Connecting ***TDChristian*** *with our Supporting Communities* *Spring 2020*
"In our 57th year of Christian Education"

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Double Issue

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The Passion, Wonder, and Awe Continues

The ongoing good news story of TDChristian

Mother Teresa once said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

In this issue, we celebrate the ripples that continue to emanate from TDChristian High School through these stories about our alumni, students, and staff. We recognize that behind each person stands a larger community.

God continues to bless TDChristian: Project 20/20, our latest building project, will open later this year; our enrolment remains at 400; and our plans for operating a thrift store continue to move forward.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

-Tim Buwalda, Editor

ALUMNI PROFILE

THE WESTERINK FAMILY

by William Groot

In this *Passion, Wonder, Awe* edition, we introduce the "family story". Brent, Matt, and Mark Westerink attended TDChristian from 2002 to 2007. Their parents, Doug and Carolyn, "are very thankful for how TDChristian helped shape our sons into the godly men they have become."

Brent graduated from TDChristian in 2006, earning a BSc from Queen's University and then a BEd from Redeemer University. He taught for six years at Langley Christian School before moving to Abbotsford Christian School, where he teaches science and math at the secondary level. Brent is currently developing the new Career Education program in his school. He is married to Lindsay, a Christian elementary school teacher; their son Elliott is a year old.

Crucial to Brent's learning, he says, were the interactions with teachers at TDChristian that helped him discover his gifts. A participant in our second Integrated Block, Brent shares: "TDChristian established some of the groundwork to prepare me for what God had in store for my future. I can only hope that as an educator myself, I can continue the legacy of the good work my teachers did for me!"

Matthew was an integral part of TDChristian's Class of 2008 for three years. A student who enjoyed sports and music, he is still remembered for his performance as JoJo Matt at assemblies. After high school, Matt graduated from Western University with a Bachelor of Medical Sciences and from McMaster University with an MD. He and his wife Justina, both doctors, opened a new family medicine practice in Innisfil in April 2019. They have two sons: Charlie, 3, and Arthur, just under a year old.

Matt's biggest takeaway from TDChristian is the relationships he had with teachers and staff; he calls it "mentorship with education". Matt says, "I still remember conversations with and encouragement from them; things stick at that age and shape your self-confidence." He now practises the same mentorship in his own life.

Mark, part of the Class of 2009, attended TDChristian for Grades 9 and 10. As a student he struggled with ADD, but through technical, emotional, and personal support and guidance in elementary and high school, he was able to take charge of his education, especially in the later years of high school and in university. Having earned a BEng in chemical engineering and a BSc in environmental science, both at McMaster University, he hopes to complete his PEng in March, 2020.

Mark notes two important things from his time at TDChristian: the great relationships with teachers that helped him stay on track as a learner, and the love he developed for the outdoors and sustainability in Grade 10 Environmental Block. This love has come full circle in Mark's current work as a Building Envelope consultant: as BC moves towards net zero-emission buildings and "passive house" homes (https://www.passivehouse-international.org/), he works on the rehabilitation/retrofit of existing buildings and the design of new builds. Mark and his wife Liesal, an elementary school teacher, are expecting their first child in March 2020.

Anyone reading the Westerink family story will notice a recurring theme in the importance of relationships with teachers and staff—to mentor, support, and guide, to help in the discovery of gifts, and to nourish student interests and confidence so as to equip young people for work in God's Kingdom.

Passion

ALUMNA PROFILE:
CATHY (de Bruin) MAAS ('97)
by Tim Buwalda

One of Cathy's earliest memories from TDCH is also the most significant. "We were out for a long run in Grade 9 gym class, when suddenly, I'm being thrown into a creek!" It turned out to be a rather unique form of flirting: soon after, Cathy started dating the creek-thrower, Ben Maas. The two of them married in 2001 and are still going strong, now living in Brampton with their daughters Maria (10), Ashley (8), and Arianna (5).

Cathy is the third of four sisters, all of whom attended TDCH. "I came in as a geeky and unconnected girl from tiny Alliston. I don't remember many specifics from my actual classes, but I did love the social aspect at the school. I knew both sides of the fence: what it felt like to be picked on, and how it felt to be friends with everyone. I found myself moving between all the groups, getting different people together and making sure everyone was included."

Cathy didn't know it then, but that socializing was actually training her for her future career. After going to school for marketing, she now works in sales as a Global Account Manager for Cintas (uniforms, entrance mats, etc.). "My job is all about people. I love it. I spend my days cultivating and nurturing relationships."

Cathy credits TDChristian for being one of the influences that molded her into someone who cares about other people. And, as someone who makes a lot of presentations, she likes how our school is intentional about incorporating student presentations into every course.

When asked if she had any advice for today's high school students, she replied, "In sales, so much of my job is not about speaking, it's about listening. Through listening, you connect more deeply with others. So, don't be too cool to listen to your teachers. They were young once as well."

CATHY (de Bruin) MAAS

FORMER STAFF PROFILE
KATIE HOOGENDAM
by Sean Van Eerden

Katie Hoogendam taught at TDChristian from 2004 to 2007. As a teacher, she emphasized the powerful empathy across generations, cultures, and backgrounds that can be developed by reading another person's words. In her now infamous "memo" assignment, which asked the young thinkers in her class to write and share a weekly journal, her students were encouraged to realize the power their own words could have on other people, and the depth of connection and community that develops through sharing. Many of her former students, some now English teachers here at TDChristian, credit this assignment with unlocking a love of words in their own lives.

After leaving TDChristian, Katie lived that message to her students authentically, writing and creating with the purpose of sharing her own deep well of experience. Active in the arts scene of Cobourg, Ontario, Katie had a long-running radio show on Northumberland 89.7 FM in which she told stories and invited community members to share their own. Her first book, *Mothertongue*, chronicled her story of motherhood with all its joys and sorrows. Recently, as a member of Spirit of the Hills, a local arts community, Katie wrote a play called *Plan X* where she re-imagined Mary's immaculate conception amid the pain and disappointment of modern everyday existence.

Katie lives intentionally, sustainably, and thoughtfully with her husband Jordan and their two children, Caspian and Juniper.

KATIE HOOGENDAM

"Cathy credits TDChristian for being one of the influences that molded her into someone who cares about other people."

LOUIS JANG

JULIO ALBURQUERQUE AND MICHAEL AUKEMA PRICE CHECKING AT IKEA

ZACH HUTZAL

KELSEY WEENING

STUDENT PROFILE
LOUIS JANG
by June Tenyenhuis

Louis Jang was born in Toronto but spent part of his early childhood in South Korea, where he lived near mountains and became mesmerized by the awesome beauty of the natural world around him. When his mother (also an artist) recognized this development in her son, she mentored him in drawing techniques.

Louis is a maker. He is famous at TDChristian for making a life-sized cannon out of Styrofoam last year for a project in Grade 10 History, an event witnessed and appreciated by all. When I asked him about the best creative ideas he has ever had, he said, "Everything is a good idea. Every day I have so many ideas stuck in my head, so in Art class I want to release them. I know that I have to take my ideas step by step. The art that I make is creative and ends up successful, because when I make a mistake, it can be fixed." He gestures animatedly with his hands as he describes how ideas grow and germinate, and how time ceases to exist during their execution.

As a school community we are blessed by Louis and his creativity. We had a chance to see his ideas transformed into action when he designed the set for this past November's production of Charlotte's Web!

PROGRAM PROFILE
MATH GOES HOME
by Tammy Dibbits

We all dream of owning our own home. Perhaps it's three bedrooms and a yard for the dog to run around in, or maybe it's a downtown condo. But the reality of home ownership isn't as easy to achieve as it used to be.

In my Grade 12 Fundamentals of College Math class, we explored a wide variety of topics in personal finance: saving, credit, interest rates, investing—and, yes, the housing market. As part of the research for our course, students visited some local condos, calculated mortgages and amortization schedules, and, on a fun visit to Home Depot, priced out the cost of a renovation. The research turned out to be a real eye-opener for the students.

These Grade 12 Math students are not only getting a credit towards their high school graduation, but hopefully also some insight into their financial future. They might not have all the answers, but at least they have started asking the questions that might lead them to informed decisions in the future.

ALUMNA PROFILE
KELSEY WEENING ('09)
by Shelby Contos

"When Kelsey grows up, she wants to be a horse!" her sister Rachael says jokingly. Aside from the humour of the statement, there's no question Kelsey's love for animals runs deep. After completing a fifth year at TDChristian to do a co-op placement at a veterinary clinic, Kelsey went on to St. Lawrence College in Kingston where she completed their three-year Veterinary Technologist program. After graduation, she was hired at the same clinic and has continued to work there for the last six years.

Kelsey's love for animals stretches beyond her occupation. Each year she competes in the equestrian sport of eventing—her first love—in which a horse and rider compete against others in three disciplines: dressage, cross-country, and show jumping. The sport has taken her to numerous locations including Aiken, South Carolina.

A close second love is travel. Kelsey has embarked on hiking and snowboarding trips to western Canada, and backpacked across South America, Southeast Asia, and various parts of Europe. Of course, her travels wouldn't be complete without a visit to the Burghley Horse Trials, an international eventing competition in England this past year.

Aside from the invaluable experiences and adventures it has given her, Kelsey's love for travel stems from her awe of the beauty of God's creation and the peace it leaves her with—a peace that comes from knowing the Creator of all she has had the opportunity to explore. Kelsey has also found a unique way to live out the Lord's call to steward the earth by personally caring for and providing medical care to dogs without homes. Even a decade after graduating, she continues to appreciate the academic opportunities provided by TDChristian as well as the friendships and community that have contributed to the firm foundation of her faith.

PROGRAM PROFILE
GRADE 11 PERSPECTIVES
by John Terpstra

Last semester TDChristian was offered a significant opportunity by Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. RZIM contacted us to help them develop an apologetics course for high school students, using our school as part of the pilot project. With a little schedule manoeuvring we were able to offer one section of Grade 11 Perspectives as a dedicated Apologetics class. We would still study the gospel of Jesus Christ and the history and theology of the Christian faith, but there would be a focus on learning how to offer a reasoned defence for the hope we have in Christ.

We spent a number of weeks studying the basic principles of both the Christian faith and apologetics, and then began our study of some of the world's most populous religions. To complete an in-depth look at Sikhism, we took full advantage of our Focus Day to visit The Ontario Khalsa Darbar, a Sikh temple (gurdwara) on Derry Road in Mississauga; my Sikh friend, Harman Preet Singh, agreed to meet us there and share lunch with us. After the delicious hospitality of the Sikh langar, Harman briefly described his religion, gave us a tour of the gurdwara, and answered questions. Because we had already studied Sikhism, our discussions quickly went beyond the basics to deeper questions of worldview: origins, identity, vocation, brokenness, and truth.

Harman balances work in an accounting firm with leading young people on tours of his worship place. He was impressed with the depth of our students' questions, but even more by how the students asked them: RZIM's Apologetics curriculum has taught us how to better defend our faith and deconstruct other worldviews, but also to remember the person we are talking with, to use tact, and to speak the truth in love.

It is a privilege to look into the faith and worldviews of our neighbours. I believe that our visit to the gurdwara was pivotal in engaging students in real discussions of faith, enfolding them into the larger community, and empowering them to live out their faith in Christ wherever they find themselves.

ALUMNUS PROFILE
ZACH HUTZAL ('17)
by Evelyn Dengerink

"There's a problem on our horizon: Ontario is facing a shortage of workers in the skilled trades," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training, and Skills Development in a recent interview. "We need to let people know that a career in the trades is exciting, fulfilling, and lucrative… We also need to transform our apprenticeship system to make it easier to use."

Zach Hutzal is a recent TDChristian graduate who enthusiastically agrees that a career in the trades is "exciting, fulfilling, and lucrative." Having found his niche in the electrical trade, Zach is working with Master Flash Electrical, Ltd. as his sponsor, logging hours towards his journeyman's licence. He has fully wired many custom homes for Hard at Work, Inc. as well as some commercial units. He is proud and excited to work on these unique homes, saying, "They're out of a movie."

Zach thoroughly enjoys his work. He loves being in charge and responsible, figuring out and planning the most effective order for doing things. The physical aspect of being an electrician is a bonus. And it is reassuring to know that the current need for electricians will continue for many years.

The road to earning a licence is long and arduous. So far Zach has roughly 3500 hours of work towards his apprenticeship; he needs 9000 to become a journeyman, and several more years of experience to become a master electrician. Most training occurs on the job, but apprentices also attend college for mandatory courses. Zach has just completed his Level 1 Basic Electrical at Georgian College Midland, and enjoyed going to school to understand how electricity works and why things are done a certain way on site. He took the initiative to learn the math and physics crucial to understanding the electrical trade.

Zach's commitment and love for TDChristian were evident in the long bus rides he endured for four years. He loved the small, close-knit community, and says that all his close friends are people he met here. While there isn't one specific course or program that helped Zach in his work, TDChristian helped shape him into the wonderful learner and leader that he is today!

Wonder

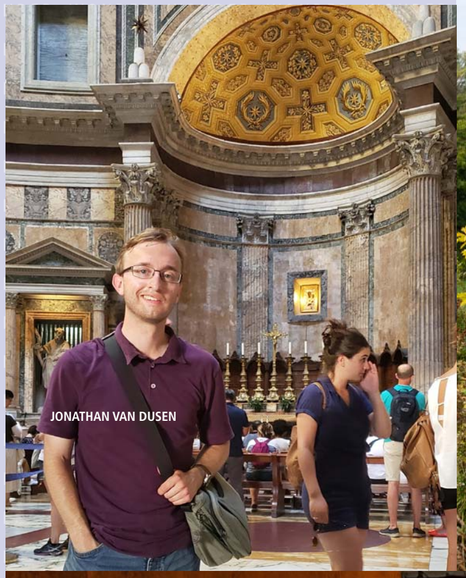
ALUMNUS PROFILE
JONATHAN VAN DUSEN
by Luke Sawczak

Visiting for the Class of 2009 reunion, Jonathan Van Dusen realized he and TDChristian had made a lasting impression on each other in his two years here. During that time he programmed a triangle area calculator in Math, penned poems in iambic pentameter in English, and discussed Jesus' upbringing with Mr. Terpstra over lunch. But it was the sustainability projects in the brand-new Environmental Block course that set the course for his career. "There, I learned that change can come from the bottom up," he said.

Jonathan left TDChristian when his father, a Presbyterian minister, took a pulpit in Sarnia. Researching universities, he realized the University of Waterloo's Geomatics program joined his passion for geography with the data analysis and environmental responsibility he'd learned under Mr. Freeman and Ms. Verveda. Even while coping with a tumour that caused hearing loss, palsy, and dizziness—"I was having brain surgery while my peers were writing finals"—he landed co-ops working with aerial road surveys, agricultural yields, and community mapping before finding his dream job at ESRI Canada, where he's been for five years.

Meanwhile, Jonathan has also influenced TDChristian. Last fall, our Grade 9 Geography class was introduced to a project he worked on in which disaster-relief volunteers used satellite imagery to map out remote villages in Nepal following the 2013 earthquake. After Jonathan guested in the class, students took to the Internet themselves to map areas of Peru and Uganda—the school's first use of the ArcGIS software donated by ESRI.

Jonathan sees the environment and social justice as linked to his faith and the service we're called to by Jesus' revolutionary example. He credits TDChristian and especially Environmental Block with showing him the work to be done and setting him on his current path. "To quote Mother Teresa," he says, "you drop the pebbles in, but you don't always see where the ripples go."



JONATHAN VAN DUSEN

LEAF MAN AND E-BLOCK TEACHER BEN FREEMAN

KEVIN HAYWARD (LEFT) WITH COMPOSER DR. DOROTHY GATES AND WYCLIFFE GORDON

MATT RODELL

STAFF PROFILE
Kevin Hayward
by Phil Vriend

Since the age of five, Kevin Hayward has been a musician and more. He's been TDChristian's Musical Director for the last thirteen years. He grew up touring Bermuda churches with his family band as well as playing in his high school band and in University of Toronto's orchestra. He also spent 17 years performing and leading music with the Salvation Army, and has generally participated in the wider musical community. In short, Kevin has lived a musical life.

Recently, that musical life has led to significant recognition: Kevin was honoured to have one of his arrangements played by eminent trombonist Wycliffe Gordon at the New York Philharmonic's "Holiday Brass" concert. A few months ago, Kevin was contacted with a request to use his piece, along with the expectation that he create a new arrangement for this concert and these players. He did so, and travelled to New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in December to hear his arrangement played by some of the best brass players in the world.

Kevin loves to see students with little experience become better musicians and leaders through grit and tenacious practice. The rest of us can easily see that he is a wonderful role model for the things and people he cares most about.

PROGRAM PROFILE
ROBOTICS CLUB
by David Robinson

Back in 2007 a TDChristian parent, John Prickaerts, encouraged us to start a robotics program, so we established a club. Two years later, in our 2009 season, the club had grown considerably, and included an all-girls group that won our first Women in Engineering (WIE) award; that year TDChristian's overall team fielded more women than the rest of the competition combined! The award was followed by a small dynasty of WIE awards from 2012–2014. Then we missed a few years and our numbers dwindled, until last season we had only two girls: Risa van Lenthe and Emma Stefanutti, both in Grade 9. The rest were guys.

This year, Risa and Emma have been a key part of club renewal, encouraging others to come out and try their hand at programming and design. Along with senior team captain Noah D'Alessandro, they mentored many new members, including nine new female students. At Ontario Tech University's 14th annual competition this past November, the WIE title was once again returned to TDChristian for a fifth time in our history.

Risa said she was nervous to be a mentor at first, but that she learned a lot about leadership while refining her design and programming skills. Emma said that teaching others forced her to relearn programming skills more thoroughly, but that it was rewarding in the end watching the renewed team find success together.

We hope to welcome many more students, both male and female, to our Robotics Club for years to come.

TDCHRISTIAN'S WINNING WOMEN IN ENGINEERING ROBOTICS TEAM INCLUDES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: GRADE 10 STUDENTS CLEMENTINA KANG, JOYCE MIN, RISA VAN LENTHE, EMMA STEFANUTTI, AND MEAGAN GROOTENBOER.

OLIVIA WELLS

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: JORDAN PICCOLO, EVAN KOOY, MEGAN PICCOLO, AND NICK PICCOLO

PROGRAM PROFILE
LEAF PARTNERSHIP
by Ben Freeman

Remember the ice storm from several years ago? It hit our school's trees quite hard. The south side of our soccer field used to be all Manitoba maples, growing out at a 45-degree angle; they all snapped off in the ice storm.

Taking advantage of nature's way of removing this non-native tree, my Grade 10 Environmental Block class planted the entire forest edge with native trees and shrubs from LEAF (Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests, a nonprofit group we often partner with). Dogwoods were primarily planted in the swampy area, and have flourished. The serviceberry and elderberry shrubs are over six feet tall now.

Meanwhile the old logs from the Manitoba maples were laid down to create a border between the forest and field to keep city lawnmowers or others from damaging our newly planted shrubs. The natural barrier worked perfectly! It's great to see how the area has visually improved, but also how it's now a more diverse habitat rather than the former monoculture of Manitoba maples and buckthorns.

We were also looking for two hardy trees to plant along the forest edge—trees that could handle the heat and poor-quality soil and, ideally, stand out with vibrant fall colours. A LEAF staff member suggested a few species that would work, including the Freeman maple. When I showed the Freeman maple to my class, they voted to go with that option—primarily because of my name, of course!

Few schools can boast an actual forest on their property. We are grateful for our partnership with LEAF that helps us continue to manage it for future generations of TDChristian students to learn in and enjoy.

ALUMNA PROFILE
OLIVIA WELLS ('18)
by Rachael Weening

Olivia Wells is in second year at the University of Guelph, studying international development. While at TDChristian, she was a fantastic teaching assistant in Environmental Block, became involved in student leadership, and participated in International Block. In the future, she hopes to work for a charity or NGO.

Last summer she volunteered with Transforming Faces, an organization she learned about from Mr. Freeman that works on reconstructing cleft palates internationally. While volunteering, Olivia was able to participate in meetings, do research projects, learn about all the technology and programs that go into making a charity work, and more.

When asked about TDChristian, Olivia stressed two connected strengths: relationships, and unique programs like the Block courses she took. These allowed her to become part of a community and recognize interests she didn't know she had. Also, integral to her Block courses was the development of presentation skills, which have given Olivia more confidence to present information to a variety of audiences.

Olivia's advice to students and their parents? Don't stress out about what comes after high school, because TDChristian prepares you well for it. Also, recognize high school for what it is—a very short period of your life—so make the most of those four years and enjoy yourself.

ALUMNUS PROFILE
MATT RODELL ('09)
by Colin Hoving

Many young boys who love hockey dream of being in the NHL one day. Matt Rodell ('09) is able to live that dream every day, but in a different capacity: in his first year as a Video Coach with the Dallas Stars, he works hard to have the team prepared each day.

After graduating from TDChristian, Matt attended Brock University and spent time in the OHL with the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds. He spent last year with the Texas Stars of the AHL, and then got the call to move up to the big leagues.

As Matt navigates through each day, waking up in different cities, he has fond memories of TDChristian. During his high school years he acquired life skills such as working in stressful situations, problem solving, and communicating effectively. He credits Mr. Freeman, Mr. Hagen, and Mr. Templeton and their classes in Data Management, Computer Science, and Math for getting the ball rolling on a fascination with data analysis, critical thinking, and an appreciation for different computer programs—such as the ones he now uses for video breakdown. More importantly, he is thankful for the lifelong friendships he made at TDChristian. He has a core group of friends with whom he is still in regular contact.

Most importantly, Matt talked about the importance of going through high school in a Christian environment, learning to live out and grow in his faith. He has been able to take that foundation into his daily work as coach and into the rest of his life, striving to live as a follower of Christ.

ALUMNI PROFILES
MEGAN ('12), JORDAN ('14), AND NICK ('14) PICCOLO; EVAN KOOY ('12)
by Jerry Klompmaker

After leaving TDChristian, Megan Piccolo earned a BA in psychology from McMaster University, with a minor in child and family studies. This was followed by an MDiv in counselling from Tyndale University. She is now a psychotherapist, living in Bradford with her husband Evan Kooy.

One TDChristian memory that stands out for Megan was the mentorship program, where she worked alongside a therapist and learned what the profession looked like. She also remembers being a peer counsellor: "It helped me develop listening skills and a curiosity for people's experiences." As a student and teacher assistant with Ben Freeman and Rachael Weening she developed leadership skills and self-confidence, and nourished her love for mentoring and working with people. She adds, "I met all my current best friends and my husband at TDChristian. There was a safe and open learning environment as well as enough space to develop deep, meaningful friendships."

After leaving TDChristian, Evan Kooy became a fish and wildlife technician; now, he does trip carpentry at Evergreen Carpentry Services. Reflecting on his high school experience, he says, "I was someone who would rather walk through a forest than sit in a classroom. Teachers at TDChristian, specifically Ben Freeman, Jerry Klompmaker, David Robinson, and Kevin Godber, saw that in me and provided the flexibility to learn in creative ways, with assignments that felt personal and relevant to my interests and learning style."

Nick Piccolo pursued engineering after TDChristian; he will receive his MSc in civil engineering this April from McMaster University, where he is currently a TA assisting students with physio-chemical and biological wastewater treatment. Nick loved his time at TDChristian—the way its teachers engaged students, the lifelong friendships he made, and classes that led to an interest in his current field. He shared a joy in mathematics and humour with Mr. Templeton, and found Environmental Studies with Mr. Freeman practical and interesting. TDChristian was a safe place for Nick to develop his personality, interests, and friendships.

Jordan Piccolo earned his BComm from the Degroote School of Business, McMaster University, and is currently employed in the Leadership Development Program with Reliance Home Comfort. "My years at TDChristian were among the best of my life. What really sticks out to me are the people I met and the friends I made; many of them are still my support group today. Sports, Mr. Templeton's Math class, and Grade 12 Gym with Mr. Heinbuch were the most fun for me."

Jordan adds, "At TDChristian I developed study habits that helped me succeed in university. Scholastically it was a safe place to try new things and learn valuable lessons; I learned more from the Chemistry quiz I forgot to study for, or the presentation I bombed, than any other experiences. At TDChristian they give you the agency to make mistakes, but also come alongside to help you correct and learn from them."

Awe

ALUMNUS PROFILE
CHRIS HENEIN ('16)
by David Kim

Although Chris didn't know what he wanted to do after high school, he always knew he wanted to help people and make a difference in the world somehow. After exploring the possibility of going into psychology, he had an opportunity to be in an internship program that introduced him to the world of Canadian politics. It didn't take long for Chris to discover his passion: this was where he belonged! "Many people have negative views on politics and politicians," he explains, "but I believe that politics can be a significant avenue for changing people's lives for good." Chris is now a Parliamentary Assistant to Andrew Scheer, where he is in charge of reaching out to and connecting with different ethnic and cultural communities.

When asked how his education at TDChristian has helped him in his work, he mentioned how the teachers were approachable and allowed him to express his own thoughts and views. "In politics, you need to be able to share your ideas with others. The teachers at TDChristian helped create an environment where I was able to do that as a student. They also believed in me when I didn't believe in myself, and helped me to be proud of who I am and my faith."

Chris admits that politics can be a difficult environment to work in. "There are many pitfalls and temptations, and I have to constantly remind myself of the importance of a close relationship with God. The question I ask myself every day is, 'Is my heart set on glorifying God?'"

Although Chris does not know how his career in politics may evolve, one thing he's sure of is his passion for helping others and "changing Canada for the better".

CHRIS HENEIN WITH ANDREW SCHEER

ALUMNA PROFILE
ELAINE VAN LAARE ('87)
by Patty Schuurman

Elaine (Adema) Van Laare is married to Brent Van Laare ('87). They have three children and live in Oakville. Elaine is currently the Director of Discipleship at ClearView Christian Reformed Church after eight years as Children's Ministry Director. She loves learning, reading, research, and creating engaging lessons to help people take their next step with Jesus.

Good memories of TDChristian for Elaine include playing cards for the entire bus ride home to Georgetown and fun times in classes, homeroom, and the cafeteria. One of Elaine's best memories was having Phys. Ed. outside every day for a full semester while TDChristian was adding its new gym—tobogganing down the hill in the back, playing soccer in the snow, running around the block, and playing L.O.G.s (low-organizational games). Other memories include struggling to open locks on lockers, wearing "ugly" gym uniforms ("I hope they're better now!") and enjoying the freedom and independence of high school. Elaine especially remembers the encouragement from the teachers, their genuine concern for her well-being, and their sincere desire to see her do well.

Elaine reminds today's teens that relationships are essential to a sense of belonging and growing. "Teachers can help confirm your God-given gifts and encourage you to use them for his Kingdom. Know that God loves you just as you are and has a purpose for your lives. At TDChristian you have a safe and loving place to explore and experiment, to discover God's relevance to your life, and to thrive."

To TDChristian, she says: Keep connecting faith and culture, showing students that God can speak into their lives and has given them creative minds and innovative spirits to help transform the world's brokenness. Keep teaching love and compassion, pursuing authentic project-based learning, and offering real and accessible opportunities for service. With strong and loving leadership, students will feel safe to risk and try new things. Above all, keep pointing students to Jesus.

ELAINE VAN LAARE

SARAH SHEEPSTRA

LEANNE FERNHOUT

"Elaine especially remembers the encouragement from the teachers, their genuine concern for her well-being, and their sincere desire to see her do well."

IAN BOELENS

ALUMNUS PROFILE
IAN BOELENS ('08)
by Vivian Templeton

Ian Boelens currently works as a Project Engineer at Environment and Climate Change Canada. His work, which focuses on the energy sector, includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the production of fossil fuels as well as promoting the shift towards cleaner fuels. After leaving TDChristian, Ian went on to receive his BASc in chemical engineering at the University of Ottawa. With a focus on environmental engineering, this allowed him to follow his interests and work on developing policies and regulations to help Canada address climate change.

When enrolling in chemical engineering, Ian didn't quite know what he was getting into or where it might lead. One certainty was that it seemed like a perfect combination of chemistry and physics, two subjects where Ian credits his teachers for inspiring him to follow a career in science and engineering. His teachers were clearly passionate, and made learning about these topics fun and interesting.

If Ian has any advice for students it would be to get to know your classmates. An easy way is to get involved, whether it be in sports, music, a club, or something else. It's a fantastic way to get to know people you may not otherwise talk to.

STAFF PROFILE
LUKE SAWCZAK ('09)
by Fran Joosse

A few years ago, Luke Sawczak spent some time in conversation with John Terpstra about his educational journey up to that point. He had enrolled at the University of Toronto (Mississauga) right after TDChristian, with the goal of becoming a teacher; but two years into the program, unconvinced that teaching was for him, he had switched his major to linguistics. Then, as he delved into the study of linguistics, Luke had noticed that he was in fact constantly "teaching", and doing pretty well at it: as a TA at university, as a part-time tutor in the Georgetown area to earn some money, and as a Sunday school teacher at church. He loved discovering and passing on information, and sharing his passion for discovery with others.

Did he need to reconsider his educational path once again? On reflection, and after bouncing the idea off Mr. Terpstra and others, it seemed the answer was yes.

Last year Luke completed his two-year Master of Teaching degree at OISE, which included four practicum placements; the final one was here at TDChristian. He enjoyed student-teaching at his alma mater, reporting that it was great to experience the same classes "from the other side" and that he appreciated the dedication of students. During his practicum Luke's varied interests enabled him to get involved immediately with several clubs and activities. In the classroom, he taught Grade 11/12 French for most of his four-week stay, eventually taking over the Grade 9 and 10 French classes as well. Later on, after completing his program at OISE, Luke returned to TDChristian for two weeks as a supply teacher.

Well, that was last year. This year, we welcomed Luke to the TDChristian staff with open arms! His love of learning, and of communicating and sharing his learning with others, is being nurtured as he teaches Geography, English, Math, and French. May God bless him as he continues his educational journey.

LUKE SAWCZAK

TECH TANK

ALUMNA PROFILE
SARAH SHEEPSTRA ('17)
by Michelle Bauer

According to the Collins Dictionary, a resilient person or thing is "strong and not easily damaged by being hit, stretched, or squeezed". Someone who demonstrates true resilience is Sarah Sheepstra ('17). Since the very beginning, she has overcome numerous obstacles in her life. In the short time that I've had the pleasure of knowing Sarah, her grit and determination have helped her not only to succeed, but to remain true to herself. These qualities even led her to complete a Grade 12 University Math course, one that was not required for her chosen college program at the time.

Sarah is an introvert—one with the biggest and most generous heart. Whether she is investing her time in people in her community, or taking steps to care for her own mental health, Sarah understands the importance of transparency. Her true strength is shown during the moments when she is vulnerable, because she takes the challenges she has been presented with and rises above them despite the circumstances. She regularly reminds herself and others around her to experience self-love through our Creator, Christ, every day.

Currently, Sarah is enrolled in the Executive Office Administration program at Sheridan College. She hopes to work in the medical or law fields, where she will no doubt be able to use her skills to great advantage. It was during the Grade 11 mentorship program at TDChristian that Sarah realized her passion for this type of work; the responsibility of being the first face that people see in an organization can be nerve-wracking, but not for Sarah. Her hope is that, in her future workplace, she can build the same sense of community and relationship that was fostered for her by the people she met and interacted with at TDChristian.

PROGRAM PROFILE
STEM TECH TANK
by Kevin Godber

Over the past year TDChristian has introduced a STEM program to equip students with the resources and skills to work in an increasingly technological world. As described elsewhere in this issue, students work through the design process to solve various problems using the equipment in our STEM Space. We are blessed to have a full complement of woodworking tools there, as well as a CNC router, a 3D printer, and a laser engraver.

But mixing new technologies, such as computers and a laser engraver, with traditional ones like routers, table saws, and sandpaper, creates a number of challenges. One of these is dust: high tech and dust don't go well together! Another is noise. So after much thought and discussion, the idea of a glassed-in room at the front of the STEM Space was proposed. Last year the "Tech Tank"—so named by Grade 9 students—was built.

The Tech Tank required furniture. It was decided that we could use the design process to build the furniture ourselves. Chairs built by Internship Block students from previous years were used. Computer tables were designed using software that students learned, the CNC router served to cut out the pieces, and then Tech Design students Noah Tran and Daniel VanHemert assembled many of the computer compartments and tabletops.

We now have a clean, comfortable area in the STEM Space where students can research design ideas, create CAD drawings of their solutions, and cut out prototypes using the laser. We look forward to seeing how they will use this space in years to come for "learning for service in the light of God's word".

STAFF PROFILE
LEANNE FERNHOUT ('96)
by Joni Knibbe

Allow me to introduce Leanne Fernhout, builder. Not a builder of physical structures, but a builder of community.

Leanne's career, though perhaps not evident to her at the time, had its start and direction when she began helping her dad organize the annual hockey tournaments for John Knox Christian School in Brampton. She was only in Grade 10 here at TDChristian, but by participating in these events she began to understand the importance of community and developed a passion for supporting Christian education. This started her on a career path that led her back to TDChristian earlier this year as the Campaign Fundraising Manager for Project 20/20.

After graduating from TDChristian in 1996, Leanne attended Redeemer University College for one semester, then left to pursue her childhood dream of becoming a nurse, completing her RPN certification at Humber College in 1998. While employed in a doctor's office she began assuming more administrative roles, which led to a decision to return to Redeemer for a BA in physical education and sociology. After graduation, an opportunity arose to assist with a large capital campaign with the Institute for Christian Studies; looking back now, Leanne realizes how much she learned there about fundraising and development and furthering the cause of Christian education.

After having her first child, Leanne began working closer to home at Holland Christian Homes' Grace Manor: she was Recreation Facilitator, then the Restorative Care Nurse and Falls Prevention Lead. Once again her interests and talents drew her in the direction of management and organization, and she became the Quality Improvement Coordinator and the Accreditation Coordinator for HCH.

Leanne knows how much TDChristian will benefit from a well-run campaign. Building on the firm foundation of community and communication, and believing that God blesses sound processes, policies, and procedures, she continues to work out strategies to heighten interest in Project 20/20, build trust in those who are fulfilling their mandate in the project, and strengthen the school community so that it will continue to support the development of TDChristian in the future.

Leanne is married to Jonathan, the Grade 4/5 teacher at John Knox Christian School, Brampton; their children Hayden, Harrison, and Hadlie, who all attend there, complete the family circle.

In the NEWS at TD

PASTORS' BREAKFAST CONNECTS PASTORS TO OUR SCHOOL

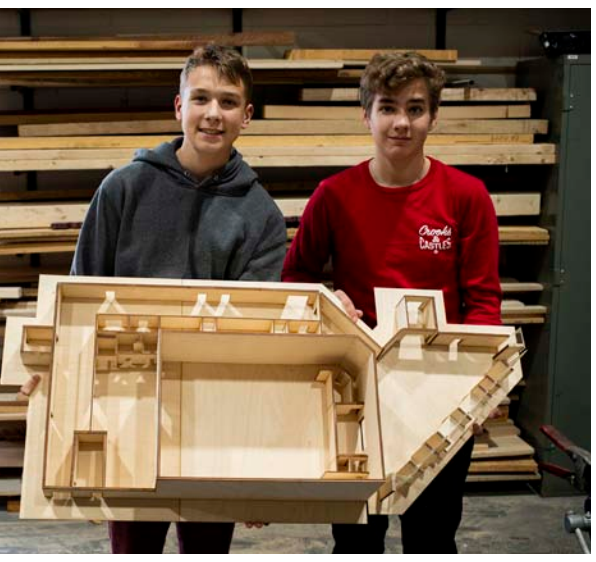
On Tuesday, February 25, TDChristian held our annual Pastors' Breakfast. This year's speaker was our Perspectives teacher, John Terpstra. He spoke on how together we can reach today's generation of teens with the gospel. A teen panel and interactive Q&A were highlights of the breakfast.

PROJECT 20/20

PROJECT 20/20 KEEPS MOVING FORWARD

At the time of this writing the glass curtain wall is going up, electrical, duct, and roof work is being done, and the new stairway is being installed. When finished, our school building will be about twenty percent larger. So far $3,210,365 has been raised! If you can help us, even in a small way, to help us reach our goal of $6 million, visit tdchristian.ca/giving or email Campaign Fundraising Manager Leanne Fernhout at fernhout@tdchristian.ca.

Grade 10 STEM students Keyzia Bijl, Isabel Luimes, Aaron Jackson, and Micah VanderKooi made these promotional models of the Project 20/20 addition. To do this they first had to analyze technical blueprints from our architect, then scale and draw the models in AutoCAD, then program the laser cutter to cut out the pieces, and finally assemble the models into their final form. "We worked as hard as we could but didn't meet our own deadlines. It just took longer than expected, and there was nothing we could do," said Aaron Jackson. "I totally understand, now, why construction projects take a long time. There are so many details you need to work out in order to make it perfect."



First floor model

Second floor model

Alumni News

Attention Alumni!
Please keep us posted regarding reunions, marriages, births, career moves, and any other important milestones. Simply email alumni@tdchristian.ca.

• Births

- **David Adema** (04) and **Heather Weststeyn** (11) welcomed Sawyer Kase on August 22, 2019. A brother for big sisters Lenix and Blakely.
- **Katie Chant** (04) and Joe Armitage welcomed Charlotte Elizabeth on September 21, 2019. A little sister to big brother Hunter.
- **Adrian Elzinga** (09) and Lareina Schenk welcomed Levi Nathaniel on September 24, 2019.
- **Kevin Riedstra** (09) and **Carlie Dekkema** (09) welcomed Natalie Marie on November 22, 2019. A sister to Thomas and Emma.
- **David Aukema** (14) and **Teresa Hanemaayer** (14) welcomed Everett David on December 14, 2019.
- **Bethany Frieswick** (13) and Daniel Klassen welcomed Penelope Grace on January 6. A little sister for Lila.

• Weddings

- **Ryan Racanelli** (14) and Carly Veenstra, August 9, 2019.

FRENCH EXCHANGE Part One

For the last seven years, TDChristian's Grade 10 French class has participated in exchanges with other high schools throughout Canada. In late February, twenty of our students were blessed by the warm hospitality (in very cold temperatures) of a group of students in Val-d'Or, Québec, which is about a five-hour drive north from Ottawa. They experienced the grandeur and vastness of this northeastern community by visiting Canada's largest open pit mine in Malartic, Québec, and by going down into a gold mine. Our students will play host to their new "twins" from Québec from May 4 to 11, 2020.

Upcoming Events

Spring Membership Meeting
April 23, 7:30 p.m.
(same day as Learning Dialogues)

Grandparents' Day
May 7, 9:00 a.m.

***Notice* Book Launch and Spring Open House**
May 14, 6:30 p.m.

TDChristian Spring Concert
May 21, 7:00 p.m.

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TD Christian HIGH SCHOOL

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