



## Embracing Throughlines in Action

by Jennifer Neutel, OACS Community Journalist (reprinted with permission)

IN MARCH, Beacon hosted an afternoon "Celebration of Learning: Throughlines in Action" event that highlighted unique and meaningful work from each class. Every grade focused their work around a *Throughline* (discipleship concept).

*Throughlines* answer the question, "How shall we now live?" through Christ-centred fundamentals that establish a foundation for curriculum and guide student development as God is revealed to them. The ten *Throughlines* are: *Community Builders*, *God Worshippers*, *Idol Discerners*, *Servant Workers*, *Order Discoverers*, *Beauty Creators*, *Creation Enjoyers*, *Justice Seekers*, *Earth Keepers* and *Image Reflectors*. These characteristics benefit the school's mission toward the restoration of creation.

Community members, parents and grandparents attended the Wednesday, March 7th Celebration of Learning event. Handouts with a map showing where each class was set up was near the entrance and students were keen to answer questions and describe the displayed work. There was a buzz in the air, as guests expressed positive feedback as they engaged students in questions about their projects.

*There are many benefits to hosting this kind of event, which at Beacon takes the place of a science or heritage fair. "It creates a necessary tension for kids to say OK, this is for more than just my teacher," said Ralph Pot, the school's principal. "I think that creates a helpful and real audience for them."*

Incorporating *Throughlines* into project-based learning (PBL) at the school was a way to tangibly incorporate them beyond chapel and into the classrooms and lessons. "The whole PBL model would suggest we want to extend beyond our walls and have it be real and important beyond a classroom space," said Mr. Pot.

Junior Kindergarten students looked at *Creation Enjoying*, focusing on God's creation in the winter. Their display illustrated activities the class did such as making winter art, taking a walk in a local park and making bird feeders to hang at Tabor Manor.

The Senior Kindergarten class worked with the *Throughline Beauty Creating* and asked, "How can we, beauty creators, use colour to create beauty?" Students explored how various artists use colour and made their own creations duplicating the methods, creating a gallery of inspired art.

The class took an introductory trip to the Niagara Pumphouse Art Centre and each week studied a new artist. Students started developing





feelings around God giving them gifts and created art to showcase beauty and colour. Avery, a SK student, chose to mimic Jackson Pollock. "It was fun to flick paint," she said. The SK students created a gallery of their artwork.

"Their excitement about it is amazing," said teacher Miss Courtney Flus. Working on a project with a distinct focus prompted the students to think about art they see outside the school in new ways. "One little girl said the reason why she likes colour is how boring it would be if everything was black and white, God made colour for a reason," Miss Flus said. Two art pieces were auctioned at Beacon's Gala and the class also made notecards with student art on the front selling packs of 10 for \$10.

The Grade 1 class looked at *Servant Working* and how to build a safe place for those who need it. Students raised money doing chores and selling cards to buy nails for a Habitat for Humanity home. While their fundraising goal was initially \$1,000 they have already surpassed that and are looking to raise more for another home.

One of the teachers, Wilma Harris, came up with the idea. Mrs. Harris helped build a Habitat home in Welland. Students attended the dedication ceremony in December and sang, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

When doing an owl art project one of the paintings was admired so much the class chose to use the image on notecards as an additional fundraiser. "It's honestly bigger than I think we anticipated it being," said Educational Assistant, Madeline Ledwez. "It was such a simple idea at first and then expanding into this whole thought process with other things happening like the cards has been awesome."

Ana Diaz, relationship coordinator at Habitat for Humanity Niagara, attended the Celebration of Learning and took photos of students holding an oversized cheque of the money they raised.

*"We are in awe of Beacon Christian School, Mrs. Harris, the students, and everything they have done. It is really inspiring," she said. "At such a young age they are learning how to give back to the community, and I think that's what this school is all about – community and collaboration."*

The Grade 2 class had the *Throughline of Image Reflectors* and looked at how to reflect God's love to the homeless in their community. They learned about the causes of homelessness and hosted a dessert auction to raise money for the Out of the Cold program. The auction raised more than \$5,000.

Grade 3 students focused on *Earth Keeping* and decided to create a field guide for the school with pictures showing the various trees on the school's property.

The Grade 4 students were tasked with the *Justice Seeking Throughline*. The class initially looked at various water crises in First Nations communities and researched Kashechewan, a Cree reserve located near James Bay. Mr. Brooks called their elementary school's principal who told him drinking water is no longer an issue, but their community floods every year. The students brainstormed and through reaching out to various businesses and local supporters created evacuation backpacks for every Grade 4 student at the Kashechewan school.

The Grade 5 class looked at the *Community Building Throughline* and decided to host a spaghetti dinner for the school's neighbours. They considered all aspects of the event, from invitations to menu planning, and making people feel welcome.

The Grade 6 class showcased their unique, handmade kites. As they learned about *Order Discovering* the class looked at how to use their knowledge of flight to build kites. They studied the principles of air and flight and in groups designed and built kites.

Grade 7 students created a magazine using Flipsnack which was designed to give a more realistic view into the life and interests of teenagers. Two groups each created a project exploring the driving question of how can we, as *Idoltry Discerners*, challenge the media's portrayal of tweens and teens? They looked at different forms



of media, including TV shows and magazines, to see how the media portrays their age group. Half of the class worked on producing their own magazine for teens that challenges the typical media images, and the other created a video directed at parents to understand issues around the effects of social media.

Vice-principal Albert Kok's Grade 8 class looked at the affect *God Worshipping* has on the immigrant communities in St. Catharines. The students studied various places of worship in St. Catharines and created a display showcasing the immigrant history and places of worship that is being featured in the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canals Centre.

One day the entire class visited the six oldest churches in the city. Guests from the churches also came into the classroom and Mr. Kok spent break times driving students to locations to take photos. The project tied into curriculum in the subjects of history, geography, and language arts.

The project emphasized critical thinking and what a museum curator considers, while tying in media literacy. The display revolved around how students express themselves, using screenshot printouts of Instagram and Snapchat posts.

"It was a great way for students to recognize we are an immigrant society, and it's a great context to look at it in," Mr. Kok said. The variety of worship spaces explored gave insight into religious plurality and how to get to know other churches without being afraid of something different.

"We, as a class, loved it. We liked learning about the different religions and different people that make up a church," said Grade 8 student Jacoba. "I didn't know about many of these churches before this project."

Teachers shared a variety of benefits from combining their PBL units with *Throughlines*. PBL puts ownership on the students, noted Grade 7 teacher Mrs. Heather Wiersma. Students are passionate about the end product because its their idea. Connecting the PBL with a *Throughline* gave it roots and a framework.

"We always have our Christian perspective weaved throughout our curriculum, but this gave it some focus and combined the two things we've been working on – PBL and *Throughlines*," she told the OACS News Service.

For younger students the big words, like "idolatry discerning," may be a struggle, but PBLs intentionally showed those concepts through practical projects. The youngest grades may need to have more teacher-directed PBL, said Mr. Kok, adding that is fine and may help produce work they are proud to share. "It may not be an official PBL, but its still beautiful work."

*PBL units are an engaging way for students to dig into a subject and also tend to be a learning experience for the educator. Mr. Kok noted that when you are trying something that hasn't been attempted before "you really are building the bridge as you walk on it."*

"That can be scary but when you see a product like this you're like, OK, it was worth it," he said. Mr. Pot doesn't take any credit, but noted it is fun to see Mr. Kok motivate the staff. The projects created lasting memories for the students.

"None of the kids will forget having a spaghetti dinner with the locals or making these backpacks, (or) the time they got nails for Habitat for Humanity," he said. The culminating work the classes produced were a way for Beacon students to bless others and also be blessed in the process.



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Darlene Teeuwsen:  
advancement@

beaconchristian.org

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MATT 5:16

# Principal's Report

by Ralph Pot, Principal

## 59 since 59

As you read this, the 59th year of Christian education at 300 Scott Street in St. Catharines is near completion. The school began in September of 1959, according to the cornerstone by our front office. So that makes 59 since '59.

Lord willing, September 2018 will mark the 60th year of our existence. Discussions are taking place regarding how to best celebrate this significant milestone. Stay tuned in the months ahead to learn how you can celebrate with us.

As you leaf through this issue of the Signal, may you be reminded that the strength of this institution lies not in our own strength, ability, creativity, or intelligence. In this issue, you can read and see smiling graduates, supportive grandparents, and innovative and community-shaping projects, developed by incredibly talented students and teachers. Though we have much to celebrate, I believe the strength of Beacon Christian School rests in our perspective. "Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his" are the words of the psalmist.

Psalm 100 is one of the passages of Scripture students memorize during their first few years at Beacon. It is a simple and profound psalm. It is our hope that the simple truths outlined in this psalm echo in each of our students' minds and souls long after they graduate.

### *Psalm 100*

*A psalm. For giving grateful praise.*

*Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.*

*Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.*

*Know that the Lord is God.*

*It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.*

*For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.*



Thanks for the music  
Grade 8 Band!

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# MEET THE TEACHER

Mrs. Joanne Thiessen – JK



My name is Joanne Thiessen. This year marks a milestone for me at Beacon as I am completing my 15th year of teaching Junior Kindergarten. I was blessed to be hired when Beacon began their first Junior Kindergarten class in September of 2003. God had provided the perfect timing for me to re-enter the working field after spending seven years at home with my young children.

I received my education in Early Childhood Education from Niagara College. Prior to working at Beacon, I held a position as a teacher and supervisor for a Christian-based childcare centre in Niagara Falls for 15 years. I love working with young children and helping them become excited about the first steps in their educational journey. I am so thankful that at Beacon my teaching can include helping the students know God's love for them and helping them to see what an awesome Creator God we have! It has been a great honour and privilege to have the opportunity to be a part of so many young lives.

I have lived in St. Catharines my entire life and attended Beacon for my own elementary and secondary education. I've been married to my husband Brian for 24 wonderful years and together we have three young adult children who are also graduates of Beacon. Our daughter Nicole just graduated with a BSc in Social Work from Niagara University. Our sons Sean and Kyle are enrolled at Niagara College for Computer Engineering Technician and Customs Border Services.

In the summer, I enjoy spending time at home and cheering on my family as they all play baseball in a variety of leagues...I am sometimes recruited as the scorekeeper as well. We enjoy spending time camping and relaxing on the beach in God's beautiful northern parts of Ontario.



Judy Dykstra, Beacon's administrative assistant, is stepping away as an employee of Beacon Christian School after twelve years. Judy made each person who walked through Beacon's front door feel valued – whether it was a student, parent, teacher, salesman, health care professional, repairman, mailman, prospective parent, or simply someone who was lost and needed directions. She will be missed by staff, students, families and our greater school community!

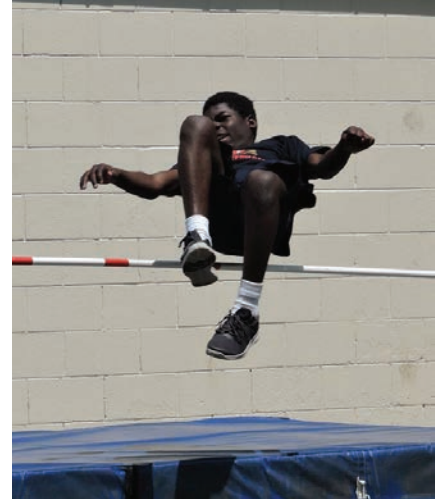


We also say goodbye to Kathy Wensink. Kathy has been teaching Senior Kindergarten at Beacon for the last three years. We wish her and her husband, Bill, God's blessings as they move to Prince Edward Island. We will miss you!



[www.beaconchristian.org](http://www.beaconchristian.org)

# BEACON SPORTS REPORT



**TRACK & FIELD 2018**



# GRANDPARENTS/ GRANDFRIENDS DAY 2018



# THE WIZARD OF OZ

# MUSICAL







# SK BUG LESSONS



# BACKPACKS FOR KASHECHEWAN

Mr. Jeff Brooks & the Grade 4 class

by Jennifer Neutel, OACS Community Journalist (reprinted with permission)



Mr. Brooks' grade 4 students worked hard to send enough backpacks to every Grade 4 student in a northern community school. As students of St. Andrew's Elementary School in the Kashechewan First Nation community experienced their annual evacuation due to risk of flooding, the students each received a special evacuation backpack from the Grade 4 class at Beacon Christian School.

With an April 19 evacuation date, the northern Ontario community is evacuated annually regardless of whether or not it is going to flood. A dike that surrounds the community is not up to standard, so each spring when the Albany River has ice chunks come down and cold evenings there is a possibility of water rising and going over the dike. Residents at risk evacuate every spring until they know the ice is clear.

The idea to create and send evacuation backpacks to Kashechewan students arose through Beacon's Project Based Learning Project which focused on a *Throughline* – a discipleship concept that answers the question "How shall we now live?"

In Jeff Brooks' Grade 4 classroom, students were tasked with the *Justice Seeking Throughline*. The class initially looked at various water crises in First Nations communities and researched Kashechewan, a Cree reserve in northern Ontario on the Albany River near James Bay.

Mr. Brooks called the principal at St. Andrew's School in Kashechewan, Tanya Spence, who told him drinking water is no longer an issue, but their community floods every year and perhaps the class could think of something to help in that area. Residents are evacuated for weeks at a time during the annual spring flooding.

When Mr. Brooks brought the idea to his class, the students were enthusiastic to help. They brainstormed and decided to make up an evacuation bag for every Grade 4 student at the Kashechewan school.

The class considered what items they wanted to send and formed small groups each responsible for something. The first required item was the backpack, with the desire to use high quality camping backpacks to hold the other items and be something the recipients would be proud of and be able to use for many years.

Students learned about a program at Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) that takes in returned bags and donates them to charities. The students called several MEC stores to ask for donations. MEC in London, Ontario, was the first store to donate and sent 10 bags, most of which looked brand new.

"That got us excited and initiated the project because we knew even if we collected all the other stuff the bags were the central item that we needed most," Mr. Brooks said. MEC stores from Victoria to Halifax were a huge support, donating lightly used backpacks to the cause.

"Without Mountain Equipment Co-op we would not have completed our project. They were absolutely huge to the success of it," Mr. Brooks said.

Behah, one of the students in the class who oversaw calling many of the stores, said the first time making a call was a "little nerve wracking," but then it got easier.

"It's been really fun calling a bunch of stores and telling them about our project and getting it all put together," she said.

Individual donations helped the class purchase other items in the backpack, which included toothpaste, toothbrush and floss; a warm blanket; a knitted hat; healthy snacks; school supplies; a mini basketball and nutty putty. Another large item was The Action Bible,

a graphic novel with comic-style text geared to readers aged nine to 12. Mr. Brooks has been using the Bible in his Grade 4 class and said because its in comic book form it is perfect for that age range.

Initially, students started calling Christian bookstores in Southern Ontario and as far as Buffalo. Nine were donated from Christian bookstores in North York, but as that was only a portion of the 46 needed, the class started writing letters requesting donations to purchase more. A construction company where a student's father works was the first to make a large financial donation. Others also contributed, and the class raised about \$1,000 to purchase the Bibles.

Knowing the Kashechewan students miss weeks of schooling during their evacuation, the Beacon class talked about ways to include an educational item. They decided it would be more fun to learn while playing a board game, and created a game that also teaches math, science, language arts and social studies.

The board used for the game was created by another student group. The board shows a map of Ontario, with Kashechewan as the starting point and St. Catharines as the end. Players move across the board by correctly answering the questions.

Lastly, in each backpack a student wrote a friendly letter to the Kashechewan recipient, asking questions about life in their community. They hope some connections or pen-pals may form, so the students can continue learning from one another.

The largest benefit Mr. Brooks sees to having a PBL unit focused around the justice seeking Throughline is the empathy it helped foster in students. "It shows them that we are privileged where we live and in addition to that I think it teaches them a lot of real-life skills," Mr. Brooks said.

The project also showed students that in Canada there are needs, and through working hard, positive change can happen. "To be the hands and feet of Jesus, that's what we are trying to do," Mr. Brooks said. "To show love, and to make change in even a small way, like putting together the backpacks for these students."



# GRADE 3 PIONEER DAY



# Beacon's 2018 Grade 8 Graduates



David Awad



Katarina Batourin



Wilem Brown



Sarah Denee



Ella Exelby



Ryan Gilks



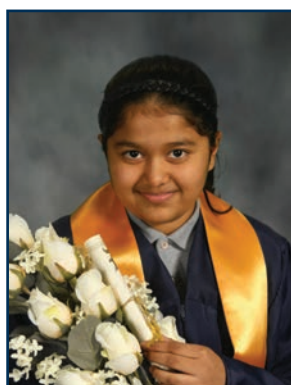
Christen Gemmell



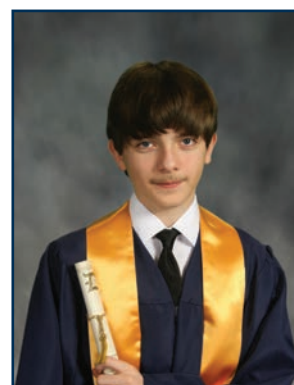
Joshua Jeong



Ogo Ogunkeye



Rohini Patel



Conner Parisotto

*Though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him  
with his hand. Psalm 37:24*

## #LetYOURLightSHINE!

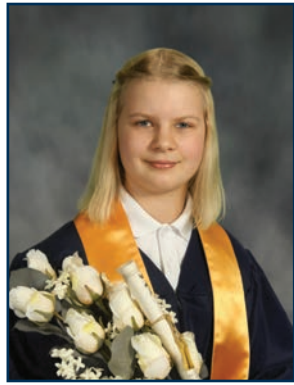
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MATT 5:16





Derek deKleine



Samantha DeVries



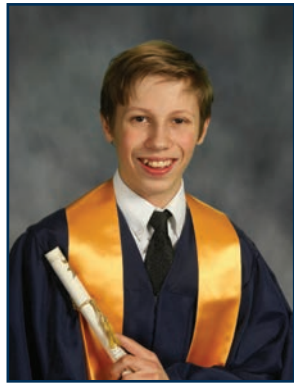
Steven Ghaly



Victoria Dorah



Jacoba Hoekstra



John Michael Kok



Kayla Loerts



Isaac Moore



Gabriel Riad



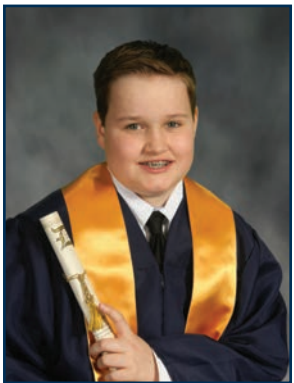
Steven Sharobim



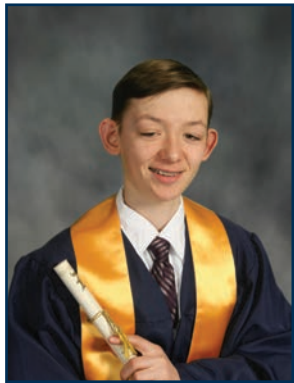
Lauren Thiessen



Seungho (Tony) Sun



Nathan Teeuwsen



Gideon Vernon



Hannah Woodland



Connor Wiersma

# GRADE 7 AND TABOR MANOR

## CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FOUNDATION REPORT

By Tony Kamphuis

Executive Director, Christian School Foundation

Here is a multiple-choice quiz question for you.  
“The nature of Christian education is:  
a) staying the same or b) in a time of change.”

If you had to pick one of these responses, you might have a very hard time doing so. Perhaps you are someone who has been a Beacon Christian School supporter for many years; decades, even. You would see in Beacon’s earnest desire to help students see God’s fingerprints all over every part of His amazing creation something that has stayed the same over all those years. The belief that “Jesus is Lord of all creation,” is a consistent theme that motivated the very earliest founders of this school...and it continues to motivate its leadership and staff to this day. Clearly, the most important things are staying the same.

On the other hand, in this issue of the Signal you are reading about the wonderfully innovative ways that students experience a Christian education at Beacon. You may have even chuckled to yourself, “Wow. That doesn’t look anything like the Christian education I experienced at Beacon, back in the day!” It is even possible that you are thinking of a former classmate, or a friend, who struggled to get through school. You might be thinking, “If they knew then, what we know now about what makes for effective education for all the different kinds of students God has created, I think my friend might have fared a lot better in school.”

I suppose that means that what I presented was a bit of a trick question. The fact is, that both are very true. Some things about a Christian education at Beacon are absolutely staying the same. But in many ways, things are constantly changing, as we learn more and more.

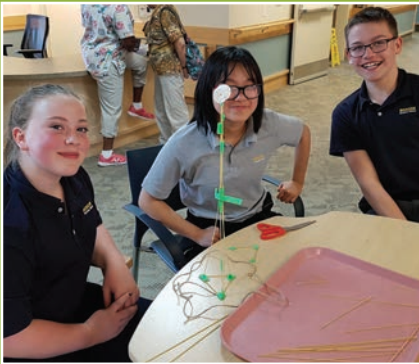
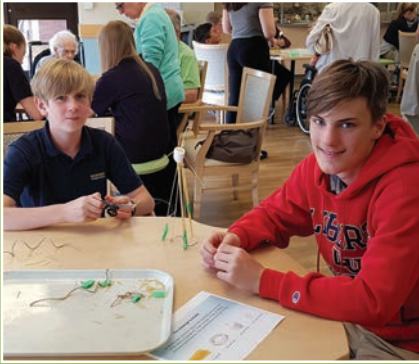
At the Christian School Foundation, we believe that God has an important task for everyone connected to Christian schools. We believe these schools are a key way that we can expand the influence of Christ in our culture. That is something that has probably always been the case. But we also believe that as schools like Beacon become learning communities that have a place for all kinds of students; as schools like Beacon seek out excellence in education; the opportunity to be a light in our culture continues to grow.

Donors that love the things they see at Beacon – that love the things that haven’t changed and love the things that continue to change – donors that share the desire to influence our culture for Christ: those are the donors that we want to support as they arrange planned gifts and bequests so that this important work of Christian education can carry on, to the glory of God.

Contact us if you have an interest in supporting Beacon in the medium or longer term, and we will work with you to ensure your gift has impact.



(905) 769 0798 or [office@christianschoolfoundation.ca](mailto:office@christianschoolfoundation.ca)



The grade 7 class walks over to the Tabor Manor nursing home once a month to participate in activities alongside the residents on 4th floor. The activity this month was to create the tallest free-standing structure using spaghetti noodles, tape, string, and a marshmallow topper.

# BEACON NEWS



## Celebrating with the Rankin Cancer Run! \$1.05 Million Dollars raised!!!

Beacon was honoured to have a visit from Rankin Run director, Mary Ann Edwards. The Rankin Run is an annual local event that raises money for cancer care and patient support in Niagara. Cole Wiersma was presented with a trophy because his artwork was chosen as one of the Rankin Run 2018 t-shirt designs! All of Beacon's Rankin Run 2018 participants wore a t-shirt featuring Cole's artwork. Beacon is proud to share in this amazing community event.



## 6,100 Pounds of Food Collected and \$237 raised for Community Care

We are thankful for the amazing results from our annual Spring Auction Community Care Food Drive. We give special thanks for our generous community, our students, and Ron Mulder and the Auction Committee!



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### REWARDS SUMMER PICKUP DATE

Arrive @ VandenDool Jewellers on  
Tuesday, July 31st @ 1:00 pm

### PRESCHOOL "MEET THE TEACHER"

Tuesday, August 28th, 2018  
5:00 - 6:00 pm

### SUMMER OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, August 28th, 2018  
6:00 - 8:00 pm

### NEW PARENT ORIENTATION EVENING

Wednesday, August 29th, 2018  
7:30 pm in the Library

### BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ

Friday, September 7th, 2018  
6:00 pm ~ Details to follow

### APPLEFEST

Saturday, October 13, 2018

Note date is now AFTER Thanksgiving.

Save-the-Date and consider  
how your family can volunteer!

### SUMMER CONTACTS:

The school office will close on  
June 27th and reopen August 20th.  
If you need to reach us, please contact:

**Ralph Pot**

*Principal*

[rpot@beaconchristian.org](mailto:rpot@beaconchristian.org)

**David Dion**

*Financial Administrator*

[finance@beaconchristian.org](mailto:finance@beaconchristian.org)

**Darlene Teeuwen**

*Advancement Director*

[advancement@beaconchristian.org](mailto:advancement@beaconchristian.org)

[www.beaconchristian.org](http://www.beaconchristian.org)

What a joy it is to know the incredible community of support that surrounds and upholds Beacon Christian School! Every prayer, gift and sacrifice, whether small or large, is vitally important. Thank you for your commitment as you invest in the exciting vision of Christian education here at Beacon.

**DONOR CARD**



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