing
Frances V. (Jager) Alkema	1958	5/31/2022
Anna (DeVries) Balkema	1962	4/6/2022
John M. Booden	1957	9/4/2022
Shirley (VanderMolen) Breedveld	1955	6/5/2022
James Brouwer	1964	10/20/2022
Harm Doorlag	1946	1/4/2022
Heather (Booden) Gallagher	1994	12/30/2022
Mary (Cramer) Gardner	1970	4/6/2022
Raymond Hamming	1949	3/28/2022
Paul W. Hendriksen	1963	6/28/2022
Dorothy (Kline) Hettinger	1951	1/11/2022
Marvin Hoekstra	1963	6/20/2022
Evelyn J. (Spoelstra) Izenbaard	1943	1/5/2022
Daniel R. Jager	1969	2/10/2022
James J. Kloosterman	1961	12/22/2022
Thomas E. Koning	1968	1/31/2022
James L. Koning	1974	4/17/2022
Craig Langeland	1973	6/21/2022
Phillip A. Lawrence	1984	1/25/2022
Richard L. Poolman	1954	11/25/2022
Sandra K. (Boekeloo) Postmus	1961	5/13/2022
John W. Schaap	1946	2/4/2022
Carol A. Schipper	1957	8/22/2022
Virginia (Langeland) Spitters	1945	5/29/2022
Larry Treur	1959	8/29/2022
H. Roger Tuinstra	1955	9/5/2022
Ronald L. VanderLugt	1973	9/10/2022
Marjorie (Westra) VanDerSlik	1957	11/25/2022
Loren VanDerSlik	1975	3/4/2022
Audrey (Gebben) VanEerden	1959	9/5/2022
Kathleen (Brouwer) L. VanElk	1975	11/18/2022
William J. VanOosterum	1980	4/19/2022
Bernard L. Westra	1959	4/1/2022
Philip Woltersom	1967	2/1/2022
Arlene (Koning) Wykstra	1972	8/1/2022

ALUMNI, PLEASE SEND ANY CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGES TO COMMUNICATIONS@KCSA.ORG

A Foundation For Kalamazoo Christian Schools

BY SCOTT PEASE, LARRY STEHOUER, & TIM SCHAUER

With its legacy stretching over 145 years, you've likely experienced Kalamazoo Christian Schools in many ways – perhaps as a student, a graduate, a parent, a grandparent or a staff member, as a volunteer, or serving on a committee. As you may be aware, it takes a large pool of engaged supporters to make this dream a reality. We do not do this alone, but rather as a Christian community devoted to providing education that is “Undeniably Christian and Academically Excellent.”

Ongoing, long-term financial support for our schools is the mission of the Kalamazoo Christian School Foundation (KCSF). How do we make this happen? KCSF receives financial gifts that provide, on a yearly basis, significant tuition reduction for all families, needs-based financial assistance, support for specific programs and purposes, plus post-high school scholarships.

Created in 1992, our Foundation was born out of a foresight of legacy. KCSF receives your generous donations, memorials, and gifts from wills and trusts (bequests), then our Foundation uses the investment proceeds from these gifts to achieve long-term annual support for KCS and its students.

Generous donors during the school year 2021/2022 provided \$260,000 in donations. And so far, in our current school year, KCSF has received over \$440,000. These gifts, along with the other funds managed, provide annual support of about \$200,000 to the school and students. The long-term goal of KCSF is to provide one million dollars of funding each year. Our hope is that these funds will continue to help all families with reduced tuition, providing tuition assistance for those with financial needs, and to provide post high school scholarships, to support special-needs education, and help build programs within areas of arts, music, sciences, spiritual support and athletics.

How can that be accomplished? Donations can be given, via planned giving, through your will or trust, and these gifts are leaving a legacy that will impact generations of students to come. Donating to the foundation is just one way to make a present financial investment in the continuing legacy of the Kalamazoo Christian Schools.

Contact Larry Stehouwer with questions at lstehouwer@kcsa.org.



FOR FINANCIAL UPDATES ON OUR CURRENT CAMPA

From The Development Desk

BY SCOTT PEASE, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

A number of years ago, Kalamazoo Christian Schools established our Annual Fund. The name of the fund is significant, the impact of the fund even more so. KCS chose the name Annual Fund in order to establish this fund as an ongoing account with which to provide needs-based tuition assistance to families seeking the impact of Christian Education. Each year, we work to raise funds in order to make an education at KCS available to everyone who applies and engages in our school community. Essentially impacting our entire Comet Nation, the Annual Fund will pay out \$425,000 in assistance this school year alone. Each student at KCS is eligible for some form of financial aid. The Second Impressions Grant can be accessed by any family willing to put in a few hours of service at our Thrift Store. The Kalamazoo Christian Schools Foundation will contribute an additional \$200,000 toward scholarships, programs, and assistance throughout the current school year. The need is great! The investment in Christian education is significant.

Our rich history of Christian education in Kalamazoo has also provided us with a firm foundation of generous donors. It is this generosity that allows us to say “YES” to those who need a little help to make Christian education a reality. As we look forward, we are developing relationships and a school community that sees the value in supporting KCS. Because the Annual Fund is made possible by so many alumni, grandparents, parents, community business leaders, current and former staff members, and families who have seen this impact first-hand, we have decided to rename the Annual Fund to “The Comet Fund.” The name encompasses who we are and the legacy that has been established.

The name will change, but the impact will remain the same: making Christian education available to those who need a hand. As we launch the new Comet Fund, we are also asking you to engage this impact with us. Would you make an investment in Christian education today? Visit kcsa.org/comet-fund to make a gift of impact.

We are grateful for this school community. We are grateful for the legacy of Christian education in Kalamazoo. We are grateful for you. Go Comets! Or should I say, Go Comet Fund!

Our Comet Fund has currently raised **\$330,185** of our **\$425,000** goal as of March 24, 2023.



IGNS, JOIN US AT THE ANNUAL MEETING ON APRIL 17TH!



**KALAMAZOO
CHRISTIAN**

Grandparents, please join us!

You have an opportunity to make
a difference in the lives of your grandchildren and leave a
lasting heritage for your family that will bless generations to come.



with Dr. Josh Mulvihill

Friday, May 12th

Fundraising Event With Dinner at 5:30 pm
Second Reformed Church

Visit KCSA.ORG for tickets

Save The Dates

- Annual Meeting, April 17
- Fine Arts/Art Show, April 27
- PreK/K Music Program, April 28
- KCHS Choir Concert, May 8
- Grandparent's Day, May 12
- 8th Grade Musical, May 24
- Graduation, May 25
- All KC Women's Event, June 10
- Chamber Singers @ Tigers Game, August 7
- All Community Tailgate, September 22

Be sure to subscribe to our newsletters at kcsa.org!