

Chairman's report

Arie Veenendaal

Praise to the Lord who over all things so wondrously reigneth!

Anyone following the news headlines of late can't help but notice the incredible stress and turmoil in certain parts of the world. The political unrest in Egypt and Libya, as well as the natural disasters in Australia and New Zealand leave the viewer with an unsettled feeling. The question of "why" pops up in our minds. "Why, Lord, does this all need to happen? Why, do Christian parents and children have to suffer so much?" At a recent board meeting we came across a similar situation in John 9. Jesus met a certain man who was born blind and was presented with a certain question as well; "Who sinned, this man or his parents?" The answer the Lord gives is clear and direct; "This happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life." Praise to the Lord who over all things so wondrously reigneth! Whether we deal with political turmoil, earthquakes, physical ailments, or personal struggles, it all must serve to display God's work in our life. Dufferin Christian School is a busy place with a lot of human interaction. Students, parents, staff, committees, and board all need to interact and deal with many and varied situations; both pleasant and weighty. But in all of these interactions it is good to remember that it all must serve a higher purpose--to display God's work in our lives. We are His image bearers, and as such we need to pray that the fruit of the Spirit will be evident in all of us; that of joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, etc. It is through these that God's sanctifying work in our lives will be fully evident.

Day to day and month to month

We are at that time of year again when contracts are handed out and staffing for next year is top of mind for the board. This time of year has sometimes been labeled as "the annual headache"! From the time of writing this article it appears that the staffing for next year will not be a pain. Many and most of the staff have already signed their contracts. We congratulate and rejoice with the joyful news that Mrs. Courtney Vandermeulen will not be back next year due to "family" reasons. We pray that everything may go well with you as you live in this new anticipation.

We welcome Carole Vanderveen and Adrianna Vandersluis to the Promotion Committee and sincerely thank the outgoing members; Hannelte Bosma and Mary Vanderpol. Your faithful work has been noticed and appreciated.

The annual MFIS dinner will be held in March and currently Len Lodder is attending the board meeting of the Teacher's College in Hamilton.

Copies of the new Book of Praise will be purchased for the elementary school grades as these grades need access to the new Psalms and Hymns for their memory work. Books for High School will follow the year after.

I know that I speak on behalf of the whole board when I say that it is a pleasure to work on behalf of the membership of DCS. Thank you for the good cooperation of the administration team of Mr. Huisman and Mr. Lodder, as well as the entire staff and support personnel. To be able to work in harmony is a blessing and we do not take it for granted. To all the parents and other supporters we ask for your continued prayers for our work as we do rely on God who provides for us day by day.

Principal's report

Andy Huisman

“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands, you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.” Psalm 8

Why do we send our children to Dufferin Christian School? What is it about reformed, covenantal education that is vitally important to all of us? From time to time, I think it is an excellent exercise to reflect upon and remind ourselves of the purpose of DCS. Why do we spend so much time and effort into ensuring that DCS is able to open its doors every day? I believe there is wisdom in articulating our worldview when it comes to covenantal education. *Why do we do what we do?* Do we send our children to DCS out of a sense of tradition? If that were the case, it may be very easy to become uninvolved in your child's education? It would simply be a matter of routine and there would be little or no involvement with the school because *‘that is the way it has always been done.’* Do we send our children to DCS because it is in our *‘comfort zone’*? We know everybody that goes there; we know what is being taught so we are very comfortable. Again, this type of reasoning can cause us to become uninvolved with the school. We may even start to take DCS for granted. Do we send our children to DCS because we think we are superior to those around us? If that were the case, then I believe we are in serious trouble. After all, we don't go to church because we are perfect but because we are sinners. We go to school, also as sinners, but who live out of responsibility and accountability to God.

While reflecting on these questions, I keep coming back to three significant items.

First and foremost, *Psalm 8*, as you can read above. When you read Psalm 8, you can see within it the entire purpose of covenantal education. We live out of responsibility to God, our heavenly Father and

creator of all. We see in this psalm that we are not greater than God, we live out of grace, “*for what is man that thou art mindful of him*”. We see as well, our cultural mandate as described in Genesis 1:26 – “*... and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air... over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.*” As God’s people, we have been crowned with tremendous responsibility, and our purpose, praise and joy should lie in fulfilling our responsibility to God.

Secondly, the *Purpose of Education* as articulated so many years ago that states:

“Canadian Reformed parents have established Dufferin Christian School so that the schooling provided will assist them in the fulfillment of the covenant promises made at the baptismal font. Reformed education aims to realize this assistance by equipping the students to employ their talents in the service of God and His kingdom.”

Thirdly, the *Goals/Aims of Reformed Education* also gleaned from documents within the school which state:

It is the task of the Christian school to assist parents in educating their children from the Biblical perspective and, in so doing, to:

- 1. Teach students that their calling in this world is to know God, their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and to honour and serve Him.*
- 2. Help students grow into mature human beings, prepared to employ their talents in the service of their neighbours, at home and abroad, and in all areas of life.*
- 3. Assist students in recognizing their value and privileges as God's Covenant children, and remind them that they are enabled by grace to respond in obedience to the call to serve.*
- 4. Help students discern the pervasiveness and corrupting influence of secular values and philosophies, so that under the Lordship of Christ they may, with due humility, begin to think in a fundamentally Christian way about all aspects of life.*
- 5. Remind students that this world has not been abandoned by God, that Christ has redeemed it, and that, therefore, their work as His followers and co-workers is of value for the restoration of God's Kingdom on this earth.*
- 6. Show students that true knowledge and wisdom is only attainable in God, in knowing and fearing Him. Wisdom, knowledge, teaching, and learning are bound up with one's relationship to God.*

When you think upon these three items (*Psalm 8, Purpose of Education, Goals/Aims*), a common thread running through all of them is ‘responsibility’ - our responsibility to God, to our fellow man and to creation. DCS’s role is to *assist* the parents in equipping the children to employ their talents in the service of God and His kingdom. That is the reason why we send our children to DCS. I, for one, am thankful that DCS enjoys many blessings, among, them, the support, prayers, love and active involvement of the many parents that it assists. Together as church, home and school, we are working for one thing and one thing only – God. Nothing else matters as the words of the ancient hymn “*Be thou my Vision*” state,

*“Riches I heed not, nor man’s empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my Treasure Thou art.”*

Reading Month

What a journey, literally and figuratively. This past February, the K-7 students read or had read to them a tremendous number of books. This was an event organized by the teachers (who did an incredible job!), supported by the parents, and received with much enthusiasm by the students. There were many special guest readers for which we are very grateful, special events organized and a library redecorated in a castle motif. The students were able to track their reading progress by counting the numerous flames making their way around the front entrance way. And yes, our brave secretary, Mrs. Vandermeulen, fears no dragons☺. The last day of the month was a fun day of activities organized by the grade 11 students. These students put a lot of thought into planning 10 different activities for the younger grades. From all that I have heard, the entire reading month was a huge success. Thank you to all for your tremendous effort. *(there are some pictures on the website – go to ‘Photo Gallery’)*

Zone 4 Basketball

What a season! If you had the opportunity to come out and cheer on our students at the various games, you were witness to a real sense of team unity. As the teams progressed through the season, they grew together, keeping an eye out for one another and helping each other grow. That too is a journey, a time to reflect on the abilities and talents that God has given us and to use them to honour Him in this way as well. The teams would love to express their appreciation to the many supporters and audience members who came out, it really was to them a sense of seeing and feeling the support of their community. I would also like to extend great appreciation to all of the parents who drove these athletes to the various venues in order to play their games. Also a huge round of applause goes to the coaching staff who gave up a lot of their time for the love of the students. Thank you to Miss Anje Jager and Mrs. Nikki Kooiker (Senior Girls), Mr. Mike Raap (Senior Boys), and Miss Janae Hillmer (7/8 Girls), as well as Richard Lodder and Devin Veenendaal (7/8 Boys). I would like to thank the Senior Basketball teams (boys and girls) for providing us with many opportunities to enjoy a sense of community through their games. Although the Senior Girls lost their game this past Thursday evening which brings their season to a close, you still have at least one more opportunity to watch the Senior Boys play. Their next game will be in Rosenort on Thursday, March 3rd. In all of their games the athletes were excellent representatives of DCS.

Grade 7/8 Basketball

Not only are the older ones playing some exciting basketball, but so are the younger grades. This past Friday and Saturday the 7/8 Girls travelled to ICS to take part in a tournament. They 7/8 boys will be playing in their tournament at ICS on March 4/5.

Report Cards

Once again, it is that time of year. Report cards will be sent home with the K – 12 students on Monday, March 21. There will be two opportunities for the parents to meet with the teachers. Thursday, March 24th interview time will be available in the evening (7 – 10 pm) and on Friday March 25th in the morning (9 -12). Please phone the school secretary to book an appointment. If you are unable to meet at either of these times, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher to make other arrangements.

High School Course Registration

You know that the year is really going by fast when you begin discussing next year's course registration. The information package will be sent home on Tuesday, April 5th. That is still a little ways away yet, but it is good to start thinking about it early. Course registration can sometimes be a confusing thing, especially for first-timers. In order to alleviate that confusion, there will be an information evening organized for Tuesday, April 12th. As staff, we would really encourage you to attend this information evening. There are many options available to our students and this will give you as parents an opportunity to question and investigate. We look forward to seeing you on the 12th.

Band Concert

Finally, there is a Band concert scheduled for Friday, April 8th. It has been a struggle trying to organize a date for this concert as there are just so many things going on. However, it appears that this night is open so the DCS Band would like to invite you to attend this event to be held at the Carman-West church,



Friday, April 8th starting at 8:00 pm.

As I come to the end of this report, I am pleased to be able to inform you that the majority of our teachers have signed their contract for next year. This means that once again they will continue on the journey of educating God's children at DCS. There is one staff member who has decided to pursue a different journey, Mrs. Courtney Vandermeulen. Courtney, together with her husband Blaine, are expecting their first child in September. We wish her and Blaine the Lord's blessing and hope that she will still pop in on DCS once in a while to visit grandpa. Enjoy the day of rest that God has granted, and may we continually remember the words of Psalm 121 – *"He will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going, both now and forevermore."*



Parent/Teacher Interviews

Thursday, March 24, 2011 7:00 – 10:00 pm

Friday, March 25, 2011 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Please call the school at 745-2278 or email the secretary at dufferin@mts.net
anytime from March 14-23.



Camp in a BOX

We celebrated healthy living week in January with many healthy activities. One of the main events "Camp in a Box" was postponed till February. Five counselors (Luke, Sandra, Max, Stef and Debbie) from Camp Arnes arrived at school on the afternoon of Monday, February 14th with a van full of equipment. On Monday, the grades 4-7 enjoyed an afternoon of outdoor activities and the grades 1-3 on Tuesday morning. The weather was positively balmy both days. The counselors had 3 stations set up:

- One for snowshoeing...Fun!
- One for cross-country skiing...Tricky!
- One for initiative activities...Challenging!

These are some comments from students. "That was FUN! This is NOT easy. Watch me! I don't know if I can do this!?!? Those snowshoes are HUGE! Yiiiiikes, Oh no...Ouch!! Hey wait, I can't get up. That was awesome. Whew I'm tired."

We all thoroughly enjoyed these activities and are already thinking about inviting them back next year. Most of the cost was covered this year by a healthy living grant we received from the government and also a grant from the Regional Health Authorities. The healthy living grant will be available again next year, but we may need to fundraise the rest.

You can view pictures of this event at www.dufferinchristian.ca and go to *photo gallery, Camp Arnes Camp Day*.

SALT Highlights

SOCIAL: So far this year we have had two major events (one not yet taken place at the time of writing) and various minor events.

Our major events have been very successful. First, we had our Masquerade on November 19. This was a huge success. We had about 50 people show up in costume!

Our next event is our Winter Formal for the high school. It has taken much planning, but will hopefully all go well tonight (Feb. 25).

Our minor events (in-school) have been days such as PJ day, ugly sweater day, decorating lockers for Christmas etc. We have had many enthusiastic participants. It is great to see us all enjoy our time in school together.

Also, we hope to be having a spirit week sometime in the future.

YEARBOOK: This year has given us many problems with the yearbook software, but at the time of writing we are in the final stages of completion. We are adding the finishing touches to our final pages, and ironing out all our mistakes. The yearbook will be sent out to be printed and re-edited soon.

Yearbook order forms will be going out shortly.

MISSION: we can definitely see God's blessing in this department. We as a high school sent out 49 Operation Christmas Child Boxes that was 10 up last year. We were really thrilled with that. From the money that we raised from the beef sales we sent \$250 to the Carman Christmas hamper and also \$300 to the Siloam Mission. We also as a high school continue to support 5 children from Children of Light. We highly request that all the high school students pay towards this great cost for grade 8 it is \$12 for the year and grades 9-12 it is \$24 for the year we are still roughly short \$600.

SPORTS: So far this year has been a success in terms of how the intramurals and the different fundraisers have gone. In the intramurals we have had great turnouts in all the sports. We have done soccer, floor hockey and 3 on 3 basketball. I have to say that the best turnout was the floor hockey. We were able to have teachers team in both the soccer and floor hockey, which was fun because everyone wants a shot at beating the teachers. Our most successful turnout for a fundraiser was the taco in a bag day. We have an upcoming pizza day which will take place on this coming Friday.

LIGHT: The light team has decided to have a set date for devotionals which will be the first Tuesday of every month. This decision was made in order that our devotions may be more regular. We have somewhat paired up with the mission team which gives us more opportunity for creative ideas and is convenient for mission updates. Also we are planning on getting some speakers in before the year is over. We are working well as a team and the high schoolers still seem to be active and enjoying these devotionals.