

COVENANT LINES

12TH EDITION

A Publication of the Eastside Christian School Board

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord . . . Serve the Lord with gladness . . . Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise.”

Psalm 100:1,2&4.

The rich sounds of our children’s laughter as they soak in the simple pleasures of summer are certainly a joyful noise worthy of their creator. This edition of the *Covenant Lines* provides the opportunity to share yet another example of how these children witness God’s greatness at Eastside as they, “enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise.”

As we look back over the past year, take a moment to give thanks. And, as we look forward, let’s apply what we’ve learned about each other, ourselves, and our Lord so that together we grow in his grace, creating the best year yet.

Congratulations

We are delighted to have graduated two students in 1999. *Andrew Schimmel* and *Brenda Slopsema*. These students increased our number of alumni to six. It is our hope and prayer that their involvement at Eastside continues even as they enter Covenant Christian High School this fall.

As not all of you were able to enjoy the graduation celebration, what follows are excerpts from the farewell speech Andrew delivered on that memorable evening in June. His testament is a reminder of the reason we devoted ourselves to this blessed endeavor, and one from which we all can learn.

“Two years ago, when my parents told me that I was going to Eastside, I said, ‘Do I have to?’ Looking back, I can see their wisdom in sending me to this small school. Where else would I have the opportunity to work so closely not only with my teachers, but also with fellow students? One of the things I treasured the most, is the relationship I developed with the younger kids. I have really enjoyed being a resource for them. From helping them to dunk on the high rim to building them a snow bank to slide down, it’s been great. I guess my parents are smarter than I give them credit for.

Although I have been teased on occasion for giving the Valedictory Speech when there are only two kids in the class, I have enjoyed having a small class. Here, we were given the opportunity to work at our own pace. We were responsible for what we wanted to get done, because our teachers were not always looking over our shoulders. They were there for us with help and encouragement when

we needed it, and for this I would like to thank them. I feel fully prepared for what lies ahead of us at Covenant. . . . I would like to thank our Almighty Father. Without His guidance throughout all our lives, none of this could have been possible. He has guided us and He will continually be on our side.

This year our class verse is Philippians 4:13, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’ Throughout the past two years, I have learned time and again, that with the strong education we have behind us, and Christ’s light ahead, we will continue to grow.”

All—School Picnic

It was a sunny spring day when so many of our supporters gathered for the year end, all—school picnic at Grand Rapids Township Park. The food was delicious, as always, and the spirit of excitement contagious. The highlight for many was Miss Lubbers’ rousing rendition of Dr. Seuss’ *Hooray For Diffendouffer Day*. If you haven’t had the opportunity to enjoy this window into a school that’s not exactly the norm, stop by the library and pick up this book for a few minutes of comic relief.



Continuing Education

In their efforts to provide our students with the best possible educational experience, our teachers have once again applied themselves to enhancing their own expertise.

At the beginning of March, Pete Adams attended the *Annual Michigan Science Teacher’s Convention* in Lansing. This included two days of presentations by elementary through college—level teachers, who covered the gamut of science instruction. In addition, many of the science text suppliers showcased their latest editions, which were available for purchase. Pete writes, “I was able to peruse the different texts

Eastside Christian School Association admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

first hand . . . and I [received] computer programs and other materials as door prizes for the different presentations.” This summer Pete took a course in reading at Western Michigan University titled, *Professional Symposium in Reading*. While the immediate reason for his enrollment was to fulfill the State of Michigan Certification requirements, Pete said that it proved beneficial in that it “brought to [his] awareness the value of reading and writing in the overall education of our children.” He plans to apply many of the techniques he learned for encouraging and enhancing students’ classroom reading experiences.

Vikki DeKryger attended the *1999 Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children Conference*. She truly enjoyed the opportunity to attend this conference, and especially valued a keynote address that opened her eyes to the importance of “grief counseling” for children who have lost a loved one. She also benefitted from a workshop that relayed the experiences of another multiage program. In this case, it was one designed for children between the ages of four and seven years. In addition to the formal instruction, Vikki explains that one of the most important things for her is to “see what other teachers are doing in their rooms,” as well as “visiting the exhibit hall to see the latest in teaching materials.”

Ruth Dykstra reports that she is pouring her energies into enhancing and expanding her curriculum materials for religious studies. She will incorporate her efforts into this year’s classroom instruction.

The Board extends its formal congratulations to Mark Ondersma, who completed the course work necessary at Aquinas College to become an eligible recipient of the *State of Michigan Provisional Teaching Certificate*. Mark will, however, continue taking classes to complete his Masters program at the college. We certainly appreciate his willingness to teach while juggling his own class schedule.

This summer Mark completed a course titled, *Learning Styles, Research, and Development*. He explains, “From this

beneficial class I gleaned a better understanding of the intricacies of the way children, as well as adults, learn new or difficult information. We are not all the same, therefore, we do not all learn in the same way. This class helped me to better understand and appreciate the diversity created in us by our Lord. I hope to put into practice many of the methods and approaches I have learned from this class to create a more meaningful learning environment for the many types of learners we are blessed with at Eastside.”

Picnic on the Patio

We’re eager to enjoy a night of fellowship with you again. Please plan to join the students, staff, and fellow supporters for this night of praise to God for the great work He’s accomplishing through Eastside Christian (August 26).

Can you believe this is already our third year of formal operation, and it’s four years since we organized as an association? Thanks be to Him!

Summer Surprise

There’s a new addition to our playground. It should be ready for use by the time of the Picnic on the Patio, and it is bound to provide countless hours of pleasure for our students. Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to try it out. Thank you Promoters for yet another generous gift that’s certain to enhance the Eastside experience.

Volunteers

What would we do without you? Shakespeare said, “I am wealthy in my friends,” and so too, is Eastside Christian. Perhaps the greatest blessing the Lord has bestowed on our school is its wealth of volunteers. You know who you are, and while we have not properly thanked each one of you for the priceless gifts to the school of your time and talents, please accept our sincere gratitude for your investment.

We look forward to the beauty you’ll bring to another year of Christ-centered education.