

# Chairman's Report

Arie Veenendaal

## They should always pray – Luke 15:1

While sitting in the annual membership meeting on October 28, I could not help but bring to mind the lyrics of a song that I heard when I was young: *"I've got a peaceful easy feeling."* The meeting went smoothly... no major concerns from the board, a principal's report reflecting on a school that works in harmony, the treasurer showed a balance sheet that would be the envy of most Canadian Reformed Schools across Canada, and a building committee report which received very little comments. Is this really how easy it is to run a school?

At my first board meeting on November 2, however, I was reminded of the effort it takes to make DCS work in harmony. Nothing runs by itself! A lot of effort and dedication goes into every aspect of running DCS. Board members, past and present have worked many hours to establish and maintain a Christian school. Parents, teachers, committee members, janitors, and the countless others have worked in faith to do what pleases God, namely to educate and train covenant youth to learn to serve their Maker in all of life. It is also in the full knowledge that when many people such as board, staff, parents, students etc. all work together, this never goes without challenges.

This reality is why it is so important to "always pray." Pray that all of our collective activities surrounding DCS may ultimately serve God. Please remember to take time to thank God for His rich blessings in allowing us to operate DCS. Remember to always ask God to grant all of us patience in dealing with one another and remember to pray to God that we may truly serve Him in thankfulness as we strive together to honour Him in ALL we do. Yes we can have a "peaceful feeling", knowing that God is in control of His school, but there is nothing easy about it. Through prayer and diligent effort we will together continue the task of operating DCS.

Remember to "always pray."

I wish you a blessed Lord's Day.

# Principal's Report

Andy Huisman

***"How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."***

*Psalm 104:24*

Isn't it amazing? Here we are, already at the end of November. One can ask "Where does the time go?" It seems as if it was just a few days ago that we held the opening assembly to start a new year. I am sure that you have the same feeling in whatever profession you are involved in. Time marches on and we get busy. The busier we get, the faster time seems to fly. The same is true of everyday life at DCS, there is always much going on. As I stroll through the halls and classrooms of DCS, I stand amazed at what takes place. There is the sound of music coming from the elementary choirs as they put the finishing touches on some Christmas selections. There is the sound of the middle years students engaged in a discussion on a novel that they are studying. There is the smell of paint in the air as the art department is busy with various projects. There is the camaraderie of the sports teams as they have just finished yet another intense practice. There is the sound of students practicing some choir arrangements during a lunch break. There is the sound of the lunchtime debate between some HS students as to whether illusionists are as bad as magicians and what the Bible says about both. There is the sound of the teachers' voices as lessons are given. There is the sound of the parent volunteers helping out in Kindergarten. There is the sound of students cheering on the teachers (I think) in a staff versus students floor hockey game. There is the sound of Shakespeare being reviewed and analyzed as it pertains to certain themes. There is the sound of students practicing their math facts. In all of those sounds, one thing becomes clearly evident- it is the sound of teaching and learning. It is the sound of using the talents God has given us to His glory. It is a wonderful sound! *"How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."*

However, as in everything, there is also a certain responsibility. God has created many works, of which we are one. As His creation, we have to see our purpose is to serve Him who created us. For the students that means at this point in time, their duty is to learn to the best of their ability. That happens in many ways on a daily basis at DCS. But there are also times, when perhaps we aren't serving with as much zeal as we could. Rev. Pol mentioned in his sermon this past Sunday about those who may be "coasting through church". Rev. Pol was talking about the dangers of not feeding your faith. He also touched on the *Parable of the Talents* in which the lesson is to use the gifts that God gave you to the fullest.

What parallels are there in this lesson for life at DCS? Although the context is not in the same vein the same questions can be asked - Where is the zeal? Where is the spiritual fervour to serve the One who created us? Do we take that same 'coasting' attitude into school? There are many hard-working students at DCS that strive to work with the talents that God has given them. There are those who have a tremendous zeal to serve. But there are also those who are very satisfied with 'good enough'. There are those who know exactly what to do in order to get a 50% and once attained, are satisfied. How does one reconcile that attitude with the purpose of the school? The home and the school need to work together on this with the students. We need to provide a united front for the benefit of the student. Think back to when your first child entered school. How much were you involved with their education, dutifully reading the newsletter, practicing math facts, working on the memory work, etc. As they get older, do we sometimes think that they should look after a lot of that on their own? And in a sense, they should, but we still have the duty to monitor their learning. Do we still read the newsletter as diligently as we used to? Do we get involved as quickly as in the past? Do we still ask our older children about the test that they wrote because you read about it in the newsletter the previous week? If we stop paying attention to these little things, I believe we may be losing something. We are losing a connection between the school and the home. Every week the school publishes an extensive newsletter filled with information for all of the students. This is also available on the school website in case your hard copy goes missing. Take the time to read it from cover to cover and become acquainted with what your children are doing on a daily basis. Take the time to talk to your children, take the time to ask the questions. Take the time to practice those wonderful multiplication facts. Take the time to consult with the teachers. Inform them of what is going on in the lives of your children if it affects school work.

This past week, you had the opportunity to meet with the teachers of your children. It is always very encouraging to see so many moms and dads show up to these important meetings. Although they are only 10 minutes in length, a lot can be accomplished. It shows to your children the importance of education because mom or dad (or both) are going to the school to meet with their teacher. As staff we greatly appreciate your attendance and support. Together, we are working for the glory of God.

Life is very busy, not only for those at school but for everybody. But even in these very busy times, we need to consider the words of the psalmist, *"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth."* Psalm 46:10 Take the time.

## Other News



### **"In the Hand of the Potter"**

The Staff and students cordially invite all to the upcoming Christmas Concert – *"In the Hand of the Potter"*. He who had made us continues to mold us. Come to listen, participate, and give thanks to God along with the students. The concert is scheduled for Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Carman-West church building.

## Annual Food Drive



It's once again time for the annual **DCS 'Food Drive'** for the **Carman Christmas Cheer Board**. This is an opportunity to donate non-perishable items. Students may bring their donations to the tables set up at the front of the school. Thank you so much for your continued support.

## SALT

S.A.L.T. (Student Action Leadership Team) has been very busy this past month in the High School division. If you would like to see an explanation of the various divisions of this important group, please visit the school's website and browse the SALT page. The *Mission* division encouraged students to fill shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child (Samaritan's Purse). The students responded by filling 35 boxes, a job well done!

## The *Light* division of S.A.L.T. invited Rev. vanRietschoten to be the guest speaker at their monthly devotions.



The Reverend spoke to the students about a topic that he has been busy studying lately. He dealt with the topic of memory, not only for facts and songs in school, but remembering your roots. "*Without a collective memory, there is no us*" is the quote that he began with. Going onto explain further, the memories of the older generation are not really a part of the younger generation's memory. It then is difficult to empathize with certain experiences. Reverend recounted some of his memories of the war years, though while interesting are not part of our students' memories. Not that they are not aware, but it is not part of who they are, it is not part of their *collective memory*. Taking this further, the one collective memory that we all share is that of God's Word and the history of His people. That is who we are as a group, that is our *collective memory*, and that is what gives us unity.

## Elementary Student Council

I would also like to mention the work of the Elementary Division's Student Council. They as well had a meeting recently in which many ideas were brought to the table. They decided to focus on "**Soup Days**" this year, once per month from December to March. Their first 'lug-a-mug' day will be on Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> (50 cents per mug). They would also like the elementary students come to school dressed in Red and Green.

Thank you to the grade 5 class who will be making hallway posters to remind the students of this occasion.



## Parent-Teacher Interviews

The staff would like to express their appreciation for the great turn out of parents at the recent set of interviews. It gives both sides the opportunity to meet face to face and discuss the children's progress. This is an important opportunity to make the connections and build relationships. For those parents who were unable to attend, please feel free to contact your child's teacher if there are concerns or questions.

**DCS Library**

I would like to thank the Library Committee members and the librarian for their hard work and dedication to ensuring that our library is a great facility. They put in many, many hours for the benefit of the students. As well, every time new books are available in the library, a list will be posted on the school website under the 'Library' heading. Check it out and if something interests you, feel free to stop in and take a look at a book.

That is about all for now, enjoy the day of rest that our Lord has provided for us!

*"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10*

*"In The Hand of the Potter"*

**Christmas Concert**



**Wednesday, December 16, 2009**

**Canadian Reformed Church, Carman WEST At 7:30 p.m.**

*He who has made us continues to mold us. Come to listen, participate, and give thanks to God along with the students. We look forward to seeing you there!*