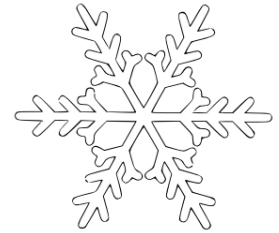


Mission Statement >>>

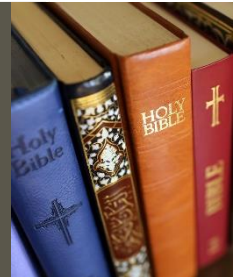
Our aim is to assist parents in educating covenant children in accordance with God's Word as we confess that in the Three Forms of Unity, to equip and assist them in developing their individual gifts and talents for a joyful life of responsible stewardship to God's glory.



www.harvestschool.ca

Principal: James Meinen

Connection



School Board >>>

Chairman: Jordan Kruisselbrink
Vice Chair: Joanie Vis
Secretary: Meaghan Hutten
Treasurer: Neil Post
Maintenance: Pete Groeneveld

Teaching Staff >>>

Grade 1-2 – Mrs. M. Kruisselbrink
Grade 3-4 – Miss E. deHaan
Grade 5-6 – Mrs. K DeGelder
Grade 7-8 – Miss A. Hutten
Principal – Mr. J. Meinen

Support Staff:

Mrs. S. deGelder
Mrs. L. Kruisselbrink
Mrs. B. Spanninga
Kindergarten: Mrs. Margaret Spanninga

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Chair: Joanie Vis
Vice Chair: Jenn Gunnink
Secretary: Janelle VanTol
Member: Lindsay Hutten

Public Relations Committee >>>

Chair: Henrietta Groeneveld
Secretary: Meaghan Hutten
Member: Ashlea Groeneveld

ADDRESS:

177551 Concession 5
Owen Sound, ON, N4K 5N5
Phone: 519-371-4498

Fax: 519-371-6532

Email: principal@harvestschool.ca &
ashleagroeneveld@harvestschool.ca

"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11

From the Board

End of December already... 4 months of the school year are completed! What a wonderful time of year it is, celebrating the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ! With two weeks away from school, students and staff will have a well-deserved break.

I don't have much new to report on since the fall membership meeting but we would like to welcome Alec to the board. Big thanks to Joanie for all her efforts over the last 4 years and her continued contribution as bookkeeper! Please continue to pray for our school; the staff, students, volunteers, board, Ed. Com and the other various committees as we work together to fulfill our Christian mandate. We hope everyone has an enjoyable time with family and friends.

I would like to leave you with the following excerpt from a Ligonier article I recently read. Luke 2:8-20. Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." (vv13-14) While Mary and Joseph tended to their son, many shepherds were nearby tending their flocks. No one could have predicted that the

first people to hear of Jesus outside of His parents would be a crew of shepherds. Nevertheless, an angel of the Lord appeared to these men, who got to watch the greatest sound-and-light show of all time.

Understandably, the shepherds were afraid, but in this case the glory of the Lord's presence, which they could otherwise not endure, was a good thing. This was the announcement of the Savior, the One who had come to redeem everyone. So, after the angels sang their praises to the Lord, the shepherds hastily traveled into Bethlehem to see the wonderful gift the Father had given to His people. The shepherds were eager to see the Savior of the world, and we should be eager to see Him as well. This involves not only coming to Him in our conversions but also seeking His face each and every day of our lives. Though we will not see the fullness of His glory until we see Him face to face in heaven, we will nonetheless come to a fuller appreciation of this glory as we study His Word and pray to Him. Let this be our focus over the Christmas holidays!

Jordan Kruisselbrink
boardchair@harvestschool.ca

>>> *Treasurer's Report*

Another year draws to a close. It seems like the years pass by in a flash. As we enter the Christmas season, we are reminded of the many blessings that have been provided. As a community, we can see the Lord's handiwork amongst us and this applies to Harvest School in so many ways. The past year saw an addition of the highschool grades, along with the extra costs of setting up

facilities and then staffing. In spite of this, the school has been provided for with its financial needs being met. Last fiscal year had a surplus and we are currently meeting our budgeted needs. A lot of thanks to the many donors who contributed in regular ways, but also those who are convicted to donate extra as they are able. Praise the Lord

for providing year after year. As the year draws to a close, please keep in mind that a 2023 receipt can only be issued for donations that are received and deposited in this year. Enjoy the Christmas season as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

Neil Post, Treasurer
treasurer@harvestschool.ca

DONATIONS ALWAYS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED!

Please ensure that any 2023 donations are received before December 31 in order to be receipted in February 2024. Please send e-transfers to treasurer@harvestschool.ca
See www.harvestschool.ca for rates

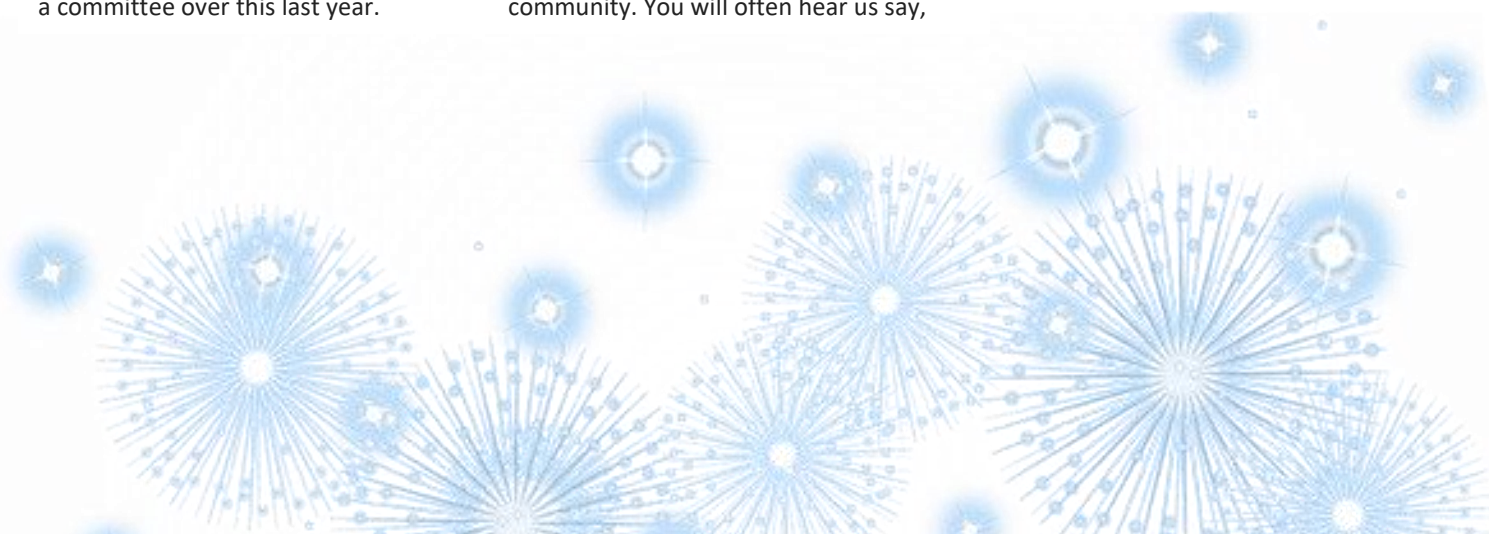
>>> *From the Public Relations Committee*

As Public Relations, we extend our well wishes to family and friends this season. It's a time where we can reflect back over the 2023 year and consider how the Lord has been guiding our Harvest community. He is a faithful Father who loves us as His own. Our response of thanksgiving for this love can be heard in word and music through Harvest students this month especially in our classes and Christmas assembly. As PR there are several other topics for thanksgiving that we have focused on as a committee over this last year.

You will find a Christmas card in your mailbox that pictures a large number of Harvest students, including grades 9 & 10. We especially thank members and our supporting community for continuing to cherish the Reformed education brought to their children at Harvest which has led to expanding our grades. PR spends time lightening the load where needed in terms of advertising and communication. As we review our contact relationships regularly, we are glad to have welcomed new members and donors to the Harvest community. You will often hear us say,

"Come spend time at Harvest with us and see just how beautiful it is!" We pray everyone feels welcome. In 2024 we will continue to promote Harvest, and encourage connection in Harvest through various means of communication. Praise our Lord, from whom all blessings flow!
On behalf of the PR,

Henrietta Groeneveld
publicrelations@harvestschool.ca



From the Education Committee



As we prepare to close out the year 2023 we can look back and reflect on God's goodness to us including here at Harvest. We are so thankful for a staff that continues to strive to share the Word of God with our children in every subject that is taught as well as in their regular walk of life. This year we were blessed to welcome Katharine DeGelder to our staff and this coming spring we will say goodbye to her from our staff although she will be remaining here in Owen Sound but with a different task ahead of her. We wish you the Lord's blessing in the remainder of your teaching here as well as in the new task ahead. With her leaving we are again in need of teachers here at Harvest. With the addition of High School the need is even greater. At the end of April – beginning of May we hope to welcome Miss Makayla Kruisselbrink. Makayala will have just finished her schooling at Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College and we are so thankful to her for her willingness to step into the classroom here. We know her well and know she has lots of energy and enthusiasm for teaching so we can look forward to her smiling face in the grade 5/6 classroom and a few other classes as well. We will also welcome Miss Mckenna Meinen in February in our high school math class. Mckenna is also a familiar face to us here in Owen Sound. She has been working hard over the last half year in

preparation of attending CCRTC in the fall of 2024, the Lord willing. We are very thankful for her expertise in Math and her willingness to share this with our current high school students. We hope this is a great experience for her, and a good learning experience as she hopes to become a teacher in the future. We are very thankful many people are willing to volunteer in high school as we prepare for the second semester, in addition to the many volunteers in the grade school classes. We are so blessed with a community of people with willing hearts and hands and so many talents that they eagerly share and use to God's glory! On a different note we are excited to finally be able to share our core values! What started a couple of years ago in an evening meeting has finally been complete. What are core values you might wonder? To borrow the words of Mark Hutten and Hutten Co.:
"The core values at Hutten & Co. were developed to describe the heart of who we are. A group of aligned professionals with a shared mission, captivating and inspiring people within naturalized spaces. These are values we've consistently come to hire by, and they continue to define our team and brand today".
What started as a long list of things we desire for our school, our children and ourselves to reflect in the community God has placed us has been condensed into 5 values. Each value is accompanied by a

verse from scripture that reflects how we are glorifying God in what we do. At this past school assembly Mr.Meinen shared the first core value poster:

Chosen – I belong, Psalm 100:3.

Mrs. Julia Feenstra was at our school recently taking pictures of the students and activities here at Harvest to use for these posters and they will soon be displayed in the gym and all over the school. The other values are:

Fruitful – Gal 5:22-23

Serving – 1 Pet 4:10

Anchored – Ps 18:2

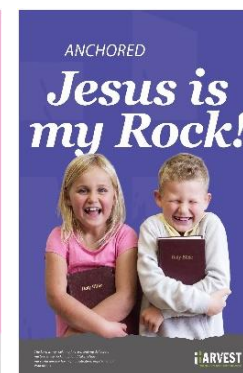
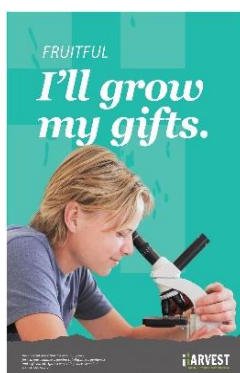
Eternal – 2 Cor 1:20-22

These core values will be the focus of our theme assemblies, where they will be unpacked and explained further. We will use these in teaching, in building school and classroom atmosphere and hope to reflect them on report cards and staff reviews as well. All these values are based on love. Our theme text of Christ's love for us and the importance of us then showing love is a perfect fit for these values. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11. We look forward to sharing the rest of the posters and values and growing together in service to God.

We wish everyone a blessed Christmas holidays and New year and look forward to returning to school in the new year 2024!

Joanie Vis

educationcommittee@harvestschool.ca



»» From the Principal

As we close out the first portion of the school year, I think many of us can attest to the fact this has been a very busy four months! Part of that busyness stems from the fact so many of you have been active volunteering in a variety of capacities here at Harvest. For Harvest to run smoothly it really takes a whole church community. I was struck recently with how many people were in the building helping. In a two day span of walking through the building I noted six volunteers driving/chaperoning class trips, a group of volunteers helping with poinsettia sales, several volunteers were in the school helping with one on one student support, other volunteers were in the library, another volunteer was teaching, another volunteer was testing our water, other volunteers were up on ladders changing light bulbs in the gym, another volunteer was helping with the installation of fibre cable internet and others were school cleaning. That's quite the list! Based on my math, that's twenty different volunteers in our building in two days. And that quick list doesn't include all those working hard on committees behind the scenes.

It is wonderful for our students to see Christian love and service on display every day at Harvest. It is clear we don't walk through life on our own.

As a community it is clear we have invested a significant amount of time into these young people's lives.

Such a large investment reminds me of an excerpt of an article I shared in a Connection several years ago by Melissa Greiss that is worth sharing again.

Any education, whether Christian or public, is an investment in time. The precious hours in our children's lives are limited, so we must make wise decisions about where that time is spent and with whom it is spent. For me, the decision has always been an easy one: I want my children to be surrounded by role models and other influences that boldly proclaim God's truth and reinforce my family's values.

It is easy to see why a Christian education is important once you start doing the math and considering how much potential time our children could spend being influenced by a culture that isn't God-honoring. In the average family, a young person spends about 13,000 hours between the ages of six and eighteen directly interacting with their parents (11, 290 hours) and attending church (1,730 hours). These are those impactful moments when values are instilled, and lessons are learned to forge the character of our children.

Now consider this: the average student spends 20,020 hours before age eighteen interacting with media. If you are making a comparison between how much time your child is being influenced by you as opposed to how much time he is being influenced by others, you are already behind by seven thousand hours!

And that is when you have to make the 17,000 hour decision: Where my child will attend school?

Making sure our children can attend a Christian school from kindergarten to grade 10 has been an important step in assisting parents to make sure their children are in an environment where His Word serves as a foundation for all that we do. Expanding our school this year to include grade 9/10 to help in this regard has been a wonderful blessing. However, like any new endeavour there have been some

growing pains and are thankful for the parents and students who served and serve as pioneers in our new endeavour.

We are also thankful to all those who have devoted so much time and effort to high school. It has been a lot of work, but that work is a wonderful investment! As we wrap up semester one and begin to plan for semester two, please continue to remember both the students, parents, and teachers in your prayers. Finally, a very big special thanks goes out to Mrs. Sarah deGelder for teaching Food and Nutrition this past semester and Mrs. Bonita Spanninga for teaching Art. Your hard work is very much appreciated!

Going back to the discussion about how we invest our time, I like to share an article Derek Stoffels wrote a few years ago about smartphones (but that is still very pertinent today!) Mr. Stoffels is the principal of Ebenezer Christian School in Smithers BC and his article shares some valuable insights on cell phones and our children. The article can be found later in this Connection.



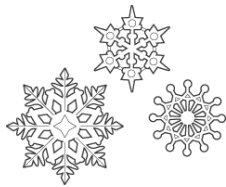
Looking Ahead...

As we enter a new calendar year in a couple weeks, the Education Committee has been busy working on all the details for semester two for grade 9/10. For semester two we welcome Ms. McKenna Meinen to the high school teaching team. Ms. Meinen will be teaching math along with Mrs. Sylvia Feenstra as a parent volunteer. The two are very strong in math and will be wonderful supports to the students. I will be teaching English, PE and Bible, and the students will have an online class in the

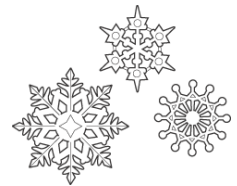
afternoon (grade 9 – French and grade 10 – Civics and Careers). Work is also being done to prepare for Mrs. De Gelder's maternity leave. We are excited to have Ms. Makayla Kruisselbrink join us in May/June to cover the final part of the year. Next semester we also welcome Rowen DeJager into the grade 5/6 classroom who will spend part of the mornings with us as a coop student. Finally, we are also busy looking ahead and planning for the 2024/2025 school year. We are looking for a grade 5/6 teacher for next year.

Please check out the wonderfully designed ad at the bottom of this page. That's it from the principal's desk for now. I'd like to wrap up this report by once again thanking our community for all the support the school continues to receive. Please continue to remember us in your prayers and may Harvest continue to be a blessing to this community.

James Meinen,
principal@harvestschool.ca



CLUBS ARE COMING IN FEBRUARY
If you have a skill or are interested in helping in any way, please contact the school!



NOW HIRING
Inspire Faithful Minds.
Join Harvest as a Junior/Intermediate Teacher (Mat. Leave Contract) to help us educate the next generation in accordance to God's word.
iARVEST
Email your resume to James Meinen at principal@harvestschool.ca

Grade 7/8 Psalms

PSALM 151

By Easton deGelder

God how great are your works
Oh God you are more powerful than all the evil
that lurks
Dear Father, you make clean our sins like the
water that is murky!

I know you made the world and everything in it
So much is your love for it is infinite!

God your forgiveness is forever
Oh Father for you know the stars and the sand
and you have numbered them
Oh Lord for you love us and your love is ever
flowing
Dear Father, you are indescribable!

Psalm 155

A psalm of the daughter of Gary Vis

¹ Praise the Father up on high,
Praise the Father in the sky.
For He is carrying us.

² Salvation came from His dear Son,
From the Savior Three In One.
For He is the Perfect One.

³ He is ever near us,
He will always hear us.
For He is a good God.

⁴ He will keep us,
He will always be with us.
He is with us.

⁵ God will carry me,
Forever and always,
Amen.



Psalm 152

By Esther Feenstra

The Lord is almighty
He is our mighty Lord
Exceedingly Great

Loving to all His children
Our God is loving to all
Rejoice for God is good
Delivered us from sin

Incredible is our God
Selfless is our God

All things depend on God
Listening to all our prayers
Mighty to save
Indescribable He is
Good to everything
Heavenly Father
There He is riding on the clouds
Yahweh is our God

My Psalm

A Psalm of Praise to God

By Cooper Kruisselbrink

1When I look at the stars and the sky,
Lord, I see you there.

2When I look at the mountains, how
they touch the sky,
Lord, I see you there

3When I look down at the depths of
the sea,
Lord, I see you there.

4When I see the trees in there
mightiness,
Lord, I see you there.

5When I look at the kingdoms of the
earth,
Lord, I see sin there.

6When I see man's worries and fears,
Lord, I see sin there.

7When I see my small and weak self,
Lord, I see sin there.

8When I see the cross,
Lord, I see you there.

Psalm 212

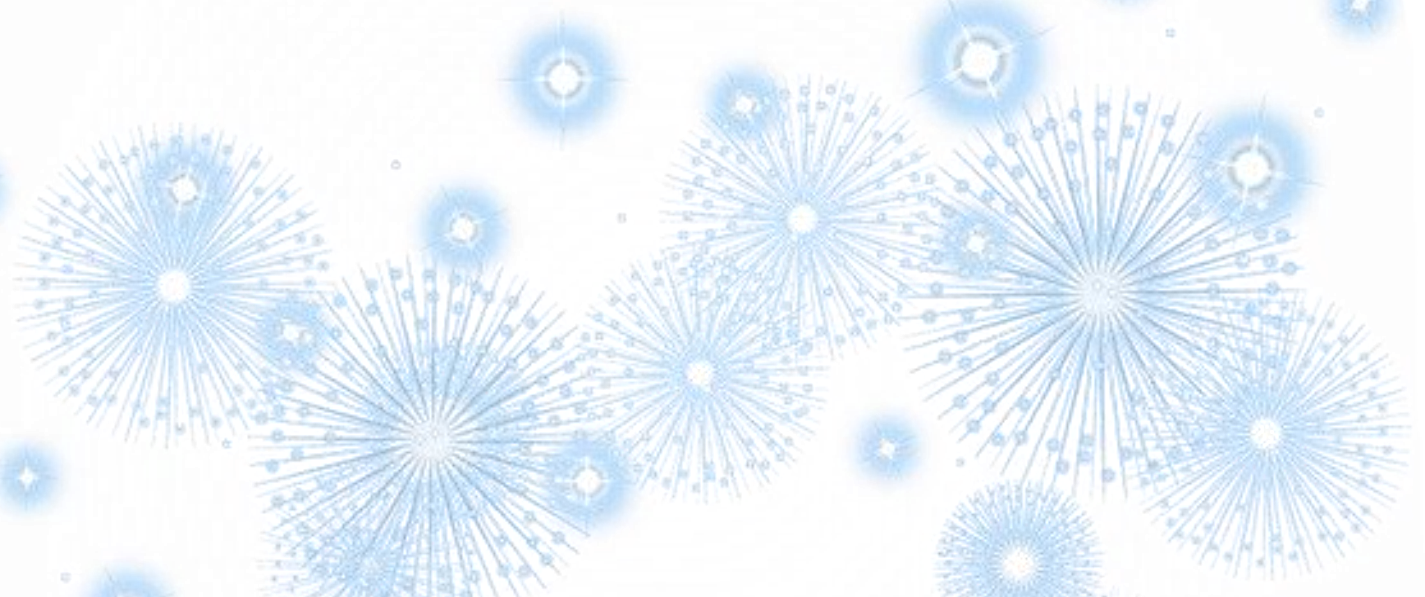
To the student of Jenna, A psalm of Praise

¹ I will sing to God,
I will praise His Marvelous name.
² He counts the sand,
He numbers the stars.
³ He paints the heavens
with His fingertips.
⁴ Each intricate snowflake,
Each blade of grass.
The LORD has made them all.
⁵ You made the trees and the flowers,
You hold the world in your hands.
⁶ You do not turn your back on us, You guide us back
like sheep and a Shepherd.
⁷ There is no problem too small that God does not
care.
Nor a problem too big that God cannot handle.
⁸ When we call out to God,
He will hear us.
He will listen to our pleas and answer us.
⁹ Deeper than the deepest ocean, where the fish find
their homes,
Yes, even deeper than the ocean is your love!
¹⁰ Creation groans from all the sin,
Yet You promise to make us new again.
¹¹ You gave your life so I could have mine.
You have saved us so we could see you in Paradise.
¹² You came as a babe,
Humbled yourself to come to this earth full of evil.
¹³ You went on that cross,
Died in our place.
¹⁴ You, my God, have saved my soul!
I am Yours forevermore!
¹⁵ I will sing to God,
I will praise His Marvelous name!

Psalm 201

Of Hutten. A Psalm of Thanksgiving.

1 Up in the heavens, oh Lord there you are,
You created Adam out of dust.
2 You witnessed Eve take a bite of that tree,
You guided Moses across the Red Sea.
You drowned the headstrong Pharaoh and all his
men.
3 You were with the Isrealites,
Though they complained.
4 Giving them the Ten Commandments,
They disobeyed and made a gold cow,
Before your greatness.
5 Yet You fought for Your children,
You destroyed their enemies.
6 Oh Lord, how great you are!
Wonderful is your compassion.
Your love and gentleness is awesome!
7 Yet Lord we still sin,
Our transgressions are great.
8 But then oh Lord you did come to our aid,
You sent your Son to die for our sins.
9 Showing mercy and kindness,
he died on a tree,
a tree that you created oh God.
10 Like a lamb to the slaughter
On the cross He entered the greatest anguish.
11 Thank you Lord for such sacrifice.
We didn't deserve it.
But our sins you redeemed!
12 Thank you Lord, all praise to you!
Oh praise the lord!



A Psalm Of Praise

By Brynn Meinen

**Our God is great, praise Him.
Under his feathers He protected us, praise Him.
Radiant ruler majestic in all the earth, praise Him.**

**God is good, God is great, praise Him.
On his throne He stands, praise Him.
Did He not send his son to the earth? Praise Him.**

**Is He not supreme over all the earth? Praise Him.
Slain was the Lamb of God, praise Him.**

**Alpha and Omega, amazing God, praise Him.
Never ceasing mercy, praise Him.**

**Almighty Father, you cleansed us of sin. Praise Him.
Wise God, wise Lord, praise Him.
Eternal Lord who cares and watches over us, praise Him.
Suffered but rose again, praise Him.**

**Ocean to ocean you hold in your hand, praise Him.
Mighty King, Mighty Lord, praise Him.
Even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear
no evil. Praise Him!**

**Gracious Savior, praise Him.
Omnipresent there will never be a time when He is not present, praise Him.
Dagon and Baal can not hear or see but He is mighty. Praise Him!**



Enjoying God's Creation during Recess at Harvest

Smart Phones – Derek Stoffels

Technological change often has unintended or unforeseen impacts. Typically society is eager to embrace technological change. People sounding cautions are easily drowned out. We live in a time of tremendous technological change in the area of connectivity. This is driven by the combination of the internet, social media and the smartphone.

As this technology became widely available it was swept up by consumers including our school community. It might surprise people to realize that the smartphone social media revolution did not start until around 2008. The first iPhone came out in the summer of 2007. Android devices first came out in 2008. The iPad came out in 2010. When viewed in that light it is really incredible how rapidly we have embraced the smartphone, social media, other applications and video providers like Netflix.

In less than 10 years people have gone from a single computer at home to multiple portable devices with the home computer getting less and less use as tablets, and smartphones become the preferred format. Popular social media sites are optimized for mobile devices instead of for home computers.

A quick scan of the internet (go ahead ask Siri, Cortana, Alexa or Google assistant) shows that we are seeing the first real cracks though in the embrace of connectivity. More and more people are issuing cautions or warnings about the impact of screen time. Screen time is the overarching term used to capture all uses related to smartphones, computers, tablets, television etc. What was not supported by science back in 2008, because it did not exist yet, now has studies that can be referred to.

As a person with a strong streak of skepticism towards studies I do wonder which ones will stand the test of time and how the interpretations will change. However, I do think that there are sufficiently credible warning signs identified by the studies that we can and should reflect on how this revolution is affecting us, our families and the communities we are part of. I will refer mainly to an article from a recent issue of The Atlantic Monthly magazine. They published an article dramatically titled “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?”

The article is a summary of Jean Twenge’s book titled: “iGEN : why today’s super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy--and completely unprepared for adulthood and what that means for the rest of us”). That title is no less dramatic than the article title.

Labeling generations has been a bit of a fad over the last decades. Baby-boomers, generation X, Y, Z, millennials, post millennials, iGen and on it goes, but it is worth noting that kids today have never known life without the internet. It is not just their use of the internet but also that they have likely seen adults use the internet via the smartphone from their birth onwards.

Screen time has increased significantly in their lifetime. I only have space to pass on the main thrust of the article. It is too long to do more. That thrust is that kids are displaying certain worrying trends that are attributed to excessive screen time. They are having more screen time, less sleep, less happiness, weaker social skills, disturbing deficits in empathy, delayed adolescence (18-year-olds acting like 15 year olds from the previous generation), staying home more instead of going out with friends, and showing increased rates of depression and suicide.

That is not a pretty lineup. Twenge says that starting in 2012 distinct changes in survey results in these areas became apparent. She connects that to the moment smartphone ownership passed the 50% mark

in the USA. Rates of teen depression and suicide have “skyrocketed” she says, and she says it can be linked to their connectivity via the smartphones and what that takes away, which is personal face to face interaction and activity away from smartphones. She does mention that suicide levels in the 1990s were as high as now.

So, while Smartphones and social media plays a role today there may be more behind it. Quoting a study that has gone on since 1975 she says that without a single exception screen activities are linked to less happiness and all non-screen activities are linked to more happiness. This is something for us to think very seriously about as a school community.

If that is true, we need to be ensuring that we have significant limits on our screen time and that of our children. It is not that happiness is so important. It is creating healthy patterns and allowing Christian joy to exist and flourish. Twenge says “if you are going to give advice for a happy adolescence based on this survey, it would be straightforward: Put down the phone, turn off the laptop, and do something –anything-that does not involve a screen.”

An article by Nick Bilton writing in the NY Times in 2014 has been frequently quoted in connection with managing screen time. He interviewed Steve Jobs from Apple around the time of the launch of the iPad and commented to Jobs that his kids must love the iPad. Jobs reply was “they have not used one. I limit how much access to technology they have.” Steve Jobs reportedly did not allow his children access to iPads and similar technology, refused to have television in his house and made a point of intentional daily supper time conversation about good books, world events, history and so on.

Bilton interviewed other executives in the tech industry and was surprised by how many of them had significant restrictions in the home on access to technology for their children and themselves. This is one of the most important points I think we need to take away for ourselves and our children especially if we have allowed them to have a phone. Think carefully about the access you give you children to technology and limit it substantially. The benefits of it need to far outweigh the negatives because the negatives are substantial according to the studies that Twenge cites.

One of the restrictions that seems common is do not allow devices in bedrooms. Buy alarm clocks and have the devices in a central spot in the main living area. Another point is to have specific times where no one uses a device. Supper time is a very common one, Sundays are another, some people say not during the school week. In most cases there is no reason for a child to need a phone so you could even just say no. Not many people support the last one.

In closing, the evidence is starting to mount that our embrace of smartphones, social media and therefore increased screen time, has serious consequences. So, we need to get serious about managing that. If that means getting rid of them then do so. If that means reducing time spent on it, then do so. But just don't do nothing about it is the basic message.