

JUNE 2020

chalkboard

TRAINING AND NURTURING CHILDREN FOR GODLINESS AND EXCELLENCE



Inside:
Community
amidst distance:
learning together
from afar



A GRATEFUL HEART

From Mr. Clum

As I transition from my role as Head of School, I want to share my gratitude for the privilege of serving at WCGS and also provide a charge for this community moving forward. In this season of life, my heart is full of thanks and appreciation for God's faithfulness over my years here. As our 2019-20 Year Verses say so well, "for he who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23-24). God has been incredibly faithful to me and His school.

I am reminded of Paul's thanksgiving and prayer as found in Philippians 1:3-6, where we read, "I thank my God every time I remember you." Paul talks about prayer, joy, partnership, being confident in God's good work, and carrying it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Prayer is part of our DNA at WCGS. There has been joy in partnering together in the education of your children. I am also confident that God has great plans for the future of His school. He has been central to the life-changing work that takes place here every day.

Let me encourage you to support, encourage, and pray for Jeff Brooke, as he begins his tenure as Head of School on July 1, 2020. The Lord has raised him up for such a time as this. Pray that God will show Himself afresh to Jeff and will teach him His paths. Ask the Lord to guide Jeff in truth and teach him as he places his hope in an Amazing God (Psalm 25:4-5). These are exciting days, and God loves His school. Let us all do what we can to keep this school moving forward under the direction and guidance of our Heavenly Father.

In my role as Executive Director, I look forward to my continued service to Wheaton Christian Grammar School as I continue to build and foster relationships within the school community. I am thankful for this amazing place that bears the name of Christ and strives to make Him known. Thanks for allowing me to serve you these past 46 years. May the Lord bless you and your family.



ON MISSION

From Mr. Brooke

Each morning, the hallways of our school are flooded with laughter, hellos, high fives, and an excitement for the day. Teachers kindly greet their students, administrators walk the halls, and staff are reminded of the gift of children. Five hundred students, made in the image of God, step into the school that God has placed as a central part of their day and story.

We certainly didn't realize on the morning of Friday, March 13, that our hallways would be silent for the remainder of the school year. As is the case in all of your lives, our rhythm has changed. But I have learned that the community of WCGS is not limited to the hallways on "normal" school days. The WCGS community is alive no matter where it is or what obstacles it must overcome. In this unique season of off-campus e-Learning, our community has leaned on God's goodness, even when we would all prefer the normal routine of high fives, hellos, and trying to make it to first class before the bell.



While our community would love to gather, we have rallied together despite our separation. I have found this time to be a firm reminder to how powerful the mission of WCGS truly is. As we have transitioned to a robust e-Learning plan, the central mission has continued: to educate, train, and nurture children for godliness and excellence, equipping them to engage and transform their world for Jesus Christ. Faculty, staff, and families have remained committed to placing these students before the Lord through the gift of education, to ensure they are growing closer to the One who made them, loves them, races toward them, and has a remarkable plan for their lives. The story of e-Learning has certainly included Zoom calls, online tools, a new learning management system, packet pick-ups, Flipgrid videos, and plenty of emails. But, it more significantly has included a committed group, working toward the mission placed in front of us, with the end hope that this next generation will be equipped to know Jesus and make Him known to the ends of the earth with the unique gifts and abilities with which God has blessed them. Our mission is clear; our avenue for instruction is different.

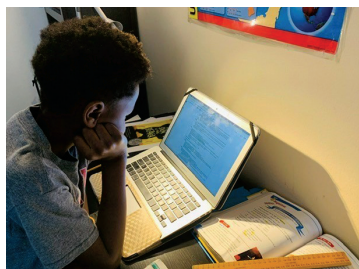
WCGS has claimed the truth found in Psalm 28:7 which states, "The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy." We will continue to run to Him for our strength, trust Him with our hearts, and rely on Him for our joy, in the moments when we are in our building or learning online. Our hallways are silent, but His work is not.

CHECK-IN



Community Amidst Distance during COVID-19

If you were to ask people what makes Wheaton Christian Grammar School the place that it is, they would mention the excellent academics, but also the community among the faculty and staff, students, and families. It was truly a sad day when we found out that our on-campus learning experience had to come to a halt in the middle of March. The familiarity of our routine and joy of being together as a school community were going to be gone immediately with no answer of when we would be able to be back together again. As our students were told the news, you could see the sadness and even some tears on their faces. We felt the sadness as a faculty and staff too as we faced a new unknown.



From that day on, technology became our students' main avenue for learning. Each school day they were greeted with messages from their teachers encouraging them and laying out the plan for the day. The administrators provided daily devotionals on our website to allow families to learn about the Bible and grow toward God together as a WCGS family, and social-emotional resources were provided by staff to help walk alongside families during this time and help students process with their parents how they feel about what is going on. *(To read more about the social-emotional work going on at WCGS, check out our Faculty Spotlight article).*



The use of online resources such as Flip Grid, FACTS Student Learning System, Zoom, and more were a way to help add to our students' educational experience. An Instagram account was made for our 5th graders to experience the process and hatching of their chicks, and a virtual Outdoor Ed experience was planned to help them experience the outdoors while staying safe at home.

Zoom meetings were a regular occurrence for all students, allowing for fun and a time to be together "face-to-face." Connect Groups for our 6th-8th graders met on a weekly basis to hang out, play games, talk about life, and stay in touch. Classes held calls to learn lessons, but always included lots of laughter as they interacted with one another.

The annual Mother's Day Tea in Kindergarten took place virtually, as children gathered with their moms in front of the computer to celebrate Mother's Day.

These are only a few of the countless examples where technology has helped our school community to learn and thrive. We are grateful for the technology we have and that our students could continue their education virtually through e-Learning during this time. It's hard to imagine what the COVID-19 situation would have looked like even 5 years ago.

Over the course of a few days, our administrative team, along with teachers and staff pulled together the resources and plans to launch an e-Learning curriculum that would not only maintain our student's knowledge but push them forward in their learning. We are always grateful for the partnership we have with our families, but during a time like this, it is more evident than ever. They have showed strength, grace, and kindness throughout this e-Learning process, and we know that this would not be possible without them.

"As we push on, let's remember that our Awesome God is faithful. The Lord reminded me of the truth from Hebrews 13:8 – 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.' He hasn't changed. He is in control. As things continually change with the COVID-19 pandemic, we can be confident and place our full trust in Jesus. He is our Rock. Let's continue to lean into Him during these unusual days for each of us."
- Steve Clum, Head of School

We plan on being back to our regular school routine come August 18 but will be preparing for different scenarios throughout the summer in case they are needed. We are eagerly looking forward to the day where we can all be back together. Until then, we will keep praying and leaning into the Lord for his strength and wisdom.

For continuous updates on the impact of COVID-19 at WCGS, please continue to check our website.



Graduate Profiles: Young Alumni Seeking Medical Professions

From Mr. Painter: We are dedicated to providing a quality education that teaches relevant skills, while integrating biblical truths in all subjects. Wheaton Christian Grammar School graduates have gone all around the world to achieve careers in numerous fields: business, education, medicine, science, technology, and so many more! In this edition of the Chalkboard, we asked a few of our recent alumni who are currently seeking careers in the medical field about their time at WCGS and how it influenced their decision to pursue a medical profession. We hope you enjoy reading about their perspectives and experiences!



“I am pursuing a career in science and medicine because I love asking questions and I love to investigate things I don’t know. My teachers at WCGS offered a supportive environment for me to be curious and to develop a love of learning more about God’s creation.”

– Ethan Klepitsch ('10) Currently at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine



“WCGS instilled in me the importance of faithful service and diligence. The examples set by those who taught me during the most formative years of my life remains with me. I would not be where I am without the guidance and love of the teachers, staff, and coaches who helped me grow.

In the most challenging seasons of life, I had teachers who went out of their way to encourage me and build me up. While others might have seen just a discouraged lonely kid, my teachers saw me as a child of God worth the effort of building up. That dedication to their work and to the lives it affected inspired me to put people at the center of my profession and shaped my decision to pursue medicine.”

– Josh Chiang ('09) Currently at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine



“My desire to enter the medical field and become a doctor started during my time at Wheaton Christian Grammar School. Although I only attended WCGS for a few years, my experiences there helped foster not only a love for math and science but also a desire to unconditionally serve and help those in need. I can still distinctly remember the amazing faculty at WCGS going above and beyond what was called of them to make sure that the students were doing well in all aspects of their lives. I can remember Mr. Burgess stopping me in the hallways or making time to have lunch with me to make sure that school was going well and that my faith was growing. I remember receiving multiple encouraging notes from Mr. Clum and his taking time out from his busy schedule to work in the gym with me on my basketball game.

As I contemplated what I wanted to do with my life, I knew that I desired to do something that emulated the selflessness and caring qualities that so many teachers and faculty demonstrated to us every day. Now as I complete my residency in Orthopedic Surgery, I attempt to put into practice the numerous qualities that WCGS helped to instill in me. I know that, without a doubt, I am where I am today because of the people who invested in me at WCGS, and I am extremely grateful for the time that I was able to spend there.”

– Josh Lee ('07) Currently in residency at Baylor Scott & White Hospital



“I am so thankful for the impact Wheaton Christian Grammar School has had in both my spiritual and academic life. The WCGS community fostered my curiosity and passions early on and certainly played a vital role in setting me up for success in my future schooling endeavors. That solid foundation has helped me immensely. There are so many people at WCGS who encouraged my love for science and my desire to make a difference in the lives of people and their pets. I am so excited to be following that dream!”

– Sidney Klepitsch ('12) Currently at University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine

Faculty Spotlight: Mandy Jasper

Wheaton Christian Grammar School has been blessed with the ability to hire a part-time school social worker to assist our students with their social-emotional needs throughout the school day. Mandy Jasper was hired for this position in the fall of 2018 and has been working through a variety of needs with our students such as emotional identification, self-regulation, self-management techniques, anxiety, depression, grief, friendship and family concerns, and conflict resolution.

The Lord first brought Mandy to WCGS as a school mom. She and her husband desired to have their daughters in a school environment where the whole child would be nurtured - mind, body, and spirit. They felt welcomed by the teachers and administration at WCGS, and their personal touches assured them their daughters would be loved and cared for.

The year before their last daughter enrolled at WCGS, Mandy started to have conversations with Mr. Clum about the potential addition of a school social worker, and eventually she was hired to enter this role.

“My heart leapt with joy for multiple reasons when I got this job: For the ability to integrate my faith into my social work practice, becoming part of a collaborative team of teachers who love their students, and thanksgiving to the Lord for opening a door for me to re-enter a field I am deeply passionate about.”

Some of you might be wondering, what is social-emotional learning and why is it so important to teach? Mandy explains:

“The term social-emotional learning (SEL) has a buzz throughout schools around the nation and is for every single student. SEL makes communities vibrant and healthy, as it teaches skills that correlate with God’s wanting us to be peacemakers and Kingdom changers. At WCGS, we have the responsibility to weave biblical truth into SEL teaching, and it is powerful to see this interplay. When students can identify emotions, problem-solve, and self-manage, they have positive interactions with self and others. This leads to healthy interactions while developing 21st century skills.”



“SEL has five key competencies: understanding and managing emotions, setting and achieving positive goals, feeling and showing empathy for others, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions. The process of these five skills are foundational for students to be able to connect to self and others in a safe, caring environment. These are skills we want our children to have for future relationships, families, and work environments.”

Currently, we are seeing a rise in anxiety and depression in our children along with other mental health concerns. SEL is not only used in times of personal or family crisis but in daily life. Mandy says that it has been powerful to see students absorb what they are learning through these lessons. They have taught children to be able to center their minds and bodies while thinking about the Lord.

“I had a kindergartner say, ‘Ahh, that felt good,’ after practicing rainbow breathing (talking about the covenant of God) and a 2nd grader said, ‘I feel brave,’ after a lesson. I’ve seen 4th graders team up and deal with conflict resolution to get out of an escape room and received emails from 8th grade parents, after doing a lesson on dealing with change, saying that they realized from that experience that their child was hesitant about leaving WCGS. They were then able to have follow-up conversations and put additional supports in their child’s life.”

Regardless of age, the benefit is ever-present, and it is exciting to see children engage in this special way at WCGS. With decades of research, the many benefits of SEL are evident, such as: increased academic achievement, improved behavior, and decreased emotional distress. God created us to be emotion filled people, and since WCGS teaches the whole child, we get to teach SEL from a biblical perspective.

We are thankful for Mandy and the many ways she assists our students. If you have questions or want further information on the SEL lessons that are being taught at WCGS, you can email Mandy at mjasper@wheatonchristian.org.



Celebrating Faculty and Staff at WCGS

Due to COVID-19, we were not able to host our annual faculty/staff appreciation dinner where we celebrate those who have served the Lord faithfully at WCGS throughout the years. Please join us in recognizing these amazing faculty and staff members at WCGS:



Jennifer Brown
LMC Director
10 years



Debbie Cairncross
Registrar
10 years



Mike Cherry
Jr. High Bible
15 years



Daniel Huttenlock,
Jr. High Language Arts
10 years



Brenda Johnson
3rd Grade
20 years



Shannon McDonald
Office Assistant
5 years



Kim Norbeck
Admissions Coordinator
15 years



Marc Painter
Principal
15 years



Vange Schock
Business Director
20 years



Lindsey Sharrar
1st Grade
10 years



Heather Van Wagner
Instructional
Aide/Educational
Therapist
20 years



Beth Wright
Administrative Asst.
Music Dept. Aide
15 years

Take a look at these
little Spartans!



Alumni News



Ethan Klepitsch (Class of 2010), married Emily Anderson on December 29, 2018, at the Compass Church in Wheaton. Ethan is currently at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine. You can read about the role of WCGS in his schooling in our Graduate Profile.

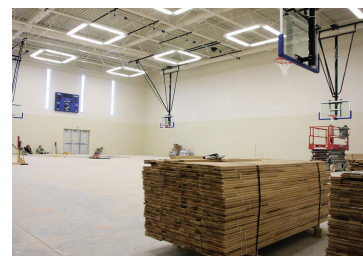
Peggy Shoe (Class of 1978) stopped by in March and was able to see our new campus and catch up with old teachers! She was in Mr. Burgess's first 5th grade class!



Have any updates you'd like us to feature or would like a WCGS onesie for your little one? Let us know! Email us at: communications@wheatonchristian.org

DO YOU REMEMBER?

In spring 2010, we were seeing the aesthetics being added to our building! Stay tuned for our summer issue where we will reflect on the past 10 years of God's faithfulness in this new building on Taylor Drive.



1N350 Taylor Drive
Winfield, Illinois 60190
www.wheatonchristian.org

Support the WCGS Scholarship Fund!

June 30, 2020 marks the end of our fiscal year, and we still need \$50,000 to reach our goal! Here are a few ways you can give to the Scholarship Fund and help families received an excellent Christ-centered education at Wheaton Christian Grammar School:

Sponsor our Golf Outing

Sadly, we couldn't be together at Cantigny on June 1, but you can still support families through the WCGS Scholarship Fund, promote your business, and get the opportunity to golf...all at the same time! Check out our Cantigny Golf voucher and scholarship packages on our website at: wheatonchristian.org/18-hole-mixed-event

Interested in the ladies 9-hole event? Check out our sponsorship and golf voucher packages at: wheatonchristian.org/womensevent



Donate to the Scholarship Fund

You can make a straight-up donation to the Scholarship Fund which equals a full tax-deduction! No vouchers or gift cards but...WCGS receives the full benefit of your donation which goes toward the \$50,000 goal. To give to the Scholarship Fund, mail in a check to 1N350 Taylor Drive, Winfield, IL 60190 or go to <https://wheatonchristian.org/support-wcgs>

For details and questions, email Joanne DeGroot at jdegroot@wheatonchristian.org

Coming Up...

Aug.
17

Back to School
Open Houses

Aug.
18

1st Day
of School

**Any edits to the 2020-2021
school calendar can be found
on our website.**

Make sure you follow us on Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter for the most up-to-date information! @WCGSWinfield

