

Spiritual Life at ACS

“I AM” ... by Julie Van Oordt

The chapel theme for this year was **I AM**. We examined the “I AM” declarations of Jesus in the New Testament. We looked at the context of each statement and listened to Jesus’ powerful and transforming words.

God spoke to Moses from a burning bush and sent him to Egypt to lead the people of Israel to freedom. Moses worried that the people would want to know who had sent him and so he asked God what his name was. God answered, “I AM WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). The same God who spoke to Moses speaks to us.

In September, we started with the general topic of **I AM**, and we learned about Jesus’ saving grace. In October we studied **I AM the Bread of Life**, and discovered that Jesus is the source of spiritual satisfaction; He fills us up. He is enough for anyone, and we need nothing else. In November, we learned that **I AM is the Light of the World**. We are to be lights in our world, our community, and our school. We are called to walk in Jesus’ light and be light-bearers. December showed us that **I AM is the Gate for the Sheep**. Not only does Jesus allow people in to heaven, He also prevents those that don’t believe in Him from entering. In January, we studied what **I AM the Good Shepherd** means. Christ protects us, provides for us, guides us, helps us, and never leaves us alone. We must listen for his voice. In February we learned about **I AM the Resurrection and the Life**. Eternal life is not something we get when we die; it’s what we receive when we believe. During March we learned that Jesus says **I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life**. The Bible is our perfect map for life, and it tells us that Jesus is THE ONLY way to heaven. In April we studied, **I AM the True Vine**. We must stay connected to Jesus and bear much fruit for Him– for God’s glory. We ended the year in May with **I AM the Alpha and the Omega**. Jesus was present at the beginning and He will be the One who brings history to a close!

The names of Jesus point to special roles that He fulfills for people. Throughout this year, we discovered who Jesus is to us: our protector, our source of life, our answer to spiritual truths, our only way into God’s kingdom, our sole support. May we live out our lives for Him in all we do and say.

8th Grade Boys Bible Study ... by Rob Gemmen

Dan Tebos and I were once again privileged to be able to meet with the 8th grade boys for a lunch hour Bible study. We explored what the Bible says on the topics of love and truth. We had some great discussion on these topics and of course wandered a little as the Spirit led. Those times can really be

the best! As we discussed these topics we also showed the boys how to find the answers for any topic in the Bible through prayer and the proper use of tools for research. We had some great discussion and some not too easy questions to deal with but with the Spirits leading we were able to find some real answers

from His Word. Thank you for this time we get to share with the boys’, it seems I learn more than they do and I am so blessed by this study. Thanks also to the boys for their participation. I pray that they would use what they learned this year as they move forward into high school and beyond.

Mission Statement

Our desire is for God to impact our school community by deepening our connection with Him and with each other through worshipful chapels, discipleship of the student body, promoting unity among parents and spiritually encouraging the teachers and staff.

2011-12

ACS Spiritual Theme

I AM ...

In Exodus 3:14, God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM” this is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.

Moms in Prayer ... by Shelly Visser

WHO? Woman gathering for one hour to pray for our children, schools and teachers.
WHEN? Thursdays, 8:45 to 9:45am (October-April) in the Art Room at ACS
WHY? TO STAND IN THE GAP - bringing our children, teachers and school before God.

We parents stand in the gap for those over whom God has given us charge: We stand before God to plead on behalf of our kids. *Lord, help ____ do well on his/her test today. Show him/her that you care about every detail of his/her life. 1 Sam. 12:23*

Interceding for our kids is obviously important, but a wonderful truth about prayer is that as we pray we receive greater insight and strength to “stand on behalf others”. “____, the Lord knows what you’re up against today. He’ll be with you. He’s promised.” *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7*

Praying with other Mom’s in small groups helps us to avoid the trap of praying “the same old thing.” Our prayer vocabulary is stretched and our prayers enlarged as we claim truths that are already settled in heaven. *O Lord, may Your hand sustain ____; may Your arm strengthen him/her. Psalm 89:21*

Sometimes we’re not diligent in prayer because we have a record of mediocre results. We get distracted, bored and vague. Sometimes we have a hard time getting started. Words and ideas fail us. Praying intentionally with scripture in mind helps us to pray confidently and specifically. *Help ____ to understand that if he’ll/she’ll acknowledge you as Lord today, you will show him how to solve this problem. Prov 3:6*

Sometimes we laugh, sometimes we cry, often we struggle for words. But our hope and trust is in the One who is listening and loves us despite our inadequacies. *Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you. Psalm 9:10.* Please join us next fall.

Advance Notice:

Prayer Covering for the 2012/2013 school year

All parents and grandparents are invited to join us on

Wed. August 29

at 11:30am in the

ACS Rotunda

For More Information
Call Cindy at 895-1223



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.

Ephesians 6:18

8th Grade Girls Bible Study ... by Shelly Visser

This spring Peg Driesenga and I met with the 8th grade girls over a lunch period for a 6-week study. Feeling very inadequate yet willing to go where God would call, Peg (a mother of boys) and myself (1 boy and 1 girl) loaded up our Bibles and notebooks in one arm and lemonade and jellybeans in the other, and headed into the conference room. Our first week we talked with the girls about what God has to say about the enemy of our souls ... his strategies and lies. The next week we looked into lies young women believe and the TRUTH that sets them free.

We encouraged the girls

to write God’s word on index cards so when they recognize the enemy’s lies, they could replace it with God’s truth. We also looked at a Proverbs 31 woman and what that might look like for our generation. We challenged them to continually be in the process of becoming virtuous women. We read letters from former ACS graduates and talked about the words of wisdom these graduates had for our 8th grade girls.

Peg and I shared our stories... mistakes made and God’s redeeming grace in our lives. We reminded the girls how God is writing their story even now and how Satan tells us lies,

especially when it comes to relationships ... but God’s word gives us truth to fight those lies. We played a game with duck tape which helped demonstrate the importance of healthy relationships and the lasting effects of our actions. When it was time to go, the girls received a 6 page packet of examples of what God says about love. “Guard your minds and your hearts...” Proverbs 4:23 “Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory, majesty, dominion and power, both now and forevermore. Amen (Jude 1: 24, 25).

The National Day of Prayer ... by Kim Ernst

2011-2012 School Year

Our country observed the annual National Day of Prayer (NDP) on Thursday, May 3, with the theme, **“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12)**. To assist our faculty in guiding the students through prayers, the Spiritual Encouragement Team prepared the ACS library to be a prayer room. Using suggestions from the NDP website seven tables held information regarding one of the topics: government, military, media, business, education, church, and family. To prompt thought and ideas for prayer, each topic’s trifold display contained pictures, illustrations, newspaper clippings, Bible verses and lists of ideas as appropriate. The range of materials was aimed at relating to the differing ages and reading ability of the students of various grades.

Each class had the opportunity to reserve a 25 minute time slot for use of the prayer room. Use of the topics and prayer time and style were left to the discretion of the teacher. Students could write thoughts on sticky notes to leave for others or to take home. Students were also given a bookmark that included the 2012 National Prayer, written by Dr. David Jeremiah, NDP Honorary Chairman: “Heavenly Father, every good gift and perfect gift comes from You. You are faithful and Your mercy endures forever. You have promised to bless the nation that trusts in You. Our currency proclaims ‘In God We Trust’, but in our culture we are far from You. In the words of the prophet Daniel, ‘We have sinned and committed iniquity, we have

done wickedly, rebelled, even departed from Your precepts and judgments.’ We come before You once more, seeking Your forgiveness. You, O God, are our only hope, hear our prayer and shine Your face upon this nation. Give our leaders the desire to seek Your wisdom and the courage to follow Your guidance. Watch over the men and women of our armed forces as they sacrifice for the cause of freedom. We give You thanks for all You have done for us. Help us become, once again, a nation whose God is the Lord. Amen.”

The Spiritual Encouragement Team prayed that this was a helpful and meaningful experience for each student. Prayer, even when it relates to an entire nation, is still a personal conversation with an attentive God.

Acts of Christian Kindness ... by Peg Driesenga

Scripture tells us we are to love and serve our neighbors. The Spiritual Encouragement Team helped ACS Middle School students put the love of Christ into action through Acts of Christian Kindness. Students were encouraged to carry out A.C.K. Attacks. A student would receive a card with a suggestion for an act of kindness. After they performed the act, they signed the card and passed it along, forming a chain of kindness.

The A.C.K. Attacks were a tangible reminder that as servants of the living God, we are to be the hands and feet of Jesus in serving one another. Students were excited to get the cards and wrote notes about their experiences on the A.C.K. Attack board in the middle school hallway. Some of the students spoke about how receiving an act of kindness made them feel special, or how they couldn't wait to get a card

so they could A.C.K. Attack someone.

The best part of the experience is that the students began to come up with ideas of their own, and perform acts of Christian kindness without the prompting of a card. What a blessing to see the students live out their faith with one another. Ephesians 4:32 *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

Editor's Note ...

This newsletter is just a small glimpse of what God is doing day to day at ACS. I see Him being exalted:

- in the worship that happens at chapels.
- in the teachers' love for the students and in their explanation of each new thing.
- in the scripture that is spoken and memorized.
- in the truth that is built into the curriculum.
- in the small hands that reach out to their neighbor to pray.
- in the way students grow and define their faith.

As a committee we give thanks that God faithfully continues to build upon what is already here.

Cindy Driesenga
ACS Parent
Chair, Spiritual Encouragement Team

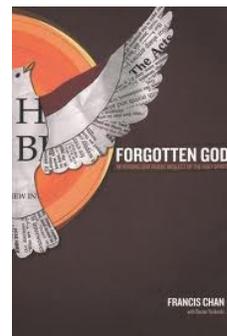
“Forgotten God”, overwhelmed by a relentless God ... by Francis Chan

This winter a handful of ladies experienced our God in the Being of the Holy Spirit through Francis Chan's book “Forgotten God.” Through DVD and book readings we discovered the beauty of being empowered by the Holy Spirit, how we grieve Him, and how personal and available He is every

moment of every day if only we would acknowledge His Presence more. We grew deeper in understanding our triune God and the Counselor that is ready to hear from us and direct our paths. Francis Chan has a genuine and relational way of presenting truths based on the Word of God.

Praying over our time and growing in our walk with God together was enriching and blessed. We are certain that God was present with us in this study to know Him in the form of the Holy Spirit better.

Bonny Baar and
Stephanie Roelofs

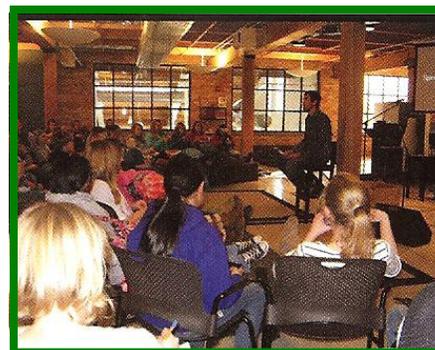


Middle School Retreat ... by Rebeka Mesbergen

Freedom. Passion. Discernment. These were the three main ideas the middle school students encountered at their annual Spiritual Emphasis Retreat. This year's retreat was held at Covenant Life Church in Grand Haven on December 8 and 9, 2011. Each day included a variety of activities, including singing, games, teaching sessions, and small group discussions.

Our main speaker this year was Ryan White, a youth leader at 1st Allendale CRC. He began by emphasizing to the students that their middle school years are significant, and he pointed out three reasons: They are creating their own identity, they are gaining freedom from their parents, and they are beginning to take control of their lives. He then posed the all-important question: what role is your faith going to play in your life? Through out the retreat, he encouraged the students to live a life that is centered on Jesus Christ and is full of passion in all they do.

During the rest of the retreat, students discovered more fully what this means. Ryan began by sharing two key scripture passages to help them think about what it means to be Christ-centered. First Corinthians 6:19-20 reminds them that they are not their own, but instead they were bought by the precious blood of Christ. Using the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, Ryan reminded them that a tree is identified by the fruit that it bears, and the same should be true of them! They then discussed what it means to be passionate, to care deeply about something. He challenged the students to work at that right now in middle school in three ways: to honestly assess the Fruits of the Spirit in their lives, to identify their passions, and to practice living out their faith with actions. Finally, they learned about discernment, the ability to distinguish right from wrong and good from bad. Ryan pointed out that life is full of choices and that the decisions they make are creating their identity and setting their path for the rest of their life. He gave some suggestions to guide them in making wise decisions and then led them to think about how to be discerning regarding their online activity, their entertainment choices, and their friendships. In the end, Ryan reminded them that they will make mistakes, but he also encouraged them to admit it when they do, to learn from those mistakes, and to take action to not let them happen again!



All in all, the Spiritual Emphasis Retreat was a meaningful time of worshiping our God, fellowshiping with one another, and growing in our faith. Students were encouraged and challenged to think about who they are and who they want to become as they grow in Christ.