



# Hampden Heights Sentinel

## Highlights:

- Our prayer is that we want to be known as the kindest, most spiritual, and most respectful classroom in the school. – Page 1.
- Joy is the one thing I'm terrified to be without, yet the one thing everyone proclaims at this time of year. – Page 2.
- Our children use their Bibles to share the Gospel with all their friends. – Page 4.

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*This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord" --- Jeremiah 17:5 NIV*

## RJA News Corner by Lee Stahl, Principal

This month I'd like to update everybody on some recent activities happening in each classroom at RJA. Here is a brief highlight for each grade.

### Grades 9-10

The focus of the Bible curriculum for grades nine and ten is always gospel-centered. While the textbook provides sequence, the primary student text is the Bible itself, with the goal that all students will develop a personal understanding of truth and its applications to life issues based on their study of Scripture. This year's emphasis is on the growth of God's Church throughout history, beginning with the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt in the book of Exodus, and continuing to the last day events, culminating with the Second Coming of Jesus. At present we are studying the time of the kings and the ministry of the prophets. Special projects include students choosing one of the minor prophets to read and for which to prepare a poster, highlighting that prophet's message for our time. In a related project, students will use a variety of media to create a narrative account of one the kings. Throughout this study, we are focusing

on the importance of a whole-hearted, rather than half-hearted, relationship with God, which is repeatedly emphasized in the Bible account. By Toni Wlasniewski

### Grades 7-8

It doesn't have to be a special time of year to be exciting in the seventh and eighth grade classroom, because I have such a great bunch of young people. Every day, we laugh and joke around, but we also have meaningful discussions about God. I have such a spiritually curious bunch, and they ask some great, in-depth, thought-provoking questions.

However, it is a "special time" of year for us. As we wound down school this week for Thanksgiving break, we celebrated with my annual Agape Feast "breakfast". I light candles around the room (Shhh...Don't tell the fire marshal.), and arrange the desks in a shape of the cross. I write cards to every student, thanking them for being awesome in their own, unique way. We have a worship talk and share conversation and fellowship over a simple menu of fruits, veggies, nuts and grains. Each one shares what he or

she is thankful for.

The students who have been in my class last year help me get it set up in the morning. The seventh graders and new students meet in the library with Mr. Stahl for attendance and lunch count. So, it is always a surprise for the next set of students, and every year my former students have kept the surprise a secret. It's neat to see their faces as I hand them their hand-written card and open the door to the glow of the candles. It is truly something unexpected and "burns" a lasting image in their minds for years to come. By Wendy Stahl

### Grades 5-6

The 5th and 6th grade classroom is practicing good behavior. Our prayer is that we want to be known as the kindest, most spiritual, and most respectful classroom in the school. Many of the students are praying this prayer on their own now. To encourage good behavior in others, the students are supposed to spot the good in others. Whenever someone is spotted doing a kind act for someone else, that action is recorded. Once we record 100 kind acts we are going to make a video as a class demonstrating different acts of kindness. By Matthew White

## Grace's Outpost by Ashley Richards

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing” James 1:2-4 (NASB).

Joy.

As we move into December, joy is the one thing I am terrified to be without, yet the one thing everyone always proclaims at this time of year.

Let me begin by saying that I *love* Christmas. I grew up loving it, and I still love just about everything about it. The generosity it brings out in people, the joy, the beautiful story of Jesus come to earth, the gift-giving, the cool air, the Christmas movies, the Christmas programs, the caroling, the Christmas lights displays. Christmas has had the ability to strike euphoric joy in my heart, and I love everything it represents to us, as Christians.

But last year, December 14 stole my joy. One of my best friends in the world—her name was Amélie—passed away December 14, four years ago this year. I don't know why it didn't hit until last year, but last December, the passing of

the anniversary of her death hit me really hard. I was filled with bone-deep sadness when joy should have filled me completely. I hadn't known Millie terribly long—only a few years—but I remember our friendship with great fondness. Sure, we had our differences, but we were there for each other in the very darkest parts of both of our lives, and I'm not sure I've had a friend whose heart so perfectly mirrored mine. She had the most beautiful spirit I've ever known, kind and selfless with a save-the-world streak as wide as the Mississippi is long.

And I miss her.

Honestly, she wasn't even a Christian—she was Jewish—and I never celebrated the holiday with her. So, theoretically Christmas shouldn't make me feel so despondently lonely and bone-deep sad, but Christmas, for me, isn't just Christmas Day, or even the couple of days before it, but the entire month of December, and I just couldn't seem to get over missing her last year.

And now, as the Christmas season sneaks in, I'm so terrified that December is going to steal my Christmas joy again. I feel like my love for Christmas and joy is being betrayed, but I just wish I could see her. I

wish I could give her a long hug, and show her Jesus. Show her how she changed my life for the better, in so many ways, and that I carry her with me, in my heart.

But sometimes I just wish I could get her out, so I could move on. Be happy at Christmas, feel the joy of the season again and not feel like such a Christmas outcast. But maybe it's important to admit this to the world, because I can't possibly be the only one to feel like this around the Christmas season.

I remember hearing a story about a blind girl who was always cheerful, and nobody ever understood why. So she quoted James 1:2 as her life verse, and said that happiness was a feeling that bubbles up inside you, but *joy* is a choice. Joy is the choice that leads to happiness. So though fearing that I'll lose my joy and love and happiness at Christmas can paralyze me, in Amélie's honor, I am *choosing* joy. It's what she would have wanted. She would have wanted me to be happy, especially around my favorite holiday. She wouldn't have wanted me to let her memory hold me back from my full potential.

So, this December, I am making the choice to choose joy. I might cry a little on December 14, and remember all our favorite things, and I might even try some Jewish food when Hanukkah rolls around. But I also choose to immerse myself in as many Christmas stories as I possibly can, and to fall in love with Christmas music all over again, and to build up my mom's surprise Christmas present as much as I possibly can (Mom, it's going to be epic! See? I'm starting already!), and to go sing the Hallelujah Chorus with all the other Sylvan Singers at BMA's Christmas concert, and read the story of the Magi on Christmas Eve, like I do every year. I'm reclaiming Christmas this year, in Millie's honor. Because though I'm not sure she ever believed in Jesus, she would have wanted my heart whole and healed, almost as much as Jesus does, and she would have wanted me to have the hope and joy Jesus gives me. While Millie can't fix my heart, Jesus is capable of both giving me joy *and* healing me, and that's all that really matters, in the end.

## Meet a Member by Bob Kondracki

Those who have been reading the Sentinel the last two months will recognize this month's "Meet a Member" guest as none other than Stacy McLean, also the Sentinel's newest columnist.

In my recent interview with Stacy, I had the opportunity to learn a little more about her, and I soon discovered what friends and family already know; that she is one of the nicest and friendliest people I've ever had the pleasure to talk to. As a matter of fact our interview lasted over an hour and a half, and the time flew by quickly. And throughout our talk it was very evident that Stacy has a heart for the Lord.

Stacy has a very busy and active life, and a large part of her day is spent home schooling her two children. And with a Paraprofessional Certification for teaching Special Education, she is well qualified to do so. Her son Cordell, who is in 8th grade, and her daughter Emily, who is in 6th, get 6-7 hours of schooling every weekday, and even 2 hours of math every Sunday! "My kids get a minimum of 2 hours of math every weekday also," Stacy says. Wow, that much math would burn most people out pretty quickly...apologies to Mr. Stahl. "Home schooling also helps me to stay sharp and get an education as well," Stacy laughs.

Stacy became a Christian

in 1977 at the ripe old age of 7. Her parents started attending the Kenhorst church when Pastor Maquisten was there. "The Maquistens really had a great impact on our family, and we missed them dearly when they moved to Maryland," Stacy reminisces. But the family continued to attend Kenhorst church, and Stacy and her sister Tiffiney also started attending Reading Junior Academy. At 14 years old, Stacy gave her life to Christ and was baptized at the Kenhorst church.

Some tough times were ahead during Stacy's teenage years, and she left RJA in her 9th grade year and went to Governor Mifflin. Her parents divorced when she was in 10th grade but she was still able to graduate. Stacy confides, "I strayed away from the church through all the turmoil, but never from God. I continued to stay strong in my faith. I made many poor choices along the way, but God never abandoned me. I discovered that God still blesses even through the toughest of times."

Stacy eventually did return to the church, and God worked through her to bring her husband Jason to the Lord as well. "Jason and I dated for two years and then got married." Stacy confides that Jason came from an Atheist family and was very reluctant to embrace Christian beliefs. "I kept inviting him to the

Revelation seminars at Hampden Heights," she says. But Jason had a lot of questions before being willing to accept what Stacy was telling him. "We started attending different churches so I could prove to him that Saturday was the Sabbath and the true day of worship. I raked the pastor of every church we visited over the coals about why they didn't honor Saturday as the true Sabbath," Stacy confesses. "None of them had a legitimate answer."

After many years of doing research, and being led by God on the subject, Stacy convinced Jason to attend the Revelation seminar by our former Pastor Barry Tryon. All the while Stacy continued to pray for Jason, and that God would open his eyes to the truth.

Stacy started taking her children to church with her sister Tiffiney when Jason was working on Saturday. "He didn't like coming home to an empty house," Stacy mused. It had been a long journey but Jason finally started to see the light, and he arranged to have Saturday off so the entire family could attend church together. Stacy and Jason have been married for 21 years now. On March 14, 2009, Jason was baptized, together with Stacy, who was re-baptized, by Pastor Barry Tryon at Hampden Heights. They've been attending ever since.

In addition to her immediate family, Stacy

also has extended family that attends the Adventist church. Her nephews Jake and Joel Hinkle, along with Stacy's sister Tiffiney are members of Kenhorst, and attend Hampden occasionally. "My mother, Gerry, remarried a wonderful man, Nick Gyomber, and they also attend both our churches." Gerry is a member of Kenhorst. "That is all my relatives that attend the church," Stacy says. "However, I feel like all the church members are my family too."

Stacy is a very good steward of her time....she has to be, with everything she's involved in...and devotes quite a bit of time serving the Lord by engaging in multiple church activities. "I help Pastor Pete when he needs me to make calls for him. I do emailing for him, and keep him informed of upcoming meetings that need to take place. I enjoy interacting with church members and getting to know them and developing a relationship. Helping the pastor gives me an opportunity to do that," Stacy says. Stacy is also involved in the Community Services Ministry at Hampden Heights, and will be taking on an even more active role sharing leadership responsibilities with Barbara Snyder in January of 2016. "Working with Barbara, Shirley Blackerby, Midge Johns, and Melinda Adolph, I feel so blessed and thankful for their support and training," Stacy says.

**Recipe of the Month** by Elizabeth Hill

It's Christmas, and what better recipe than a cookie recipe that every kid loves? I came across this recipe while I was looking for one for the newsletter and I had forgotten all about it. I'm glad I found it and I will be using it for the holidays.

Merry Christmas, everyone!

**Monster Cookies**

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teasp. vanilla
- 2 teasp. baking soda
- 1 1/4 cups creamy peanut butter
- 4 1/2 cups Old Fashioned Rolled Oats
- 1/2 cup sweetened, flaked Coconut
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 cup M&Ms, divided

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Cream together the butter and sugars. Then add the eggs, vanilla, and baking soda. Add the rest of the ingredients, saving at least half the M&Ms. Drop by rounded spoonfuls onto a parchment lined cookie sheet. Flatten slightly with a fork dipped in cold water. Add a few M&Ms to the top, pressing in slightly.

Bake for 12 minutes. They'll be puffy and soft (don't remove from baking sheet yet.) Have another baking sheet ready to go into the oven, and let these cool for 6 - 8 minutes (WHEN THE COOKIE DE-PUFFS A LITTLE, IT'S READY) then remove with spatula to cool.

**Meet a Member** (continued from page 3)

Stacy has also recently started writing a column, "The Book Review," for this newsletter. "I love to read all kinds of books, and enjoy sharing information that I feel will benefit others," she says.

Stacy and Jason's children attend the Pathfinders program at Hampden, and Stacy even finds time to help in that ministry when she can. "I make calls, and I also will be teaching and co-teaching some honors," Stacy confides humbly. "As a family we try to be active in our church, and I also help Jason, who's an assistant deacon, by calling the other deacons to let them know when he has his meetings."

When she's not homeschooling or doing something for her church, Stacy also enjoys cooking gluten free foods and making up recipes. "But my favorite hobby is reading," she confesses. "My favorite books are 'self-help' and relationship books. Health and religion are also among my favorites. I just love doing research, and I'm always searching the library for books," she admits.

"We go there pretty consistently. That's why I feel right at home doing "The Book Review" column for the Sentinel. It allows me to read and share important information with others," she says.

Stacy's favorite Bible story is the story of Noah. "That's been my favorite since I was 7 years old. I was so amazed how God saved Noah and his family and all those animals in such a big boat! I also thought it was so neat that God made a promise with a rainbow. Incidentally, that was the only story Jason knew from the Bible when we met," she laughs.

Stacy's favorite Bible verse is Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

"I always say this verse over and over, especially when I'm experiencing some very difficult times," she confides.

Stacy discovered the Clear Word Bible about 3 years ago, and it's been her favorite Bible ever since.

"It led me to a deeper understanding of the Bible," she says. "We also have the Clear Word for our children as well. We even buy these Bibles as gifts for our family and friends. In the past 4 months we've purchased 11 Bibles to give away. Our children use their Bibles to share the gospel with all their friends and it's exciting to see them so enthusiastic for God's Word."

One of the things that Stacy mentioned in our interview that had a dramatic impact on their family was *The Distraction Dilemma*, by Christian Berdahl. For those unaware, this is a program that demonstrates how today's media/music insidiously influences us in a very negative way. It also presents how our children are especially vulnerable. "After watching the DVDs from that program, we no longer have cable TV. We only watch the news, some children's shows, and a few educational shows we get from our rabbit ears antenna," Stacy reveals.

Here are 5 things that you may not know about Stacy:

1. She lived on her own at 19, and has moved 10 times during her life.
2. She has an Associate degree in Business Management/ Fashion merchandising.
3. She received her Paraprofessional Certification for teaching Special Education when her children were in elementary school. She was a substitute teacher until she started home schooling.
4. Their family lives within 5 miles of her and Jason's parents.
5. She writes a love note to Jason every day and puts it in his lunch box.

Often God puts people in our path that He knows will provide a blessing for us. Stacy McLean is one of those people. It was truly a blessing for me to interview her. She is a good listener and is also a wise counselor. If you get a chance, corner her sometime and just share some small talk. You'll quickly see what I mean.

**The Book Review** by Stacy McLean

**The Ministry of Health and Healing by Ellen G. White** (An adaptation of Ellen G. White's classic work *The Ministry of Healing* in today's language)

I chose this book because everyone can benefit from good health, by following "God's Principles". It is important to understand and follow the laws of health that control our body, mind and spirit.

In the century that passed since the original book in 1905, the principles of health and service have not changed. The words and the way we express our thoughts have changed significantly. The Ellen G. White Estate has produced this book for the benefit for today's generation. The message is still there; however, the long sentences and outdated words are replaced by today's vocabulary to achieve a deeper understanding (Copyright 2004).

The insights found in this book give us a new look at the principles that make up God's approach for a happy, healthy lifestyle to be achieved. The book divides different contents into parts such as:

1. Jesus our example, the touch of faith, and healing the soul.
2. Prayer for the sick, the use of remedies in contact with nature, and directing our minds to GOD.
3. Health principles; general hygiene, dress, diet and health, flesh as food, and extremes in diet.
4. Home ministry;

parents, child, and home influences.

True education is a missionary training.

5. A true knowledge of God, the false and true in education, importance of seeking true knowledge and receiving it through God's Word.

The world is sick. Wherever people live, suffering is there. Our Creator has put laws together for us to follow so that we are not burdened with pain, and disease. All too frequently the laws established by God to sustain life are violated, sin enters the heart, and people lose sight of their dependence upon God, the Source of life and health. We need to rely on God and ask for understanding of what we can do to feel good, have true happiness, a cheerful home, obedience to the laws of life, and proper relationships to other people. We need to develop a true relationship with our Creator, God. We need to have faith and he will see us through. Psalm 46:10 says: "Be still and know that I am God."

Matthew 11:28, 29 says, "Come to me, you who are tired and worried and I will give you rest. Take up my work and learn from me, for I am gentle and kind, and you will discover an abiding peace in your soul" (Clear Word).

The most interesting points of this book to me are the health principles, diet and health, extremes in diet and flesh as food. I would like to share

some very important information about our health. Ellen White has specific ideas that can be followed and states that good health is the direct result. The following are examples she stresses in her book: for the morning hours of breakfast, she indicates eating fruit as the first foods on an empty stomach are for best digestion. Every time fruits should be eaten first and then followed by other foods. It takes a shorter time to digest.

Fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and seeds are the complete diet chosen by God. Olives, nuts, rice, corn, oats, beans, peas, and lentils can replace flesh meats and butter. Olive oil is healing to an irritated stomach, and it helps as a laxative to heal. Wheat is often an offender to cause constipation. Milk and sugar should not be taken together. Too much sugar is the cause of indigestion.

It is best to drink water or liquids before eating. It is most difficult to digest foods if liquid is taken with meals. Liquid must be absorbed before food can be digested. If you eat an abundance of fruit-you will not need liquids at meals. Do not eat in a hurry. If the stomach is taxed, so is the brain. When the organs and digestive system are overworked, then the feeling immediately or later is weakness, dizziness, and listless. Sometimes numbs the brain with disinclination to mental or physical effect.

Too much food burdening the system can cause illness

and feverish conditions. The blood has to go to the stomach, causing limbs and extremities to chill quickly. Using plain and simple foods are best for digestion and strength so that we do comprehend spiritual things.

Another important point that I found to be quite interesting is this: Ellen White encourages her audience to make sure every room in the house has a window that is opened daily to fresh air and sunshine even in the winter conditions to release stale air and toxins that build up. I just open up my house and let it air out for 5-10 minutes a day.

This is the final idea that I would like to share with you. To have better circulation, take a warm bath or shower, not hot and rinse off with cool water before getting out. This will help your circulation and help you to feel more alert. This really works, I have been making the water cooler just before I get out of the shower and surprisingly I do not feel so cold and I feel more alert. (Plus you take a shorter shower if your water is not so hot.)

This is a wonderful book; it has great insights and shares Scripture that is really enlightening. I hope you enjoyed reading this book review. There are many things you can learn from Ellen White. You can find this book at your library, or online.

Best wishes and God bless!

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We're on the Web!

See us at: www.HampdenHeightsChurch.org

The Children's Page by Ashley Richards

Oh, no!

Someone left us a list of words relating to Christmas, but they mixed up all the letters! Can you figure out what the words are?

- 1. RTAS
2. SUESJ
3. RYAM
4. PESHJO
5. AGIM
6. DEPHSEHRS
7. RPENINKEE
8. YHA
9. GELAN
10. OYJ
11. EVOL
12. NANA
13. NEISMO
14. GERMAN
15. RIALGEB

RJA News Corner (continued from page 1)

Grades 3-4

The 3rd and 4th grade were "helping hands" to several people in the community this past month. On November 9th the students went up to the Kenhorst Church parking lot to help out with the Food Bank. Then, later in the month we took 2 days to go and rake leaves for church member, Warren Lutz. The class enjoyed serving others immensely and wanted to know if there were other people for whom they could rake leaves. As their teacher, I was very pleased with how hard they worked. In their journals, most of the students remarked as to how happy it made them feel to help those in need.

The students are also anxiously awaiting their books to come back from the publisher. Each student wrote and illustrated their own book which will be delivered in time for Christmas. By Carol Rey

Grades 1-2

The students in first and second are excited about our transportation theme of "Go Into All the World". They enjoyed designing and making vehicles for their desks. Our class has written a book and is waiting for it to come back from the publisher. Every little author wrote and illustrated how they will use their vehicles for God. Also, each student has a mini car that does laps around the classroom from pit stop to pit stop as the student memorizes scripture after scripture. They love letting others know they care and how they are praying for them by creating cards to send their way. We are all excited about how we can learn and share with others in our "travels". By Darlene Peterson

Pre-K/Kindergarten

A tribe of Indians has been spotted several times today on the RJA campus! Not to worry - It's just Ms. Cindy's Pre-K and Kindergarten class getting ready for their annual Thanksgiving Play and Feast. The children have been busy learning their parts, making decorations and have been cooking and baking up a storm.

This year about 80 people will partake of the food and the fun (Mr. Schubert says next year, we might have to rent a stadium).

Happy Holidays to all! By Cindy Eisenhardt

RJA: Educating Today and for Eternity!