

# Grand Haven Christian Middle School

## News Brief

### February 26

#### **Middle School Chapels**

Each Wednesday, the Middle School meets in the music room for chapel led by a teacher, a pastor, or a guest speaker. Three weeks ago, Wendy, the youth leader from CLC, challenged us with the question, “Do you believe in God? Do you believe God?” She passed around a bag with several small holes cut in it. One student looked in one hole and other students looked in different holes. They saw completely different things, yet no one could tell what was in the bag. She told us a story about her own faith journey and described a moment when she had to decide if she really did believe in God’s promises. It was a moment when her faith was no longer her parent’s faith, but her own. Her story inspired us to believe that God has a plan for our lives, even when we don’t understand how it is all working together. Just like her bag example, we see only a small part, but God knows the whole.

The next week, we heard Pastor Grier from WMCHS and Pastor Koetje from 2<sup>nd</sup> CRC speak about Black History Month. Pastor Grier told us to think of it as *Our History Month*. He shared some stories about his own upbringing in Arkansas during the time of the civil rights movement. Then he introduced a third grade guest he brought along, a member of his church, who powerfully recited the entire “I Have a Dream” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was a moment we won’t forget.

Chapels are an important part of our week, as Mr. Annema shared in last week’s chapel. In fact, he said that chapel time is his *favorite* part of the week. If you have a message to share, or an inspiring speaker for us to know about, please contact a middle school teacher or student with your idea. Our goal is to continue to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our God.

#### **Book Buddies**

The seventh graders paired up with Mrs. Groenendyk’s second graders as book buddies earlier this year. Twice, we visited her classroom to listen to her students read. We also took turns watching each other’s classroom plays. When we learned that the second graders were studying fables, we decided to combine that with our study of drama and folklore by turning fables into short plays for them to perform. The writing was a success, and now small groups of seventh graders are directing small groups of second graders as they rehearse these plays in reader’s theatre form. Both second grade classes are involved. We hope to perform these plays next week in Mrs. Groenendyk’s room.

#### **Spelling Bee**

On Thursday night, February 25 at 7:40 p.m., the Grand Haven Christian Final Spelling Bee will take place. Students from grades five through eight recently participated in classroom spelling bees to win a place in the school wide competition. Congratulations to the following students for winning their classroom spelling bee:

Fifth Grade: Matthew Anderson, Ian DeGram, Molly Poel,

Sixth Grade: Abigail Billett, Ella DeWyn, Samuel Goorman

Seventh Grade: Abbie Alfree, Jeremy Christianson, Christa Houskamp

Eighth Grade: Ariana Brondyke, Lindsey Dick, Lorelle Hallenbeck, Sara Katje

#### **Student Advisory Committee (SAC)**

All 8<sup>th</sup> graders serve one quarter on SAC planning a service project, middle school birthday celebrations, spirit days, an after-school event for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade, and a chapel. This quarter the group is made up of Erin Sawyer, Sarah Sumroo, Jamie Poel, Catherine Puisis, Max Ingersoll, and Andrew Vriesman. They have decorated lockers for birthdays, delivered birthday cards to teachers and staff,

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and hosted "Beach Day." Currently they are running a "Penny War" between the homeroom classes. All money raised will go the memorial fund for Steve LeVeck, who passed away a week ago from cancer. Steve's son, Ethan, graduated from GHC last year and is currently a freshmen at WMC. All pennies and bills (green money) count as positive and all silver coins can be used to "bomb" other homerooms. The committee is in the process of planning their chapel for March 24 as well as a middle school social event.

#### **Mayan Day**

On Monday, February 15 the 6<sup>th</sup> graders had the opportunity to spend an afternoon as an Ancient American. They spent the day as Mayans and learned how to write stories using pictures, play games from the culture, build masks, make jewelry, and work with the number system. We even had the opportunity to taste a little bit of their food during lunch. Thank you to all the parents who gave of their time and resources to make this happen.

#### **Sledding**

Last Monday the SAC group sponsored a sledding party at Pigeon Creek. Seventeen middle school students enjoyed a perfect night of sledding. The hill was hard packed snow but a light snow was falling throughout the night. The lodge was open so we could warm up if we got too cold.

The night began with the students trying to go as far and as fast as they could down the hill. After many races the students tried to connect sleds and go down as a train. The train idea did not work so well so we tried linking arms to go side by side. This method worked somewhat better, but there was chaos as we went down the hill.

By the end of the night we mastered piling many people onto a couple of inner tubes. We were able to get thirteen students all moving down the hill as one. It was a great ride for all involved and a good mix of kids from all the middle school classes.

#### **WMC Visiting Day**

On Tuesday, February 23, our 8<sup>th</sup> grade class went to visit WMC for the morning. The students were picked up by bus at 8:00 and spent the morning shadowing freshmen and sophomores as they attended classes. Our students were able to attend chapel led by Mr. Doty, principal of WMC. His message was based on Psalm 137. The students were provided a good lunch by WMC and then returned to our school about one o'clock.

The students enjoyed seeing what a high school class was like. They also enjoyed seeing friends who were former GHC students. Some students noted that the seventy minute classes seemed long, but it was o.k. because there are only five class each day.

Overall this was a good experience, thanks to Kyle Kempster who helped set up this trip. Thank you to the students at WMC for being such good hosts and hostesses.

#### **Open House**

We enjoyed the Open House last night (Thursday). Lots of student work was on display such as the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Battle projects, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Puppet projects, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Cross displays as well as history and social studies displays. The new Science curriculum was also displayed.

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#### **Next Year**

As always, the staff is planning ahead for the next school year. We are looking to improve the methods and tools students use to keep track of their assignments and upcoming events. A couple of the options being considered are a “monthly calendar” for test/quizzes/projects and a small spiral notebook for keeping track of daily assignments.

#### **Academic Camps for Excellence**

“Calvin College offers summer camp opportunities for children and teens who enjoy academic challenges. Taught by talented professors who are experienced in their fields, these camps will get your son or daughter excited about science, math computers or writing in a whole new way. “ This is a quote from a brochure the Middle School staff recently received and we wanted to pass the information on to you. “If your child loves learning and is challenged by complexity, he or she will benefit from the individual attention given in ACE summer camps.” Go to [www.calvin.edu/admin/pre-college/camps/ace/](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/pre-college/camps/ace/) for more information and registration.