



BRANCHES



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Grandparents' Open House... Thursday, February 9, 2017 ... 10:00 a.m. til noon

The purpose of our parental Christian School is to educate our children to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a life of responsible stewardship in God's Kingdom.

From the Chairman....

Tim Bontkes

As this is the first edition of *Branches* for 2017, I would like to start off by wishing everyone a blessed and prosperous year ahead of us! Even though the snow has melted and we have all put away our Christmas sweaters, I wanted to quickly reflect on the wonderful Christmas program the students and teachers put on for us in December. A big thank-you to all those who helped put together this energetic and heartfelt program for us to enjoy! With 226 students along with their parents, grandparents and other fans we had a full house and we couldn't help but be reminded of great blessing we have been provided in our school and its continued support from the parents and community.

So much for global warming...

It has been a number of years since we have had a white Christmas and accumulations of snow and sub-zero days in the Lower Mainland. With snow and ice covered roads we can be thankful that for the most part we were spared from any major injury or incident. A special thank you to all those who helped transporting the students to school in a safe manner.

Planning Ahead...

One of our first priorities for the Board and administration within a new year is to start organizing the teaching requirements for the following school year and how to best balance our teaching needs within our budget restraints at the same time. Large class sizes and double grades continue to provide challenges for us as we balance the teaching needs

for our students while at the same time managing our budget and tuition affordability.

Cooperation...

In my short experience as Board Chair I have been amazed at the level of cooperation we have been able to enjoy for our Covenant schools across the Fraser Valley. I have been involved or witnessed the cooperation between our principals, Board members, committee members, teachers and parents as it relates to many aspects surrounding the education of our children and we have much to be thankful for. Please continue to pray for us as we move forward in cooperation and collaboration on items such as Special Education, curriculum development, professional development for our teaching staff, policy development, valley wide strategic planning and many other common initiatives. One great example of this successful cooperation is in the development of the Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy. After much research and deliberation between our 4 Fraser Valley Boards this Ministry mandated policy was adopted. A special thanks to Harry Moes for coordinating the work on this!

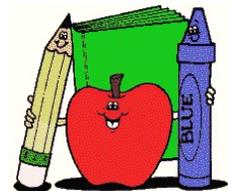
The items mentioned herein are just a few of many activities being worked on by the Board, administration, staff or volunteers at CCES. As Board we ask that you continue to pray for us in all our tasks we are involved in and that it may all be done to God's glory!



GRANDPARENTS' OPEN HOUSE

Where: Credo Christian Elementary School

When: Thursday, February 9, 2017 10:00 a.m. -noon



Please come any time after 10 and stay as long as you like. There will be a café in the gym which you can visit throughout the morning for coffee and treats. Visit the classrooms during the morning and interact with your grandchildren

From the Principal....

Otto Bouwman

Welcome to the New Year! We praise God that he providentially provides for each of us as we transition from one month to the next, from one year to the next, from one grade to the next, from one American president to the next..... What a joy to live with the assurance that this is our Father's world!

School Life

At the beginning of this calendar year, a new reality emerged in the third grade classroom: Mrs. Deb Minderhoud began teaching those students in the library, thus taking a substantial amount of the pressure off our regular teacher Mr. Stephen Chase. Twenty nine students in one third-grade classroom form a large group, and all could agree that it was difficult to optimally meet the needs of each of those students. The teachers are grateful to work in an environment in which the board and supporting community appreciates the responsibilities and challenges associated with teaching. Thank you so much. We're thankful for Deb's smooth transition into the library classroom.

With gratitude I can pass on that the teachers continue to do their work with pleasure. To mention just a few particular that should receive deliberate attention:

- One of our Kindergarten teachers has just completed her Master's studies, and graduated from Vancouver Island University this past week. Congratulations, Jennifer!
- Our joint teaching team in Grade 1 is working out well, and the students in their care are clearly developing their skills.
- Though at times Mr. James Kanis seems slightly distracted, his smile and light-heartedness more than makes up for it..... he is looking forward to becoming a married man during our spring break. Congratulations, James and Breanne!

Our recent awareness/fund-raiser for Hope for Women was a good experience for us. I'm delighted to share that we raised \$2222 for this worthwhile cause. Thank you to all who made this a successful experience! I was particularly impressed when I learned that a few students had decided to turn this fundraiser into a personal challenge: they started phoning some of their father's business contacts. After just 8 phone calls, they had collected \$750 for this worthwhile cause! That's what inspirational leadership looks like!

During the past few weeks, student and teacher absenteeism has been particularly high, as many have

succumbed to seasonal illnesses. We are thankful for the good health most of us enjoy, and trust that God will care for us also during those days when we are not well. Thank you for informing the school in a timely fashion when your child is unable to be in attendance.

Other Matters

A parent recently brought to my attention disturbing news about *Highlights*, a nationally recognized magazine for children. Apparently, it has decided to include same-sex families in their magazines. *Highlights* seems to be deliberately joining the anti-Christian cultural transition that is happening in our time. I pass this on to parents to encourage you to be discerning as you deliberately determine which influencing agents you invite into your living rooms.

In that connection, though there is much good material out there that could be recommended, one excellent resource - especially for young families - is a Bible story book for young children. It's called *Teach Them Your Way, O LORD*, and was written by Amanda DeBoer. The book has been favorably reviewed in both *Clarion* and *Reformed Perspective*, and can be purchased from Jane Deglint at Anchor Book Centre (604-530-8137). The book summary states that:

As parents, we pray that God will work in our children's hearts and teach them His way. We also have an amazing privilege to share God's Word with our little ones. These stories are meant to assist you in teaching your child God's Word. Even children as young as two will understand something about their God. And so these Bible stories can be used to that effect. The book is written specifically for children aged 2 to 4, but can be enjoyed by older siblings as well. The stories are respectful, yet in a child's language. The illustrations are life-like and augment the Bible story. Key words are defined. Important concepts are repeated over a number of stories. These stories are also interactive. The interaction is in the form of questions and a few simple activities that can be done at the kitchen table. This is meant to keep the child's attention. May the LORD use these stories to glorify His Name and teach them His way.

I recommend the book as an excellent resource for young families.

Signing Off

I am deliberately keeping this report brief, as I am also including another article about Special Education in this publication. Thank you for your continued support as we move forward. May God continue to bless Credo Christian Elementary School.

Special Education

Otto Bouwman

The "Special Education" topic has been a prominent one that I have encountered during the past few months in my principals' roles. In what follows I'd like to share a few thoughts related to this topic.

In the first place, it's good to acknowledge that each child in our school is a gift from God. God has created each of us uniquely - as his special child. Each individual has his/her own gifts and each one is a recipient of God's magnificent promises. Each individual here is not only an image-bearer of our Creator, but is also a recipient of his wonderful promises. God did not make a mistake in the way that he created each of us, even though, to lesser or greater degrees some bodies and / or our minds particularly display limitations. Though it's true that in this broken world many people have difficult burdens to carry, it's also true that the burdens are not outside of our Father's control. We confess that all aspects of our lives and the lives of our children are within our Father's design and providential care. May God give us the desire to demonstrate and cultivate contentment in every way.

It's good in a covenantal context to acknowledge that we do well to be a hand and a foot to each other. Scripture passages such as Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 exhort us, as a church community, to work together for the good of the whole body. Of course, a school community is not identical to a church. Nonetheless, working with the principle of being a hand and a foot to each other seems to be appropriate; this has been a foundational principle in many of our Canadian Reformed schools for the past several decades. One consequence of this is that in our schools, we work together, pooling our resources so that all the needs of each of our children can be met. As a matter of fact, that notion even inspired cooperation between school societies.

Another truth we need to be aware of is that special needs can be a very complex challenge - in several ways. First of all, at the individual level, it can be difficult for a parent, pediatrician, speech/language pathologist, classroom teacher, occupational therapist, educational psychologist, hearing specialist, and special education coordinator to all see the same thing and agree on what exactly the needs of an individual

really are. Situations can be complicated and different parties may place slightly different emphases on different data. Secondly, on a broader level, the amazing spectrum of special needs continues to become broader and broader; some challenges are in the (physically) developmental category, others physical, others academic, others behavioral, others emotional, and at times a curious combination of some or all of the above.

We can be grateful we live in an era in which there is increasing awareness of and sensitivity to many such special needs. Years ago, if someone's challenges were not physically evident, there may have been some reluctance to acknowledge that the challenges were real. Today that is different; thankfully there is a much greater willingness to acknowledge to what extent, for example, anxiety can impact a person's ability to function. Specialists understand much better today than previously how the brain develops and functions, and what happens when challenges related to conditions like Down syndrome, Tourette syndrome, autism, fetal alcohol syndrome are real for a child. Though better understanding helps everyone, that doesn't result in the challenges being solved. Rather, it does often result in helping the student (and parents / teacher) develop coping strategies that enable them to function in a better way than they otherwise would.

Special education can be financially costly. Though some kinds of professional testing might cost "only" \$400, it is not unusual for some kinds of tests to cost in the thousands of dollars. Voices might be out there that suggest testing services can be obtained freely; unfortunately, free services are the ones where waiting lists are often years long. And it is not just the testing services that cost money: clinicians and therapists earn their livelihood providing professional services, and consequently they too can charge substantial fees. When the professional needs to interact regularly with a student, the fees can become quite substantial in a hurry. Thankfully, occasionally parents can receive some reimbursement through an extended health care plan. It's not a big surprise that currently the Ministry provides almost \$18K per annum for each student who has been formally identified as a special needs student; these funds help the school in the provision of special education services.

There is widespread agreement that everyone can benefit when students with special needs receive as much assistance as possible in regular classrooms. It is good to foster a sense of belonging and a culture of acceptance for all students. Given good levels of deliberate support in the classroom, students with special needs can often experience commendable levels of growth in the classroom context. Furthermore, classes which have gone through the system with special needs students in their midst frequently display heightened levels of empathy for those with special needs in the community.

In order for children with special needs to receive the necessary assistance which enables them to develop and cope optimally, numerous realities should be evident.

- The student needs to feel immersed in a culture of acceptance; in the school setting there will be advocates who encourage genuine understanding of the needs of the students who have these challenges.
- There needs to be transparency by all parties. We cannot hide the reality that some children have genuine challenges; their peers figured it out a long time ago. Attempts to not acknowledge such challenges will do little to help our children.
- The family needs to demonstrate "ownership" of the challenges being faced by their family member. Such ownership might be demonstrated by accepting some of the financial consequences of testing and service provision, or by providing vigorous levels of home support and reinforcement.
- The school needs to be able to come alongside the

family and work closely with the parents. This requires collaboration and open dialogue.

- There needs to be acknowledgement that working with special needs students can be draining and frustrating. It can also be very rewarding. Either way, it's often difficult work, and everyone involved needs to provide mutual encouragement and support to other participants.
- Clear, measurable, and achievable goals should be established, which have been custom-designed (typically with the input of knowledgeable professionals), and referenced regularly as the student goes through his / her educational program.

For many years already, there seems to have been an implicit acknowledgement that there is a certain efficiency in pooling resources; perhaps that was one of the reasons for the acknowledgement in the "Special Education Agreement" between CCES and William of Orange that "occasions may arise where the complex needs of a child(ren) require the expertise or care and instruction not available at the local school." Consequently, a special education program was formally established at CCES, and many students and families have benefited from that arrangement. It is good to acknowledge the commendable leadership that Deborah Huttema has provided in recent years, and the wonderful Special Education staff that works with her.

May the Lord continue to bless efforts in our community to help our brothers and sisters with special needs also optimally develop the gifts they have been given.

<i>Calendar Update</i>			
January	30	Book week begins	
February	6	Opening Assembly	8:45 CCES gym
	9	Grandparents' Day	
	10	Pro-D Day	no classes
March	13	Family Day	no classes
	6	Opening Assembly	8:45 CCES gym
	7	Report Cards	
	9 & 10	Student-Led Conferences	
	13-24	March Break	no classes
	27	School reopens	

Short Reports of Board Meetings

Short Report of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors of
Credo Christian Elementary School
November 14th, 2016

- **Opening and Welcome:** The Chairman, Chris Hoff, opened the meeting by reading from Philippians 2 and prayer. He welcomed all the Directors, Directors-elect and Principal Otto Bouwman to the meeting.
- **Agenda Approval:** The agenda for the regular board meeting was approved.
- **Minutes and Short Report:** The Minutes and Short Report of the October 5, 2016 Board meeting were adopted. The Minutes of the October 26, 2016 Membership Meeting were approved for publication.
- **Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence:** One incoming letter was received from the CCRTC. One incoming letter was received by a member regarding cancelation of membership. Two outgoing letters were sent to members thanking them for services executed for the Board.
- **Principal's Report:** Otto Bouwman presented the Principal's Report for November 2016 and provided updates on policy development surrounding educational resources and drinking water. Approval was given to advertise for a teacher to help out in the grade 3 classroom. A new Credo letterhead was shared with the Board and approved for use.
- **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's report for November 2016 was received for information. Chris Hoff reported on his activities as chairman. Chris provided encouragement for the future board and provided advice on program delivery planning.
- **Maintenance Committee:** Dave Vandeburgt and James Vandeburgt were appointed to the committee to replace outgoing members Brad VanOene and Tim Bontkes.
- **Board Assignments:** After being given opportunity to speak, the departing Directors left the meeting. Otto Bouwman offered a prayer of blessing on the upcoming board year. Following due process, the following roles and functions were assigned to

Board Directors:

- Chair - Tim Bontkes
 - Vice-Chair - Ron Scheper
 - Treasurer - Oliver Hansma
 - Secretary - Will VanOene
 - Education Committee - Bob Huttema
 - Finance Committee - Oliver Hansma & Will VanOene
 - Membership Committee - Neil Dykstra
 - IT Committee - Tim Rook
 - Special Education Committee - Erica Feunekes
 - Credo Christian High School representative - Erica Feunekes
 - Maintenance Committee - Ron Scheper
 - CCSTA Representative - Tim Rook
 - Board-Staff Relations Liaison - Erica Feunekes
- The Governor Letter of Commitment was signed by incoming Board Directors Tim Bontkes, Erica Feunekes and Ron Scheper.

- **General Business:** A number of matters were discussed including the SCSBC Conference, the October membership meeting, and registration of the Constitution and Bylaw revisions. Plans for execution of the 5-year maintenance plan were discussed. An update was provided on the Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy being developed with the other schools.
- **Membership Committee:** Membership Committee minutes were submitted and reviewed. Karin Louwerse and Ryan Sikma were appointed to the committee to replace outgoing members Mary-Anne VanderHorst and Deanna VanDyke.
- **Education Committee:** Bob Huttema provided a positive report on a school visit done during the month of October.
- **Finance Committee:** The income statement for October 31, 2016 was submitted and reviewed. The financial statements were passed on to W. VanOene for the archive. It was noted that Angela deBoer and Deanna VanDyke were appointed as reviewers and discovered no concerns.
- **Next Meetings / Events:** The next regular Board meeting is planned for December 12, 2016.
- **Closing:** Oliver Hansma offered a prayer of thanksgiving. Tim Bontkes closed the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Short Report of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors of
Credo Christian Elementary School
December 12th, 2016

- **Opening and Welcome:** The Chairman, Tim Bontkes welcomed all the Directors and Principal Otto Bouwman to the meeting. There was no official opening, as this meeting was preceded by the Legal Authority Meeting. Neil Dykstra, Erica Feunekes and Tim Rook were absent with notification.
- **Agenda Approval:** The agenda for the regular board meeting was approved.
- **Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence:** One incoming letter was received from WO regarding Special Education. One incoming email was received from JCS regarding strategic planning.
- **Principal's Report:** Otto Bouwman presented the Principal's Report for December 2016 and provided updates on program delivery for 2017/18, special education and substitute teachers. Deb Minderhoud has been hired to assist in the Grade 3 classroom. A new Harassment and Bullying Prevention policy was approved.
- **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman's report for December 2016 was received for information. Tim Bontkes reported on his activities as chairman. Tim provided updates on recent RCDC and CCC meetings.
- **General Business:** A number of matters were discussed including a proposal from JCS to convene a committee to discuss joint strategic planning, and a request from WO to begin discussions on a new Special Education agreement. The recently approved Constitution and Bylaws have been registered with the Registrar and the Society has officially transitioned under the new Societies Act.
- **Membership Committee:** Ron Scheper provided an update on the activities of the Membership Committee, and will be filling in for Neil Dykstra during his absence.
- **Finance Committee:** The income statement for November 30, 2016 was submitted and reviewed. Oliver Hansma reported on the activities of the Finance Committee and presented a draft pledge form for the five year plan.
- **Maintenance Committee:** Ron Scheper provided updates on the activities of the Maintenance Committee and outlined initial plans for the delivery of the five year plan.
- **Special Education Committee:** Special Education Committee minutes were submitted and reviewed. Otto Bouwman provided updates on the activities of the Special Education Committee and clarified WO's intent to work towards a new Special Education Agreement.
- **Next Meetings / Events:** The next regular Board meeting is planned for January 9, 2017
- **Closing:** Ron Scheper offered a prayer of thanksgiving. Tim Bontkes closed the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Kindergarten Registration

Registration for the 2017-2018 CCES Kindergarten class is now underway.



If your child will be 5 years of age before Dec. 31, 2017 and you wish to enroll at Credo Christian Elementary School for September 2017, please complete the CCES Registration Form. (Please contact the school if you have not received a copy). Please note that we require a copy of your child's birth certificate and a copy of your driver's license as proof of your BC residency. You are welcome to drop by the school to have these copies made. Please return the completed form and document copies to the school by Feb. 15, 2017. If you anticipate not enrolling your child, please let us know by phone ((604) 530-1131) or email (cces@telus.net).

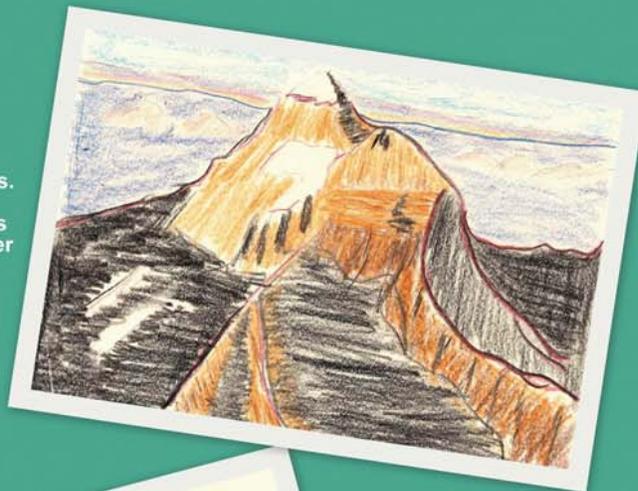
Reflections on Psalm 104

Grade 4



Oh Lord, I see your greatness when I eat very good food in the lodge at HomeWood and when I'm wrapped in a sleeping bag in a cabin. I'm very thankful that you made people: people to build places and people to make activities and have camping places. Oh Lord, I see your greatness when I see the birds flying in the air and the shows you put on with people at night on rocks by the lakes. I see that you made a camp with cabins and different sports to do. Praise the LORD oh my soul; praise the LORD.
Hannah

Oh Lord, I see your greatness when I feel the moist air on the tippy top of the mountains. I see the white snow and the wonderful colours of the sun and great power of you, oh Lord.
Pedro



Oh Lord, I see your greatness when I play pond hockey. I see your greatness in the ice and I see my breath and I see your power in the snow that is falling and I smell the sweet creamy hot chocolate. The minds you put into man to make skates, helmets, pucks, sticks and nets.
Jaxon



Oh Lord, I see your greatness when I look and see a red Cardinal on a snowy pine branch. I feel the smooth and slippery skin of a Frog jumping over a pond. I hear the humming of a Rufous Hummingbird; you feed it every day. I smell the nature around me. I feel the fresh air. I see the great Red Fox in the wild. I hear the mighty roar of a Lion and it reminds me of your might. I see the colours of a Wood Duck and it reminds me of your beauty.
Jacob



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Board of Directors

Mr. Tim Bontkes (2019)	Chairman
Mr. Ron Scheper (2019)	Vice Chair/Maint.
Mr. Bob Huttema (2017)	Ed. Com
Mr. Will VanOene (2019)	Secretary/Finance
Mr. Oliver Hansma (2018)	Treasurer
Mr. Neil Dykstra (2017)	Development
Mrs. Erica Feunekes (2019)	CCHS/SpEd
Mr. Tim Rook (2017)	CCSTA/IT

Education Committee

Mr. Bob Huttema	Mr. Mindert Deboer
Mrs. Mandy Dewit	Mr. Ivan Scheper
Mrs. Wenda Sikma	Mrs. Melissa VanPopta
Mr. Otto Bouwman	Mrs. Jennifer Onderwater

Membership Committee

Mr. Neil Dykstra	Mr. Bryce Graham
Mrs. Karin Louwerse	Mr. Ryan Sikma
Mrs. Shelley Sikma	

Special Education Committee

Mrs. Erica Feunekes	Mrs. Deborah Huttema
	Mr. Otto Bouwman

Finance Committee

Mr. Oliver Hansma	Mr. Will VanOene
	Mrs. Elma Kuntz

Maintenance Committee

Mr. Ron Scheper	Mr. Rob Bisschop
Mr. Darryl Hofsink	Mr. Kevin Leyenhorst
Mr. Dave Vandeburgt	Mr. James Vandeburgt
Mr. Dan Warkentin	

Staff

Mr. Otto Bouwman	Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Onderwater	VP, Kindergarten B
Ms. Leslie Scholtens	Kindergarten A
Mrs. Mary MacDougal	Grade 1A
Mrs. Alyson Winkelaar	Grade 1B
Mr. Mark Hoogerdijk	Grade 2
Mr. Stephen Chase	Grade 3
Miss Amy Vanderhoek	Grade 4
Mrs. Linda VanSpronsen	Grade 5
Mrs. Natasja VanRhee	Grade 5
Mr. James Kanis	Grade 6A
Mr. Jerry Scholtens	Grade 6B
Miss Diana Nobel	Grade 7A
Miss Jenn Harink	Grade 7B
Mrs. Deborah Huttema	SpEd, LA
Mrs. Yvonne Jacobi	Music 4,5
Mrs. Tamara Jansen	Music 6,7
Mrs. Sarah Beintema	Educational Ass't
Mrs. Wilma Deleeuw	Educational Ass't
Miss Katelyn Mostert	Educational Ass't
Mrs. Jacqueline Spoor	Educational Ass't
Miss Freda Struik	Educational Ass't
Mrs. Lisa Vandervan	Educational Ass't
Mrs. Elma Kuntz	Office Administrator

Credo Aid

Mrs. Jen Sikma	Mrs. Leona Huttema
Mrs. Renee Leffers	Mrs. Audrey Leyenhorst
Mrs. Kait Scheper	Mrs. Ang VanSpronsen

Fee Structure 2016-2017

Membership	125.00	Kindergarten	305.00
Elem. (1-3)	515.00	Elem (4-7)	535.00
Junior High	680.00	Senior High	730.00