

Reveal

Jenison Christian School Education Foundation Newsletter

Jenison Christian School is celebrating its 90th year!

Jenison Christian School is celebrating its 90th year of education this school year!

To celebrate God's faithfulness and blessings over the last 90 years we will be telling some of the extraordinary stories that God orchestrated in our school's history. We invite you to share in the joy and praise the Lord with us as we look back and reflect on just a few of the many ways God has directed our school's story to where it is today.



Jenison Christian School launched in 1930 with a group of 31 students in 8 different grades and the support of the Jenison Christian Reformed Church. The school met in the basement of the Church for the next 5 years. The school community worked together to overcome challenges of The Great Depression with a focus on teaching kids about God's goodness. Over its first three decades, JCS grew to having 620 students on two separate campuses. This growth raised questions of where to go and how to meet the

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Principal Tim Paauw

Welcome

This is our first publication from the Education Foundation of Jenison Christian School. The Education Foundation for JCS has been in existence since 1982 and has been blessed with the opportunity to invest and steward over one million dollars of donations that directly help JCS each year in keeping tuition costs affordable.

The JCS Education Foundation is thrilled to partner with Jenison Christian School in this first year of Reveal as we celebrate 90 years as a school community together! Our sincere hope in this publication is to share what JCS School Community is all about through picture and print. As part of our effort to tell our stories and share in God's faithfulness through the generations, we have been hard at work updating our contact information. If this is your first time hearing from us in a while, we want to welcome you back and reconnect! If you know of someone from the community who attended JCS but may not be in our contact list yet, we would love for you to share that information by emailing Liz Wiersema, JCS Team Member for Donor Relations. She can be reached at lwiersema@jenisonchristian.org

Whether this is your first year in the JCS school community or you've been with us for a while, we hope you enjoy this first publication of Reveal. It won't be our last!

In Christ,
Tim Paauw
Principal



November 2019

*Celebrating 90th Birthday at
Jenison Christian*

Welcome

*The JCS Education Foundation
Revealed*

Jenison Christian Library

JCS News

Psalm 78:4, 6 "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done...so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born..."

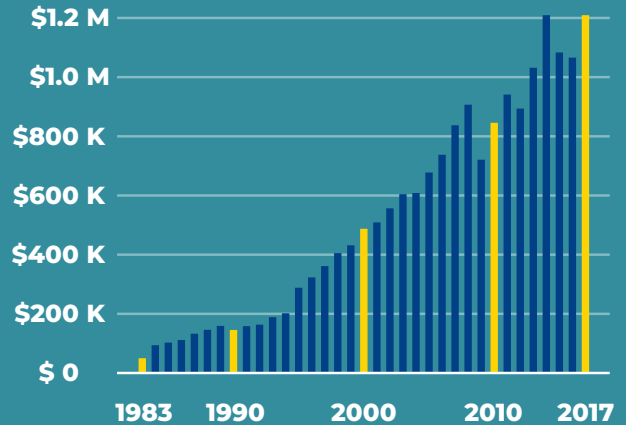
The Jenison Christian School Education Foundation Revealed

Back in 1982, ten men had a sustainable vision. The vision was clear and concise and still exists today. The vision: to provide an investment fund that will sustain the longevity of Christian Schools well into the future, specifically Jenison Christian School. These men were: John R. DeWinter, William D. Fles, Robert Grooters, Henry Hilbrand, Kenneth Jipping, Edward F. Streelman, Wilbert Venema, Kenneth Visser, Bernard H. Woltjer, and Donald Wondergem. Thus, is born the Jenison Christian School Education Foundation.

The initial investment totaled \$50,000 mostly in increments of \$500 and \$1,000 donated by families, individuals, some old, some young, but all, very generous and visionary. By 1994, this initial investment was worth \$200,000. And in 2013, the investment tallied over \$1 million dollars.

Currently, the Foundation gives an average of 5% of total investment back to the school annually. Recent fundraising events have been Author Night with Travis Thrasher at Terra Square in Hudsonville and a Glenn Bulthuis and the Tonedeads with Christ Hansen's Horns at Jenison Center for the Arts. Look for more events to

Foundation Fund Balance Over 35 Years
(Combined total of JCSEF Investment and GR Community Foundation Contribution)



come and please consider attending.

It was at such an event, that discussions took place with one of the few living remaining founders to promote the Foundation and educate new families about the duty of the Foundation. A \$50,000 match was revealed and offered if the Foundation could fund raise another \$50,000 to total a \$100,000 gift. Currently we are \$5,000 away from reaching our goal. Would you please consider giving to cover the remaining portion by the end of 2019?

The Jenison Christian Library

- The Jenison Christian Library has 11,415 copies of books, audio books, and audiovisual materials.
- There are 319 students and teachers who check out materials from the JCS library.
- During the month of September, a total of 1,948 items were checked out. The checkouts were divided into 50% chapter books (novels), 20% picture books, and 30% nonfiction books
- The most popular picture books in September were The Bad Seed, Arnie the Doughnut, Bad Dog, Marley, Pink and Say, and This Book Is Red.
- The Elephant and Piggie series by Mo Willems accounted for 7 of the top 10 early reader checkouts.
- The top novel checked out by middle school students was A Night Divided.
- The top chapter book among elementary students was The Candymakers.
- Popular series fiction continues to include Diary of a Wimpy Kid, The Bad Guys, Catstronauts, and the Treehouse series.



90th Year of Education *(Continued from page 1)*

growing needs of the school.

Long before Jenison Christian School was thriving and in need of more space, God was preparing a place for His school. Throughout these decades of growth the DeVries family lived on their farm on the Northwest corner of Baldwin and 20th. Jacob DeVries had 8 children, the 6th of which was Grace. Grace lived with her family in the 'square house,' just East of Baldwin Street CRC on Baldwin. The soil on the land was perfect for farming, for growing, for thriving... for life. Grace recalls the land populated with asparagus, strawberries, and other vegetables. As a young girl she would harvest the fields to sell her family's crop at the local market. She would do this before going to school in the morning! Grace has many memories of the land when it was just a farm, but also fondly remembers the time of growth in Jenison, when she saw much of the land being developed.

Grace married a man named Harry Meyer. After his return from serving in World War II, living in Grand Rapids to manage a grocery store, Harry and Grace moved back to her family's farm in 1953 and lived in the 'yellow house' on Baldwin, just west of Greenfield. Jacob would eventually sell his property to Harry and Grace before he passed in 1959.

Harry's parents both passed away when he was a late teen, and he had spent much of his young adult life living with his sister, who encouraged a strong support for the local Christian School. Though he did not attend JCS as a student, Harry understood the value of a Christ centered education. Harry's son, Ron, and good friend, Dirk VanderSteen, describe him as a visionary, knowing his blessings could only be multiplied with giving them away. Harry's wife, Grace, who is still living at age 101 (!), says Harry was a man of faith, with a strong heart for supporting Christian Education. He wanted to use the land he owned to further the cause of Christian Education in Jenison.



Harry and Grace Meyer

With the Lord's guidance, Harry and Grace recognized the opportunity to turn this thriving piece of land into a place for growing, thriving, and breathing life into souls, preparing them for a life of Kingdom service. As JCS stared at the puzzle of what to do to meet growing student needs, God's plan unfolded. In 1961, Jenison Christian School purchased a piece of the property from the Meyer's for a new school building. Several additional lots were soon donated by Harry Meyer and Earl Elenbaas in effort to help the school as it looked to the future. By 1962 the first phase of the Greenfield campus (our current location and now a Graceland address) was complete with 6 classrooms, an office, and restrooms. Throughout the 60's the Greenfield site kept expanding and ended in 1969



with 20 classrooms, a kitchen, music room, teacher's lounge, and an all-purpose room.

Harry and Grace had two children, both of whom attended Jenison Christian Schools. Their children were in middle school at the time the new elementary was built, and never attended school on 'their' property. Ron, their son, has many memories of watching the farm develop. By the time his father owned the farm, much of the field had been turned into a Christmas tree farm, though the trees were never pruned or sold. He watched as trees were taken down for building Jenison Christian School. He saw new roads being built, some of which were named after him and his family members (Graceland after his mom, Caroline after his sister, and Ronson after himself). Ron has many fond memories of his years at JCS and can recall each teacher he had while here, some of whom made a life-long impact on him!

Grace remembers of serving on the 'mother's club' (currently our parent club), and understood the need to be involved at the school for the benefit of each student. She remembers the school's flourishing bazaar (now our Arts and Crafts Fest) held at the school and providing baked goods to sell each year. She was also the treasurer of the club, a job she honored and took seriously. When asked what she hoped for the next 90's years at Jenison Christian School, Grace prays for God's continued blessing on the school

and community. She valued the school family she had at JCS, and prays that each family would experience this as well.

Harry and Grace were correct; this land was made for growing life! We see God's presence daily at JCS in today's school community and thank the Lord for His faithfulness in preparing this extraordinary site for generations to learn about God and to flourish and serve in God's Kingdom. As we approach the 90th anniversary of JCS, we rejoice in God's continued faithfulness at His school, deeply rooted in teaching His unchanging word in an ever-changing world.

*A special thanks to Grace Meyer and Ron Meyer for taking time to share their stories with us as we reflect on our history!

JCS News

Preschool Open House on January 15, 2020

Offering 3's and 4's preschool in 5 classrooms. So, if 2, 3, or 4 days work best for your family, come check it out! Special Visitors to the school this year include a firemen, a veteran, and a dental hygienist. Our preschool enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year is 121 Students.

Music Department

Upcoming Concerts

Dec. 5 Middle School Christmas Concert
(5th – 8th) 7:00pm at JCS

Dec. 6 Elementary Christmas Concert (PreK-4th) 7:00pm
at Fair Haven Church

Dec. 6 EOCS Band Concert (7th & 8th)
7:00pm at Fair Haven Church

Dec. 16 Elementary Choir Concert
(3rd & 4th) 5:00pm at Baldwin
Street Church (Evening Service)

Our Music Department

3rd Grade – Guitars*

4th Grade – Recorders

5th-8th Grade Band

6th Grade Choir

7th-8th Jazz Band

7th-8th Grade
Honors Choir



"And we know that in all things God **works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called** according to His purpose."

A Blessing: After a middle school concert in 2015 a former JCS family had undesignated family tithe that they unanimously decided should benefit the JCS Music Department. This donation covered most of the expenses to purchase and inspire lower elementary musicians.

