



LANSING CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL



www.lansingchristianschool.org

PILGRIM JOURNEY

SPRING 2024

Equipping young men and women to engage
and transform the world for Jesus Christ.

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Our Mission

Recognizing God as the source of all truth, wisdom, and knowledge, Lansing Christian School partners with Christian parents to educate children to the full extent of their God-given abilities. We engage students in an academically challenging environment that fosters spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical growth. We equip students to exalt God and follow Christ in all of life.

CREDITS

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Core Values Shape the Lives of our Students— Both Now and for the Future

Most mission-based organizations have core values, and so do we. Where do core values come from? What role do they play in the day-to-day work of our school, and why are they important?

In 2015, the Board of Trustees and the administration set out to clearly define the core values of LCS. Core values essentially reflect what is in our DNA. They are values that are inherent and natural for us, and they have been apparent at LCS for a long time. Core values serve as a foundation for what we cultivate in classrooms and in student learning, in strategy and performance, and in our daily decision-making at school. The core values of LCS are reflected in the teachers and coaches we hire to teach and walk alongside our students every day.

I do not think it is a stretch to say that the core values of LCS help to shape the kinds of people our students are becoming. In this edition of the Pilgrim Journey, you will see numerous examples of how the core values of LCS – Striving for Excellence – Glorifying God in All of Life – Cultivating Christian Community – Partnering with Parents – are lived out in the day-to-day learning and work of our staff and in relationships throughout our school community.

Christian education is a commitment and it is an investment for families. It is my prayer that you are filled with hope for the present and for the future as you reflect on how your investment in Christian education is helping to shape the lives of our students - your children - every day.

With hope in God,



Wendy Hofman
Head of School





Breaking Bread and Building Bridges

By Katherine Lohman, College and Career Counselor

The second annual Breaking Bread and Building Bridges celebration took place in February in recognition of Black History Month. The deep hope of this event is to acknowledge and appreciate the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and lived experiences within God's kingdom.

Jasmine Fountain's 8th grade social studies class designed and implemented an engaging walk-through exhibit, which focused on honoring and celebrating Black patriots in America throughout various time periods. This exhibit represented a vibrant Formational Learning Experience (FLEx) for 8th grade students as they mastered foundational skills in research, public speaking, and professionalism. In the words of Ms. Fountain, "God's heart is that we love one another, and an aspect of love is taking the time to know one another. It was a beautiful experience to partner with my students to create an event that allowed people to reflect on the challenging aspects of history, expand their views of patriotism, and hear the deep hopes of our youth for the nation."



Lansing Christian's Multicultural Club (MCC), a student-led club that aims to honor the various cultures and stories of those within and beyond the LCS community, also contributed to this year's event by designing an immersive Underground Railroad experience throughout LCS's outdoor trail system. The MCC orchestrated a delicious soul food dinner to wrap up the evening's events accompanied by a special message from guest pastor Sean Holland from Lansing's Epicenter of Worship. We look forward to continuing this event in future years and celebrating the rich tapestry of history, culture, and diversity that points our community towards our intricate, holy, and loving God.





Using God-Given Gifts to Bring Beauty to Life

By Melissa Kranzo, Communications Coordinator

When in the Commons area at Lansing Christian School, if you look up in the direction of the secondary office, you'll notice a mural that depicts a student's life at LCS as they learn to "transform the world for Jesus Christ."

This illustration was created by LCS alumnus Dane Porter ('14), who was inspired by our school's vision, "Equipping young men and women to engage and transform the world for Jesus Christ."

Back in 2016, at the time of his mural completion, Dane shared, "In this mural, I included my high school sketchbook because Lansing Christian School equipped me to be an artist, a student, and a disciple of Christ. Now, with the gifts God has given me, it's my turn to transform the world for Jesus Christ." Today, ten years after his graduation, Dane is using his gifts to do exactly that. He has employed his artistic talents in work with architects, landscape designers, artists, and individuals in the Lansing area and beyond. He says, "Nature is the main inspiration powering most of my works. I also find inspiration in architecture as well as minimalist forms and shapes. Fixing these themes together always poses an exciting and unexpected outcome." Dane's excellence in creative endeavor and artistic contribution merited him this year's 2024 LCS Distinguished Alumni Award.

Dane Porter: 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipient

By Cathy Bytwerk, Alumni Coordinator

For those of us who knew Dane Porter ('14) in his years at LCS, there was no doubt that his bent, his talent, and his course for life was going to be in the world of art. He describes himself as self-taught. Those gifts to create, however, are attributed to his Heavenly Father, whose masterful creativity is in every piece of Dane's art. Mrs. Emery, his high school art teacher, did a phenomenal job of giving him the tools to succeed. This, coupled with Mrs. Quinn's understanding of his learning style, made for a high school career that brought value to him. Spirit Week was one of his favorite times of the year because of the creativity he was able to bring to the class competitions.

After graduating from LCS, Dane dedicated much of his time to developing his personal style. He worked with media of metal, glass, and concrete, creating pieces of art that stand inside and outside of various businesses today.

Throughout the years since graduation, Dane has been involved in the community through judging, speaking, and

curating many public art events, including the MSUFCU Student Art Exhibit and the ScrapFest of Lansing. His work and designs are in demand with many in the Lansing area and beyond. He is currently involved in real estate investing and the restoration and design of properties, such as a mid-century home restoration in Okemos. His goal is to bring color to communities as he glorifies God through them.

It is with great pleasure that we present to Dane Porter the Distinguished Alumni Award of 2024!



Reflecting Christ in the Community through Athletics

By Dan Carmichael, Athletic Director

As a Christian school that competes and participates in sports with many other schools, our athletic program offers a unique opportunity to represent Christ to others. Each week through athletics, we interact with and host hundreds of people outside of our school.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

Those who interact with our community through sports have an opportunity to see Christ reflected in sports through our pursuit of integrity (Ephesians 5:1), community (Psalms 133:1), perseverance (Galatians 6:9), and excellence (Colossians 3:17).

Being a Christian venue also offers a unique opportunity for those who typically work or coach in public school settings to openly share their faith. At a recent home



high school basketball game, one of the opposing coaches asked if he could lead the opening prayer for the game. The coach mentioned that he worked in full-time Christian ministry, but his players had never heard him pray or talk about his faith. We were honored to have him lead the prayer at LCS that evening for both teams, families, and spectators.

Times like this give us just a small glimpse of the many ways God is at work through our athletics. Our aim is to pursue Christ through the wins, the losses, and every effort, giving God the glory for it all.

Team photo by Jamie DeMond Photography



We Honor God through Excellence

Math Initiatives Thriving at Every Grade Level

By Jamie Wernet, Director of Learning



This year, we have expanded opportunities for students to challenge themselves mathematically beyond the classroom. In high school, we are transitioning Precalculus to the new AP Precalculus course, and nineteen students are blazing the trail and taking the AP Precalculus exam this spring.

Our middle school math club is thriving, and many students recently participated in two competitive math experiences: MathCounts and the American Mathematics Competition. In February, twelve middle school students traveled to MSU to compete against other area schools through MathCounts and performed very well!

In our elementary, we are running a new program, Math Challenge, for 3rd-5th grade students as a way to differentiate learning for students. These students are having fun exploring factorials, area patterns, and complex mathematical expressions.

Students Offer Their Best at State Honors Choir

By Satara Nadarajan, Vocal Music Teacher

Three LCS students qualified for the State Honors Choir this year, a significant and noteworthy accomplishment. The State Honors Choir program offers students an opportunity to develop and be recognized for their vocal music skills while singing in an advanced ensemble with the best singers from across the state of Michigan.

This year, students began the process with an audition for the regional choir, and during regionals went on to audition for the state level. Auditions consisted of sight reading and music memorization tests in a three-day rehearsal process, where they were placed into three select choirs: SSAA, TTBB, SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) for performance at the DeVos Theater in Grand Rapids.

From this, senior Elena Ardis was placed in the All-State Choir, which is comprised of the top 80 students in all of Michigan. In May, Elena will spend three days at MSU for rehearsal and further opportunities.

It is very exciting that these students took the opportunity to honor God in excellence by participating in this choir. Some of them are already in multiple Advanced Placement classes and this was

an extra, but they accepted the challenge without reservation or complaint; we are very proud of them. They had to be prepared, they had to persevere, and they had to apply the training they received in class. This is also an incredible opportunity for them to be a light in the world. While this is not a Christian event, it is an opportunity to witness their faith and praise God with their music. Choral music is oftentimes religious because of its history, and these students infused their faith into the words they sang, fully representing Christ to all.



Satara Nadarajan with students Hope Tebben, Katie Seifferlein, Elena Ardis, and Annie Wernet at regionals.

We Honor God through Excellence



Sparking Creativity and Nurturing Gifts

By Nicole Hayhurst, Preschool Teacher

The outdoor program in preschool is on its way and we are excited to continue to see it grow and develop. We have taken our learning outdoors through activities such as finding natural materials and building letters, going on nature hunts, and comparing and measuring items from the environment. The goal is for our preschoolers in the outdoor program to be learning outdoors two days a week.

Outdoor education is immensely beneficial to our students. It helps physical and mental health. It builds leadership skills, social interactions with classmates, student focus, and cognitive function as students have a chance to explore the world God made for them. Studies have shown the impact outdoor education can have even if it is

just for an hour. It helps students to focus and have better social and emotional interactions. We have noticed over the years that issues with stress and anxiety are growing, and this is another way to help. After school, families' lives are so busy. For many students, this is their only time outdoors.

The idea of the outdoor education program has been in the works since 2019. A full outdoor program is something that takes time to build and it has been exciting to begin getting this off the ground. After touring a handful of schools in Michigan to learn more about their outdoor programs, it is evident that LCS has an amazing opportunity to have a robust program here. We are very blessed and fortunate to have the land and spaces we do.

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program, we want to engage our students in the world God
body of Christ, love things that He loves, which is His creation.
students to explore His creation through wonder and creativity.



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[1] Students regularly make use of the trails throughout the LCS campus, which span over two miles.

[2] Preschoolers and administrators welcome the new greenhouse with a ribbon-cutting ceremony!

[3] Students learn about measuring using their own bodies as units of measurement.

[4] Mrs. Hayhurst's Pre-K 4 class creates bird feeders to benefit the birds who remain through the winter and bring joy to people on campus.

[5] Students hunt for rocks, then use scales to compare rock sizes and predict which ones will weigh the most.

Senior Spotlight: Nathan Dery

By Melissa Kranzo, Communications Coordinator

Nathan Dery is a senior who began his time at LCS in kindergarten. He shares how his time at LCS has been academically, socially, and spiritually formative. The following is an excerpt of his story. Read the full article on our blog: lansingchristianschool.org/blog

Student Nathan Dery pursues each opportunity with excellence. He is known for the positive attitude and inspirational growth mindset that he brings to each endeavor. Academically, Nathan has taken the opportunity to be challenged in several Advanced Placement (AP) classes: AP Chemistry, AP Spanish, and AP Biology. In AP Biology, he has been able to dive more deeply into his favorite subject - science. Nathan loves learning about DNA and genetics, an area he is considering pursuing in the future.

Nathan shares that his classes have contributed to his growth far beyond just academics. "I have slowly been growing in my confidence when talking with people. Especially in the past year, I have been able to confidently challenge myself to be more outgoing, which has helped greatly in my public speaking and relationships in general. My Communication and Culture class has been especially helpful with standing in front of people

to give speeches or just talk. There was specifically an improv speech I had to give. It didn't go perfectly, but it was good to challenge myself and risk it. It was exactly the push I needed, and helped my confidence." Nathan appreciates that LCS is an environment that has not only helped him succeed but also

"I wanted to experience everything LCS had to offer before I left, and I'm so glad I did."

safely fail. "I even look forward to the failures now," he says, "because I know through them, there is always something to learn."

Sports are a significant part of Nathan's experience at LCS. He participates in swimming, track and field, cross country, and tennis. In swimming, he has received numerous awards; one of his highlights this year was placing second overall in his division for the 100m freestyle. Nathan began participating in track and field in middle school and has continued throughout



Nathan places first in the 100m butterfly at an invitational.



high school. It was more recently, at the start of his senior year, that Nathan added tennis and cross country to his sports experience. "I wanted to experience everything LCS had to offer before I left," he explains, "and I'm so glad I did."

Being at LCS has allowed Nathan to develop and build his faith over many years. He says, "Growing up in a Christian atmosphere is a huge advantage for growing in your faith. LCS has helped me through ups and downs and has ultimately let me develop a relationship with God that is stronger and deeply rooted in who I am today."

Nathan's favorite thing about LCS is that it is more than just a school - it is a community that feels like a family. He shares, "Every day that I walk into school there is an atmosphere of camaraderie and just simple friendship that runs deep between each and every person, making school truly seem like home."

We Live and Learn in Christian Community

Helping Students Live Out God's Calling

By Katherine Lohman, College and Career Counselor

Through the advising program at LCS, students in grades 9-12 engage in various learning opportunities beyond the classroom that encourage lifelong, holistic development. The advising program supports the larger mission of the school to educate students to the "full extent of their God-given abilities." Our deep hope is to foster an environment of purposeful exploration and growth as students live out God's calling in both their present and future lives.

Students receive intentional guidance and support in areas such as college and career exploration, self-discovery assessment measures, and study and life skills. Lessons and activities are designed with the whole student in mind and acknowledge

the meaningful connection between spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical growth. Students are invited to reflect more deeply about their development through a digital growth portfolio, a living document that is updated throughout each student's high school experience. Through these intentional structures of support, we aim for students to graduate with an increased confidence in the story God is weaving in and through their lives while also being curious about the ways He is inviting them into His restorative kingdom work. Students receive tools to engage the plans God has for them without fear of the future and are encouraged to look forward with eager anticipation and hope in the work of engaging and transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

Holding Fast to Community

By Dan Carmichael, Athletic Director

On Friday, December 29, 2023, LCS hosted two alumni basketball games with 36 alumni players.

The girls game (alum vs. alum) began with our Head of School, Wendy Hofman, who played basketball all throughout her high school career at LCS (1977-81), throwing the ceremonial tip-off. Among the girls team participants, 14 different LCS classes were represented, ranging from 1986 to 2023. Two additional alumni coached the team.

Following the girls' game, the current LCS Varsity Boys Basketball team played a game against alumni. The alumni team included five members of the LCS 2017 state semifinalist team and was coached by an alumnus. Many other alumni were also present to cheer and volunteer.

When Boys Varsity Basketball Coach Grayson Fuller came up with the idea of an alumni game, his goal was to keep the former players connected with the current team. In just two years, the response has been fantastic, and we are excited that the girls' program is now also a part. The alumni game has quickly become a yearly event that we look forward to in the LCS community.



Our alumni are an honored part of the LCS community. The alumni basketball games are a time of reuniting and making new memories.

Read more about the evening on our blog: lansingchristianschool.org/blog

We Live and Learn in Christian Community



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[1] Middle school students participate in varsity sports by serving as water boys and stat keepers.

[2] High school Individual Musicianship students work with third graders to refine their skills in playing and composition.

[3] Middle and high school student small groups meet monthly to discuss and reflect on what they have learned in chapel.

[4] Senior and kindergarten buddies are paired together in the beginning of the year and meet monthly to connect and build relationships.

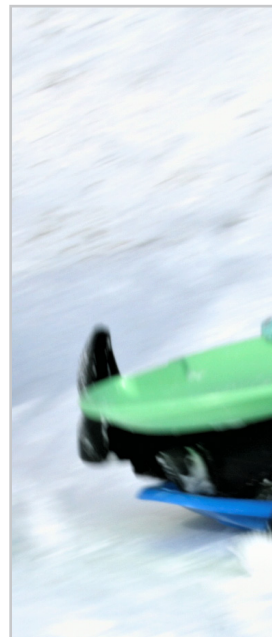
[5] High schoolers volunteer to help elementary students navigate the trails at the fall Fund Run.

[6] Sledding is a favorite winter activity for senior and kindergarten buddies.

[7] Fourth graders visit preschool classrooms to read to preschoolers.



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Developing Relationships Across Grades

At LCS, we intentionally structure opportunities for cross-grade partnerships. This creates a culture where relationships are formed among students in various grade levels, developing respect, support, empathy, and care for those in our community.

As one of the only PreK-12th grade school campuses in the area, we have the unique opportunity for students across grade levels to work together easily and often throughout the school year.



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We Partner with Christian Parents

Parents Pour Their Time and Talents into LCS



Left: Parents coach an elementary soccer team.



Right: Kindergarten parents help with the Thanksgiving feast.

Below: Parents speak to high school students at Career Day.



Parent volunteers set up our Fund Run course and are key to the success of this fall event.



Elementary Field Day gives parents and students time to celebrate the school year and work on teamwork skills.

Supporting Families through Parent EDU Sessions

By Melissa Kranzo, Communications Coordinator

Lansing Christian School exists to support parents in building a strong Christian foundation for their children. One of the ways we partner with parents and families is through our Parent EDU sessions, offered monthly at LCS. In these sessions, parents join together on campus to hear from teachers and administrators, meet other parents, enjoy coffee, and learn more about how to support their children in their education at LCS.

This year's topics have included LCS curriculum, study methods, stress management, healthy habits for learning, digital safety, reading development, and preparation for college and career.

This is our second year offering Parent EDU. LCS parents share that it has been a great way to connect with other parents, gain expertise, and support their students in their learning.

What LCS Parents are Saying about Parent EDU

"This was a wonderful class full of great information that I know will help me to help my child. The speaker was awesome."

High School Parent

"The session was really good. Very informative and a lot of take-away information. I really appreciated having this session."

Middle/High School Parent

"Loved the case studies from teachers and that the presenter shared at-home examples. I also appreciated all the tips and the science behind it. I learned a lot and have already put the tips into practice!"

Elementary/Middle School Parent



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Black AND Gold

CITY LIGHTS

Saturday, April 13, 2024

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