

THE PARK PARTNER

FALL 2020



Thankful

for each of these staff pointing our kids toward Jesus and teaching truth in the classroom.



WHAT I SEE...

Chris Nellermoe, *President*

What I See - Keeping 'the main thing the main thing'!

Over the past year, all of us have been asked to change, adjust, and pivot our routines and normal activities beyond anything we could have imagined. As President of Park Christian School, this challenging time has caused me to reflect and consider how we go about focusing on our priorities.

How do we keep 'the main thing the main thing' as we step forward into the 2020-21 school year?

I believe that, by God's grace, we must:

- Live in the freedom of God's saving love for us in Jesus;
- Support our dedicated teachers and administrative staff;
- Provide excellent, Christ-centered academics;
- Love the students, families, and friends of Park Christian School.

We have a God who is for us and loves us so incredibly!
Romans 8:38-39 says it best:

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Living in the freedom of this truth is 'the main thing.'

The blessing of having a teaching and support staff of born-again, growing disciples of Jesus Christ who impact the lives of our students on a daily basis is an amazing distinctive of Park Christian School. Through morning devotions on campus, involvement in the local church, and personal quiet times, each person employed at PCS is called to minister and point our students to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Maintaining and investing in the employees of Park Christian School is 'the main thing.'

Each day, Christ-centered academics remain a top priority. Preparing our students at every grade level to be critical thinkers who are also collaborative, creative, and effective communicators drives our curricular goals and effective teaching strategies. Within this, we place an equal emphasis on bringing Jesus Christ into the classroom daily through prayer, devotions, Bible classes, chapels, and a sense of gratefulness for the freedom we have to train our students in righteousness. Educating students with quality Christ-centered academics is 'the main thing.'

One of the noticeable absences in the spring of 2019 as a result of COVID-19 was the fellowship, community, and sense of family we have at PCS. One of our core values is to partner with Christian parents. We embrace the responsibility of parents in their students' lives and celebrate the partnership between families within the school community.

You are loved Park Christian School families, alumni, and donors! Caring for you and partnering with you to equip our students to think Biblically, live wisely, and serve faithfully is 'the main thing.'

These past months cannot take these priorities away, and be assured that, as I lead, we will keep 'the main thing the main thing.' I am beyond grateful for this amazing school.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us! Romans 8:37



THE MATTHEW & LAURIE DE VRIES FAMILY

When distance learning became a new phrase back in March and the kids started class each day at the computer, we knew that this would be a different experience. To be honest, there were tears (from child and parent both), friends and teachers were missed and daily hugs from the office ladies were not there each morning; however, we learned quickly that PCS was still there for our girls. We are so grateful for the adjustments the teachers made to move the classroom to the computer. Although being at home was not the same, the children still received a quality PCS education and strong faith foundation each and every day. The adults in our family, as well as the kids, have learned to be better with change, more flexible to not having it our way, and more trusting in the Lord to guide the path.

March to May of 2020 has brought a great deal of memories, but this family is so very excited to be in-person at Park Christian each day. These first few weeks of class have shown us that PCS administrators and teachers are doing all they can to keep our kids safe, to keep our kids in school, and to communicate the good and the challenging events with the parents.

Brenna and Molly were asked a few questions to see what life has been like for them as PCS students during times like this...



Matthew, Laurie, Brenna & Molly De Vries

How do you feel about returning to PCS in-person?



Brenna – Really really really excited because we get to go every day and be around my friends again.



Molly – So excited to be able to see my friends again. I just love school!

What was the good part of remote learning at the end of last year?



Brenna – I still got to see my classmates over Microsoft Teams and was able to complete my school work anywhere I wanted to be (office, couch, bed).



Molly – Extra pajama time if I wanted! I loved being able to see the kids in my class over the computer too.

What do you hope for during this year at Park



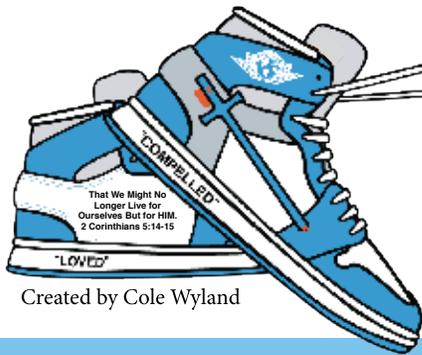
Christian School?

Brenna & Molly – To stay in school the whole year!



CLASS OF 2021 – COMPELLED

The senior class met over Zoom last May to discuss what direction we wanted to go this year with our theme. COVID-19 and the effect it would have on this school 2020-2021 year was a big part of our discussion. We wanted a theme that would cause people to look to Jesus and what's important in life when many things are taken away. The class voted to go with *2 Corinthians 5:14-15* "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." The verse goes through the basics of Christianity, that Christ died for everyone, and because of that, His Christians to love others unselfishly.



Created by Cole Wyland

love has changed all our lives. The love he showed to die on the cross for us allows us as Our lives are no longer for ourselves but should be lived for Christ! Only when we truly understand Christ's love for us can we then love others unselfishly. Then we can be compelled to live a life of love, whether that be by serving others or continuing to share the gospel in light of eternity. I pray that you all have a deep revelation of Christ's love this year.

Grace Schmidt, PCS 12th Grade



Class of 2021

DISTANCE LEARNING – A Teacher's Thoughts

If I were to make a list of the most challenging events in my life, switching to distance learning in just two days would be near the top of that list. It was a challenge I felt ill-prepared for, but I dove in with both feet and spent many hours getting my new virtual classroom up and running. Those early days are a blur of sleepless nights, thousands of text messages and chats with colleagues, and learning more information faster than I ever thought possible. As the days turned into weeks and eventually months, it was those colleagues that carried me through. We collaborated more online than we ever did in person by sharing our new technology discoveries and connecting about struggling students. We comforted each other in the struggles we faced each day, and we lightened the mood with well-timed memes when the days got long. I have always enjoyed and respected my colleagues at Park Christian, but I appreciate them so much more after distance learning. They are truly an amazing group of people.

When people ask about distance learning, my response

is always the same: "It is all the work of teaching without much of the fun." I'm passionate about mathematics and love teaching it to my students, but that isn't what keeps me returning to the classroom day in and day out. I think any teacher would tell you that the hard work of creating lesson plans that are dynamic and engaging pays off in the relationships we create with the students in our classroom. It's the random crazy tangents that turn into a class discussion that sticks with me for years later. It's the fist bump that you expect from that one student every time you see them. It's the opportunity to drop everything in the middle of class and pray for a student who needs it. It's those daily interactions that keep me coming back to the classroom year after year, and it's those interactions that were desperately missed during distance learning. Sure, I tried my best to connect. I tried to chat with every student personally each week and had some great conversations. I held office hours several times a week where sometimes we would talk about math and other times simply catch up on life. In the end, however, the connections were still through a screen, and I missed the everyday spontaneous life that exists in a classroom full of teenagers.

I am three months past distance learning, and I think I'm finally able to look back on the experience and appreciate the things I learned. For the most part, the kids rocked at distance learning. They worked hard, asked questions, and made the best of a challenging situation. Because of what we learned together, I am far more apt to try out a digital activity than I ever was before, I find it a lot easier for students who are absent to catch up if I record a lesson while I'm teaching it, and the students ask questions on Teams as they work on their homework in the evening. I'm not eager to go back to distance learning, but if I have to, I know I have a great support system in my colleagues and I will seek to continue to make connections with my students in whatever way I can.

Amanda Biebighauser, PCS Teacher



LEAVING A LEGACY

What a wonderful blessing God has given to us to be grandparents of students who are attending Park Christian School!

We first became acquainted with Park Christian School in 1996-97 when our oldest daughter, Jennie, was hired as Assistant Superintendent. At that time, Terinne Berg was the superintendent, and Jerry Jones was the development director. The classes were only K through 8th grade. When Park decided to add on to their building for future growth, they needed to move the playground. Jennie told Jerry that her dad, who was then retired, owned a bobcat, had worked with heavy road equipment, and would maybe be interested with working on the project. Jerry contacted Duane, and Duane said he would be happy to help others in getting this accomplished. This included leveling the ground, removing trees, and preparing the area for the new playground equipment. A year later, Park added 9th grade, and Jim Kroshus was hired as high school principal. He then asked Duane to help with painting stripes in the parking lot, planting trees, laying sod, and installing and moving bleachers and lockers, while Grace helped with secretarial projects and even painted an inside wall. Today we see many changes with the newest additions that have taken place.

In 2001, one of the greatest joys of our lives happened. We became grandparents to Amanda Grace Strom, our first grandchild. How we loved and adored this little girl and watching her grow up! During the next three years a beautiful grandson, Alex, and another darling little granddaughter, Anna Lynn, were added to the family. What joy these little ones brought and how fast they grew up! It wasn't long before they would start school.

While volunteering at the school and interacting with staff, we knew that the teachers were

dedicated to God and that they strived to help each child know Jesus and how to love and serve Him. There was no question in our mind as to where our grandchildren should attend. When each child turned four, their parents agreed that Park Christian School would provide the best education and biblical training for Amanda, Alex and Anna.

Our lives have been involved with Park now for many years. We've enjoyed attending the programs of each child as they get older, especially the 3rd grade Famous People speeches. Amanda was Helen Keller, Alex was Henry Ford, and Anna was Jane Adams. Music performances were another highlight. How proud we feel as grandparents when we see our grandkids and other children singing and praising God! We try to stay "young" by going to as many of their volleyball and basketball games as we can. Since 2006, we had not missed a Grandparent's Day and always looked forward to visiting the classrooms and meeting their teachers. We missed 2019 because of a snowstorm. Amanda graduated and now attends Grand Canyon University in Arizona while Alex is a junior and Anna is in 9th grade at PCS. We again thank God for the blessings He has given to us. It has been an honor to support this school, and we pray that for many years to come Park will continue influencing the lives of precious young people as they grow closer to Jesus and make their lives count for Him. Thank you, Park, for helping us train our precious grandchildren to walk and follow in God's ways.

*Duane & Grace
Hoven and
grandchildren,
Amanda,
Alex &
Anna Strom*



NEW PLAYGROUND

OVER \$6,141,160 WAS GIVEN TO ACCOMPLISH PHASE 1 EXPANSION IN 2019

School in-person five days a week
395 students



93% OF 9-12TH GRADERS WERE INVOLVED IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES WHILE MAINTAINING A 3.65 AVERAGE G.P.A. IN 2019-2020.

We praise God for 69 new students who joined PCS this fall from 38 new families.

\$926,063.20 HAS BEEN GIVEN OR PLEDGED IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2019-20 TOWARDS EXPANSION INITIATIVES, SCHOLARSHIPS AND ENDOWMENTS.

STUDENT-TO-TEACHER RATIO 14:1

The average tenure of our staff is 9 years of experience. Our teachers and staff, made up of born-again followers of Christ, is the foundation for who we are.

520 ALUMNI (2002-2020)

Christ-centered environment



2020 PCS GRADUATES WERE OFFERED **\$2,131,397** IN SCHOLARSHIPS

AVERAGE ACT SCORE:

24.77

(for 95% of graduates 2002-2019)

NATIONAL AVERAGE: **20**

97% of graduates attend college.

Fully accredited through **ACSI & COGNIA**

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702 Communications
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Nexus Innovations, Inc.
Nine Dragons/Slap Shot Pizza
Nodak Insurance Company
Northwestern Bank

Nova Fire Protection Co.
Obermiller Engineering
Personal Touch Marketing & Manufacturing, Inc.
Petro Serve USA
Quality Auto Body Shop
River Rock Property
Sandman Structural Engineers
Scheels
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Small Wonders Preschool & Child Care Center, Inc.
Smile Care
Terry's Home Repair Inc.
Thimjon Courier, Inc.
Tom & Serene Ystebøe
Trane
Troy Wyland Enterprises, Inc.
Van Dam Chiropractic
Ward Muscatell Automotive
West Acres
Zack Heuring Agency,
State Farm Insurance and Financial Services
ZCON

MEMBER CHURCHES

Bethel Church
(since 1981)

Calvary Church at Village Green
(since 2014)

Northview Church
(since 1981)

Metropolitan Baptist
(since 1993)

River Valley Assembly of God
(since 1991)

Salem Evangelical Free
(since 1991)

Triumph Lutheran Brethren
(since 1996)



What a great time to support these businesses that support Park Christian School!