

DECEMBER 2023

# MIND & SOUL

*News from Orillia Christian School*



## LATEST NEWS IN THIS ISSUE:

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**Merry Christmas** from the staff, board of directors and community here at Orillia Christian school! We are thankful for the opportunity to share about the school year with you, highlighting the ways OCS seeks to support Christian families in educating to equip the mind, heart and body of children through Christ-centred curriculum and teaching for service in the world. Your prayer and financial support continues to allow us to work together to pour into the lives of the children God has entrusted us with. Thank you for following along and supporting what Orillia Christian school stands for. Have a blessed new year!



The Christmas cheer is in full swing at the Orillia Christian School! The stockings are hung, the halls smell of gingerbread, and the snowflakes are falling (our Grade 4 class is even churning their own butter!). This truly is a joyful time of year where we celebrate alongside the rest of the world the precious truth of the incarnation. Christ came! Isaiah 9 announces glorious news to a weary world! There is more to the baby in the manger than first meets the eye. He is: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Just like you, I'm sure, the Christmas traditions are also well underway at home. The denBok family already has their Christmas tree up and even some presents wrapped underneath. One of my favourite parts about Christmas are the theologically rich hymns that we hear all around us. For many of our loved ones, this is the one season of the year when they will join their voices with songs of praise to Jesus. Isn't that such a gift to us this Christmas?

One of my favorite songs to listen to is O Holy Night, not only because I marvel at how anyone could hit the high vocal parts of the song, but also because of its beautiful reminders:

***Truly he taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and his gospel is peace.  
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,  
And in his name all oppression shall cease.***

What beautiful, hope-inspiring lyrics! Take a moment to consider these words that we often rush past.

### **"His Law Is Love"**

"His law is love" references the passage where the Pharisees attempted to stump Jesus by asking him what the greatest commandment was. Jesus replied in Matthew 22:37-40 saying:

"And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

The deepest act of love we can contribute this Christmas is to offer a compelling witness for Jesus Christ to our watching world. The peace we can offer in the chaos of the season, the patient parenting, the focus on giving rather than receiving, the act of loving our grieving friends through a difficult season, and simply guarding our calendars in spending much needed time with our spouse. There also can be the thoughtful prayers we offer the Lord as we bless the Christmas dinner, the turning of the cheek or choosing to love despite the snarky comment of a distant relative, or the gift of true, gentle, words of hope we offer to a lost and weary soul. LOVE! O that the world would see the love of Christ shining in and through us this Christmas!

### **"His Gospel Is Peace"**

In the armour of God passage we read in Ephesians 6:15 "and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace".

One comfort for us to remember this season is that the gospel truly is the best gift we could ever give to someone. It is the good news that God purchased peace by the death of his Son and offers it to sinners who believe in Jesus. We can delight in the fact that the gospel of peace restores our relationship with God AND our relationships with each other. There is nothing sweeter in all the world than to be at peace with God and with others. Sharing the gospel also gives our lost loved ones hope and peace that they cannot find in this dark and dreary world.

The gospel of Jesus Christ offers new life, new hope, new relationships, and best of all a new heart. A heart that longs to put Jesus at the centre of it all.

Maybe you're reading this and you are already a Christian, but you've lost sight of the beauty of it. Allow yourself to reflect on some of the other lyrics of O Holy Night:

***A thrill of hope- the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!  
In all our trials born to be our Friend.  
He knows our need- to our weakness is no stranger.  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we;  
Let all within us praise His holy name.***

Let us sing O Holy Night this Christmas with fresh perspective (and hit that high note), and behold our King and praise Him evermore!





# STUDENT LIFE

## ACT, LOVE, WALK

As we wrap up 2023, our theme from Micah 6:8 continues to impact our learning and community here at OCS. One of our goals in teaching this theme is for our students to find opportunities for service projects, which also goes along with our learning vision. It is a joy to be the hands and feet of Jesus, especially during this Christmas season. Classes packed 99 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child, collected hats, mitts and hot chocolate packs for the Lighthouse, and 2 classes were able to bless the residents of Champlain Manor with cards and Christmas carols. Some of our grade 8's also enjoyed a recent visit with one of our retired staff members who worked with them as grade 3's!



**“At the nursing home, I saw residents who were happy when we sang. Some joined in! When we handed a card to the person in the hall, he was very happy! His joy made me feel happy too!”**

*-Alexis Birnie, Grade 5*



## CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING

Let's go Eagles! The team travelled to Owen Sound to compete, after a long season including many early morning practices which paid off! It was an amazing day all around! The sportsmanship and perseverance was inspiring and our team did so well running! We landed **1st place for Primary girls** (2nd year in a row!) and our **Primary boys also placed 1st!** 🏆 Plus we had so many top ten finishes individually. Congratulations Eagles!! Thanks to our coaches and parent volunteers for being a part of such a special day! We're so proud of our strong runners!





# Christmas traditions



## **"KIDS CHRISTMAS SALE" - A decades old tradition going strong!**

One of the highlights of the school year- students come with some spare change to buy gently used items for their family members. You can see students taking the time to find the perfect piece that will make their mom, dad or sibling feel loved. What a tangible way to practice the act of giving this Christmas season! We know many treasures have made their way under various trees this year, we hope you enjoy opening that special piece picked just for you! (And maybe enjoy a few laughs!)



## **"END OF THE YEAR SKATE"**

Ending the year with school skating leaves the year off on such a fun note! It has been several years since we have been able to take the students over to Brian Orser, but this was finally the year! It is a blessing to revisit these fun traditions that many have experienced over the years.





# FUNDRAISING



## WALKATHON UPDATE – OCTOBER

Our walkathon was an incredible success! Not only did we have a ton of fun together, we also were able to exceed our fundraising goal of \$30,000! Our grand total this year was the highest yet- **\$50,759.00!!!!** What an amazing blessing for our school!

Congratulations to Noelle DenBok for raising the most money in the school, which also secured the win for Junior Kindergarten winning top class! They recently enjoyed a "Zoo to You" prize in their classroom.

A GIANT thank you to all who donated or sponsored the event! Your support is truly appreciated!



## SILENT AUCTION – NOVEMBER

We enjoyed a wonderful evening together bidding on over 180 items donated from local businesses and individuals. The gym was beautifully decorated and enjoyed over some yummy desserts! Thank you for joining us and helping us to raise over \$23,000 for OCS!

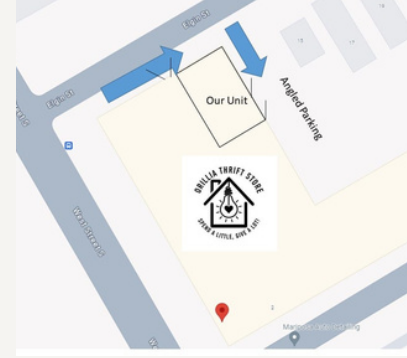




# UP & COMING NEWS

## DEVELOPING THRIFT STORE

Follow The [Orillia Thrift Store](#) on Facebook to stay up to date on future work bees and donation drop off times! It has been very exciting to watch the store develop, one day at a time- closer to an opening soon! Thank you for your patience throughout this journey and a BIG thank you to the volunteers pouring so much into this endeavour!



## YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

When you support OCS, you are investing in the lives of our students today and in the years to come as they live out their lives to glorify Christ. Please consider partnering with us, so that we can continue a legacy of building up the next generation.

Email [bookkeeper@orilliachristianschool.com](mailto:bookkeeper@orilliachristianschool.com)

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