

Reflector

Special points of interest:

- The winter season is approaching. Emergency school closings will be communicated through email. If your email has changed, please notify the school office so we can make sure you receive our emergency closing notifications.
- Please see the HCHS and PRCS basketball schedules on our school's website.
- School will be dismissed at 11:30 on Wednesday, November 23 for Thanksgiving Vacation.
- PRCS junior high band will hold a mini concert with our Heritage (MI) junior high band at 2:00 PM on Friday, December 9 in the school gym.
- HCHS Band/Choir Concert is scheduled for Friday, December 16 at 7 PM at the school gym.
- PRCS Christmas Program is scheduled for Wednesday, December 21 at Crete PR Church starting at 7:00. Doors open at 6:30.

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School Board News

Growth and Growing. Not an apt depiction as fall turns into winter and crops are harvested. But indeed, an apt depiction of what parents and teachers have observed in the past quarter. And, a prayer we have on our hearts and tongues, is not only for the physical growth of our children, but mentally and spiritually as well.

Growth and Growing. In the past month, parents have been privileged to engage in direct conversation with their children's teachers. Exciting and encouraging, for a teacher to observe as the lesson planning built upon past years of efforts comes to fruition as children's eyes light up with understanding of new topics. In the past months, perhaps your child has charged through the door, determined with the new basketball season, that they can jump and touch the net or rim...or the top of the door jamb. Or, perhaps your child has begun to study with earnest attention as to the calling or future schooling God is calling them to, as they look beyond their high school years.

Growth and Growing is an abundant theme in the opening verses of Paul's letter to the Colossians. The truth of the gospel has brought much fruit to the church and has expressed itself in abounding love to the saints. And for that, Paul, gives much thanks. We too, as parents, supporters, and the board, have much to be thankful for.

As a school board, we've settled into the familiar rhythms of the academic calendar. We've already started the enjoyable and educational experience of conducting classroom board visits. These provide important opportunities for the board to observe and assess the school in motion.

As the first quarter ends, we're humbled. Needs existed at the start of the year to fill teaching positions, and the Lord has provided to fill those needs. A portion of our high school curriculum is being taught through online means and collaboration with fellow Protestant Reformed Schools. We're grateful to our teachers (both here and virtually!) for your continued efforts on behalf of our parents and children.

Exciting opportunities for visits to local museums, zoos, nature centers have occurred and are being planned. And within the classroom, energy abounds (both from teachers and students!) Much thanks to our area pastors and administrators for continuing to lead our students with chapel, which has been additionally supplemented with outside speakers (presentation on the church in Myanmar and Fearfully and Wonderfully Made Day – (welcome back Rev. Barnhill!)).

We are grateful to the teachers for your continued zeal and efforts for our parents and their children and for your continued efforts to grow as well, through sharing insights and encouragement with each other, as well as participation in the recent Teacher Convention. The Board is continuing to assess curriculum, student and teacher growth as well, through the work of a subcommittee tasked with researching school culture and curriculum.

Reported later in the *Reflector* is an overview of the school's current financial condition. As expressed there, our school's financial needs are met, and we do not anticipate a shortfall this school season. It's our prayer that we would be able to hire additional full-time teachers for the next year, which may require budget increases based upon existing enrollment.

We are excited for two current high school teachers, Mrs. Sydney Gagliardi and Mrs. Teagan Van Overloop, who have announced the expectancy of their first children in the spring. Our full time teacher, Mrs. Sydney Gagliardi, hopes to teach through the 3rd quarter, Lord willing. Mrs. Karen Van Baren and Mrs. Rachel Hillegonds have agreed to take over the courses Mrs. Gagliardi is teaching in our English Department. Mr. Ralph Medema will finish off the year with the Spanish I class. Mrs. Teagan Van Overloop, who is helping us out by teaching computer courses for us this first semester, will finish those courses and then dedicate her time to finishing up some other consulting work she has and preparing the home to welcome their first child.

We are also glad to have hired Miss Melanie Hanco to join our high school staff this January. Miss Hanco will graduate from Grand Valley State University this December with a teaching degree and a math major. While her expressed desire is to teach in the lower grades in one of our schools, she is willing and capable to help us out this second semester, teaching some science and math classes. Her help will relieve the burden on some of our current staff as well as bring FST (Functions, Statistics, and Trigonometry) back to an in-person class. We are thankful for Mr. Tom Bergman from our sister school, Covenant Christian in Michigan, who has been remotely teaching that for us. Miss Hanco is in need of housing; please let us know if you know of a good housing option.

While immediate needs for the 2022-2023 school year have been met, we continue to have a great need for high school teachers, especially in the Maths and Sciences, and also English and Bible classes. If you are reading this and are interested, or know of someone with interest, please encourage them to apply to our school! They can speak with Mr. Ralph Medema to learn more about the available opportunities.

Also, please note as is reflected within the *Reflector*, the Board has implemented modifications to the school calendar commencing fall 2023.

The Achieve Committee expresses its thanks to the Taste Committee and to the community for their generous support of "The Taste" held this past season. Over \$26,000 was raised for our Achieve program. The program, via Mrs. Boer and aides, continues to develop in its ability to reach children, and we are thankful for their work and additional efforts to grow, via participation in ongoing continuing education themselves.

The Progress and Promotion Committee extends its thanks for participation in the past Fall Promotional Dinner, as well as to Mr. Baldwin and all alumni who participated in a wonderful night of song and praise. Over \$60,000 was raised to support education in this 2022/2023 education season.

The golf outing was held on October 1, 2022 at Lincoln Oaks Golf Course in Crete, with a record 146 golfers in attendance. Thanks to our generous sponsors and supporters, over \$17,000 was raised for the school's endowment fund. A special word of thanks to the Golf Committee for all of their hard work that went into hosting this event. Now with nearly \$1,200,000 in assets, the endowment fund continues to generate income annually which remains an important source of funding to cover the operating expenses of the school. Please consider making a year end gift to the endowment fund as a way to support our school for years to come.

And while dollars raised are vital to the operation of the school, we are routinely reminded of your many hours of dedicated volunteer service. Whether it's in the library, serving hot lunch, fixing what needs attention in the building, helping at sporting events and robotics, going on field trips as room mothers – the list goes on and on! We thank all our volunteers for your efforts.

And so, while appropriate to reflect upon continued growth and development of staff and students, and love shared between child, parent, and teacher, our prayer, as is yours, is that of Paul in Colossians. "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Colossians 1: 9-10)

Sexual Abuse Policy

Sexual abuse is an age-old sin that is still very prevalent today. Statistics show that 1 in every 4 females and 1 in every 6 males will have been sexually abused before the age of 18. However, we may not conclude that the sin of sexual abuse is just out in the world, out 'there.' All sins that are prevalent in the world also infiltrate the church world. Even more directly, all sins that are prevalent in the world also infiltrate the Protestant Reformed denomination and affect our churches, schools, and homes. We are not immune to any type of sin, including sexual abuse.

HCHS/PRCS has no tolerance for sexual harassment/abuse in school operations and in school-related or sponsored activities and programs. We believe it is the responsibility of every staff member at our school to act in the best interest of each child throughout the school and in every school program and activity. Therefore, all faculty and support staff have been trained in sexual abuse awareness. We have contracted with MinistrySafe (a private organization which advises churches and schools across the country) to aid us in sexual abuse awareness training for our school personnel.

Furthermore, although HCHS/PRCS had a Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy for many years, the school board recently adopted a new Sexual Harassment policy to replace the old policy. This policy is based on several fundamental policy statements which includes the basic belief that "all students and all school employees are expected to conduct themselves with respect for the dignity of others." As a school we repudiate sexual harassment of others by staff, students, volunteers or any other person involved with the school. The policy's introduction notes: "The purpose of this policy is to address sexual harassment in the school, at school activities or functions, or involving school staff, volunteers or students in other settings outside of school." The Sexual Harassment Policy explains sexual harassment by defining it and giving examples of what sexual harassment might include. The bulk of the policy focuses on the process of reporting instances of sexual harassment.

The school board has also adopted an additional policy entitled "Student and Child Safety Policy." This policy can be found in the HCHS/PRCS Student/Parent Handbook on our school's website. In addition to emphasizing that our school has zero tolerance for abuse, this policy "supports and encourages a culture of communication related to abuse or suspected abuse of children." Abuse of children must be taken seriously and acted upon. "The Administrators, Education Committee and/or School Board will take appropriate action when a report of abuse occurs. School officials shall take all such reports seriously and investigate all such matters promptly."

The "Student and Child Safety Policy" then lists and explains specific prohibited actions by staff members and volunteers towards children to help ensure the safety of our children. One area that is addressed is Physical Contact. "In general, staff members and volunteers should minimize displays of physical affection toward students." Please also talk to your younger children about not initiating a hug to their teacher as a way of a morning greeting. "Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of limited physical affection between staff members or volunteers and students should be conducted with the utmost care and respect for all persons involved."

This policy also gives the school board allowance to require staff members and volunteers to receive training in sexual abuse. As was indicated earlier, this training has taken place.

As always, we appreciate your support and prayers as a school. It is our prayer that God will bless our labors. God has given us this school as an extension of our homes. We pray that God will continue to sustain and prosper us and that we might fear the Lord and walk in His ways in every aspect of our school and home life. *"Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel."* (Psalm 128: 1, 4-6)

Mr. Ryan Van Overloop

School Calendar Changes

Can Our School Calendar Be Improved?

Like with any common practice, it is healthy to ask such a question from time to time. And as times change, it is worth considering whether we can or should change with them. So the administrators have discussed possible improvements to the calendar over the past few years, and after soliciting input from faculty members, we proposed calendar changes to the Education Committee and School Board.

The main impetus for change was the question of if it would be better for the students to take high school exams for first semester before Christmas break, rather than after. Answering yes to this, the next question is if starting a week earlier in August is reasonable. Since the times have changed, and many schools now start much earlier in August, we decided it was not too big of a leap to have our calendar start one week earlier than our typical start, or two weeks before Labor Day instead of our typical one week.

Though this means a somewhat unbalanced calendar, with second semester being at least a week longer than first semester as a result, the teachers felt that the benefits outweighed any negatives. It also gives opportunities to try some other changes, especially in how we view the second semester. When presented to the Education Committee and then to the full School Board, we heard resounding approval for our proposal.

Please have a look at the approved calendar on page 5 for next school year. You will notice the following, which serves as a summary of the changes compared to what we have typically practiced over the past 20 - some years.

Approved

Start Date is Monday **8.21**

“Labor Day Weekend” **9.1** and **9.4** no school

10.18 is ½ Day K-12,

End of 1st Quarter PRCS/Midterms HCHS

12.20 – 12.22 HCHS EXAMS (*before Christmas Break*)

12.22 End of 1st semester

12.25 – 1.5 Christmas Break

2.16 & 2.19 “Winter Break” (*6 weeks into 2nd Semester*)

(**April 1-5**) Spring Break 1st full week in April,

*including the Friday before, **March 29***

EXAMS **May 21-23**, Graduation **May 23**

(Graduation now should always be before Memorial Day.)

Typical

Tuesday **8.29**

Labor Day = Monday **9.4** no school

10.27 was ½ Day for PRCS teachers as Records Day,

End of 1st Quarter PRCS/ Midterms HCHS

1.17 – 1.19 HCHS EXAMS (*after Christmas Break*)

1.19 End of 1st Semester

12.25 – 1.5 *Christmas Break usually 2 weeks,*

but not when Christmas/New Year are on Sunday

1.22 Records Day & **2.19** Presidents’ Day

(**April 1-5**) Spring Break 1st full week in April

EXAMS **May 29-31**, Graduation **May 31**

Mr. Ralph Medema

2023/2024 School Academic Calendar

Aug/September

M	T	W	T	F
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Aug. 21 - School Begins
 Sep. 1, 4 - Labor Day Weekend
 Sep 9 - Board / Faculty Dinner
 Sep. 27 - Picture Day

October

M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

Oct. 4 - Pre-ACT
 Oct. 6 -The TASTE
 Oct. 11 - PSAT/NMSQT
 Oct. 18 - 1/2 Day, End of 1st Quarter, Midterms
 Oct. 19, 20 - PRTI Convention
 Oct. 26, 30 - P/T Conferences

November

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

Nov. 3 - Fall Promotional Dinner
 Nov. 8 - Picture Retakes
 Nov. 17 - PRCS Fall Concert
 Nov. 22 - 1/2 Day
 Nov. 23,24 -Thanksgiving Break

December

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

Dec. 15 - HCHS Christmas Concert
 Dec. 21 - PRCS Christmas Program
 Dec. 20-22 - EXAMS
 Dec. 22 -1/2 Day
 1st Semester ends
 Dec 25 - Jan 5 - Christmas Break

January

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Jan. 8 - School Resumes
 Jan. 26 –Beanbag Tournament

February

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

Feb. 8 & 12- P/T Conferences
 Feb. 16, 19 - Winter Break

March

M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

M. 8 - Midterms
 M. 8 - Spring Promotional Dinner
 M. 13 - Prayer Day
 M. 20 - Beginners' Day
 M. 29 - Good Friday
 April 1 - Easter
 March 29 - April 5- Spring Break

April

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

April 23 - Open House

May

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

May 9 - Ascension Day
 May 10 - Kindergarten Program
 May 10 - Senior Class Trip
 May 13 - PRCS Spring Concert
 May 16 - HCHS Concert
 May 17 - Jr/Sr Farewell Dinner
 May 21 -23 - EXAMS
 May 23 - 1/2 Day, End of School
 Graduation @ 7 PM
 May 27 - Memorial Day
 May 29 - Report Card Pick-Up

2021/2022 School Year Financial Summary

Association for Protestant Reformed Education				
Fiscal Year End Financial Report				
<u>Balance Sheet</u>		<u>General Fund Statement of Income and Expenses</u>		
	<u>Jul 31, 22</u>		<u>Aug '21 - Jul 22</u>	<u>Budget</u>
ASSETS		Ordinary Income/Expense		
Current Assets		Income		
Providence Bank - Building Fund	81,685.86	Assoc for PR Spec Ed (MI)	21,027.50	
Providence Bank-General	24,012.93	Transportation Income	48,251.18	55,450.00
Accounts Receivable	-2,143.38	Tuition Income	1,153,552.08	1,348,434.00
Providence Bank Money Market	720,624.36	Donation Income		
Total Current Assets	<u>824,179.77</u>	Association Dues	46,686.72	50,800.00
Fixed Assets		Collections & Envelopes	151,304.31	198,200.00
Buildings	4,871,106.00	Ladies Auxiliary	70,000.00	70,000.00
Land	569,270.00	School Dinner	145,436.00	95,000.00
Equipment	431,807.70	Total Donation Income	<u>413,427.03</u>	<u>414,000.00</u>
2015 Addition	1,078,412.53	Endowment Interest	35,867.01	31,000.00
Bus	147,616.00	Miscellaneous Income	44,930.51	2,000.00
Total Fixed Assets	<u>7,098,212.23</u>	Total Income	<u>1,717,055.31</u>	<u>1,850,884.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>7,922,392.00</u>	Expense		
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		Dues for CSI & Fed PRCS	5,020.48	3,500.00
Liabilities		Insurance	183,914.85	217,200.00
Current Liabilities		Payroll Expenses	1,244,418.93	1,252,782.00
Payroll Liabilities	24,374.45	General Office Expense	1,635.58	2,000.00
Total Current Liabilities	24,374.45	Miscellaneous Expense	11,828.51	7,550.00
Long Term Liabilities	0.00	Education Expense	71,193.63	91,200.00
Total Liabilities	<u>24,374.45</u>	Transportation Expense	36,087.30	44,850.00
Equity		Building & Grounds	164,741.71	154,500.00
Net Assets	7,098,212.23	Major Building Fund Expense	15,000.00	15,000.00
Building Fund	81,685.86	Computer Replace Fund Expense	15,000.00	15,000.00
Bus Replacement Fund	33,000.00	Bus Replacement Fund Expense	10,600.00	10,600.00
Technology Replacement Fund	20,366.66	Total Expense	<u>1,759,440.99</u>	<u>1,814,182.00</u>
Major Building Repair Fund	89,325.30	Net Income	<u>-42,385.68</u>	<u>36,702.00</u>
Special Education Fund	133,749.59			
General Fund	484,063.59			
Total Equity	<u>7,898,017.55</u>			
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>7,922,392.00</u>			

Above is a summary of the financial position and activity of the past year for our school. You will notice that we had a deficit of \$40,000 from the past school year. Tuition income was about \$200,000 less than budgeted due to the lower enrollment that year. With the help of increased donations and reduced expenses, the deficit was minimized fairly well. In 2022/23, the expected income is budgeted to be similar to the actuals from last year. The payroll expenses are expected to be reduced resulting in a minimal net income. One significant observation from the balance sheet is there are no Long Term Liabilities or large debts required to be paid by the school. All fixed assets are paid off and a substantial amount of cash is being held in our school's accounts. So although net income was negative last year and breaking even this year, the Lord has blessed us with a strong financial position to endure through difficult times. If any association members have questions or concerns about the above information, please contact me and I would be happy to address them.

-Treasurer, Mr. Eric Van Baren

Teachers' Convention 2022

Encouraging Our Covenant Soldiers

The 2022 Protestant Reformed teachers' convention took place this past October 20-21 at Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School in Walker, MI. About 180 teachers attended!

Prof. Kuiper opened the convention on Thursday morning by speaking to the teachers on the topic "Encouraging Our Covenant Soldiers," based on Deuteronomy 20:1-4. Just as tiny Israel fought against the large nations of the world, today's tiny church of Christ battles against the anti-Christian world. One function of the Christian school is to train covenant youth for the fight.

Our enemy, Satan and his kingdom, threaten church foundations by attacking Scripture, attacking the home, and attacking the educational system of our country. The enemy tries (and is often successful) to promote sin as normal, so that many children in the public school system are taught at a young age that homosexuality, abortion and transgenderism are rights.

As Christian teachers in a Christian school, part of our calling is to tell the children we are in a battle against our enemy, the wicked world. We must bring them to see the glory of God in all subjects. We must teach them the true doctrine found in Scripture so that they are able to fight spiritual battles! Finally, we must remind the children and ourselves that our encouragement is found in the one true God. He is the God of His chosen people. He has already saved us and goes with us into every battle.

After Prof Kuiper's speech, the teachers had a brief time of fellowship and snacks before parting ways to various sectionals. We attended three sectionals on Thursday and two on Friday. The ladies of Hope school did an excellent job of feeding us. There were always snacks!

One sectional that I attended was called Bridging the Gap, led by Jodi Baker and Nancy Gritters, two teachers from Iowa. They sent out a survey to parents of struggling students, both past and present. The goal was to see the perspectives of the parents on teacher methods and how having a student who struggles in school affects the whole family.

Parents responded to the survey listing both negative and positive methods that teachers use. Some negative methods included being impatient with students, peer grading, not giving extra help when students ask for it, and blaming students' poor performance on laziness or inattention. Some positive methods that teachers use are to modify tests, make copies of notes for the student, reading the test out loud to the student, and breaking projects down into steps.

Having a student who struggles in school can also affect the whole family. A parent might have to spend hours at home working with the student to get homework done and study for tests. It can also be hard to keep the rest of the kids quiet so that the one child can focus on the work. Finally, students who struggle in school do not always appreciate the parents taking the time to work with them, so parents can feel sad or irritated.

The two teachers ended their presentation by providing tips for teachers to communicate to parents. These teachers encourage parents to sit with a student while the student does homework and help them complete it, rather than sending a student to his/her room to complete it alone. They also encourage teachers to print copies of notes for the students, find ways for these students to shine in the classroom, and encourage parents to learn from each other and support each other.

This year's convention encouraged the teachers to press on in our labors, viewing our students as children of God. The sectionals provided us with different ideas to think about and possibly use in our own classroom. Overall, the convention was spiritually uplifting and refreshing!

-Miss Amanda Ophoff

Myanmar

The Sophomore Composition class focuses on the art and skill of writing and how we as Christians can develop our writing skills to the glory of God and for the edification of the Church. For our second unit, we studied the Writing Process. As the students learned about the five steps of the Writing Process, they wrote essays about the church's missionary work in Myanmar or the challenges that those in Myanmar face everyday. In the Prewriting stage, they took notes on a presentation given by Mr. Seth Kalsbeek (Michigan) to the school on Thursday, September 22, regarding the saints in Myanmar and the state of the country. By the end of the process, each sophomore submitted a well-developed essay focusing on the different aspects of life in Myanmar, primarily based on Mr. Kalsbeek's original presentation. Following are two of these essays.

-Mrs. Sydney Gagliardi

Problems People Face in Myanmar By Claire Bruinsma, HCHS Sophomore

The people in Myanmar suffer every day, and it's important to know how and why. But before the how and the why, it's important to understand *who* we're talking about. So, who are the people of Myanmar? Well, most of the people live in poverty and struggle to provide for their families. The majority of Myanmar's people speak Burmese (Burman) and, for the most part, are Buddhist. They are known for their kindness and gentleness as well as their poise. Myanmar is about 8.2% Christian, and about 5.5% are Protestant. Christians have the same day-to-day struggles as the rest of Myanmar but also live under the fear of persecution for their faith. So now that we know the people, what are the problems they face? How are the Christians' problems different from the rest of Myanmar?

The people in Myanmar are suffering from three main things right now: Covid-19, poverty, and the military coup. Looking at Covid-19, we see the same threats that we face: social distancing, wearing masks, and becoming sick. The number of cases spiked in July of 2021, reaching 6,700. Since then, Myanmar has been recovering; thankfully, there have been less than 400 new cases. The church in Myanmar experiences even more difficulties than the typical people do. Many cannot come to church because they would have to surpass the military to get to the church building; instead, they listen via online watching. However, in-person services have restarted for those able to come. We rejoice with the churches of Myanmar in this.

The second main struggle that the Burmese are suffering is poverty. Many struggle to find stable jobs or any work at all, making it hard and even impossible to provide for food and a roof over their families' head. The Christians in Myanmar are blessed here, as missionary work helps provide for their necessities. They still suffer from poverty, but God provides care for his people.

Finally, Myanmar struggles with the problem of the military coup. The military coup is, in simple terms, like a giant lockdown throughout the whole country. This plays a huge role in the lives of all Burmans. There are military soldiers posted on roads, buildings, government houses, and even on sidewalks. There is a constant threat of death, and houses are burned down to send warnings. Cars are not allowed to be owned without a license. The God-fearing few in Myanmar have another concern when it comes to the military coup. They live with the threat of the military killing them for their faith. In this, they yet remain thankful to God for each day.

Two questions remain. Why is this topic important? Why should anyone care? We need to be aware of these situations to be able to pray for them, to empathize with them. We need to know because God's children are in Myanmar, and in knowing of their difficulties, we show that we care. While all the people in Myanmar suffer, only the Christians have a true hope, the hope of salvation and the knowledge that they have a God who cares and will protect them. This gives us comfort in knowing that all things work together for good. Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Military in Myanmar

By Rebecca Ophoff, HCHS Sophomore

Once a democracy, now a fight for life. Citizens should not have to be woken up to gunshots or wonder if a member of their family will be killed that day, right? Shouldn't freedom be a gift given to everyone? Militaries should not be concealing very crucial information from its people. This is the hard reality of the people of Myanmar today. But can they find peace in their civil war?

Myanmar's struggle for a non-threatening government was a little rocky in its history. This little country, located southeast of China, was mostly ruled by the military since it was granted independence from the United Kingdom. From then on, the military has been dictating Myanmar on and off. The 2021 coup first occurred in the aftermath of the November 8, 2020 democratic general election. The army claimed the votes for the NLD (National League of Democracy), Myanmar's democratic party, were fraudulent and disputed those votes. (This coup attempt had been rumored for a couple of days, prompting concern from some western countries.)

Many laws and restrictions have been a burden to the people. On February 1, 2021, soldiers detained and put many of the leaders and activists of the NLD on house arrest. The military put laws over basically everything. Along with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the citizens were shut up in their homes with a curfew of eight o'clock p.m. to four o'clock a.m. Television and newscasters' licenses for filming were revoked so they could not legally spread news concerning the military.

Armored military vehicles ran rampant through the streets while the people protested for their rights. Hospitals were not allowed to care for the people because the government reserved healthcare for themselves. Gunshots could be heard through the cities, marking an end to one's life. For months, protesting citizens had been shot and killed for just longing for their freedom. This persecution is still going strong today.

The Christian church in Myanmar was—and is—very limited in their worship. Rev. Titus and his congregation have to worship in secret for fear of being disrupted by either the Buddhist church or the soldiers. While Rev.

Titus's congregation is singing, the Buddhist church down the street ring their chanting bells to drown out the singing. The military has disassembled their worship services before and are willing to do it again.

We are very blessed with the little amount of persecution we have in America. Prayer for the Myanmar people as well as the nation as a whole is essential for their growth in strength and faith. Prayer for God to open the eyes of the coup leaders is a necessity in our part of the world. We must pray for the citizens, and specifically Rev. Titus's congregation, to find the peace that passes all understanding. Let us take up our duties to support and pray for our brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus for the sake of the truth's preservation.

Fibonnaci

The sophomore Advanced Algebra class recently studied the Fibonacci Sequence. We took a couple of class periods to explore this simple, yet fascinating sequence of numbers. The sequence itself has a very simple concept of how to progress from one term to the next. However, its complexity lies in how our Creator has woven this sequence into so many parts of His creation so that our confession underscores Article 2 of the Belgic Confession: "the creation...is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to contemplate the invisible things of God, namely, his power and divinity, as the apostle Paul saith, Rom. 1:20." What follows are two articles written by students of the Advanced Algebra class.

-Ryan Van Overloop

Fibonacci in Nature ~ Luke Holleman, HCHS Sophomore

The Fibonacci sequence is a mathematical sequence which, at first glance, appears to be almost random numbers just getting increasingly larger. But to find the numbers you begin with a one and a one. You add those to get two, add one and two to get three, two and three to get five, and so on. You can continue as long as you desire adding the two previous numbers. But, it is more than just a sequence of numbers added with the previous ones. With a little investigation one can find a plethora of occurrences of this sequence, or its golden number, in nature.

The first observation of Fibonacci's sequence in nature would be plants. There are many plants from all over the entire globe that demonstrate terms of this sequence.

One example would be flowers from several species of plants. Lilies and iris have three pedals. Buttercups have five pedals on a flower. Delphiniums have eight pedals, marigolds have 13 pedals, asters have 21 pedals, but daisies can have 34, 55, or even 89 pedals! All of these numbers are increasingly larger terms in the Fibonacci sequence.

Another place to find this occurrence would be in fruit, for example, the pineapple. If you count the scales spiraling down one way it will be 13. But on the other hand, if you count the scales spiraling down to the opposite way it will be 21. But you can even count the scales a third way and you will get 8, all fibonacci numbers.

These examples are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the fibonacci sequence or the golden ratio. Now, with so many occurrences in nature, how could one say that this is a coincidence. Clearly there is some reason that so many things are related by one set of numbers. Just about anywhere on earth you could find something that relates to these numbers. But why? All these things are related in these numbers because they were all created by God. He has a secret order in all of creation which is unfathomable to our lowly, human, sinful minds. As with human art, you can look at the masterpiece and tell who designed it. If you look at creation, you can see God's handiwork at every turn. All things created by God were created for the glory of God.

The Fibonacci Sequence ~ Adelle Bosman, HCHS Sophomore

What is it?

The Fibonacci sequence is a fascinating element of math that can be found in the world around us. It is a sequence created by adding the previous two terms together to get the next number. For example: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89... the sequence continues.

Who started it?

This sequence was named for Leonardo of Pisa, who was later called Fibonacci. He was a mathematician and was the first to introduce the Fibonacci sequence to Western Europe.

The Sequence in Nature

We can see the numbers in the Fibonacci sequence in many different places in God's creation. Some examples are leaves, petals, flowers, sea shells, and stems. They can create spirals and grow a number of petals following the sequence. Some examples are below:

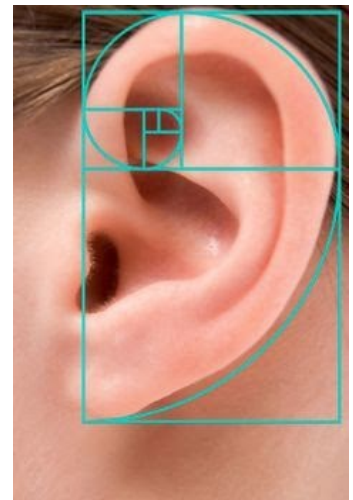


This spiral can be found all over the world in nature, and shows us just how orderly and great God is. He has a perfect reason and an order for everything.

Not only does God put the Fibonacci sequence in everyday things around us, but He also created OUR bodies with the sequence. For example, our ears actually spiral using the same pattern as those of flowers, sea shells, and pinecones.

Our ears aren't the only example, however. As you divide two consecutive numbers in the sequence, your answer will always get close to 1.618 the further you are in the sequence. This number is known as the golden ratio, and is found all over our own bodies. For example, if you divide the length of your face by the width of your face, you will get an answer near 1.618. You can find these numbers in so many different parts of your body.

Seeing all these patterns in our lives should remind us of God's greatness and control over all things. We should never forget what He can and does do. The wicked see these things, and know in their hearts that there is a God, but still deny His goodness. However, we should see it and praise God, using this as a reminder of His control and order.



Beanbag Tournament

The 8th grade class will again host a beanbag tournament as their class fundraiser. The tournament will take place on Friday, January 27 at the school gym. We are planning on splitting the teams into a ladies', men's, and a co-ed division, depending on the number of teams that register. Registration forms will be available shortly and can be found on our school website at www.heritagechs.org or you can pick up a copy of the registration form in the front entryway of school.

Mark your calendars!! Spectators, high school age and older, are also welcome to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!!

Team registration forms will be due by December 31 so don't delay to sign up a team once the registration forms become available. All proceeds go to the PRCS 8th grade class.

Thank you for your support.

Emergency School Closings

Inclement weather can happen at any time. Especially during the winter season, the administrators keep an eye on the weather forecast. If school were to close due to safety concerns with transportation to/from school, the administrators will relay this information in two ways. First, the administrators submit our school closing information to the Emergency Closing Center. Parents can search for our facility by going to www.emergencyclosingcenter.com. This website is used by local TV and radio stations who then also publicize our schools' names regarding the closing. Secondly, we also use FACTS to send an email to all parents in our database regarding the school closing. Parents can use either of these two ways to determine whether or not our school is closed on any particular day.