



# Torchlight

Fall/Winter 2020

*Sunnyside Christian School*

Providing a Christ-centered, Bible-based, quality education for distinctly Christian living.

## GOD IS IN CONTROL



Dedication! Love for students! A willingness to do whatever it takes! This is what comes to mind as I think about the work that has been done over the last nine months by the staff of Sunnyside Christian School.

When school was mandated to close in March, many of us thought we would be closed for a month or so; we never envisioned that it would be for the rest of the school year and that it would significantly change the way we are teaching this year. However, the teachers were willing to sit down and figure out exactly what needed to be done. They created packets, drove throughout the lower valley from Prosser to Zillah to deliver material, and learned how to implement different online learning platforms to engage our students.

As it became apparent the many unknowns would continue for the 2020-2021 school year, the staff willingly agreed to invest part of their summer in professional development to learn more about distance learning, especially best practices. Many sat on committees that created plans for the return to school. One teacher said, "We will do whatever we need to do to ensure that we can meet in person."

Semester One has been full of changes, doing things we have never done before. Some teachers have moved classrooms; a schedule in the junior high and high school was created where teachers move each period and students remain in the same classroom; classrooms were rearranged to follow social distancing guidelines; teachers and students were required to health screen and wear masks all day long; sports and other special activities were canceled. Through all of these adjustments, there were few complaints but instead incredible excitement from both teachers and students to return to in-person school.

This school year has truly been one of working together to ensure that we will continue to provide a Christ-centered, Bible-based education in which the quality of teaching reflects a commitment to Christ.

We do not know what the future holds or how the rest of the school year will unfold. Will we be able to stay open? Will our students and staff remain healthy in school? We do not know those answers. We certainly never know the future. It is easy to become discouraged during all of this and want to give up. However, we need to always remember that God is in control, and we have nothing to fear.

Isaiah 41:10 says, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Please join me in praying for wisdom, discernment, and God's strength as we continue through the unknowns. Also pray for God's protection for students and staff so that we can continue with in-person instruction.

Blessings,

Brad Van Beek  
Administrator



# SCS STAFF NEWS

## WELCOME!

*20 Years of  
Dedication to Teaching & Serving*



**H**ello! My name is Katie Dykstra, and it has been a joy getting to join the SCS staff this year! I grew up in Sumas, Washington, and attended Nooksack Valley School District from Kindergarten to 12th grade. After graduation I went straight to Central Washington University to pursue my degree in Elementary Education. I have always loved working with children and helping others to learn, so teaching seemed like the best career path for me! I was supposed to graduate from CWU last spring, but COVID delayed this process. I have been blessed with the opportunity to teach at SCS in first grade while also completing my last graduation requirements. My degree should be in the mail any day, and I am now working towards completing my teacher certification process. Outside of school I love spending time with my family and friends especially in the outdoors! Volleyball, paddle boarding, and camping are some of my favorite activities! I have made the Yakima Valley my new home and am so grateful to work with these amazing students and educators every day!



**A**lmost 22 years ago, a relatively young man walked on to the Sunnyside Christian Elementary School campus to become the new administrator at Sunnyside Christian School. Previously, Mr. Del Dykstra had been working at Sanborn Christian School in northwest Iowa, but decided to relocate halfway across the United States to the Yakima Valley. Over the past two decades Mr. Dykstra has served as the SCS Superintendent for 17 years, commuted to a position at an Oregon school for two years, and then rejoined the SCS staff to teach the past three years as a P.E. instructor and reading specialist. A number of characteristics and actions displayed by Mr. Dykstra are his deep passion for conversation and care with/for the students, especially knowing each student by name, his willingness to lend a hand wherever needed, his vibrant work ethic to ensure all tasks are completed thoroughly, and his ability to encourage whenever possible. We thank you, Mr. Dykstra, for your years of service to SCS and, more importantly, to our Lord. May God bless you as you continue teaching His children in the future.

*35 Years of Dedication to Teaching & Serving*



**F**or the past 35 years, SCS has been blessed to have Mr. Tim De Groot on staff as the 6th grade teacher! Mr. De Groot and his wife, Julie, moved to Sunnyside during the summer of 1986. Hundreds of students, including his own three children, have benefitted from his teaching, his dedication, and his Christian faith. He has taught under five building principals, alongside dozens of teachers, and in three different classrooms, including his current teaching post in the elementary gym! Mr. De Groot invests many hours in crafting lessons that are both interesting and relevant. Sixth graders are introduced to medieval history and create castles that the whole school enjoys viewing. Ben Hur and Aviation are a couple of other memorable units of study in sixth grade. Mr. De Groot also spends one class period each day with the eighth graders to share his love of history with them. He is a great storyteller, and his students enjoy the stories he shares, particularly the stories from the time he spent in Africa with his family during his growing up years. Many of those stories have also blessed the students, staff, and visitors at all-school chapels. In addition to speaking at chapel, Mr. De Groot has helped with leading singing, and he has even shared his harmonica skills on occasion! Mr. De Groot has served SCS in many other capacities. For several years he coached soccer. He was also a bus driver for many years. He has served on the Building and Grounds Committee, helped out at the Thrift Store's e-cycling program, and welcomed many new teachers with offers of help as they rolled into Sunnyside on a hot summer day, just as he did 35 years ago! Thank you, Mr. De Groot, for 35 years of service and dedication to your students, the SCS family, and, above all, to God! As you continue in your work, may "the rest of the story" be a blessing to you and to those you serve!



## Kinder Bear Hunt.....



This year our Kindergarten class is taught by Ms. Lauren Johnson and Mrs. Ruth Van Beek. Our Kindergarten students now attend SCS five days a week, which has given us the opportunity to expand our learning adventures and time together. We are working hard on our math and reading skills every day. Some of our special activities have included an Alphabet

Bootcamp, Alphabet Fashion Show, Apple Extravaganza, Bear Day, and a 50th Day Celebration that included hula hooping and root beer floats! Recently, Mrs. Van Beek has been teaching Spanish to our class. What a delight to hear our students greeting each other, counting and singing in Spanish. It's been a wonderful year so far in Camp Kindergarten!

## WELCOME NEW SCS FAMILIES



We want to extend a warm welcome to all of our new families at SCS this school year. We are so excited to be back at school and meeting in-person. The staff and students are also excited to welcome new members to our school community. God has abundantly blessed us with his grace and mercy.

## The Promise Tree



On Wednesday, October 7, the elementary and junior high students participated in a special tree planting ceremony and chapel. Pastor Joel Sheeres, from the Sunnyside CRC shared a short message. He called the new tree "The Promise Tree" and explained that whenever we look at the tree, we remember God's promises to us. After he finished, one student from each class tossed a shovel of dirt in the hole where the tree was planted. The donation of the tree is in honor/memory of Esther Van Belle.

## Memorials

*We gratefully acknowledge these memorial gifts. Thank you to all who remembered loved ones this way.*

**Dave Van Dyke, Sr.**

**Herman te Velde**

**Lela Omta**

**Nick Arreola**

**Esther Van Belle**

**Pauline Newhouse**

**Linda Van Klompenberg**

**Doris Folkerts**

**Annie Grimmus**



## High School Chapel

High school chapel is a weekly long-standing SCS tradition - a short break from routine studying to focus on God. This tradition came full-circle this year when alumnus Katie Westenberg (c/o '98) joined us to impart wisdom on us all. (For more from Katie, check out her recent book, *I Choose Brave: Embracing Holy Courage and Understanding Godly Fear*).

Katie began by pointing out that she remembers being a high school student sitting on the elementary bleachers during chapels. She never anticipated being the speaker of such an event years later. What a unique experience to have an SCS graduate return to speak to current SCS students.

Katie recalled that when she was about our student's age, caramel apple suckers and pumped up sneakers were trendy. She pointed out the presence of these sorts of trends within the Christian specter too – Precious Moments Bibles and WWJD bracelets. With changing trends all around, she reminded our students that God is not a trend. He is timeless and on top of that, timely.

God is the same yesterday, today and forever! The same God of Abraham is the God over us and He hasn't changed. He also is timely in that He spends centuries building up to important events. For example, prophets announced a Savior long before the donkey journeyed into Bethlehem. She concluded her talk by pointing out that Esther was placed where she was "for such a time as this." So if all this is true – if He is timeless and timely - which we believe it is, then she challenged us all to consider what our purpose is in being born at this place and time. She encouraged us all to examine what God has planned for us and how we can be used for His kingdom in our spheres.

We are grateful to those who enter our doors to invest in our student body. Having Katie, in particular, come to challenge us was a special experience because it demonstrates how His faithfulness and wisdom passes on from one generation to the next.

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### **SCS Thrift Store**

The SCS Thrift Store employees enthusiastically thank all who have generously given donations over the past year! We also thank all our volunteers and customers who make operating the SCS Thrift Store possible.

May God bless you all!!!

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### **B O O S T E R CLUB**

*We are hopeful to have  
our 41st annual  
Booster Auction on  
Saturday, April 24, 2021!  
Keep an eye out for more  
details in the near  
future through the SCS  
newsletter and mailings!*



## Sunnyside Christian Childcare Center

### “Run Now, Gobble Later”



Sunnyside Christian Childcare Center’s 3rd Annual 5K Turkey Trot was a virtual event this year! Our unique flock included over 150 people in 27 states. Virtual racers were able to run their race when convenient for them during the days of November 26 to 30. Pictures were posted on the website from all over the United States. We were able to raise funds for Team Jazzy, the Sunnyside Foodbank, and the scholarship fund for the teachers who work at our center. We appreciate the support of all who participated! See you next year!



### SCCC Info

**Website**

[www.scchildcarecenter.com](http://www.scchildcarecenter.com)

**Director:**

Michelle Ramirez

**Address:**

700 North 16th Street

**Phone:**

(509) 831-1509

**Email:**

[scchildcarecenter@gmail.com](mailto:scchildcarecenter@gmail.com)

## Technology at SCS

The switch to distance learning in March and the changes to in-person learning led to a summer overhaul of our school’s technology. This effort relied upon the good will and selfless efforts of many and has had a significant effect on the daily lives of students, teachers, and staff members at SCS. The technology committee, which consisted of eight teachers, met weekly to prepare for the upcoming school year. One early realization was that a switch of our cloud-based operating system from Microsoft to Google was needed. This would provide teachers and students with access to better educational programs and improve safety for students. Another early realization was that the school would need additional computers and tablets since students would not be able to share computer labs. Thanks to the generosity of SCS donors who responded to the unique need, the board and finance committee were able to give the go-ahead to spend what was needed to provide a device for every student. We purchased 126 more Chromebooks for students in grades 3-12 and 39 more tablets for students in grades K-2. When individual students or entire classes need to work from home, they can now use the same device that they use in school. The set-up of all of these devices was also a team effort. High school art teacher Dawn Haak coordinated the set-up and received valuable assistance from 2020 graduate Sophie Halma and SCS students Piper and Hannah Clapp. Junior high science teacher Al Smeenk and maintenance supervisor Mike Pendleton assembled storage carts. In order for all of these devices to function, improvements had to be made to the school’s internet. Thankfully, the efforts were successful and the network has been able to handle the increased demand. K-8 classrooms join together for activities over Zoom video conferences. Students working from home are able to participate in their classes over video. All teachers invested significant time into learning how to use the new technology and programs that they would be using in either in-person or distance learning settings. Darcie Jamieson of the local Education Service District provided five training sessions for the staff, and teachers within the school led additional training sessions and workshops. During the school year, 5th grade teacher Megan Slager and kindergarten teacher Lauren Johnson have taken a lead role in assisting teachers. Jeremy Van Dam has handled Chromebook repairs while Dawn Haak has managed account related issues. Dana Clark regularly monitors student activity reports. We received needed help from a broader community as well. Conversations with leaders from Sunnyside Public Schools, Sioux Falls Christian, Mount Vernon Christian, and Orange City Christian provided insight for decision-making. Board members provided wise counsel and prompt feedback. Many more could be thanked. The development of our technological ability has provided for a smoother and more flexible educational experience for teachers and students. That improvement and the remarkable cooperation of the SCS community is something to be thankful for during this difficult time.



**Sunnyside Christian School Foundation**  
PO Box 667  
Sunnyside WA 98944  
509-837-2050  
sonya.faber@sunnysidechristianschool.org  
www.scsfoundation.com

## Memorial Gifts

The SCS Foundation  
Gratefully Acknowledges Memorial Gifts  
Given In Memory Of:

**Nick Arreola - Merlyn Dykstra**  
**Gilbert Elbers - Doris Folkerts - Annie Grimmus**  
**Pete Groeneweg - Pauline Newhouse**  
**Herman te Velde - Esther Van Belle**  
**Linda Van Klompenberg - Mark Wierenga**

## 26th Annual Sunnyside Christian School Foundation Golf Tournament Alternative Fundraiser

Due to the Golf Restart Covid-19 Requirements & Recommendations and Proclamation by the Governor of Washington State, issued on April 27 and effective on May 5, which included numerous restrictions making any golf tournament fundraiser very difficult, if not unlawful, the SCS Foundation was unable to hold an actual golf tournament on June 6, 2020 as scheduled.

As an alternative fundraiser, golf tournament sponsor signs were displayed on the perimeter of the SCS elementary campus from June 10 to June 19 and golf tournament sponsors were thanked each day on the SCS Foundation Facebook page. Thank you to all of the sponsors who participated in this alternative fundraiser and thank you to everyone who drove by the SCS elementary campus and visited the SCS Foundation Facebook page to view the golf tournament sponsors. If you are able, please, support these sponsors who make our golf tournament fundraiser a huge success each year.

### Thank You Corporate Sponsors

Orange Dairy Service - Pioneer Commodities - Yakima Valley Chiropractic Center

### Thank You Special Sponsors

Bos Ag Sales (Raffle) - Cascade Hybrids (Lunch) - Davis Pump & Electric Motors (Lunch) - De Laval (String)  
In Memory of Grant Smith & Heather Smith (Golf Cart) - Kinter Electric (Lunch)  
Liberty Dairy (Golf Cart) - White & Company (Golf Balls)

### Thank You Upgraded Hole Sponsors

Ace Hardware/Sunnyside - Ag Concepts/Agzyme - Ag Health Laboratories - Bos Ag Sales - Cherry Hill Dairy - CHR Hansen  
Columbia Bank - Daritech - Double P Dairy - Double H Hop Ranches - Doug's Dairy Testing - EPL Feed - Excel Dairy Service  
Golden West Seed Company - H Bosma Dairies - Herman & Sharon te Velde - High Desert Dairy Lab - Kinter Electric  
L & L Construction - LTI Inc/Milky Way - Northwest Liquid Transport 1 - Northwest Research & Nutrition - Pioneer  
Prins Dairy - Prosser River Ranch - Sage Hollow Ranch - Skyridge Farms - Smeenk Brothers Dairy  
Sunnyside Christian Childcare Center - Sunnyside Christian School - Sunnyside Christian Thrift Shop - Sunnyside Dairy  
SunSteel - Sweet Rose Orchard/Haak Farm Management - TNG Heating and Air Conditioning - Valley Hills Funeral Home  
Valley Pipe Company - Veldhuis Dairy/Klompe Dairy - Wolfkill Feed & Fertilizer

### Thank You Basic Hole Sponsors

State Farm Insurance/Ben Sartin - Swofford Halma Clinic - Victor's Dairy Service - Wedam Veterinary Services



# STUDENT OF THE MONTH



*September:*  
**Jojo Van Slageren**  
**Junior**



*December:*  
**Piper Clapp**  
**Freshman**



*October:*  
**Justin Van Wieringen**  
**Junior**



*January:*  
**Violet Bosma**  
**Sophomore**



*November:*  
**Ellie Bosma**  
**Junior**



*First Quarter  
Most Improved:*  
**Cade Kinter**  
**Sophomore**

## 2020-2021 Banner Boosters

Ace Hardware  
Ag Health Laboratories  
Ag Pro Repair & Fabrication  
Animal Health International  
Banner Bank  
Beltman Construction  
Bleyhl Farm Services  
Bos Refrigeration  
Cargill Animal Nutrition  
Columbia Bank  
Davis Pump & Electric  
DeLaval Direct Dist. LLC  
Excel Dairy Service, Inc.

F & M Investments LLC  
Green's Point S Tire  
Halverson NW Law Group  
Hiway Fruit  
HUB Insurance Services  
Kinter Electric, Inc.  
Long & Son  
Lower Valley Credit Union  
Lower Valley Machine Shop  
Mid Valley Community Clinic  
Newhouse Dairy Custom  
Bagging  
Orange Dairy Service

RDO Equipment Co.  
Smith Funeral Home  
Speck Motors  
Sunny Smile Orthodontics  
SunnySpot Carwash  
Swofford & Halma Clinic  
Tolman Electric  
Toppenish Livestock, Inc.  
Valley Hills Funeral Home  
White & Company, CPA  
Wilbur-Ellis  
Yakima Valley Chiropractic



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### Elementary School

Grades PreK - 8  
811 North Ave  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
(509)837-3044  
julie.broersma@sunnysidechristianschool.org

### High School

Grades 9-12  
1820 Sheller Rd  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
(509)837-8995  
deanna.driesen@sunnysidechristianschool.org

### Sunnyside Christian School Foundation

P.O. Box 667  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
(509)837-2050  
sonya.faber@sunnysidechristianschool.org  
  
[www.sunnysidechristianschool.org](http://www.sunnysidechristianschool.org)  
[www.scsfoundation.com](http://www.scsfoundation.com)



**KINDERGARTEN CLASS**



**PRESCHOOL CLASS**

These **Kindergartens** are excited to invite next year's class to **Kindergarten Round-Up!** On Friday, April 23, from 8:30-11:00, your child will interact with Ms. Johnson and participate in fun activities. All children who will be five years old on or before August 31 are invited to attend. Kindergarten Round-Up provides an excellent opportunity for parents to experience the blessings of a Christian education. Attending the Round-Up does not commit a family to attend Sunnyside Christian School. If you would like your child to attend, please contact Julie Broersma at 837-3044 or by email [julie.broersma@sunnysidechristianschool.org](mailto:julie.broersma@sunnysidechristianschool.org).

Join the fun at **Preschool Preview Day!** Your three and four-year-olds are invited to Mrs. Hughes' classroom for a time of exploring and learning on April 20 from 8:30 to 10:30. We would love to have your child join us and discover the possibilities for next year. Call the school office (837-3044) to sign up.