The theme of the current issue of Crusader Chronicle is not coming together for me. I am a bit bewildered by writing about a word that is too common, too non-descript, and just too plain and simple. Yet together is frequently observed at Whitinsville Christian School. Students frequently work together on projects, they study together, eat lunch together, and they play together on the playground. Faculty attend conferences together, families carpool together, the staff prays together, athletic teams work together in competition, and the trustees meet together to resolve issues and stay true to the mission of WCS. All of these efforts together provide a vision for WCS.

Very early in the history of mankind God proclaimed, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” (Genesis 2:18 NIV) Scripture further develops the strength of togetherness with the image of a triple braided cord. “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” (Ecclesiastes 4:12 NIV) Teaming together with two or three people provides a better return for their labor. More ideas, greater satisfaction, and enhanced community develop out of togetherness. Those stranded on the island of individualism and isolation should consider becoming stranded into a triple braided cord. It is all about togetherness.

Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. once said, “I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity.” The simplicity of togetherness on the other side of complexity is a gift in this issue of the Crusader Chronicle. Togetherness contextualized in the setting of a school can be messy, frustrating, difficult, challenging, deep thinking, and hard work, but it can also result in creative ideas, celebration with passion, joy-filled accomplishments, and visionary solutions to knotty places. In the cadence of our common experiences with each other, let togetherness flourish on the other side of complexity – it is well worth the effort. Read and see what togetherness is like at WCS on the other side of complexity, working together as a volleyball team, integrating curriculum for deeper learning, and coming together in the unity of the Spirit. I, too, “would not give a fig” for some sort of simply-stated aspiration for togetherness without the complexity of actually experiencing it and developing it through false starts as well as trial and error. Engage the complexity of togetherness through self-doubt (wonder of wonders, maybe you are not always right), risk-taking, self-examination, and conscious empathy for others to arrive at what it really means to live life – together.

Lance B. Engbers
Headmaster

“Though one may be overpowered… A cord of three is not quickly broken.”
The Crusader Chronicle

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Dear Friends of Whitinsville Christian School,

I want to take this opportunity to tell you how very blessed I feel to begin working with such an outstanding organization and Christian community. To all of you I have already met, I offer a heartfelt “thank you” for making me feel so welcome! WCS is truly a place of unity – in purpose, in devotion, and in faith. Over the past 15 years, I have been blessed to be involved in Christian education – first as a football coach, then as a Director of Admissions, and most recently as a Director of Development. These experiences have given me a sense of the profound impact a Christian education can provide. Having now spent some time at Whitinsville Christian School, I realize just how transformative a Christian education can be, as demonstrated by the students, faculty, and staff.

According to Henri J. Nouwen in his book *A Spirituality of Fund Raising*, “from the perspective of the gospel, fundraising is first and foremost a form of ministry. It is a way of announcing our vision and inviting other people into our mission.” It is with great joy that I have the opportunity to share the story of Whitinsville Christian School and the wonderful things this school has been able to accomplish. I am inspired to take on the challenge of broadening the school’s advancement.

The vision that I have for the development of my message about Whitinsville Christian is rooted in the concept of faith in the future, which I see demonstrated in three ways. First, faith in the future means that as Christians and members of the WCS community, we are joyful and optimistic. We believe in the promise of Christ’s return and His presence throughout our life’s journey. We look for the best in people, and we overcome the obstacles in our own lives, knowing that we have divine guidance. Second, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is central to everything that is done here at WCS and is, and will always be, at the school’s core. And finally, faith in the future speaks to our commitment to innovative teaching and learning, technology, and the unending joy of discovery of God’s glorious creation. Francis Collins, the National Director of the Institutes of Health, states in his book *The Language of God*, “I believe God did intend, in giving us intelligence, to give us the opportunity to investigate and appreciate the wonders of His creation. He is not threatened by our scientific adventures.” The implementation of the cutting-edge STEM Curriculum Integration and Distribution (CID) Program is a great example of the school’s commitment to the future, as described in an interview with David Romano of Tri-Tech Pathways Inc. on pages 10 and 11.

As I look at today’s world and the many challenges that our young people face, I can’t help but feel that the need is greater than ever for God’s influence and guidance. Beyond the family structure, it is the educators who can provide the clearest pathways to a child’s future joy and well-being through Christ. Students graduating from WCS are committed, through their instruction and their devotion to Jesus Christ, to make the world a better and more loving place. They will be peacemaking leaders in all the they do, and provide a prominent example of what it means to know and accept God. I look forward to being part of this mission.
In September we celebrated Homecoming and 90 years of Christian education at WCS. As with many of our events, an amazing group of volunteers came together to make Homecoming a wonderful celebration for our community. The weekend kicked off with a pep rally on Friday, all of the soccer teams in action, and a volleyball match. On Saturday, 90 runners (including many of our middle school cross country runners) set out from the WCS track for a 5K race. Carnival games, a luncheon celebrating our Willow Street alumni, and alumni games rounded out the fun.

A new element that was added this year to celebrate the 90-year anniversary was Giving Day. We set a goal to raise $90K for the WCS Fund to celebrate our 90 years. This event brought together faculty and staff, students, current families, friends, and of course, alumni. Students participated in class challenges, donating their allowances and spare change during the week of Homecoming. On September 21 at 9:00 a.m., Giving Day was launched. The event closed at 9:00 p.m. on the 22nd, and we are so blessed to report that we raised more than $96,000 to support the WCS Fund. This annual fund supports many areas of the school but for Giving Day, all donations were designated for tuition assistance, so we can welcome even more families to WCS.
Jodi Koeman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Last May, I met with a group of students to explore the question, "What is the main thing you want WCS to be about next year?"

Their answers included:

“We need each other, especially with the pressures of life.”

“We want community.”

“Students are divided by issues, opinions, social power, popularity, interests, etc., and we need to learn how to get along and respect one another.”

“We need to learn how to have conversations, most importantly, difficult ones when we disagree.”

“We need to learn about unity.”

These conversations evolved into a student-led decision to choose UNITE as the 2018-19 school theme. The students chose the theme and the Bible verse (Ephesians 4:3), and an alumna (Arianna Koeman ’17) created the theme logo. Student-led from start to finish!

I think this hope for unity is not just felt by students, it is felt by all of us. The call to unite is universal. We’re asked to unite around an idea, message, party, nation, or cause. With all this talk of unity, the word “unite” has the danger of losing its meaning. The “unite” we’re talking about at WCS is so much more than rallying around an idea or something we care about. The “unite” WCS is talking about is about Who we serve - One Lord, who we are - One People, and why we’re here - One Mission.

Six months ago we received a call from my husband Kent’s mom saying, “You have to get on a plane as soon as possible, I think Dad is dying.” It’s usually in the difficulty and hardships of life that we learn our biggest lessons and over those next two weeks I learned three new things about Unity.

**FIRST**, in order to unite, we need to know what the ONE main thing is in our lives. When all of the other “things” fade away, a relationship with Jesus matters in your death and in your living.

**SECOND**, the way of weakness brings out our strengths. What we learn from a young age and what we see in our world is that the strong move ahead. And there is truth to this. But there is something more powerful than strength. If the goal of your life is not to glorify yourself, but to glorify the ONE who gave you life, you need to walk a way, not of strength, but of weakness. Through shallow breaths, Dad whispered encouragement to us. And because of his weakness, his dependency on others brought out their strengths. Weakness allows others to be strong and builds unity through our uniqueness.

**THIRD**, we need to be present. God is with us. Jesus moved into the neighborhood and the Spirit is inside of us. We need to be that presence to others. Kent’s dad, a pastor, was a man of presence. On his “day off,” he still ministered. He became the neighborhood outdoor preschool, teaching four year-olds how to weed, garden, stack wood, and bee keep. He was regularly someone people went to seeking guidance. So when he could no longer talk, we practiced the power of presence. At his bedside we sang, prayed, told stories, and touched him, letting him know we were near and Jesus was even nearer.

Our final full message from him was, “Don’t worry. I’m going to a place where I will love like I’ve never loved and be loved and welcomed like never before.” In our faith tradition this type of feeling, being loved and welcomed, will ultimately and perfectly happen in heaven. But we don’t need to wait until then to feel and show it. “On earth as it is in heaven.” Through our theme - UNITE - let’s ask ourselves, “How can we be present in our students’, parents’, and each other’s lives? How can we show love and welcome like people have never experienced before?”

**UNITE THE WCS WAY**

**Who we serve - ONE LORD**

**Who we are - ONE PEOPLE**

**Why we’re here - ONE MISSION**
Mrs. Dykstra! We just flew a kite outside for math class! We got it up to 73 feet! It was so great!” The student was exuberant as she shared her excitement with me. Her cheeks were pink from the cold, but her heart was bursting from the applied math lesson. Here in the middle school, we are surrounded by teachers who make learning come alive.

I had a visit from Officer DeJordy, our School Resource Officer with the Northbridge Police Department, who said he received a call about a stone wall that was on a path on our school property. I told him it that was from our eighth grade students. They were learning about the different types of walls settlers built for their property and the different functions for the various walls. To give the students an idea of what was involved in building a stone wall, as well as a log enclosure, eighth grade students went outside and built both kinds of walls. Officer DeJordy was happy that this particular mystery was solved so quickly.

In December, three church leaders came to WCS and participated in a panel discussion with our eighth grade Bible class. These leaders talked about unwavering faith, being called into the ministry, and the many different ways they serve their congregations. In Life Skills students are learning about table etiquette, how to iron, and how to write a thank you note. They’re also learning how to greet someone by looking them in the eye, holding eye contact, saying hello, and asking the other person how they are doing.

Our seventh and eighth grade ELA students enter writing contests each year, resulting in many students being published. They also see how literature comes alive on stage and engage in after-school literature discussions over pizza. Our sixth graders use their reading skills to read to kindergarteners and share their love for great stories. They also go in-depth, looking at figurative language and what it means in a story. In some of our math classes, students learn about scale by taking real objects such as a cereal box, eraser, or pencil sharpener, and creating a larger scale model of the object.

Middle school students thrive when they see their learning has meaning beyond the classroom. Our teachers are wonderful at giving many opportunities to see how the content students learn applies to real life.
Together on three. One, two, three, TOGETHER!” The varsity volleyball team shouted this theme before each game. Captains Christina Leduc and Emily Schneider led their teammates onto the court before each match with the shared goals of honoring Christ, improving as a team, and winning. With each bump, set, and spike, the girls inched closer to their goals. During practice, I encouraged the girls to work hard for five points at a time - always looking toward the next task to complete. On a Friday night in Hopedale’s loud gym, one of our goals was accomplished. We defeated our opponents and claimed the Dual Valley Conference Championship title!

A few regular season games remained as the girls continued to work hard; they could see their next task on the horizon: a District championship. Seniors Abby Upham and Amiah Van Dyke, along with junior, Anna May, aided the captains to encourage the younger players to continue on and improve each day. Sophomores Lucy Bowler, Olivia Fleming, Maggie Rejmer, and Fiona Shaw, as well as freshmen Hope Brookhouse and Ella Rejmer, practiced and played tirelessly as the regular season came to a close. Finishing with a 19-1 record, our team advanced to the district tournament. As junior varsity sophomores Karen Bekhet and Mikaela Rose with freshman Melany Ravitz joined the team, the girls renewed their efforts to work hard, to thank God for the opportunities with which He blessed the team, and to take on each game TOGETHER. Traveling to Wellesley High School, we faced and defeated Millbury High School to win the Division III Central Massachusetts District Championship. With this victory, we became the first WCS girls team to earn a district title! After celebrations (such as playing We Are the Champions by Queen) concluded, we were back in the Nehemiah Gym, preparing for the state tournament. With each November practice, the girls looked toward continuing their historic season.

For the state semi-final game, we played the DIII North champions, Austin Prep, and continued our string of victories, advancing to the state finals. On Saturday, November 17, the girls took the court at Worcester State to face the East champions, Bourne High School. With more fans in blue and white in the stands than seemingly any other color, the girls took to the court to represent WCS. After losing the first two sets, we won the third set. I reminded the girls of the joy in life and the blessings God granted the team to have made it this far. We ultimately lost the championship and earned the title of DIII Massachusetts State Finalists, taking home the second place trophy. We are incredibly grateful for the seniors and their contribution to the program, for the support of the WCS community, and for the practices, games, and championships in which they played TOGETHER.

In 2016 Kelly Penning and Kris VandenAkker “snuck in” to the Nehemiah Center (under construction at the time) and left this reminder. After winning the district title, Kris shared on Facebook, “I want to make sure that through all their hard work, this volleyball team continues to give God Glory! Today was a historic day for girls volleyball at WCS. Glory to God alone! Going to bed with a smile.”
Bringing Talents, Passions, and Opportunities Together

Q: Choosing a college major can seem like a daunting task for our high school students. How did you choose civil engineering?
A: One thing I learned at Calvin is to consistently use a Venn diagram to evaluate our talents, our passions, and job opportunities. In high school, I started with the things I do well like math, science, art, and sports. I’ve changed my path a few times.

Early on I was thinking I would study physics or astronomy, but when I looked at potential jobs, they involved research or teaching. Next I considered architecture since I enjoyed Mrs. Groot’s Architectural Design class as well as some art classes I’d taken. But I discovered there was too much of an aesthetic emphasis compared to a scientific one. I was more interested in the structure itself and the safety aspect of the design process. That is what led me to civil engineering, specifically structural engineering, to bring together all of my interests.

Q: What WCS classes do you feel best prepared you for college and your major?
A: There are so many. Like I mentioned, I enjoyed Architectural Design. The AP (Advanced Placement) courses such as AP Calculus (also with Wendy Groot) and AP U.S. History with Dick VandenBerg prepared me for college-level courses as well. All of my English classes with Jerry VanTol, Rocky VanTol, and even back to middle school with Terry Ebbeling, were so important for my speaking and writing skills. Now, I even offer to edit my friends’ papers.

Q: How do you keep that balance you were describing to the freshmen?
A: It was definitely easier in high school, but in college, it’s common to overboard with your social life. You meet so many new people when you arrive and for me, the academics weren’t as challenging at first. After classes became more challenging and my grades suffered, I started saying “no” to my friends more often. They don’t always understand, but as an engineering major, my academics require extra attention. It’s also important to stay active, and I enjoy lifting weights and playing a lot of intramural sports. Staying connected with family is important, too, and having friends who also have faith in the Lord helps with the balance. Holding yourself accountable for all of these things is very important.

Q: How did playing sports at WCS help with that idea of accountability?
A: There are many lessons about accountability learned through sports, and it was important to hear them from people other than just my parents. My coaches taught me so much about self-discipline. Chris Vander Baan and Brady Bajema both instilled a “no excuses” and “mind over matter” mentality, especially when your teammates are relying on you. After suffering the consequences, you realize you do not want to be the one who is late to practice or fails the team. That learned accountability and self-discipline will help you get through tough situations later in life.

Joshua Schneider (‘15), a senior at Calvin College studying civil engineering, returned to WCS during his Christmas break to speak to Wendy Groot’s Principles of Engineering class. Joshua spoke to the freshmen about the ways in which WCS prepared him for college, how he unified his talents, his passions, and the job market to arrive at the field of engineering, and the steps he took to succeed in both his education and his internship opportunities. Joshua also emphasized the importance of finding a vital balance between one’s studies, social life, and recreation time, while still remaining faithful to God.
In order to meet the rising demand for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related jobs, secondary school educators are seeking new and innovative ways to fill the STEM pipeline with students who are prepared for this line of work. Whitinsville Christian School is leading the way in this movement and has partnered with Tri-Tech Pathways Inc. to accomplish this task. We spoke with David Romano, President and CEO of Tri-Tech, to discover what this partnership has meant.

Q: Why has WCS partnered with Tri-Tech?
A: Through a series of STEM initiatives and pilot programs, WCS is in the process of making structural changes that will allow students to learn the nature of each of the STEM disciplines and learn that they are interconnected in ways that are similar to what they will encounter in the real world. There is a need for curricula that integrate STEM content in meaningful ways that go beyond the traditional teaching methods, especially across grades K-12. Tri-Tech Pathways is helping WCS teachers and administrators develop professional learning experiences that prepare them to work within and develop integrated STEM learning environments for WCS K-12 students in a program called STEM CID.

Q: So what exactly is STEM CID?
A: CID stands for Curriculum Integration and Distribution. In general, it is an effort to combine the four disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into class units, or lessons that are based on connections among these disciplines and real-world problems. Traditionally, schools are set up to silo the disciplines of STEM through subject-centered curriculum. For example, in math classes students are taught mathematics, in science students are taught science, and sometimes a few coding and technology electives are thrown into the mix. While it is good to learn each subject as a stand-alone, it is also imperative that students see the interconnectedness of the subjects they are learning through curriculum integration. Tri-Tech Pathways is creating cutting-edge curricula that combine the four disciplines of STEM into lessons that will intercept current WCS curricula.

Q: What is an example of Curriculum Integration?
A: The goal is to provide students with authentic learning experiences that bring them in touch with real-world problems and work situations, immersing them in environments where they can gain lifelong learning skills. A good example of this is "Robot Arms and Right Angles," the recent high school lesson piloted with Katie Carbone's geometry classes. Students used a robotic arm to explore the practical use of right angles and the Pythagorean Theorem in an industrial engineering setting. In this activity, students acted as an electronic circuit board assembly engineer. Their job was to program a pick-and-place robot arm to automate assembling a computer circuit board. The challenge was to find the most efficient method of robot arm movement to automate the
placement of a circuit into a socket of an actual circuit board. They applied what they learned in geometry and computer science to help solve this problem. The CID units fully implement a hands-on, project-based learning methodology.

**Q: Is this being used only in the high school?**

**A:** Experts recognize that a positive attitude toward STEM must be cultivated in students early in their educational experience. Research studies have indicated that in the general U.S. population, positive attitudes for STEM peak around the seventh grade and then begin to decline steadily right through the twelfth grade. WCS is proactively working to promote STEM integration from elementary through high school. Recently, Sarah Bowler (Elementary Principal) led a test group of students in a lesson using Didacubes Smart Blocks. Didacubes are the latest innovation for early STEM development. Tri-Tech is planning for these to be introduced to elementary school programs at WCS in 2019.

**Q: Do you see Whitinsville Christian School as a leader in this type of education?**

**A:** We are standing at the cusp of a sea change in education. This seismic shift will be driven by advances in technology and changes in the workforce. The dedicated educators at WCS are ready to take leadership roles and embrace the opportunities. Rethinking the roles of teachers is a paradigm shift from knowledge dispenser to learning facilitator. This requires visionary leadership and teamwork. Chris Vander Baan (High School Principal) embraces new ideas and methods and has been a driving force at WCS. Sustaining innovation through leadership is the key for long-term success. Visionary leaders like Chris, along with Headmaster Lance Engbers, continue to pursue pioneering initiatives which are engaging students in an integrated learning context, breaking down barriers that have traditionally existed between different classes and subjects, offering WCS learners opportunities to be the best prepared for the 21st century workforce.

David Romano is currently the president and CEO of Tri-Tech Pathways Inc. (www.TriTech-PW.com). David founded Tri-Tech Pathways to bring STEM education to students with a real-world industry perspective. He is a proven technical leader whose engineering career has spanned over 25 years and multiple high-tech companies, including Raytheon, Motorola, HP, Intel, and two start-up companies. He is the author of Make FPGA and mbot Discovery and coauthor of multiple technology patents. He is actively involved in STEM advisory and teaching roles and is an adjunct professor at the New England Institute of Technology. He is also a member of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA).
There is no overstating the unity of spiritual purpose as it exists here at WCS. It was something that stood out to me the moment I arrived on campus for the first time, and continues on with my experience each and every day. I see it in the teachers and what they bring to the classroom. It is evident with the students and their participation in programs like Chapel and community outreach. And it clearly drives the actions of all of those involved in moving the school forward through their administrative responsibilities. They are all unified in defining WCS as a premier PK-12 school of active learning, Christian charity and formation, and engaged servant leadership.

But what completes this circle of unity as it pertains to spiritual purpose is the devotion demonstrated by the WCS community at large, who so graciously give of their resources and of themselves in order to sustain the current viability and long-term future of the school. And there is no better evidence of this devotion than the success of this past year’s annual campaign for the WCS Fund. Because of your generosity, the school was able to meet and exceed the very lofty goals set forth for the campaign, and for that we just cannot thank you enough.

Our challenge moving forward is to make the WCS Fund a stable and growing foundation for the operation of the school for years to come. This will provide a consistent, predictable, and reliable source of revenue critical to the operation of the school in areas that include academic excellence and innovation, spiritual formation, student expression, and tuition assistance. There is a high set of standards that has been established in all areas here at WCS, and the gifts through the WCS Fund will help ensure that those standards are met for this generation and tomorrow’s generation as well. Over the next few months, we will tell some of the many stories that illustrate the impact of a successful WCS Fund, and we will begin to provide a vision for this year’s upcoming campaign.

The reality is that there isn’t really an “inside” and “outside” school community here at WCS, but rather a single, well-defined sense of mission and a desire to make WCS the distinctive model for excellence in Christian education – it is a true circle of spiritual unity!
“Paying it Forward” has become a tradition within the tradition of the WCS Dutch Apple Pie Fundraiser. This annual activity has become more than a fundraiser, it is a fellowship event that unites us in spirit. It begins with a dedicated planning team, peaks with a single day of volunteers working together to make more than 7,000 pies, and wraps up with 1,100 donated pies being delivered to the greater community.

In addition to area food banks, Net of Compassion is one of the organizations that receives donated pies. On Main Street in Worcester, Net of Compassion feeds the homeless every Saturday, in all kinds of weather. Thanks to our “Pay it Forward with Pies” program, WCS donated 100 apple pies to the ministry in 2018. The Saturday after Thanksgiving, Net cooked a full turkey dinner for the homeless. For dessert, the people enjoyed WCS's apple pies and ice cream. Ann Fredericks, Stepping Stone Preschool Teacher, WCS parent, and Net of Compassion volunteer said, "We would like to thank everyone who 'Paid It Forward' with apple pies. It truly means a great deal to so very many in need!"

This past June, Treasures celebrated ten years of service to Whitinsville Christian School. Volunteers, both past and current, gathered for a buffet lunch served in the Nehemiah Center. This was an enjoyable time of fellowship for all volunteers with special recognition given to former volunteers who have given many years of service at Treasures.

Treasures is a non-profit upscale thrift store whose proceeds support the Whitinsville Christian School by reducing tuition for all students. WCS has received close to $1 million thanks to the support of Treasures. Since a team of parent and grandparent volunteers helps to maintain the store, there is always an urgent need for new volunteers; without them Treasures cannot survive. The store, located in the Koopman Plaza in North Grafton, is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

You can contribute to Treasures by donating your gently-used items and by volunteering your time, either in the morning or in the afternoon for a couple of hours a week during normal store hours.

Women's clothing, housewares, and men's clothing are the three categories that produce the most income for Treasures. Other categories that make major contributions are decor (pictures, lamps and floral arrangements etc.), children's clothing, and furniture. Treasures also sells accessories, jewelry, books, shoes, and domestics.
The Mouse that Roared is about a small country that declared war on the United States and won. This small but mighty nation was bewildered at its own state of affairs, and then at the successful plan that made it the most powerful country in the world. Thankfully their ultimate goal was peace.

We had a small but mighty cast as we took on this wonderful play. It is a play that reminds me of the Christian life. We are just one small part of God's grand plan that extends beyond countries, people, languages and across time. Yet He holds each one of us in the palm of His hand. We, though tiny, matter greatly to Him. He loves us with a love we can't fully understand. With God on our side, we are promised that we “...can do all things through Christ who strengthens (us) me.” (Phil.4:13) Just like the tiny duchy of Grand Fenwick, we are small in comparison to God's greatness. But He is greater; He is our God who is mighty to save. He takes great delight in us, and rejoices over us with singing. (Zeph. 3:17) Christ can do great things through us even though we are small like Grand Fenwick.

Each production offers unique opportunities to hear from audience members and this show was no exception, providing one of the more memorable connections someone had with this particular play. This audience member shared with me that she was also in The Mouse that Roared, back in 1963. She played the role of Mrs. Bascom. She told me how much fun it was and that all the girls had a crush on the boy who played Tully. She also mentioned that as opening night drew nearer, their cast wasn't quite ready to perform. In fact, she said, they were awful. They didn't know their lines and were not ready to be on stage in front of an audience. Then, their opening night was cancelled due to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. I was amazed by her story and asked her if they ever did perform the show. She said that they did a few weeks later, which actually gave them time to be fully prepared.

These and other stories always amaze me. We remind our students over and over again that God uses their performance for His glory and to bless our audiences. This was true once again with this wonderful play. It is always a great pleasure to work with high school students. I love their energy, their creativity, their laughter, and their concerns. These students give their all as they step onto the stage, becoming vulnerable, strong, confident, and nervous all at once. These students overcome fears, and find great joy in performing or working backstage together to become the body of Christ.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Mary Dykstra
Our younger Strings students visited area nursing homes to spread their Christmas joy.

Christmas is one of our favorite joy-filled occasions that brings us together. The season began with a Campus Christmas. This event had storytelling, cookie decorating, craft making, tree lighting, caroling, and more!

Celebrate Christmas with WCS brought together over 200 students in band, choir, and orchestra in a beautiful evening that has become a can’t-miss event of the season.
WCS Alumni Association

Bring the Past, Present, and Future Together

Whitinsville Christian School is thrilled to announce the formation of the Whitinsville Christian Alumni Association. The association has been established to strengthen the ties between the school and its alumni, and to support the goals of WCS. The mission of the association is to identify, reach, serve, and engage all alumni of WCS, and to establish a lifelong connection of loyalty and learning between the school and its alumni.

One of the great strengths of WCS is the legacy that exists within all aspects of the school’s community. It is with that in mind that the association seeks to support that legacy and provide a range of services that includes such things as enhanced communication, alumni activities and events, professional/career connection, reunion organization and facilitation, and more.

We have been blessed with three alumni who have stepped forward in a leadership role for the development of the association: Melissa Hadley (’99), Bill Fredericks (’14), and Melissa Paiva (’03). They are asking for assistance in forming the core group of the association, with meetings limited to once every two months. It will be especially helpful if we can get representation from a variety of age ranges. If you are interested in joining Melissa, Billy, and Melissa, please contact Scott Anderson, Director of Advancement. You can also join the Facebook Group by searching for Whitinsville Christian School Alumni Association. There will be no fee associated with the Whitinsville Christian Alumni Association or the Core Group.

CONNECT

Join the WCS Alumni Association, by contacting Scott Anderson at sanderson@whitinsvillechristian.org, or search the Facebook group “Whitinsville Christian School Alumni Association.”
Caitlin Leffingwell (’08) and Will Veronin announced their engagement last summer.

Dave Jellesma (’03) and Samara Yohai are engaged and planning a November 2019 wedding in Cancun, Mexico.

Corah (Dahl) Hannaford (’06) married Kenneth Hannaford III on April 7, 2018. The couple now resides in Mashpee, MA.

Gordon DeYoung (’51) and Lois Kostelyk Hendricks were married on September 22 at Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton, MA. They currently reside in Uxbridge.

Sarah (Monroe) Demchuk (’07) and her husband, Ivan, are celebrating the birth of their first child. Victoria Grace Demchuk was born on October 10th.

Melissa (LaFleur) Hadley (’99) and her husband, Matt, welcomed a daughter to their family. Madeline Rose was born on October 22 - just three days after Melissa was at WCS making apple pies! Madeline has two brothers: Jackson, and Nicholas who is a third grader at WCS.

Harriet (Jackson) Graves (’55) passed away in August of 2018. She had recently moved to Uxbridge after living in Hopkinton.

Mel Vanden Akker (’56) passed away on December 27. He most recently lived in Northbridge and was a long-time employee of Raytheon Corporation.

Kathy (Baker) Bangma (’68) passed away on October 1. Kathy was married to Len Bangma (’68) and was mother to Mike (’03), Katelyn (’01), and Tim (’07). She was a lifelong member of Pleasant Street Christian Reformed Church and a faithful WCS supporter.

Linda M. Nydam (’76) passed away on September 5, 2018, at Rose Monahan Hospice in Worcester. Ms. Nydam enjoyed sailing, good conversation, and is remembered for her very quick wit.

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Linda M. Nydam (’76) passed away on September 5, 2018, at Rose Monahan Hospice in Worcester. Ms. Nydam enjoyed sailing, good conversation, and is remembered for her very quick wit.
The John T. Bajema Chapter of the National Honor Society at Whitinsville Christian School inducted 20 new members. Stephen Gorman, parent of four current students and one alumnus, was this year’s guest speaker. He encouraged the students to continue to aspire to be lifelong learners, servants, and leaders with integrity.

**New members class of 2019:** Youjin Chen, Quinn Colligan, Abby Karns, Abby Upham, and Yusi (Vera) Zhang

**New members class of 2020:** Vicky DeBarros, Connor Dudka, Robert Foley, Makenzie Gorman, Andrew Harvey, Peter Johnson, Hadley Koeman, Dylan Ramos, Olivia Toothman, Ping-Hsun (Tim) Tsai, Jessye VandenAkker, Darnell Worley, Katie Wren, Xinran (Catherine) Yu, and Anneke Zeyl

**New Faces**

- **Scott Anderson**
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- **Courtney Cook**
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- **Nicole DeVries**
  Spanish, grades 3-8
- **Kelly Foppema**
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- **Timothy Freitas**
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- **Patricia Goodell**
  Preschool Aide
- **Emily Kreidler**
  Preschool Teacher
- **Baird Lashley**
  MS/HS Music Teacher
- **Annamarie March**
  Student Academic Services, High School
- **Christine McCabe**
  Nurse
- **Jennifer Miller**
  English and History Teacher, Middle School
- **Sarah Nydam**
  Preschool Aide and Aftercare
- **Zachary Surapine**
  Strings Instructor
- **Michaela Van Voorst**
  PE, MS/HS and Asst. Athletic Director
- **Kathleen Warren**
  Preschool Aide and Aftercare Leader

**New Roles**

- **Brady Bajema**
  Promoted to Athletic Director
- **Dr. Erinn Lowery-Corkran**
  returned to WCS as Director of Guidance and International Student Programs
- **Erinn Klatt**
  returned to WCS as 4th grade Science and Social Studies and Elementary PE teacher
We are grateful for our generous donors and their faithful support of WCS. This donor list covers the time period of July 1, 2017 – December 31, 2018. Going forward, the donor list will appear in the winter issue of The Crusader Chronicle, reflecting gifts received during the calendar year.

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Front 3 rows: $2,000 per seat
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Bleacher seats: $200

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Annie Jr. presented by Middle School Drama Club
March 8 & 9 – Nehemiah Center for Arts & Worship

Spring Auction
April 6 – Pleasant Valley Country Club

Matilda presented by WCS Drama Club
April 25, 26, & 27 – Nehemiah Center for Arts & Worship

Night of Music and Art (NOMA)
May 9 – Nehemiah Center for Arts & Worship

Golf Outing
June 17 – Blackstone National Golf Course

Please visit whitinsvillechristian.org for more information and for our full schedule of events.