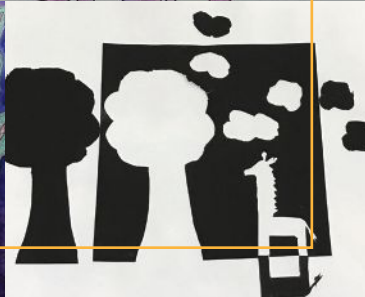
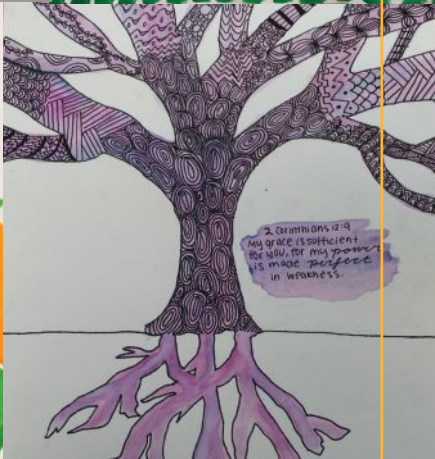
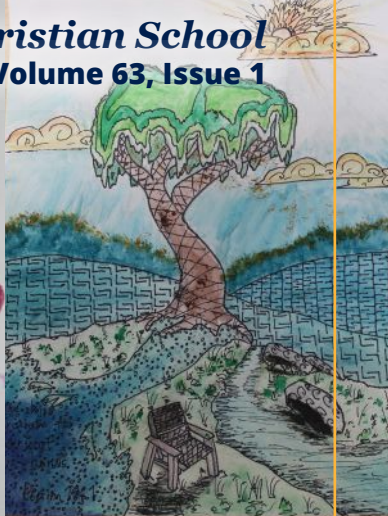
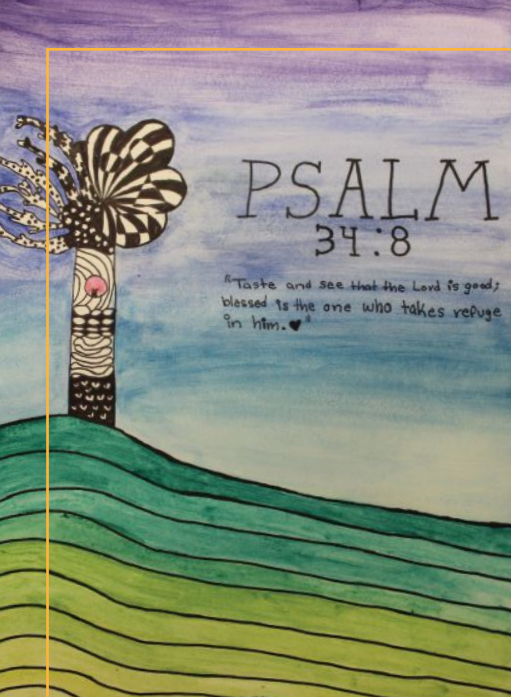


# THE HERALD

a publication of **Eastern Christian School**  
Volume 63, Issue 1



# Rooted in Christ

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**This year, Eastern Christian School has focused on the words of Colossians 2:6-7, "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."**

These words remind us of our identity as individual believers and as a school community. As you read this issue of the Herald, I hope you are encouraged by the ways in which Eastern Christian School continues to draw on its roots in Christ and that you are inspired by the opportunities for those roots to bear fruit in our students and in our local and global communities.

Our core values make clear that, "In pursuing the character of Christ, we will seek truth, serve others, embrace community, exhibit compassion, develop responsibility, and strive for excellence." You will see evidence of those core values as we **strive for excellence** through training, supporting, and recognizing the exceptional work of our teachers. Our students **serve others, exhibit compassion, and develop responsibility** in their daily interactions with their classmates and teachers at school, as well as through mission trips, cancer awareness, Boxes of Love, Operation Christmas Child, Convoy of Hope, and clothing drives.

We continue to **embrace community**. At the start of this school year, we welcomed historic numbers of new students, families, and staff members. These new community members are passionate about our enduring commitment to partner with Christian families in the education of their children and they bring new gifts and enthusiasm to our school community.

Pastor Will Reinmuth began our year with a message (pp. 10-13) that reminds us of the depth of our roots. In his words, "And let's rejoice, as we see how firm a foundation, how strong an anchor, how deep the roots...that Jesus alone has made for us!" Through the challenges of the past couple of years, we continue to **seek truth** when we recall the ways in which Christ roots us in the foundation that will not fail. As we reflect on the many ways in which God's providence has sustained us, we are truly abounding in thanksgiving!

We hope you enjoy this issue of *The Herald*.

**Ruth Kuder '84**  
*Executive Director and Head of School*





EASTERN CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOL

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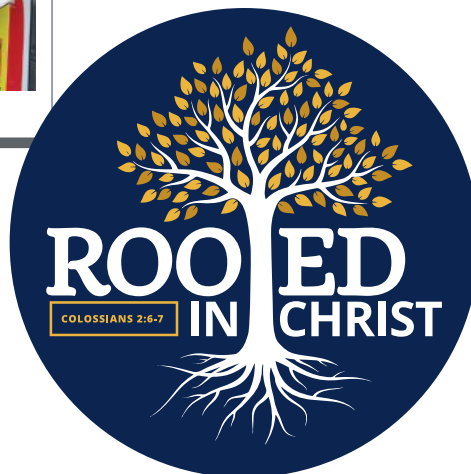
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*The Herald* is a bi-annual publication of The Foundation for Eastern Christian School. The purpose of this publication is to share the story of Eastern Christian School and to strengthen the bonds among our extended school community in support of Christian education. ***The Herald* is mailed free of charge to over 6,500 alumni, families, and friends of the school.**

Our address database is always being updated. If you would like to update your contact information or if you know of someone who would like to receive *The Herald*, please contact The Foundation for Eastern Christian School Association office and we will be very happy to update our database accordingly.

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*Pictured here and below: Scenes from this year's high school open house*



## Enrollment up around the nation and at EC

### Covid-19 effects on private school enrollment



**It is a phenomenon being reported across the country. Forbes Magazine, in a June 8, 2021 article, posted the headline, "How Covid-19 Boosted Private School Enrollment Forever." Similar stories have been featured in many other media outlets:**

**CNBC, The New York Times, Time magazine and North Jersey Media, to name a few.**

What is being discussed nationwide is being lived out at Eastern Christian School. And it is exciting to witness first-hand the work of God, who is faithful through all generations.

At the start of 2019, Eastern Christian School was home to 829 students. Despite the turbulence of the pandemic, the school's enrollment is currently at 853. This year's early childhood program—Pre-K3

through Kindergarten—opened with 159 students; 104 of them new. Students are coming from various places; joining older siblings, rejoining the school after a 1-year hiatus, or just coming in for the first time. **Suzanne Kraai**, director of enrollment at Eastern Christian School, commented that the mix of students across all campuses "is comprised of great covenantal families and I am excited about the beauties of being in a godly partnership, even when walking through challenges, like a pandemic."

Although the increased enrollment phenomenon has been widely reported, the root reason for it is less clear. Kraai speculates, "Many political and social tensions have come to a forefront over the course of the past few years, undoubtedly amplified by the current pandemic. Diverging values have also been further accentuated. As a result, I think many people have reconsidered their priorities, investment and the various influences that impact worldview development."

No matter what the reason behind it, it's a testament to God's provision toward Christian schools, and Eastern Christian School in particular. Kraai adds, "COVID created some anomalies and yet, God is growing His family at a healthy rate even in the midst of a pandemic, and it is truly invigorating to be a part of it. I get to share the story of the amazing things God is doing at EC, how He's been faithful for generations, and how he is continuing to steer EC's mission—both now and as we make future plans."

"My prayer for EC this year is that as we're able to reinstate, reinvigorate and innovate community, we...step into opportunities to build one another up, support each other as we pursue excellence together, and do it for His glory alone."



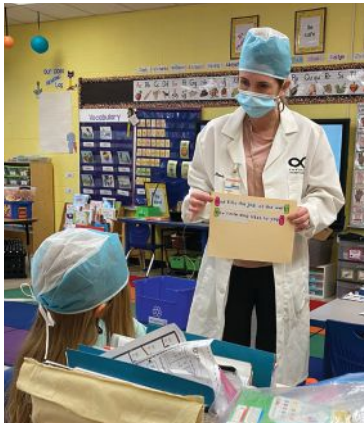
# A new teaching methodology

## Improving instruction through responsive classroom technique

**“Write two adjectives on the board that describe your weekend.”**

It’s an easy task for a Monday morning, but also quite meaningful. After welcoming her eighth grade students, **Liesl Botbyl** directs them to the morning message written on the board. The message offers a greeting, a chance to share—in this case, two adjectives—and sometimes a glimpse of expectations for the day.

Although the questions are different each time, the routine is the same. “These mini, thought-provoking activities are then used to spark discussion and community among the homeroom, providing everyone with a safe environment to share,” Botbyl explains.



*Christina McGowan, head of Elementary School Educational Support Services, provided costumes for all of our first graders to perform sentence surgery. A Responsive Classroom principle is that “In order to be successful in and out of school, students need to learn a set of academic competencies- academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.” This fun day in first grade allowed students to use new and exciting strategies to improve their mindset and ability to persevere with a developing concept.*

Incorporating morning meetings is just one technique championed by the Responsive Classroom teaching methodology. Prior to the new school year, teachers at the elementary and middle schools were trained in Responsive Classroom, a methodology that has been independently evaluated by Columbia University Teachers College and was found to cultivate higher academic skill, stronger student/teacher relationships, and better quality instruction.

Responsive Classroom operates under this core belief: “In order to be successful in and out of school, students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies--cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy and self-control--and a set of academic competencies--academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.”

In practice, carrying out Responsive Classroom ideology might look like many different initiatives and activities: enacting logical consequences, introducing role plays and guided discoveries, or even building in quiet time. Although each activity may look vastly different to an observer, all are designed to care for students socially, emotionally and academically. And according to independent evidence, Responsive Classroom works.

In addition to efficacy, and just as importantly, Principal **Sandra Bottge** adds that Responsive Classroom “fits well with our Christian worldview



*Third grader Abigail Stoner takes her turn playing “Guess the Leader.” This game, where one person attempts to guess who is secretly leading the class in a series of motions, is played as a part of a Responsive Classroom morning meeting meant to refresh and refocus students for more learning.*

and our Eastern Christian School Core Values. Each year, we build a strong, Christian community where we recognize each student as an image bearer of God with unique gifts and talents to use for His glory. We use positive language and biblically based discipline to “instruct children in the way they should go” (Proverbs 22:6).



*First grader Isi Cortes proudly displays her “How do you eat a gingerbread cookie?” worksheet and treat. A guiding principle of Responsive Classroom is “How we teach is as important as what we teach.” Students had the opportunity to practice the important skill of explaining a step-by-step process in their writing with this hands-on activity.*

# Opening hearts and homes through homestays

By Angela Avolio '24



Anneke Kuperus, Chaeyeon (Olivia) Jang, Alicia Ulaikere, Gyurin (Stella) Kim at a recent bowling night sponsored by the International Department.

realize. In the 1960s, the school hosted its first international student from Japan. International students trickled in in the decades to follow, but the program began to take off in 1990. Significantly more formalized than in the early years, there are currently 36 students enrolled. Students in the past five years have been citizens of South Korea, China, Italy, Spain, Nigeria and India. A team of four staff members help ensure that their transition into Eastern Christian, and into America, is as smooth as possible.

## It isn't necessarily a big memory; it's the opportunity to share many small moments.

For **Sandra De Marco**, it's memories like witnessing a student decorate a Christmas tree for the first time, or laughing with a teenager about how to run a snowblower. It's talking in the car while riding them to friends' houses, or surprising them with food they eat in their home country. These little moments to learn and to love add up. And over time, they've turned into multi-year relationships.

"My homestays and I still text and email regularly. One came and stayed recently, so he could attend alumni chapel over Thanksgiving. It was really nice to be able to catch up and hear what he has been doing

in college. Quite a few of the parents in the program keep in touch with students, and in turn the students love to keep in touch too," says De Marco.

Eastern Christian School's history with international students is significantly longer than most people

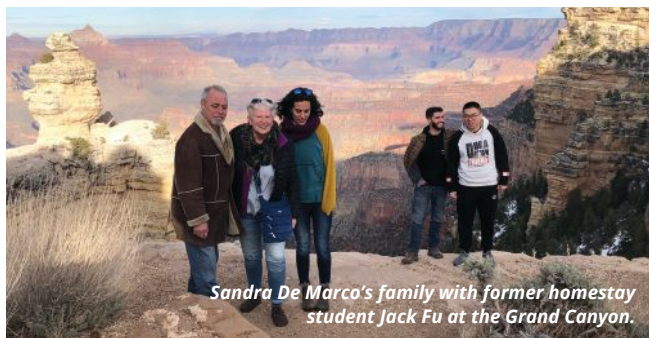
Although not a requirement to their enrollment, many international students are housed by Eastern Christian School families. "In the 2010s, we started offering homestay arrangements to pair international students with American families. The families provide basic necessities, and also provide emotional and social support that students need while they are there," says De Marco. Families, in turn, are financially compensated for room and board.

The De Marco family is in their fifth year of hosting international students. "Five years later, my husband and I still pray for their families, even now. I love it and I know it's because I kept going to God for guidance," she says. "As in all new relationships, it takes time and if you put the time and effort into it, it will be rewarding. I have been truly blessed by them living with us."

**For more information about becoming a homestay family, email [sandrademarco@easternchristian.org](mailto:sandrademarco@easternchristian.org).**



David Hwang learning how to use a snow blower at the De Marco home.



Sandra De Marco's family with former homestay student Jack Fu at the Grand Canyon.





Esther Kim

# Harvard's differentiated instruction training

**Reinforcing every student as an honored student**

Six Eastern Christian School staff members across all three campuses completed a professional education course offered by Harvard Graduate School of Education intended to better prepare teachers to instruct students of all levels. The three-month course, titled **Differentiated Instruction Made Practical**, was based on the book by Rhonda Bondie and Akane Zusho.

Faculty members already serving on the accelerated learners program task force were offered an opportunity to participate in the intensive training. "How the class actually starts out is identifying that every student is a unique individual. Every single student is different—there is no such thing as an average or normal student. Everyone has different needs, different skill sets, etc. Everyone learns

differently. We cannot really group the class as average and teach them one lesson. We need to approach our classes with this understanding," says **Esther Kim**, high school teacher and course participant.

"What I appreciated most is the focus on this class being about all students in our classrooms, every minute of every day. Students in our classrooms may need varying aspects of a class 'differentiated' for them and that does not mean they are an accelerated learner or a learner with other unique challenges. Content, processes, and the product may all be differentiated according to student needs and interest," adds **Liesl Botbyl**, middle school teacher and course participant.

**THE GOAL WAS TO TRAIN PARTICIPANTS TO BE "AGILE TEACHERS," TEACHERS WHO ARE ALWAYS ACTIVELY LISTENING, LOOKING OUT, AND ADJUSTING FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL.**

The class approach was to offer skills and ideas that could be immediately tested and implemented into the daily classroom. Botbyl, for example, quickly incorporated the tool called "elbow exchange", a mechanism to facilitate collaboration between partners as well as provide an opportunity for her to listen for understanding and make adjustments as necessary.

Similarly, Kim says that the goal was to train participants to be "agile teachers," teachers who are always actively listening, looking out, and adjusting for the benefit of all. She liked the emphasis on determining clear objectives, establishing repeatable routines, and encouraging everyone to have a voice. She immediately gravitated toward the lesson planning concept of establishing "must haves" that every student would need to grasp and then utilizing peer sharing to aid in this endeavor.

"Overall, I think it is very important to be aware of individualized learning and differentiating instruction, not only for one group or another, but really approaching it so that everybody has what they need at the end of the lesson. This class has taught me just that," shares Kim.

“

*“What I appreciated most is the focus on this class being about all students in our classrooms, every minute of every day.” —Esther Kim*

# Getting to the heart of service learning

## Representing Jesus Christ in the world

**Merriam-Webster dictionary provides a number of definitions for the word, redeem. One of those is “to free from the consequences of sin.”**

**Dan Lazor**, principal at the middle school, sees serving as God’s redemptive agents as a critical component of a person’s faith walk. He elaborates: “I think that service is one of those things that should define a Christian’s life...we are given a responsibility of representing Jesus Christ in the world. Part of this includes sharing the message of God’s gospel and the Good News of Jesus, part of this includes acting as citizens of heaven, bringing the redemption and reconciliation with us wherever we go.”

This understanding has cultivated a deep love of service learning. To this end, Lazor recently

completed his doctorate program, ending with a dissertation titled, “A Survey of the Practice of Service-Learning in Christian Middle and High School”

Lazor’s passion is shared community wide and is reflected in the school’s core values and graduate profile. Lazor adds, “At EC, we have a desire to see our students take who they are and what they’ve learned and their walk with Christ and have an influence in the world, wherever God places them. Training students to see their role as Christ’s ambassadors and the opportunities they have to serve prepares them to continue this after they leave EC.”

Following are highlights of service learning within Eastern Christian School this fall.



Elementary school students filled 15 boxes to support Star of Hope Ministries

## Boxes of Love

Tied to the school’s core values of embracing community, serving others, and exhibiting compassion, the Midland Park campus got to work once again this season filling Boxes of Love.

*The Box of Love program, an initiative of Star of Hope Ministries, seeks to bless 2,000 families each year with supplies to make a Thanksgiving meal, plus extras that can be used after the holiday. Teacher **Kelly King**, who also serves as the leader of the special project team, reintroduced the service project in a video back in October.*

*Students from preschool through third grade participated. “We were able to fill 15 boxes (with 4 bags of leftovers) and donate 53 turkeys. Our students diligently prayed for the families who will receive our boxes,” shared Principal **Sandy Bottge**.*





## MAD Groups

*After a COVID-driven hiatus, the MAD (Make A Difference) Program is back at the middle school.*

*The program, when fully operational, pairs student volunteers with various ministries in a setting that is both educational and philanthropic. "This year is a re-starting year, introducing service as a concept, rebuilding old partnerships and looking for new [partnerships], and reestablishing routines. There are a lot of things that we can do in the classroom tied to EC's core values that support the idea of a life of service," shares Lazor.*

*"We have set aside one period each week for groups to meet and focus on the work of MAD. We have also decided to go back to having a grade-level focus for the areas of service. This allows for easier integration of content into core content classes. For example, since all 7th graders will be learning about the same issue and organization, those ideas can be integrated into any 7th grade class," says Lazor.*

*In addition to MAD, this year the middle school has also participated in Boxes of Love, Operation Christmas Child, and Convoy of Hope hygiene kit projects.*



*High school soccer players organized a fundraiser, donating nearly \$2500 to Valley Hospital's breast cancer program. Here, the girls present the check to a hospital representative.*

## Breast Cancer Fundraiser

*By Gianna Angelucci '24*

She could be counted on for her cupcakes at the New Hope Christmas party, her cakes at birthday parties, and her spontaneous workplace treats. **Ellen Spalt-Faber ('86)**, say her nieces, was known not only for her baking skills, but also for her generosity. When she passed away from breast cancer in 2014, the loss was felt by many.

Each year, the Eastern Christian girls soccer team wears pink socks and shirts to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In homage to their aunt Ellen, two sisters—**Gabriella Angelucci** and **Gianna Angelucci**—aspired to do more, raising money for the breast cancer program at Valley Hospital.

Gabriella, senior captain, with the help of Fair Lawn-based GEM sports, created four T-shirt designs representing each of the fall sports. The girls promoted the fundraiser through social media, friends, family and school announcements. Although Gabriella set a goal of \$500, the fundraiser was a rousing success, raising close to \$2,500.

At a girls home game during Homecoming Weekend, a representative from Valley Hospital

came to accept the donation. Angelucci shares, "I feel that my aunt would be proud of me for this and would love to know that everyone was able to come together and support [it]."





# Chick-Fil-A Leadership Academy Opens at ECHS

By Liam Reinmuth '24

**Twenty-nine high school students have joined the Chick-Fil-A Leader Academy this fall, an initiative sponsored by a NJ-based Chick-Fil-A and led by high school financial literacy teacher Dawn Heerema.**

They join 27,500 other high school students nationwide as part of a 7-month leadership training program that partners local Chick-fil-A franchises with high school educators. The Academy has been in existence since 2018, but it is the first year for Eastern Christian School.

The new program at Eastern Christian High School was born out of existing relationships between Chick-Fil-A management, who are current EC parents **Ray and Megan Cowan**, and Eastern Christian students. "The owner of the

Ramsey Chick-Fil-A has a history of hiring our students. When they first opened, the owner, Ray Cowan, came here to interview students right in our building. Since then, we have often had multiple students on staff at the restaurant," shares Heerema. It was this long-time symbiotic relationship that led Cowen to sponsor the corporate program at the high school campus.

Heerema adds, "We are blessed to have Mr. and Mrs. Cowan guiding and supporting the program. They are sharing personal experiences, funding the ideas, and encouraging the students to do beautiful things each month."

The program intentionally focuses on leading and service, challenging students to integrate these two characteristics in their vocation and as a lifestyle.

Work includes discovering authentic giftings, creating and executing service projects, and stepping out of individual comfort zones in order to make a positive impact in individual spheres of influence. In the kick-off meeting, for example, students were surprised with two gift cards. One was to keep and the other was to give to another person as a thank you. "They were challenged to consider who is a key figure in their lives and bless that person with a special thank you note and a free meal."

Students were accepted from all four grades. Senior **Michael Cook**, already serving as a leader through varsity sports, was one of the inaugural members. "I feel like we have a great opportunity," he shares. "I hope to gain some more knowledge on leadership and do some great service [projects] throughout the year."



# Cross-Campus Collaboration: Digital Technology

By Jadyn Ninan '24 and Meredith Kohlbrenner



Luis Goenaga in Design Tech class, working on another project.

High school teachers **Tim Steen** and **Jesse Wright**, along with middle school teacher **Kari Pratt** and technology integration specialist **Meredith Kohlbrenner** and the high school Design Tech class, worked collaboratively to introduce 3D modeling, and more specifically TinkerCAD software, to middle school students this November.

"This was a first time doing this and the part that was really exciting was just the idea of pulling in so many different people to make it happen," shares Steen.

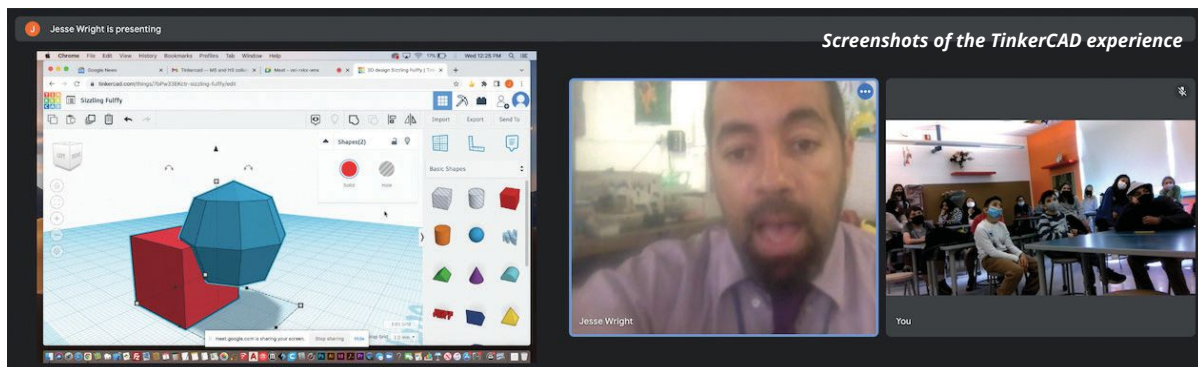
The objective of the activity was for the high school students to bond with the middle school students, working together to create a 3D wearable pin for veterans in conjunction with a Future Engineers

competition. The winning design will be 3D printed and handed out to veterans at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Columbus, OH and will earn a 3D printer for the student's school.

The sixth, seventh and eighth grade students rose to the challenge and displayed quick learning and creative skills as they began tinkering with the program. Wright's suite of video tutorials, which showcase more advanced features of the program, were made available to the students for further exploration.

Tim Steen's TinkerCAD-experienced high school students **Zach DeVries**, **Joe Vivolo**, **Ben Visbeen**, **Danny Lazor**, and **Sebastiano Secades** made guest appearances in Kari Pratt's art classes to coach the middle school students in their assignment. The juniors and seniors expertly answered the students technical questions and gave them inspiration to improve their designs. The seniors also shared ways they have used TinkerCAD in the past and how they hope to use it in conjunction with their college and career aspirations.

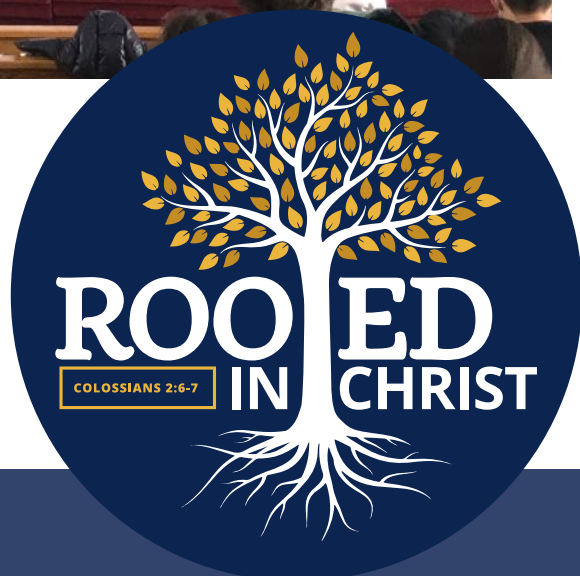
"It was fun and they definitely did learn. It's good to have that peer-on-peer interaction. It's better than just a teacher saying, 'do this'. It is someone they might look up to, showing them something new," explains senior Design Tech student Zach DeVries.



Screenshots of the TinkerCAD experience



## Persevering through pandemic, local pastor exhorts staff on the importance of being rooted in Christ



*Note: Will Reinmuth, current pastor and EC father, delivered the following meditation to the faculty and staff at our opening convocation. We were so inspired by his words that we wanted to share them with the entire school community.*

**As we begin this new school year, with all of its potential, all of our great plans, and all of our hopes for something better than what we have had to live through over the past year and a half, the first week of school can and should be a time of excitement.**

However, as we are already hearing the swirling winds of more turmoil from the Covid Delta Variant, the various hurricanes pounding our shores, the fallout from the collapse of Afghanistan, and the many lives lost from the earthquake in Haiti...just to name a few of the headlines recently...how are we supposed to hold onto our hope? Where can we find our footing for the year ahead, when the world around us seems to be crumbling?

This year's theme at Eastern Christian School gives us our answer: Rooted in Christ. Only in Jesus, do we find a foundation that is immovable, unchangeable, and everlasting! Only in Jesus, do we find the anchor that our souls need when all other foundations are crumbling around us!

But what does it mean to be rooted in Christ? And how do we as Christian teachers, administrators, and parents live out of that rootedness?

In Paul's letter to the church in Colossae he writes:

**"THEREFORE, AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK IN HIM, ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM AND ESTABLISHED IN THE FAITH, JUST AS YOU WERE TAUGHT, ABOUNDING IN THANKSGIVING." – COLOSSIANS 2:6-7**



As we begin this year together, please consider this encouragement and challenge:

*You have been rooted by Jesus, to endure, so pray and teach!*

Okay, so firstly, what does it mean that you are **rooted BY Jesus**? In our passage, Paul writes “as you received Christ Jesus, so walk in him, rooted...”. To be honest, this is not the best translation for us of the word “rooted,” because it tones down the power of what God is actually communicating to us through Paul. You see, that word “rooted” is a perfect middle participle, meaning that it is referring to an action performed on us, in the past, that has implications for our present. It is not, therefore, an imperative, but an indicative. It is not telling us what to do, but first and foremost reminding us who we are in Christ. A better translation would have been, “having been rooted,” which is the position from which we are to learn to walk through life.

Why does this matter? Because it means that the primary work of rooting our lives on a foundation that lasts belongs first and foremost to Jesus! It means that it is not up to us to try to build a place of sure footing when the world and our lives seem to be spinning out of our own control, but instead, it is the promise and work of our Jesus to anchor our souls in a truth and a reality that is unshakeable! If there is anything that we, and our children, need in a time so turbulent, it is an immovable strength upon which to truly understand our world and build our lives. And that, friends, is precisely what Jesus came to do, and who He is!

Is this not what Jesus, Himself, proclaimed when He picked up the scroll in Luke 4 and read from Isaiah 61:

**1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me  
to bring good news to the poor;  
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who  
are bound;  
2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor...**

We are all familiar with Jesus' declaration of His life's work, that being anointed by the Spirit, He was going to preach the good news to those bound by sin, and then bring the year of the Lord's favor

(jubilee) through His death and resurrection. Hallelujah!

But how does the prophet Isaiah then go on to describe the fruit of the work of Jesus FOR us and IN us? Please do not miss that he says it's all about being rooted!

**3...that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified.**

Jesus came to root our lives in what He accomplished for us, that we might become like the strongest of trees, oaks, rooted deeply in His righteousness. Beloved, we are rooted, first and foremost, BY Jesus Himself!

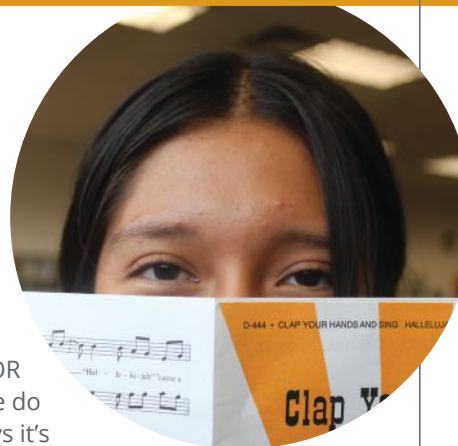
**AND LIKE AN OAK TREE,  
WE HAVE BEEN ROOTED  
TO ENDURE!**

Whether it be the rubble of the storms that have already passed through, or those that are to come, our roots are there to enable us to survive and even thrive! In Isaiah 61:4, the prophet goes on to say:

**4 They shall build up the ancient ruins;  
they shall raise up the former devastations;  
they shall repair the ruined cities,  
the devastations of many generations.**

Did you hear it? Not only is it the work of Jesus to root us, but even if the hurricane of our worst failings has already come through and destroyed, leaving ruins and devastations; ours is the God who delights to use our rubble to build His masterpiece! He is not afraid of our broken pieces, but promises to use them to make us whole!

And this is not simply for the storms that have already come through, but for those that are still on the way as well! For, as Colossians 2:4 and 2:8 both indicate, there is an enemy pursuing us and our children. One who seeks to deceive and enslave. One whose arguments and attacks on the truth of our Jesus will seem reasonable and loving,



even while they are intended to lead us away from Love Himself.

“Therefore”, Paul writes, “because these attacks are coming, and you have been rooted by Christ, learn to walk, build upon, and be established on that foundation! Or, to put it like King David wrote in Psalm 1, blessed is the one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. But who instead meditates (walks, stands, sits) upon the Word of the Lord! For that person will be like a what? Like a tree planted by streams of water that bears its fruit in season. Do you think Paul might have had Psalm 1 on his heart when he wrote this letter to the Colossians? Do you think God really wants to make sure we get this point?

Beloved, we have been rooted by Jesus, so that we can endure the devastations that have already come, and those that are on their way! Jesus has done this! This is who we are in Christ! Please do not rush past the indicative to get to the imperative! Sit and meditate upon the truth of who Jesus has made you to be, and what that means, no matter what this year throws at you. And only after you have done so, then move on to the imperative...

## THEREFORE, LET US PRAY AND TEACH!

In Colossians 2:1, Paul says, “I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you.” And just one verse beforehand (Colossians 1:29), Paul says, “For this I toil, struggling with all his energy...” The

**PAUL HAS DISCOVERED THE MYSTERY OF THE UNIVERSE, THE MOST PROFOUND, FREEING, ENCOURAGING REALITY OF BEING ROOTED IN CHRIST TO ENDURE, AND HE WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE FOR HIS FRIENDS IN COLOSSAE TO SHARE IN THIS REALITY WITH HIM. AND AS PAUL MODELED FOR THEM, AND FOR US, THAT BEGINS WITH PRAYER.**



*Anchored, the high school girls Bible study.*

word in both places for “struggle” is “agonizomai” or “agonize.” Paul has discovered the mystery of the universe, the most profound, freeing, encouraging reality of being rooted in Christ to endure, and he wants more than anything else for his friends in Colossae to share in this reality with him. And as Paul modeled for them, and for us, that begins with prayer. It starts with Paul’s willingness to be poured out like a drink offering, weeping before the throne of God on behalf of those for whom he was responsible. Crying out, that they (and we) would be knit together in love, experiencing the full assurance of knowing our rootedness (Colossians 2:2). For it is one thing to intellectually ascribe to the fact of our being rooted by and in Christ, but quite another to KNOW, experientially, that oneness and strength. That is the kind of intimacy that comes only through prayer.

*And so, the question is, will you? Will you prioritize the time to go before our Almighty King this year, on behalf of your students, that they might be rooted by Jesus, and know how*



*A scene from an outdoor worship night, hosted by students this fall.*

*to live in that place of stability and strength? Will you pray? And in addition to prayer, will you also teach?* In Colossians 2:7, Paul points to the fact that these Christians in Colossae have been taught the faith that they believe. And while it should come as no surprise to us that teaching is a fundamental aspect of discipleship, the clear message here is that our teaching is not limited to our lesson plans, or the words that come out of our mouths, but is much more accurately the whole of our lives! We cannot lead anyone to a place where we ourselves have not been. We cannot teach an intimacy that we do not have. But, conversely, WHEN we have such knowledge, when we know that intimacy and power, when our lives outside of the classroom or office reflect that rootedness, THEN the lessons we teach will come with power and fruit! *What are you teaching, beloved? Will you aim to build on the foundation that Jesus has laid and invites you find your hope, strength, and joy upon? Will you teach, in word and deed, that our children have been rooted by Jesus, to endure, and invite them to look at your own life as evidence of this incredible intimacy and power on display? Will you teach?*

Please know, that this parent and pastor, is praying that you will. I am agonizing before the King, that you would be knit together in love, and there find



Grace Schulster playing during chapel.

such a firm foundation, that the joy of the Lord would be your strength, no matter the storm! You are seen, and known, and loved. Your hard work and incredible faithfulness IS producing fruit in our children! Your labor is not in vain, and nothing can change that. For you have been rooted by Jesus, to endure! And so have those children in your care. So let's pray together! Let's teach with our lives! And let's rejoice, as we see how firm a foundation, how strong an anchor, how deep the roots...that Jesus alone has made for us!

“And while it should come as no surprise to us that teaching is a fundamental aspect of discipleship, the clear message here is that our teaching is not limited to our lesson plans, or the words that come out of our mouths, but is much more accurately the whole of our lives!” —Will Reinmuth

## HE ALONE IS ABLE! HE ALONE HAS DONE IT! AND HE LOVES YOU!

*Come close, Lord Jesus! Come close, and shape our hearts this year, to know the strength and sure footing of being rooted in deep intimacy with You. Drive out all fear and confusion! And let the light of your presence shine brightly in and through Eastern Christian School... our faculty, staff, parents, children, and families. Let this year be saturated with Your grace in our lives, that no matter what happens around us, we will bear the fruit of being deeply rooted in You! All glory and honor and praise belong to You alone! Come Lord Jesus, and build something beautiful! We open our hands and our hearts to You now. Come! We pray in your matchless Name, amen!*

With you in Christ,

**Will Reinmuth**

EC Parent & Pastor at All Souls Community Church



# ROOTED IN TRUTH

## Mission Trips Resume



*The last overseas missions trips occurred in 2019. Pictured here, the Tanzania team.*

work. Which, in this context, is NGO work mixed with the Gospel. The class examines missiology, the mission dei (the mission of God) and the real effects of poverty on people. These elements lead up to the trip and give the students experience in content they've been studying," shares **Stephen Bailey**, Touch the World liaison and the Eastern Christian teacher advising the missions team this year.

The program also includes a weekend-long missions seminar hosted by Touch the World. At the seminar, students complete a role-playing activity called "\$2 a day." "The essential lesson of that game is that most families in impoverished countries only have \$2 a day to live on. Each mission team is assigned a family and a business and has to learn how to make decisions with only \$2

accessible per day. It is a thoroughly researched game and is based on real-life events that happen to communities who live in poverty," says Bailey.

**In 1 John 3:18, the apostle exhorts believers: "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."**

One way Eastern Christian School seeks to love with actions and in truth is through mission trips. After two years of cancellations due to COVID, this April, a team of students will be traveling to Harlan County, KY. Harlan County is an economically disadvantaged county in the Appalachian Mountains and students will be working alongside Heritage Ministries to restore homes.

Eastern Christian School teams with Touch the World ministries to offer authentic missions training and experience to students. Locations change, but the intentionality behind the program does not. In addition to participating in a trip, students must also complete a class called Cross-Cultural Perspectives.

"Cross Cultural Perspectives is an opportunity for the students going on the mission trips to receive an academic perspective on why we do missions

In addition to the academic component, Bailey also sees the deep connection between service and worldview formation. He says, "By serving others, we offer God this opportunity and this platform to shape our worldview, minds and hearts. Whenever we offer the Lord space and time to do something in our souls, he enters our lives and makes the change necessary."

He adds, "Everyone walks away with a different interaction with Christ, but I feel like every mission trip I have gone on, I have gotten the opportunity to see everyone take a step in their faith."



*Lizzie Thomas in Kansas City, circa 2019.*

**Eastern Christian School is excited to relaunch Cross Cultural Perspectives, which was forced on hold due to COVID. This year, one team will head to Kentucky. Pictured here are former students who served in Kansas and Tanzania in 2019.**

# ROOTED IN EXCELLENCE

## HS teacher wins Teacher of the Year

By Jadyn Ninan '24



**Art and technology teacher Jesse Wright was honored as 2021 New Jersey Nonpublic School Teacher of the Year in a competition sponsored by the NJ Council of American Private Education. The prestigious competition included a nomination, interview and application process; One teacher is selected around the state each year.**

Despite winning this highly competitive educator award, Wright's early career was not in education. Before his time at Eastern Christian School, he alternated work between graphic design, web design and marketing, along with pursuing missions work. But then 14 years ago, he answered the call to serve at EC.

"The call to teach for me was the call to serve God. There hasn't been a day that I haven't been excited to see how God might show up on the EC mission field," he says.

While at Eastern Christian School, Wright has taught a variety of courses, including Foundation Arts, Painting, Drawing, Sculpture, Media Production, Advanced Placement Art Portfolio, Advanced Ceramics, Graphic Design, Web and App Design, Design Tech, Coding, WINGS, and Printmaking.

Wright shares that his philosophy of education involves "inviting students to identify their unique giftings," sharing that he takes deep satisfaction when students "gain an increased sense of ownership, voice and purpose, thus engaging with the community in applying their skills in a real world."

Wright says he has been deeply inspired by the late Paul Beverly, who was the only other Eastern Christian teacher to receive this award back in 2010. "Micah 6:8 was Paul's mission. I am honored to have won the award after a figure who was very inspiring and encouraged people by inspiring them to step out of their comfort zone and bring positive changes."

As for the school community, he adds, "We all endeavor to strive for excellence. While it is nice to receive an acknowledgement, I genuinely lift this up on behalf of the amazing collaboration at EC among the teachers, the administration, the outstanding students, the parents/guardians, and community members beyond these walls that all come together to make this a district of character and competence."





# ROOTED IN...

## Investing in the Ones Who Invest in Others



**Kindergarten teacher Jessica Truran shares that as a child, “school was always my safe place.” This personal experience led to a deep passion in adulthood to create an academic “environment that is supportive and teaches healthy coping skills.”**

After joining Eastern Christian, Truran pursued and recently completed a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in trauma and resilience in educational studies, offered by Concordia University.

The knowledge she has gleaned is now used to help the greater school community. “I am passionate about sharing my knowledge with colleagues in order to help EC become trauma-informed, resulting in healthy, connected, and academically engaged students,” she adds.

Truran, like many teachers before her, is a participant in Eastern Christian’s innovative pathways program, a leadership

development program established in 2013. The program, a distinctive for Eastern Christian School, constitutes a win-win for teachers and students.

“The program is intended to support teachers who go way above and beyond the normal expectations of their classroom and will provide opportunities for them to develop additional leadership skills and broader exposure within the organization,” says Head of School **Ruth Kuder**.

Kuder adds, “In this alternative model of teacher compensation, teachers fall into one of four salary bands that are designed to reward both the acquisition of additional skills and knowledge, and the assumption of additional responsibilities, both in and outside of the classroom.”

After completing initial pre-requisites, experienced teachers are offered an opportunity to move into a third salary band—the senior teacher band—after they earn a master’s degree with the support of a forgivable loan. Upon degree completion, teachers can go one step further and apply for the final band—a Master Teacher, Senior

Specialist or Educational Leader career designation.

Now in its eighth year, the program has resulted in a significant increase of certified and master’s prepared teachers who are equipped to lead projects benefiting a number of stakeholders. These projects are as varied as Truran’s work with student trauma, Tim Steen’s effort in building electronic portfolios and a badge grading system, and **Rebekah Sankey’s** Pre-k-12 curriculum focus.

Eastern Christian School has perennially been honored as a Top Place to Work in New Jersey by NJ.com, and its strategic investment in staff is one way the school has stood out among competitors.

Kuder shares the reason behind the strategy: “Teachers are the ones most directly responsible for student growth, which is at the heart of our work. We believe that excellent teaching results in students who meet our mission of developing students’ gifts so they are ‘empowered to act as Christ’s transforming agents in a global society.’ Eastern Christian School is committed to supporting teachers in their own learning and growth.”



*End-of-year faculty and staff picnic. Several staff members have taken advantages of EC’s innovative pathways program.*



# ...EXCELLENCE

## EC's Graduate Profile and the Valedictorian Legacy

Understanding by Design is a common strategy taught to aspiring teachers, based on the book by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Also known as backward design, the central premise of this practical strategy is to begin lesson planning by first articulating the end goal.

At Eastern Christian School, no matter the campus, our end goal for every student is encapsulated in the graduate profile:

### GRADUATE PROFILE

*Utilizing Biblically informed inquiry and strong academic knowledge, an Eastern Christian graduate will think critically, exhibit curiosity and develop the discernment that will enable him/her to confidently and intentionally strive for excellence in every endeavor.*

*Having studied the message of Jesus Christ and having experienced models of Christian servanthood in community, the Eastern Christian graduate develops a healthy self image. Recognizing and responding to the will of God, and seeing in humanity the image of God, the graduate embraces diversity, exhibits compassion, offers respect, and is forgiving and open to others.*

*The Eastern Christian graduate is prepared to be a person of Christian vision and influence and seeks to contribute cooperatively and responsibly to God's mission of renewing all of creation.*



A goal such as this is not accomplished in a single class or in a single year; it is the culmination of a great cloud of witnesses over a long period of time. Perhaps a better way to show our graduate profile in action is to look at the speeches of our recent valedictorians. Following are some of the highlights, with bolded words that mirror our original graduate profile goals:

"...Looking back, these past four years were times of growth, change and maturity...We've developed opinions and have **become more aware about the greater world, our peers, and ourselves**. We **overcame our differences with others** and **embraced our shared passions and ideas**. We've learned to become people."

*-Aidan Sehulster, Class of 2021 Valedictorian*

"I want to exhort you to glorify God without being unrealistic about the struggle to praise Him in every circumstance. Most of all, I want us to **remember the faithfulness of God** without spouting the false promises of prosperity gospel."

*-Isabelle Lazor, Class of 2020 Valedictorian*

"We are **precious children of God**, and the **knowledge found in the Bible should be the guiding force in shaping our identity** and determining the course of our lives."

*-Cassidy Langenfeld, Class of 2019 Valedictorian*

It is Eastern Christian School staff's desire to partner with families and churches to raise up children in the way they should go, and that means proactively engaging their minds, nurturing their spirits, and giving them the tools to transform the world.

## The importance of and need for community

By Soo Brown

I just passed nine months as the Executive Director of the Foundation. I thought this would be a good opportunity to share what's been on my mind, as well as my prayers regarding my role and the school.

Tonight, I attended the ECHS Open House. I was asked to moderate a student panel, where EC students shared about their lives and experiences. As Suzanne Kraai, director of enrollment, and I listened, we were truly moved by what they had to share. It was an authentic reminder that EC is truly a special place that has impacted their lives and not only helped them to grow academically and socially, but most importantly, spiritually.

One thing that kept coming up tonight is also what I've been wanting to focus on at the foundation: **community**. The first question I asked our students was, "What is the best part about EC?" All four students said in one way or another, it was the unique community and a sense of belonging that our school provides. They added that it felt more like a family. I couldn't help but think that this unique sense of community is because we all serve the same God because we are brothers and sisters in Christ and part of His body.

The blessing of a community is special. I can relate to this myself. In August 2018, I left my 18-year career at Morgan Stanley in Community Affairs. Despite it being a big company, I

knew a lot of people, had a good circle of work friends, was well regarded, and enjoyed my job. Most importantly, I had helped to establish and lead a workplace Christian ministry that I loved. We shared daily devotionals, prayer meetings or calls, and in person fellowship by location. Within this company of 50,000 employees, we had formed a special community of over 300 believers.

After leaving my corporate job and switching to full-time mom mode, I initially felt disoriented being in such a different season of life. The Lord used this "break" as I awaited guidance on next steps to engage me into the EC community, where I jumped into volunteering. I felt at home very quickly as I got to know the staff, other parents, and kids, frequently opening up my home as opportunities to serve arose. I felt like I had found my "ministry" and then COVID stopped it. In that season of quarantine, I really missed the community and circle of friends that I had formed.

Then in early 2021, a couple staff members mentioned this job opening. I had some big hesitations but when I asked for a clear confirmation, the Lord answered in an amazing way. When I share how I feel in my current role, I've mentioned to a few people that **I feel competent but not confident**. Yet, the Lord has given me so much confirmation and encouragement to see how I can serve and live out His calling in this season. I honestly seek Him daily to pray for wisdom and remind myself that **I do all things in His strength** and not in mine.

I share that background to say that my prayer is for EC to have a sincere sense of community as a body of believers and YOU are part of it. I see so much potential in our community to not only bless the

school financially with the resources it needs, but to be a reflection of Christ's body at work. **The range of giftings and talents in our community among our staff, students, family and friends is amazing!** Not everyone is able to write a large check, but they may have more time to serve, they may have talents that can bless our school and students, or their business may provide a service that we need. There are so many ways to get involved and bless EC.

COVID brought a break in social interactions, but opportunities to connect now abound. **Newer families**, we want you to meet other families and get to know our amazing staff. **Alumni**, help us with the skills, resources, and talents that have developed even more since you graduated. **Friends and businesses**, is there an opportunity for us to partner? Can you mentor a high school student who may be interested in your profession? Do you have a communications background and have ideas on how we can communicate more clearly? Or do you just have the flexibility to volunteer your time and can help at ditto or with our pizza days at school? Most importantly, please continue to pray for our school, students, and staff. If you're a parent, please join us for our next Parents In Prayer meeting!

In this new season, I know and trust that our Lord is at work in strengthening HIS school even more. I've been amazed and reminded through times of fervent prayer so I encourage you to join me in praying for EC and taking an active role here. Get involved in our efforts, the Lord has placed YOU in this community for a reason. Please contact me directly if you want to help but not sure how. I would love to discuss our opportunities with you!

# Tom Dykhouse Leadership Scholarship

As one of the most recognized faces and names at EC stepped down on August 31, 2021, the Board of Trustees established the Thomas G. Dykhouse Leadership Scholarship to benefit EC students and families.

This scholarship was orchestrated by Nick Kuiken, the School Board Chair, on behalf of the Board of Trustees. This scholarship is to recognize 14 years of dedicated leadership and service to EC by Tom Dykhouse as our Head of School. As a testimony of Tom's impact on this school, over \$189,000 was raised through donations made in his honor!

This scholarship will be awarded to students who demonstrate significant leadership or character traits representing EC's core values and financial need. It will be funded annually from the scholarship endowment held at the Barnabas Fund by the Foundation of ECSA.



Tom Dykhouse and Nick Kuiken

Students will be nominated by our principals and be selected by the Head of School and Executive Director of the Foundation. The first award of this scholarship is planned for this spring to be applied toward the student's following academic year.

*If you also wish to recognize Tom's leadership and support this scholarship, please contact [foundation@easternchristian.org](mailto:foundation@easternchristian.org) or give online and select the Endowment Fund as the designation and note "Dykhouse Scholarship".*

## Endowment Fund Reduces Tuition for All EC Families

**Eastern Christian School's Endowment Fund was established in the early 1960s with the goal of providing a source of investment income that would help to reduce the cost of tuition for all EC families.**

During its 60-year history, the Endowment Fund has grown primarily through estate gifts and memorial gifts as individuals and families made final gifts that reflected their lives of commitment to Christian education at EC.

The Endowment Fund is managed by a committee of six community volunteers

with investment expertise who work in close collaboration with Eastern Christian's senior administrative team in overseeing the investments comprising the fund. Each year, the Endowment Committee provides \$450,000 of support to the school's budget to help reduce the tuition obligation of every Eastern Christian School family. In addition, the Endowment Committee oversees trust funds that have been donated to Eastern Christian to provide support for scholarships for current students and recent graduates.

***Anyone wishing to obtain additional information regarding the work of the Endowment Committee or the process for designating estate gifts to Eastern Christian School is encouraged to contact [foundation@easternchristian.org](mailto:foundation@easternchristian.org).***



# Groundbreaking for EC Field

Eastern Christian and North Haledon officials broke ground March 4 to celebrate the beginning of construction for the new athletic field, slated for completion in fall 2022. The project, when finished, will feature a lighted turf field, along with a practice track. It had been a moment five years in the making.

working relationship between the borough and Eastern Christian School.

Fundraising for the turf field began in earnest in 2017 for the school's 125-year anniversary, as part of Campaign 125, a project launched by former Director of the Foundation for ECSA **David Visbeen** in collaboration with former Director of Operations **John Belanus** and Dykhouse. Despite this official start, shared Dykhouse, this goal had been in existence for much longer. He added, "Today, represents a next stage in a dream that has gone on for decades."

Head of School **Ruth Kuder** opened the ceremony with a passage from Deuteronomy 6:10-12. She shared her experience with the field in 1980 as a member of the first girls' team, grateful for the generations who came before her. She exhorted the crowd to "be careful not to forget the Lord."

Other speakers for the event included Head of School Emeritus **Tom Dykhouse**, who presented on the background of the project; Director of Marketing & Communications and former soccer coach **Rudi Gesch**, who spoke about the athletic pillars, and in particular, the school's commitment to strive for excellence; and ECSA Board Member **Jeremy Mulder**, who ended with a passage from Ephesians 3 and a reminder that the work of the Lord continues for generations.

Also in attendance, Mayor Randy George extended the congratulations and encouragement of the Borough of North Haledon and commented on the close



NOW - ECHS groundbreaking ceremony in 2022

## Abounding in Thankfulness for our 2021 Giving Tuesday Success

*On Tuesday, November 30, 2021, the EC Community was asked - If you believe in and have been blessed by EC's mission to raise our kids with a Christ-centered education, would you please consider supporting us as one of the charitable organizations you give to this Giving Tuesday?*

The Lord surprised us, although who are we to ever doubt His faithfulness and provision! We surpassed our stretch goal of 200 with 238 donors and raised \$70,324! That is 119% over our goal and so many first time donors. We took a leap of faith to have a participation focused campaign and trusted the Lord to lead our community into financial generosity. A financial goal was not publicized but our hope was to raise \$35,000 and the Lord more than doubled it.

If you were one of our 238 donors in this campaign, thank you for following His lead to give. We want to also express a special gratitude for our unexpected donors who offered our generous match incentives. **Every gift does matter, every dollar does count, and no gift is too small for it is all a gift from the Lord!** We Abound in Thankfulness for your commitment, prayers, and support of our mission here at EC to provide excellent education Rooted in Christ.

# Grant News

*General donations to EC are always a blessing but sometimes we receive donations that are restricted or earmarked for specific purposes. These are often a wonderful surprise and a pleasure to notify the campus or specific teachers. I'll feature three that we have received recently.*

*If you feel inspired and would like to make a gift, please let us know. Annual Fund donations give us the most flexibility to support the needs of our school, but we also appreciate gifts toward causes that are especially meaningful to our donors.*

## **\$9,000 TOWARDS STAFF ENCOURAGEMENT:**

This donation is from a current parent who appreciated all the hard work of our staff. The family knew that it has been challenging for them to adjust to so many changes and increase in their workload due to COVID and also the addition of new students and teachers.

This gift was divided between three campuses for \$3,000 each with the guidance that it is to be used to encourage our staff and to acknowledge all their hard work. These funds may include fun outings and fellowship for staff, food/lunches, and etc.

## **\$2,500 FOR ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS TO BUY BOOKS:**

This donation is from an alumni who is also an educator. She wanted to bless our elementary and middle school teachers with the ability to freely purchase books they wanted for their students & classrooms. The foundation coordinated with principles and notified specific teachers of the great news that they have additional funds to spend!

## **\$200 FOR HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER FOR BOOKS & SUPPLIES:**

This donation is also from an alumna who is an educator. She wanted to bless our high school media center with additional funds to purchase books and other literary materials. This donation came in only a couple days after the donation for our elementary and middle schools. It was amazing to see the Lord's timely orchestration to move the hearts of our donors!

Donald Van Harken, Joyce Foster



## HomEComing is for Everyone in our EC Community!

All praise to our Lord for an amazing HomEComing weekend of October 15 & 16! A special thanks to all those who partnered with us to pray that this would be a blessed event to celebrate the EC and our community. This year, we made some adjustments to emphasize that the New EC HomEComing was for EVERYONE from our EC community, not just alumni! We were intentional in wanting opportunities to engage everyone.

With the introduction of our new community picnic, EC was truly represented from our Heritage alumni, recent graduates, high school student volunteers, parent food server volunteers, to preschoolers enjoying balloon animals and a pick-up volleyball game of parents and students!



Art Vooy's '05, Greg Hagedoorn, Brandon Steiginga '12, Noah Ruitenbergh '11



It was a wonderful weekend and the 2022 HomeComing will be here in no time. A great big thank you to all our faithful volunteers of parents, alumni, staff, students and friends who helped the whole weekend to go smoothly. Lastly, we were able to offer this weekend free of charge thanks to our generous sponsors. THANK YOU so much for your support and commitment to our EC Community! We look forward to seeing everyone again in October!



Scenes from around HomeComing

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR BUSINESS SPONSORS!

**Event Sponsor** – Columbia Bank Foundation

**Isaac Hennessy Soccer Game Sponsor** –

Sarepta Therapeutics

**Eagle Sponsors** – KV Builders LLC, Search Consultants of Northern Jersey

**Picnic Sponsors** – Ditto, Veenstra Dental, Wayne Tile, Christian Health, Nicholas Markets, Shotmeyer Bros., Kuiken Brothers, Jeffer, Hopkins & Vogel Attorneys of Law, Martin Orthodontics, Regency Wealth Management

**Alumni Soccer Sponsor** – Regency Wealth Management, Wayne Tile

**3v3 Basketball Sponsor** – Athletes in Action

**Homecoming Dance Sponsor** – Bushoven LLC, Regency Wealth Management



## Can you help with our Campus Athletics Wishlist?

*Are you like me and think it is nice to buy a present for someone off of their wishlist and to know that it is an item that they really want or need? This happens often with wedding registries, Christmas presents, and birthdays. If you are a “practical” gift giver, then you probably enjoy selecting an item that you know the person wants but it is nice to choose from the list.*

*We are so excited for EC’s groundbreaking for a new turf field at the high school, but there are other athletics related needs which are not budgeted but hoped for. With that idea in mind, each campus was asked to provide a wishlist and below is their list. If you feel led, we would love for you to purchase an item or donate funds towards one! Please contact [foundation@easternchristian.org](mailto:foundation@easternchristian.org) and we’re happy to help facilitate your donation.*

Elementary School (Midland Park)		
Item Description	Number Desired	Cost per item
Gator Ball	2	\$20.99
Hot Block	1	\$170.99
Folding mini ramp	1	\$189.00
20' parachute with handles	1	\$209.00
Magnus scooter storage cart	1	\$285.00
Fast Track Scooters-set of six-rainbow	1	\$445.00
Middle & Upper Elementary School (Wyckoff)		
Item Description	Number Desired	Cost per item
Folding PE Mats	2	\$40.00
Tennis Rackets (set of 2)	5	\$58.77
Basketball, Men's (29.5)	8	\$69.99
Basketball, Women's (28.5)	8	\$64.99
Soccer Nets 6' x 4'	4	\$119.99
4-Way tug of war rope	1	\$269.00
High School (North Haledon)		
Item Description	Number Desired	Cost per item
Olympic Barbell 7-Foot Barbell	2	\$117.00
Bumper Plates	2	\$299.00
Rogue 8' X 8' Oly Platform	2	\$395.00
Rogue 90" Monster Lite Squat Stand	2	\$525.00
Adjustable Bench	2	\$695.00



# Alumni tradition relaunched this fall

## The return of Alumni Thanksgiving Chapel

On November 24, Eastern Christian School welcomed 75 alumni to its Alumni Thanksgiving Chapel.

After a year hiatus, the event—which required total separation from the high school population and other considerations due to COVID regulations—was made possible through the work of several adults, current students in Bible & Worship Class, as well as alumni volunteers.

Centering around the school's spiritual theme of being Rooted in Christ, alumni from various graduating classes participated in the event.

The participant list included:

**OPENING VIDEO PRODUCER:** Jack Jiang '21  
**VIOLIN:** Christiana Hubbard '21 & Erina Lee '21  
**VOCALS:** Naomi Engelhard '20 & Kiandra Dussard '20  
**VOCALS & ACOUSTIC GUITAR:** Scott Steenstra '17  
**DRUMS:** Luciano Catizone '20



**PIANO:** Becky Parker-Ortiz '18  
**ELECTRIC GUITAR:** Stephen Frank '21  
**SPEAKERS:** Emmanuel Dyer '21, Becky Parker-Ortiz '18 & Dan Rainville '07  
**CLOSING PRAYER:** Emily Steen '20



After the chapel, alumni moved into the cafeteria for a morning of food, fellowship and alumni trivia. The vast majority of attendees graduated Eastern Christian School within the past five years, however, this year's registration included a few exceptions, including a participant from the class of 1969.

Check out the opening video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1B67qDdlZWM>

# Alumni Celebrations



Adam & Kelly Dykstra

## WEDDINGS

Eric Boonstra '06 &  
Rachel Gavios  
9/19/21

Nicole Brello '08 &  
Timothy Hennessy  
10/22/21

Brianna Palazzi '08 &  
Richard Torres  
10/29/21

Randi Lynn Veenstra '08 &  
Alex Gould  
12/31/21

Kellee Liverani '09 &  
Timothy Kane  
10/29/21

Francesca Cacciola '10 &  
Eric Chiaramida  
10/30/21

Alyssa Cestaro '10 &  
Shine Wang  
9/25/21

Michael Flim '10 &  
Sara Smith  
11/5/21

Andrew Vriesema '10 &  
Rebecca Budde  
7/2/21

Joey De Marco '11 &  
Sharon Saladino  
8/28/21

Nora Furbeck '11 &  
Alex Parisi  
10/10/21

Chris Gregson '11 &  
Lisa Mauti  
11/13/21

Mark Hook '11 &  
Ashley-Rose Sherman  
6/26/21

Devin Sickles '12 &  
Nick Ferrante  
10/1/21

Kyali Shattuck '13 &  
Ryan Medford  
10/15/21

Daniel Vivolo '13 &  
Caley Andrews  
7/17/21

Michael Sessa '14 &  
Selena Villarreal  
7/4/21

Adam Dykstra '16 &  
Kelly Dykman '16  
10/2/21

Carter Heerema '16 &  
Jayna Van Buiten '16  
7/31/21

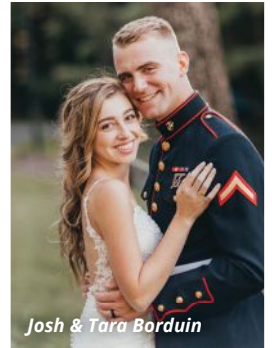
Dan D'Urso '16 &  
Marissa Chin  
7/31/21

Kelly Tanis '16 &  
Joshua Groenewal '16  
8/20/21

Tara Brain '20 &  
Josh Bordin '20  
9/3/21



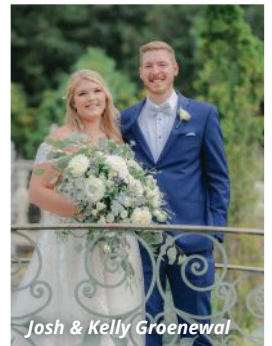
Carter & Jayna Heerema



Josh & Tara Bordin



Mike & Sara Flim



Josh & Kelly Groenewal



Andrew & Becca  
Vriesema



Joey & Sharon De Marco



Michael & Selena Sessa

*Congratulations to all  
the new EC marriages!*

**OWE NO ONE ANYTHING, EXCEPT TO LOVE EACH OTHER,  
FOR THE ONE WHO LOVES ANOTHER HAS FULFILLED  
THE LAW. -Romans 13:8**



# Alumni Celebrations

## BABIES



Mackenzie Breur

Kevin '96 & Tara  
(Smith) Breur '98  
Mackenzie Rose 9/9/21

John & Ganelle  
(Romero) Allen '01  
Maddox Gray 9/6/21

Andrew & Lisa-Marie  
(Gallagher) Katzman '02  
Maddie Kate 6/28/21

Chris & Katie  
(Den Hollander) Hoehl '04  
Emily Ann 10/13/21

Wesley & Sarah  
(Veenema) Livesey '04  
Wesley Burchill IV 6/12/21

John & Kelly  
(Braunius) Ombaldo '04  
Jonathan Theodore 7/28/21

Matt '05 & Julissa Milkamp  
Eli Matthew 8/14/21

Sean '05 & Sara (Davidson)  
Tanner '05  
Iris Beatrix 8/22/21

Ken '07 & Evonne  
(De Jong) Malnati '08  
Luke Andrew 10/20/21

Dan '07 & Karyn Verrengia  
Logan William 6/17/21

Billy & Taylor (Vooys) Knuth '07  
Riley Brianne 6/10/21

Justin '07 & Sarah Van Dyke  
Hannah Joomi 11/2/21

Dan '07 & Bridget  
(Soodsma) Rainville '07  
Lia Joli 6/15/21

Joe '08 & Sandy Everett  
Jonah Mark 11/1/21

Tom & Jenna (Greenfield) Johnston '08  
Bennett Lochlan 10/2/21

Joe '08 & Laura Pellegrino  
Julianna Leigh 7/2/21

Eric & Nicole  
(Struyk) Krzyzanowski '08  
Roxy Island 11/12/21

Kendall '09 & Amy Everett  
Dayne Barrett 9/30/21

Justin '10 & Ashley Chrinian  
Lauren Olivia 6/4/21

Ryan '10 & Samantha Dykstra  
Eliza Pearl 7/29/21

Dan & Jenna (Maffei) Vito '10  
Vincent Daniel 6/23/21

Kyle '11 & Amanda (Fenners) De Jong '11  
Sawyer Elaine 9/10/21

Joe & Sarah (Gabriele) Wilmot '12  
Jace Curtis 7/3/21

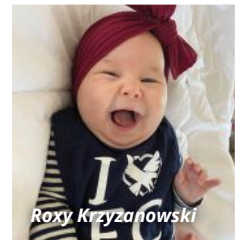
Isaiah & Francesca (Quintero) Velez '13  
Daia Liv 9/21/21



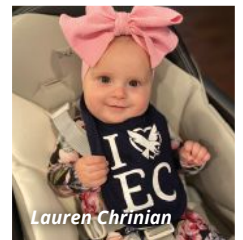
Hannah Van Dyke



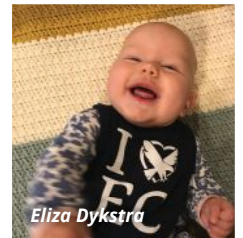
Lia Rainville



Roxy Krzyzanowski



Lauren Chrinian



Eliza Dykstra

*Children are a gift from the Lord; they  
are a reward from him. –PSALM 127:3*



Eli Milkamp



Jonathan Ombaldo



Riley Knuth



Jace Wilmot



Sawyer De Jong



# Remembering

## ALUMNI

**Lois (Hoitsma) Hengeveld '44**  
Wellington, AL 8/14/21

**Ruth (Ruit) Geveke '46**  
Hopkinton, MA 10/22/21

**Emma (Wispelwey) Stanivukovich '47**  
Clifton, NJ 6/26/21

**William Rankin '47**  
Old Bridge, NJ 11/20/21

**Betty (Botbyl) Tolsma '47**  
North Haledon, NJ 12/25/21

**Matthew Okkema '48**  
Holland, MI 4/12/21

**Connie (Schryvers) Gezon '48**  
Grand Rapids, MI 7/6/21

**Dorette (Reeg) Taylor '48**  
Rochester, NY 5/9/21

**Jessie Hamersma '49**  
Hawthorne, NJ 8/4/21

**Carol (Troast) Aandewiel '51**  
Tucson, AZ 6/10/21

**John Zuidema '51**  
Jenison, MI 10/24/21

**John Beversluis '52**  
Fresno, CA 5/22/21

**Betty (Borduin) Brandes '52**  
Wyckoff, NJ 8/30/21

**Kathleen (Peters) Martin '52**  
Hawthorne, NJ 10/11/21

**Carolyn (Van Til) Veenstra '53**  
North Haledon, NJ 10/26/21

**Julia Belanus '54**  
Wyckoff, NJ 8/31/21

**Doris (Van Ostenbridge) De Jong '55**  
Eatonton, GA 1/28/2021

**Joan (De Vries) Fericy '55**  
San Diego, CA 10/4/2021

**Lois (Venema) Hetrick '55**  
New Port Richey, FL 9/7/21

**Patricia (Houseman) Keegstra '55**  
Spring Hill, FL 10/12/21

**James Reynierse '55**  
Chesapeake, VI 11/27/21

**Beatrice (Van Beveren) Spalt '55**  
North Haledon, NJ 12/9/2021

**Peter Van Hoff '56**  
Huntsville, AL 1/18/22

**Jerry Vermeulen '57**  
Mahwah, NJ 6/26/21

**Elbertus "Bert" Prol '62**  
Ringwood, NJ 10/28/21

**Cheryl (Tanis) Leegwater '63**  
Lavallette, NJ 10/9/21

**Charles "Chuck" Pulis '65**  
Mechanicsburg, PA 4/18/21

**J. George Aupperlee '65**  
Grand Rapids, MI 8/31/21

**John Van Beekum '65**  
Wyckoff, NJ 11/11/21

**Diane (Smith) Mol-Tanis '66**  
Bloomingdale, NJ 10/1/21

**James K Greydanus '70**  
Grand Haven, MI 12/30/21

**Elizabeth (Bruining) Arruda '71**  
Dartmouth, MA 12/14/21

**Barbara Halma '73**  
Hawthorne, NJ 12/11/21

**Susan (Meier) Leucht '76**  
Hawthorne, NJ 12/30/21

**Donald Westra '81**  
North Haledon, NJ 11/23/21

**Debra (Spaak) Schroeder '82**  
Sewell, NJ 1/18/22

## FORMER FACULTY/STAFF

**Gilbert Kitchen**  
9/13/2021  
*Director of Development  
and Superintendent 1996 – 2004*

**Jean Richmond**  
1/13/22  
*ECES Office Secretary 1978 - 1994*

**Aafke "Alice" Spoelstra**  
12/3/21  
*ECHS Office Secretary 1969 - 1978*

**Annetta Vander Lugt**  
11/5/2021  
*Teacher, Passaic & Wyckoff  
Campuses 1977 - 1989*

**Carolyn Veenstra**  
10/26/2021  
*ECHS Librarian 1977 - 1997*

*We remember before our  
God and Father your work  
produced by faith, your labor  
prompted by love, and your  
endurance inspired by hope  
in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

–1 THESSALONIANS 1:3



Gil Kitchen

# Upcoming Reunions

*To stay up-to-date, please be sure EC has your current email address. Update online at: [www.easternchristian.org/alumni](http://www.easternchristian.org/alumni) or email: [alumni@easternchristian.org](mailto:alumni@easternchristian.org)*

## CLASS OF 1970 50 YEAR REUNION

**Friday, October 14, 2022**

We have waited a long time to celebrate our FIFTIETH REUNION from high school! Homecoming Weekend will be a perfect time to celebrate our 50th reunion and also have a gigantic birthday party for all of us as we reach our 70th birthday sometime in 2022. Please reserve Friday, October 14, 2022, for the festivities. We will be mailing a "save the date" postcard to encourage you to come and be a part of this amazing milestone celebration.

Contact: [ecclassof1970@gmail.com](mailto:ecclassof1970@gmail.com) or committee members: Gary Link – [glink3511@gmail.com](mailto:glink3511@gmail.com); Beverly Soodsma Ten Kate – [beventenkat@gmail.com](mailto:beventenkat@gmail.com); or Linda Vander Plaat Brock – [linda@vpf.com](mailto:linda@vpf.com)

## CLASS OF 1982 40 YEAR REUNION

**Saturday, May 28, 2022**

11 am - Tour of ECHS and boxed lunch

6pm - Portobello Restaurant  
175 Ramapo Valley Rd, Oakland, NJ

Contact: [ECHSClassof82@gmail.com](mailto:ECHSClassof82@gmail.com)

## CLASS OF 1972 50 YEAR REUNION

In planning stage for November 2022

Contact Barry Smith at [bssmith310@gmail.com](mailto:bssmith310@gmail.com)

## FOUNDATION NEWS

### CLASS OF 1960



**Row 1 (L to R):** Joanne Dyer De Bruyn, Alida DeVries De Boer, Karen Beversluis Beck, Judy Spoelstra Abma, Trudy Graham Boogerman, Ruth Hagedorn Wynbeek, Annamae Nienhouse Dykstra; **Row 2:** Len Wynbeek, Lois La Fleur Vredevoord, Joyce Anema Streelman, Connie Wondergem, Joanne Velzen Wit, Jean Schoenjogen Janeczek, Gail Bangma Baker, Gladys Buckley Van Der Woude; **Row 3:** Rich Van Hoff, Sam Steen, Craig Bender (hidden), Don Baker, Marilyn Eichorn Myers (hidden), Ern Wiegers, Cal Wiegers.

### CLASS OF 1971



**Row 1 (L to R):** Kathy Rosendale Tanis, Lisa Reid Cooke, Shirley Struck Schuit. **Row 2:** Glenn Ver Hage, Mark Vander Weit, Barbara Meyer Heersink, Alice Lesterhuis Vander Plaat. **Row 3:** Rich Schipper, Dave Bruinooge, Roy Jellema, Tim Huizinga, Craig Sonderfan, Carol Vander Meulen Ten Brink. **Row 4:** Bob Kuiken, Henry Marsman, Nancy Dykstra Powers, Dan Meeter, Gordon Sluis, Rosemary Cimini Stathis, Bill Reitsma, David Van Dokkenburg, Paul Ten Brink, Jackie Kruithof Hayes.

### CLASS OF 1981



**Front row (L to R):** Pam Westra Abma, Robin Faber Martin, Lori Miller Lansey, Sharon Zuidema Spoelstra, Debi Wisse Veenstra, Julie Hamstra Voskuil, Wendy Leegwater Malone, JuleAnn Troast Martin, Deb Rosendale Kerlen. **Back row:** Albert Bolt, Jim Abma, Ben Spoelstra, Jim Nieuwenhuis, Gary Veenstra, Jeanne De Kort Veenstra, Wayne Schipper, Linda Mabie, Sally Last Ruitenbergh, John Kuperus, Hilda De Groot Kamps, Barb Stokes Moran

## ECHS friendships continue past graduation!

**Back (L to R):** Sara Leegwater Martin '16, Alexis Struck '17, Brianna Altamuro '17, Sarah Martin '16, Josh Groenewal '16, Kelly Tanis Groenewal '16, Ashley Silva '17, Kelly Dykman Dykstra '16, Emma Hagedoorn '16, Erin Groenewal Gorter '07, Leah Groenewal Tironbola '11. **Front (L to R):** Shawn Tanis '07, Joshua Tanis '09, Jonathan Hook '16, Kyle Dykstra '16, Bradley Tanis '06, Calvin Gorter '16, Adam Dykstra '16, Jonathan Gorter '08, Mark Tironbola '10.



# EC alumna reaches finals in American Ninja Warrior

By Jadyn Ninan '24



**Announced as the last Jersey girl of the night, Cara Mack '07 started her televised semi-final run with fierceness: Her first few obstacles complete, she overcame the dreaded Warped Wall, powered up the Salmon Ladder, and then fell in a heartbreaker during the Padlock obstacle.**

Despite succumbing to one of the final challenges in the famously difficult course, her performance landed her in the Top 3 Women slot for American Ninja Warrior that night. She went on to the finals, where she placed among the Top 5 Women in the country. And starting this month, Mack will begin filming for season 14 of the show, returning for her fourth season.

Although known for her performances as a Ninja athlete, Mack's faith in Christ is what drives her.

Her connection with Eastern Christian started in middle school, when she transferred halfway through her fifth grade year. The transition was initially hard for Mack, but with time, engaging in new opportunities opened the doors for new friends and a chance to figure out her giftedness. This of course, included sports. She played volleyball and also tried track and field. Still, she shares, "I kind of just did sports for fun...I

did not expect to go into some sort of professional sport at all."

Her initial passion was to become a sign language interpreter. After graduation, she pursued this dream, working as an interpreter full-time for six years. However, God had other plans for her life. One core memory was during a competition for sign language in which she was not permitted to continue, although it was something very close to her heart. Denise Jonas, her pastor's wife and a prominent role model in her childhood, reminded Cara that God had bigger things in store for her. And Denise was right.

Cara was initially introduced to a Ninja gym through a boyfriend. From this moment, her life took a turn. She describes the sport as being "addictive" because "you realize how every time you do an obstacle or every time you have success, it's giving you so much confidence and it's helping you get over a fear".

The road was not without difficulty. She dislocated her shoulder between Seasons 11-12, a heartbreaking but awakening moment for her. "It was like a blessing in disguise... I learned so much from the injury. It changed my life for the better", shares Mack. Her faith in Christ and passion for Ninja were able to grow tremendously over this period. Cara never lost that spark for Christ, even as fame and sometimes mocking followed. "Being made fun of for being a Christian taught me that my relationship with God is personal."

As she looks forward to another televised competition, Mack is also pursuing "new ways to partner with the community and share my story of faith and what God has done in my life through Ninja Warrior." This includes branching out into public speaking. She adds, "You never know what God has in store for you. You may try to plan out your own life, but ultimately, it's all in His control."

**MACK IS ALSO PURSUING "NEW WAYS TO PARTNER WITH THE COMMUNITY AND SHARE MY STORY OF FAITH AND WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN MY LIFE THROUGH NINJA WARRIOR."**



# Tribute Gifts

*Gifts received in Memory or In Honor June 16, 2021  
through January 20, 2022.*

## IN MEMORY OF

### J. George Aupperlee

Ronald & Karen Steiginga

### Henry "Red" Balkema

Gary & Donna Balkema  
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Christopher & Linda Morich

### Sidney & Rena Bruins

John & Linda Bruins

### Beverly Bylsma

Toni Steenstra

### Class of 1960

*in memory of deceased  
classmates*

Class of 1960 Reunion  
attendees

### Class of 1971 Reunion in memory of deceased classmates

Anonymous & Cash  
donations  
Dave Bruinooge  
Carol & Alan Hoeksema  
Nancy Dykstra-Powers &  
Ed Powers  
William & Nancy Reitsma  
Richard & Nancy Schipper  
Glenn & Cynthia Ver Hage

### Donald & Joan De Bruin

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Wilma J. Oliphant  
Lynda & Thomas Pasqueretta  
W T & Barbara Sanders  
Beatrice Spalt  
Bernhard & Sharon Spoelstra  
Ronald & Karen Steiginga  
Shirley & Arthur Stokes  
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Betty Tolsma  
Roger & Paige Van  
Valkenburgh  
Milo & Ruth Veenstra  
Albert Visbeen  
David Zavadil

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Robert & Jane Wiegiers

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### Gilbert Kitchen

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Lavalette friends  
Rawn & Susan Leegwater  
Thea & Martin Leegwater  
Amy McNamara  
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### Marianne Silva

John Golden

### Edward Slump

Brian & Laura Lokker  
Ellen Lokker & Mark Baker  
Jacqueline Lokker Taylor

### Beatrice Spalt

Frederick & Joanne De Ruiter

### Aafke "Alice" Spoelstra

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Trina Bolt  
George & Carol Bosma  
Robert & Sandra Bottge  
Christian Health  
Sophia Constandinou  
Alice & William Davis  
Cathy Del Rio  
Thomas & Linda Dykhous  
Nancy & John Hemrick  
Steven & Daun Hook  
Anthony Ijzerman & Sue  
Sibley, Jarrod, Moira &  
Caleb

Margaret Ijzerman  
Aleida & Erika Jakobowski  
David Kelley  
Gail & Dale Laninga  
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Leonard & Ruth Wynbeek

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Toni Steenstra

### Nate Thomas

Tom & Linda Dykhous

### Bernard Tolsma

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Margaret Pennings  
Cathy Peters  
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Carole Roper  
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Wendy & Kevin Zwiers

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John Golden

### Carolyn Veenstra

John Drukker

### Nicholas Veenstra

Lynn Veenstra

### Jerry Vermeulen

Barry & Linda Foster

### Donald W. Westra

Glenn & Lauren Bushoven  
Karel & Catherine De Waal  
Malefyt  
John Drukker  
John Golden  
Ruth Heeringa  
Elizabeth Kolk

### David M. Zuidema

Lois & Harry Prins

# Tribute Gifts *cont.*

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Doris Villarreal

**Class of 1946**  
Mary Jean Kolk

**Class of 1950**  
Dr. J. F. Girard Rooks

**Class of 1951**  
David & Caroline De Wilde

**Class of 1955**  
Dick & Tena Watterz

**Class of 1965**  
Barbara & Donald Smith  
Carolyn & David Spadafora

**Class of 1966**  
Diane J. Pasma  
Anita & Donald Rose  
Maria & William Wagner

**Francesca De Paris**  
Lawrence & Kathleen  
De Paris

**Thomas Dykhouse**  
*in honor of 14 Years of  
Service to ECSA*  
Roy & Ann Jellema

**Roger A. King**  
*in honor of my EC Varsity  
soccer coach*  
John & Dawn Baum

**Garret & Florence  
Nieuwenhuis**  
*in honor of 60th Wedding  
Anniversary*  
Jim, Nancy, Deena &  
Jay Nieuwenhuis  
Kenneth, Vera & Trevor  
Nieuwenhuis  
Cliff, Debbie & Kip  
Nieuwenhuis  
Sharon Nieuwenhuis

**Edna Smith**  
*in honor of 100th Birthday*  
Larry & Donna Van Wieren

**Marilyn & Donald Sporn**  
*in honor of 60th Wedding  
Anniversary*  
Gary & Dawn Sporn

**James Vander Plaats**  
*in honor of Jim's Birthday*  
Lynn Veenstra

**Milo "Mike" Veenstra**  
*in honor of 90th Birthday*  
Karen & Jay Nelson  
Lynn Veenstra

**Jessie Ver Hage**  
Dic Ver Hage

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Shirley Faber  
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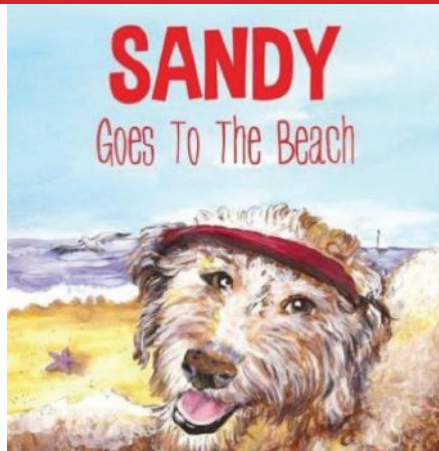
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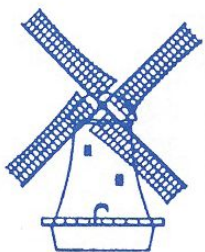
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## Fall Varsity Athletics



Evan Hopeck

### Varsity Boys Soccer

The 2021 Boys Varsity Soccer team will be remembered as one of our best in recent memory. The season included emotional and hard-fought games, opportunities to learn from mistakes, growth in sportsmanship and quality of play, and big wins under the lights supported by incredible, loyal fans. Under 2nd year head coach **Rich Troast**, the boys finished with an amazing

end of the season run, winning 5 out of the last 7 games behind **Evan Hopeck's** 11 goals and 5 assists in those games. Injuries, Covid and quarantine had sidelined much of the lineup prior to that final run which concluded with two 5-4 games in the state tournament. Even with 10 seniors graduating, the team still looks strong for next year with 7 returning players who earned starting positions or quality playing time this season.

### Varsity Girls Soccer

Through the course of injuries and a slightly below .500 season, the team's seven seniors led by example and demonstrated what it means to represent Christ on the field. They also laid the groundwork for future success, understanding that "we practice like we play and we play to win." Senior captain **Sydney Heinold** earned 2nd team All League honors at midfield and fellow captain and goalkeeper **Gabbi Angelucci** finished her career with 232 saves. Underclassmen also played key roles this season, highlighted by Freshman **Kirsten Braunius**, who led the team with 15 goals. This season allowed the team to simultaneously celebrate the work God has done in the lives of our seniors, while also creating great anticipation for what's coming next for coach **Seth Stadlander's** group.



Kirsten Braunius

*This season allowed the team to simultaneously celebrate the work God has done in the lives of our seniors, while also creating great anticipation for what's coming next...*



## Varsity Tennis

The 2021 season proved to be a high-water mark in recent history for coach **Adam Culp's** girls varsity tennis team.

Anchored by senior captain and first singles player **Christy Kim**, the ladies won 9 of their 14 team matches and finished 4th in the county. Christy posted a winning record against top players in the league and county, while **Kathy Kim** had similar success at 2nd singles including her best played match of the year, a convincing win over powerhouse Villa Walsh in the state tournament.

**Juliana Hopeck** added 8 wins at 3rd singles to round out a solid singles lineup. Highlights included a 1st doubles draw and 2nd doubles win over league champion Glen Rock.



*Gabbi Angelucci*

## Varsity Cross Country

For 35 years coach **Joel Apol** has told his teams that "sports mirror life and unfortunately both come with some hard knocks." After losing 4 of their top 6 returning runners, including **Luke Parker** to injury and **Peter Visser** to illness, this season was no exception. The varsity gradually became a mostly freshmen team but demonstrated steady improvement under the invaluable positive leadership of upperclassmen including Luke, Peter and **Matt Vander Wall**. **Alex Culp** set a new course record for a freshman and along with **David Cho** formed perhaps the best frosh duo in program history.



*Yeun Seo, Cade Sippel, Alex Culp, Minseo Cho*



*Christy Kim*

**FOR 35 YEARS COACH JOEL APOL HAS TOLD HIS TEAMS THAT "SPORTS MIRROR LIFE AND UNFORTUNATELY BOTH COME WITH SOME HARD KNOCKS."**



## FALL 2021 COUNTY AND LEAGUE RECOGNITIONS

### CROSS COUNTRY

**Alex Culp** – 2nd Team All County and All League

**David (Minseo) Cho** – Honorable Mention All County and All League

**Luke Parker** – 2nd Team All League and Honorable Mention All County

### VOLLEYBALL

**Joanna Mas** – 2nd Team All County and League

**Sadie Vander Pyl** – Honorable Mention All County

**Jennifer Braunius** – Honorable Mention All County

**Grace Ivanov** – Honorable Mention All League

### GIRLS TENNIS

**Christy Kim** – 2nd Team All County and 1st Team All League

**Juliana Hopeck** – Honorable Mention All County

**Kathy Kim** – Honorable Mention All County, 2nd Team All League

**Laurel Vander Pyl** – 1st Team All League

**Jamie Kim** – 1st Team All League

### BOYS SOCCER

**Evan Hopeck** – 2nd Team All County

**Ben Visbeen** – Honorable Mention All County

**Jack Veenema** – Honorable Mention All County

### GIRLS SOCCER

**Sydney Heinold** – Honorable Mention All County, 2nd Team All League

**Gabbi Angelucci** – Honorable Mention All County, 2nd Team All League

**Kirsten Braunius** – Honorable Mention All League



Charlotte Van Goor



Joanna Mas

## Varsity Volleyball

With only a few upperclassmen in the program, first year coach **Nicole D'Augustine** knew this would be a rebuilding season. The varsity rotation featured 4 freshmen and a sophomore who made a lot of progress and played some very competitive matches with the league's best. Senior libero **Joanna Mas** anchored the team with solid play throughout and will be missed but with many talented younger players getting involved with playing in the off-season the future looks very bright for the Eagles.

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