

BRANCHES

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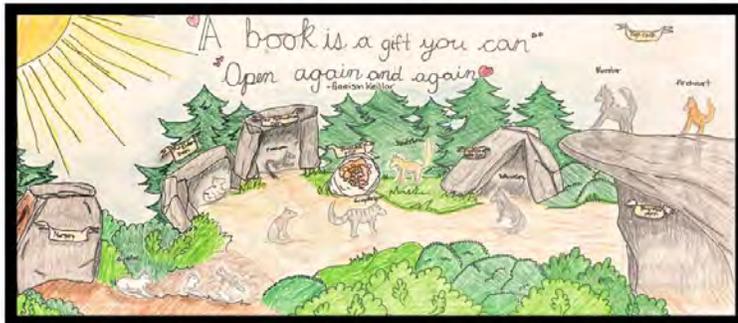


CREDO BOOK WEEK

Book Mark Winners 2026



Romeo DeBoersap (K/Gr 1)



Tenley Vandeburgt (Gr 4/5)



Hadassah Nincao (Gr 2/3)



Kenzie Dewit (MS)

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The purpose of our parental Christian School is to educate our children to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for a life of responsible stewardship in God's Kingdom.

From the Chairman *Oliver Hansma*

The board has the privilege of participating in classroom visits. In February it was my opportunity to participate along with a member of the education committee. During this visit, we are able to witness the instruction of our covenant children and the blessing we have with faithful teachers and educational assistants. While it is not possible with the schedule to visit 100% of the classrooms, we were able to visit all with the exception of one. This visit allows us to witness what our purpose is at CCES and it aligns well with the school theme text for the year which is Psalm 145:3-4 – “Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts”. In this way, the school is “bound in unity” with our homes.

The administration team is hard at work finalizing staffing plans for next year and how that rolls out to our budget. We are happy to report that Gavin Thomas has agreed to join us next year. For those that do not know Gavin, he is a member of the Sardis Canadian Reformed Church and is soon to be married to a young lady, Lydia Gunnink, who has recently accepted a teaching position at the high school. Gavin will be completing his PDP shortly and we wish him well with the tail end of his studies and the Lord’s blessing on his upcoming nuptials.

During the month of February, the board had the opportunity to meet with the staff to discuss joys and challenges so far this year and to get a sense of their plans for next year. These meetings are a long-standing

occurrence. In these meetings, all board members heard very positive reports of how the Lord continues to bless us as a school community. All staff contribute to the team effort and are a hand and foot to each other. Thank-you staff for your contributions and may God bless you for the duration of the school year.

The board recently agreed to continue our long-standing practice of providing an opportunity to have public vaccinations occur in the school building. We did so with some hesitation due to some past mistakes in administering and the disclosure of information. The administration team has expressed the school’s concerns to Fraser Health as we did not want to ignore the challenges. We want to be clear that the Board is not taking a position on vaccinations. Decisions about your child’s health remain entirely with you as parents. The Board simply decided to continue to provide the opportunity to those parents who wish to have their children vaccinated and it was not prepared to take away a convenience which has been provided for decades.

Spring break is around the corner and we hope that this two-week period provides for some rest for both staff and students before they take on the last part of the year.

By the time you read this edition, we will have been able to attend the spring concert. We thank the staff for the excellent work that they do in preparing the students for this program. We are truly blessed by your gifts and all praise be to God!

From the Principal *Otto Bouwman*

Welcome to spring! Did anyone miss the winter that we didn’t have? Even as I look at the ten-day weather forecast, there’s still not much indication that winter is on its way. Nonetheless, time marches on and we are looking forward to beautiful blossoms and longer days.

Flourishing

A word that has received a lot of attention lately has been “flourishing.” For example, at the recent professional development day on February 13, Dr. Mark Slomp, our guest speaker, reminded us that God made us to flourish. What do we mean by the term “flourishing”? He defined it as “a state in which all aspects of a person’s life are good.” God created us to flourish, but we can flourish only when we are in a right relationship with God. As principal, (besides other responsibilities) I want to help everyone who is

on Credo’s staff to flourish. All of Credo’s staff members want to help each of our students to flourish. Perhaps it’s appropriate to think about flourishing for a few moments.

An aside: what did flourishing recently look like in our staff room? There were huge smiles and there was an abundance of radiance projected by both Meghan Visscher and Spencer Pruij on the Monday morning following their engagement. Congratulations, Spencer and Meghan, and may God bless you as you prepare for becoming husband and wife! For the record, thankfully, there are many ways, besides engagement and marriage, in which people can flourish.

There are numerous references to flourishing in Scriptures. A few well-known references:

- Psalm 1 – The psalmist compares the righteous with the wicked. The righteous one flourishes:

not only does he meditate on God's law, but he produces fruit and prospers in all he does. On the other hand, the wicked do the opposite: they are blown away like chaff, leaving nothing behind.

- Psalm 92 – The righteous dwell in the house of the LORD, growing, producing fruit, and remaining full of sap and green (even into old age).
- Jeremiah 17:7-8 – “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

We recently celebrated Family Day. Our families are one of God's good gifts that he gives to us. Is each husband embracing the responsibility to ensure that his wife is flourishing? Are each set of parents embracing the responsibility to ensure that each of the children God has given are flourishing? Are our homes happy places where our children thrive? What are some key ingredients to enable a family to thrive? Thriving can happen when at home we intentionally take the time to meditate on God's Word and communicate in prayer together. Thriving can happen when we keep our over-busy schedules in check, so that we connect and support each other meaningfully. Thriving can happen when we acknowledge the unique gifts and challenges of the different members of the family.

Also at school, we do our best to create and maintain an environment where students and staff flourish. Not surprisingly, flourishing at school follows similar principles as flourishing at home.

Dr. Slomp articulated five principles related to flourishing that are applicable not only in our classrooms and hallways, but in all of life:

1. Incorporate life-giving practices. Let God's Word play a central role in our lives and marvel at the beauty of the gospel story.
2. Cultivate life-giving behaviors. When we conduct our lives in alignment with God's commandments, we are living in line with “the grain of the universe.” Shalom will not come when our lives are not aligned with God's commandments, including the command to love.
3. Shape life-giving perspectives. How do I think about the environment in which God has placed me? Do I think catastrophically? Do I genuinely

believe that God made me on purpose, for a purpose? When encountering hardships, do I believe that, under God's sovereignty, everything will in fact be OK?

4. Provide a life-giving presence. Am I a conduit of joy to those around me?
5. Create life-giving community. Since flourishing is relational, and since all people long to belong, do I invest deeply in those around me?

Today we hear a lot about mental health; governments are pouring billions of dollars into programs that they believe will help people's mental health. Dr. Slomp had some interesting perspectives, sharing that research indicates that chemical imbalances and genetics do not seem to play as significant a role in “mental unwellness” as was previously believed. Perhaps, when, in our personal lives, in our homes, and in our school, we focus on flourishing – as understood biblically – then “mental unwellness” will be less and less evident.

Highlight Events

In the principal's office much effort is being expended on preparations for the next school year. I am thankful to report that Gavin Thomas is planning to join Team Credo next summer! By then, if all goes as planned, Gavin will not only have become the husband of Lydia Gunnink, but will also have graduated from UFV's education program. We are delighted to welcome another male on our staff! At this point it is premature to share further developments related to next year's staffing.

In the second last week of January, the school was abuzz with the Geography competition. Thank you to those who organized and participated in this event. All students who entered and participated in the competition are to be commended for their efforts. Congratulations to those who made it to the final round, and a special congratulations to the winners: Philippa Kampen (8) in first place, Kenzie Dewit (6) in second place, and Kasen Broersma (8) and Jannick van Popta (7A) in third place!

During final week of January, we had a plethora of activities associated with Reading Week. Again, thank you to those who organized all these activities, and thank you to all those who participated. The week ended with a Book Character Dress-Up day, and also with a closing assembly. Numerous prizes were handed out to various winners; see elsewhere in this *Branches* for their work.

Credo Aid deserves a big shout-out for their wonderful support. On Friday, February 6, the students were bused to the Canlan skating rink and enjoyed skating together. Thank you, 8th grade students, for your cheerful assistance to all the younger students for the occasion. Not only did Credo Aid fund the skating, they also ensured that the students were welcomed back to the school with hot chocolate etc. And then a few days later Credo Aid had pizza delivered to the school, and then a bit later more pizza delivered... Credo Aid: thank you for your continued generosity!

By the time you read this, our spring program "By Faith: Heroes of His Story" will have been delivered. Thank God for the abilities, passion, patience, coordination, goodwill, and everything else it takes to create and deliver such a performance. May God be glorified in all we do. This program ties in nicely with the Pass the Promise theme that our Fraser Valley schools are focusing on this year. It is our prayer that

our students internalize and appreciate the profound truths they are taught, so that they go on to live a "life of responsible stewardship in God's kingdom."

Wrapping Up

We're looking forward to another round of parent/teacher conferences, followed by a two-week spring break. May the parent/teacher discussions be profitable, and may the break be rejuvenating.

Looking way ahead, there are other things on the horizon, including an Open House on April 24. We will do our best to "get the word out" in an effective manner, so that everyone is invited. Stay posted. We appreciate opportunities to have meaningful interactions with so many in the supporting community.

Thank you for your continued support, interest, and prayers.

Short Report of October Board Meeting

Short Report of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of Credo Christian Elementary School January 13th, 2026

Opening and Welcome: The Chairman, O. Hansma, opened the meeting by reading Scripture, followed by Board singing and a moment of prayer. He welcomed the Directors and Principal O. Bouwman.

Agenda Approval: The agenda for the board meeting was approved.

Minutes and Short Report: The minutes and short report from the regular board meeting held on December 8th, 2025 were approved.

Incoming Correspondence: A CRSA balance sheet was sent over for information and review.

Outgoing Correspondence: The Board sent a response letter to 2 families and an appointment letter to CRSA.

Principal's Report: O. Bouwman presented the Principal's Report for January 2026. The board discussed scheduling board/staff visits. O. Bouwman invited Board members to share any recommendations or potential candidates for teacher recruitment for the 2026-2027 school year.

Education Committee: E. Vandergriendt introduced an Interim Report from the committee regarding the recent SpED survey. The Board reviewed the report and discussed key points. Appreciation was expressed to the

committee for their work and affirmed its support as they continue their efforts. A positive report was received from the December classroom visit.

Valley-Wide Implementation Committee: An update of the committee's recent work is received. The Board expresses a desire to have further discussion with the other boards at the Combined Boards meeting, scheduled for January 28.

Membership Committee: The Board was informed of a new enrollment at CCHS.

Finance Committee: The Board reviewed the Ad-Hoc Salary Committee Report that will be presented at the combined board meeting that will be held on January 28th 2026, as well as the December 31, 2025 income statement and accounts receivable.

Board/Staff Relations: M. Mostert reported on a successful and enjoyable staff Christmas party that happened before the Christmas break. Sympathy and birthday cards were signed by the board.

Next Meetings / Events: There is a combined board meeting scheduled for Jan. 28th, 2026. The next CCES board meeting will be held on Feb. 9th, 2026

Closing: E. Vandergriendt offered a prayer of thanksgiving. The chairman closed the meeting and thanked all for coming.

Psychoeducational Assessments *Crystal Koat*

What is a psychoeducational assessment and who should get one? A psychoeducational assessment is a comprehensive, professional evaluation of a student's learning profile, that covers their ability to learn, their social-emotional functioning, and is used to detect various learning difficulties or strengths. A teacher or parent might suspect that an assessment could be helpful when a child is not progressing in their learning in a typical way, or when their presumed potential is not meeting their output.

A psych ed assessment is conducted by a Registered Psychologist who is trained specifically in educational assessment. The testing usually takes place in their office, but some psychologists will come to a school to do the assessment. The testing takes place over a day or is broken into two days, with lots of breaks for the child as needed. The testing is child centered and meant to cause as little stress to the child as possible. There is a cost associated with testing; some of it may be covered by an extended health plan. The testing is followed up by a report that includes whatever diagnosis there may be, as well as recommendations and other insights.

Some parents might hesitate to have their child assessed because they believe that an assessment always results in a diagnosis. This is not true; sometimes the child's struggles do not meet the threshold of a diagnosis. A learning disability is essentially when there is a gap between expected outcomes and actual performance. A child that otherwise appears to be very bright and capable in some ways not actually performing at their expected level probably has some kind of learning disability. A child that learns at a slower pace is not necessarily learning disabled. Getting a diagnosis is only part of the psychoeducational assessment. The information in the assessment sheds light on their actual ability, and where their particular struggle is. So if a student does not get a diagnosis, you are still armed with information on your child's learning style and struggles that you can share with the school to get them the help they may need. Most of the students in our schools getting extra help do not have a diagnosis—but we don't deny them the help they need.

Why would you get your child tested if they can continue to get extra help without a diagnosis? There

are many good reasons. Your child may be receiving extra help, but that help is based only on what the teacher is guessing is the best way to help your child. Teachers are amazing and can be endlessly helpful, but when they know specifically where the child's deficits and strengths are, they can help so much more effectively. This information would be part of your child's learning profile, so each year you don't have to wait for your child's teacher to figure out what best helps your child.

Another great reason for testing is to ease some of the tension felt by frustrated children and parents. It is frustrating when your child just doesn't get something. How can they not see what is so obvious? It is puzzling and confusing when they keep making the same mistakes, or just can't retain information or can't pick up a skill that is so easy for other children. There is a sense of dismay when you attend parent teacher conferences year after year and hear the same thing—sloppy writing, forgotten assignments, daydreaming, not showing their work—whatever the challenge may be. Once you learn why they are struggling with certain skills, or why they do so well in one way but so poorly in another, a parent or teacher might be less inclined to feel frustration and more likely to understand why the child is behaving as they are.

We of course acknowledge that all of us, including our children, are sinful and certainly not perfectly behaved at all times. However, most children are trying to please their parents and their teachers. Most students are aware when they are not keeping up with their peers, or when they are being pulled out for extra help when their friend is not. At some point they will start wondering why they don't learn the same way the other kids do. This can lead to anxiety, a loss of confidence and eventually, to a teen who doesn't even want to try.

Francis Bacon said that "knowledge is power", and he is right. Knowing your child's strengths and challenges helps their teachers to teach them, you to understand them, and the child to understand themselves. Understanding that it's hard to focus because you have ADHD, instead of thinking that it is some moral failing that you can never overcome, gives an explanation and a path forward, and can lead to real positive change. I'm using ADHD as an example, but

there are many learning challenges that when understood, go a long way to explain why certain struggles continue through life. The bonus as a parent is along the way of learning about your child's struggles you might come to a better understanding of some of the challenges you may be facing throughout life. Constantly drinking soda or coffee? Can't keep your house clean? Do you have a hard time listening to individuals when in a loud church annex? There might be a reason for that. You might be witnessing the seeds of your current challenges in the struggles of your child.

Another reason for psychoeducational testing is that it is the only legal way for your child to get the help they need throughout their educational career including post-secondary education. If your child qualifies for extra time, a reader or scribe, a quiet setting or other accommodations, this will follow them into post-secondary— but only if they have had recent psycho educational testing. In BC, it is a legal requirement for post-secondary institutions to provide accommodations based on the assessment, and they will not grant accommodations without it. Post-

secondary institutions are not just going to give accommodations to be nice, or because you had them in high school without a formal diagnosis. If you do not want to limit your child's potential and offer them all opportunities to follow whichever career path they choose, you will need an assessment for them.

I liken learning challenges the same way I see the need for glasses. Society does not shame people for needing to wear glasses or contact lenses. Poor vision may make some parts of your life more annoying than for those with perfect vision. For example, when you want to swim with friends only to find them becoming shapeless unidentifiable blobs as soon as they are three meters away from you, or when you are caught in the rain with your glasses on, or the fact that you will never become a fighter pilot— but that's how God made you, so we wear the glasses and let someone else fly the planes. A learning challenge, once understood, is something that can be worked with and worked around with no added self blame, and a psycho educational assessment can be the way to get there.



Kodiak Corner *Shelley Sikma*

The month of February brought on basketball ‘seasons’ for the grade 6 and 7’s.

Under the coaching of Ms Mikayla Stam, the grade 6 girls enjoyed a Christian Elementary ‘B’ size school’s tournament at John Calvin Christian. The girl played very well and placed 2nd! The grade 6 boys also enjoyed their tournament at Regent Christian. Many thanks to coaches Mrs. Deanna Van Dyke and Mrs. Kim Meints for sharing their expertise with the boys. This one-day tournament has hopefully gotten these students excited for a longer grade seven season next year!

The grade seven league play changed format this year, going from weekly games for four weeks to two ‘jamboree’ days where multiple schools got together at one location for mini tournament style play. This format has had pros and cons. One of the pros has been that the schedule has allowed more practice time. Under the coaching of Mr. Shawn Meints and Sr. girls Kenzie Raap and Nadia Zietsma, the students have learned a lot about the game. One highlight of the season for both teams was playing a game against the John Calvin grade 7 teams! A fun event for and competing against future classmates!

Grade 6 Girls Basketball



Grade 6 Boys Basketball



Grade 7 Boys Basketball



Grade 7 Girls Basketball



Credo Aid Update

Welcome back to the Credo Aid section of *Branches*.

Much has happened in the last several weeks of school life. The children got to enjoy a morning of school skating at CanLan arena. They were welcomed back to school with hot chocolate and Timbits.

In February, Monica Miguel and Lizanne Hansman organized a first for Credo, a Love Credo puzzle party! Thank you to all who supported and participated in Credo's Puzzle Race fundraiser that brought in just under \$2900! We thank donors, ITB, A-Corn Roofing, Foster Irrigation, Loney Financial, and The Bog along with private donors. Langley Church's fellowship hall was packed with 25 dissecologist teams (fancy term for puzzlers).

The winning team 'JadJaw' was made up of Wendy & Jenoa Winkelaar, Debbie Johnston and Jeanette Janssen. These competitive ladies joined us from Yarrow and Lynden and completed the 500pc puzzle in only 32:24 minutes. The Jacobi Team was 15 seconds behind! Award plaques were beautifully made by the gr 11 woodwork students. Thank you all for making this evening a success!

The children were also treated to a pizza hot lunch by the Hot Lunch crew. Thanks to all who baked or supplied cookies for the Spring Concert. The kids who performed received a frozen treat! Everyone's help assisting with skate tying, driving, serving, and supplying snacks and lunches is greatly appreciated.

The Neufeld Farm order just wrapped up and we raised \$786. Lots of tasty meat and sweets were purchased. Thank you! The last order before summer for Neufeld Farms will run in May with pickup on June 2nd.

Credo Aid just finished the Devan and Cedar Rim gift card fundraiser. Thanks so much for ordering and purchasing these, your contributions raised another \$1215 for Credo Aid. This brings our fundraising total so far this year to just over \$20,000! Wow, thanks so much Credo community.

Thank you for partnering with Credo Aid and the school in general to help create a positive, warm environment for the kids to learn and develop new skills and experiences.



Book Week Short Story Winners!

A Red Panda's Adventure

By Jaylynn Beukema – Grade 3

This story is about a very sneaky red panda named Fire. She lives in the forest with her family and friends. Fire was lying in the tree sleeping, having a wonderful and relaxing day. She was having a great day, until, a few people came out to spoil it. Okay, this is the worst part - they PICKED HER UP! Every Red Panda froze in their spots. Nobody could save her. Everybody ran away as fast as they could run. The next thing she knew, she was thrown into a bag. Little did she know, she was captured by a family with 4 kids – Suzi, Brody, Amanda and Sam.

In the morning, she was stuck in a cage. After a while, she was allowed out of the cage. Just then she noticed a tree. "Oh, it's just what I need - a tree," thought Fire. She snuck toward the tree, but was seen by Suzi – who was the girl that captured her. Suzi loved Fire, but the weird part, is they called her "Fluffy" or "Fluffball". But when Fire looked behind her, Suzi kicked her. Fire thought, "Oh, this hurts so bad!" Suzi's Mom saw what happened and said, "SUZI, why on earth did you just do that?" Suzi's Mom finally took Suzi away to her bedroom. Fire now saw a chance to go in the tree, so she did. She sat there for 30 minutes and then, oh boy, another kid named Brody yelled and yelled at me. Fire tried to hiss at Brody, but it sounded awful. He grabbed Fire and threw her on the ground. Fire felt like every bone in her body was bruised, so she ran to her cage and slept for 1 hour.

Then Amanda, the third oldest, took Fire out of her cage. Amanda is super annoying – she always sings and throws Fire the Red Panda up in the air. She kept throwing Fire in the air and was singing,

"Fluffy is so cute,
I love Fluffy,
Fluffy loves me,
I don't know
What I'd do
Without you."

Fire leaped away and ran right under the tree. Amanda screamed and said, "Mom Fluffy is under the Christmas tree. Fire heard this and thought, "Christmas tree? I thought it was a tree!" The mother came running toward Amanda saying, "What's the matter?" "Fluffy went under the Christmas tree!" Amanda said. "So? Fluffy is allowed under it," said Mom, "and anyways, it's time for bed." Amanda whines, "But it's so early!" Mom replied, "Well, you should learn how to leave Fluffy alone or I'm putting her back where we found her."

The next morning Fire got out of her cage and ate breakfast. Then came Amanda, she picked me up and threw me in the air singing,

"Oh Fluffy,
I hope you,
Had a great,
Breakfast."

"AMANDA!" Mom yelled, "What were you thinking? Do not throw him into the air." Amanda was in trouble. "I'm sorry Mom!" Amanda said. "If you guys want to keep Fluffy you better behave," said Mom. "Yes Mom!" said Amanda.

When it was dinner, Sam, the oldest kid, threw me out of his path. Mom saw what Sam did and said, "That's it. I've had enough of you guys being mean to Fluffy. We're putting him back where we found him. "Fine I don't care anyway," said all the kids.

The next morning, Fire was back home and she was SUPER-DUPER happy. - THE END

Breakout

By Jesse Schouten – Grade 5

In Central Park Zoo the families loved to gather and see the creatures from the very smallest to the grandest of them all. To them, it was the greatest attraction in the city. However, Sam the sloth, disagreed. He thought this zoo was a nefarious prison in the bustling concrete jungle, so he hatched a plan. Sam was going to organize the greatest escape plan in the history of the animal kingdom.

Now to most people, Sloths are known to be slow, and dare I say, simple minded, shaggy mops. Sam, on the other hand, was a rather intellectual being. What he lacked in speed, he made up by using the resources of the zoo.

Two weeks prior to the great escape, Sam gathered the animals to the elephant's enclosure. Naturally, it was the best option due to its large capacity. The elephants, unlike the monkeys, never caused too much trouble at night so it would also be less likely to be monitored by the guards.

Sam knew how each animal could be an asset to his plan. Obviously, the swindling monkeys, with their opposable thumbs, would be beneficial to unlock the gates. The blunt force of the rhinoceros could be used to break any walls if necessary. After all, those monkeys do tend to get side tracked. Chameleons can sneak around with the ability to blend in and the giraffes can assist in places that are slightly out of reach.

After Sam gave an inspirational speech, the animals decided they shall escape this concrete jungle once and for all! The date was set and the plan was solidified.

The night of the escape all the enclosures were buzzing with excitement. Nervous anticipation rippled through the air.

The monkeys scurried over to the control room and to their delight found an unassuming slumbering guard, dozing off with coffee and donuts in hand. Unable to resist the sweet aroma, the monkeys snatched the pastry and beverage but not before they swiped the keys. All the animals waited and hopes were fulfilled when they saw the three monkeys prancing down the hall with the glimmering keys in their hand and the residue of powdered donuts clinging to their fuzzy faces.

The giraffes patrolled from their designated places as a chameleon scampered through a small opening, holding the keys in its mouth. The thought of even having a crumb of one of those delectable donuts caused his mouth to water so much that in one small *gulp* the keys were gone!

The monkey who was peering into the hole saw what happened and alerted the others. The animals panicked but Sam remained calm. Sam whispered in a slow, raspy voice to the rhino, "Sssmmmmaassshhh!"

Charging forward, the rhino smashed that cursed wall that was blocking their freedom.

While the escape was not as discreet as Sam and the others had planned, it did not matter. Sam's cunningness had prevailed. They were free, not in the concrete jungle, but in the real, wild, untamed jungle!

The Conservatory

By Philippa Kampen – Grade 8

Charlotte felt warm, moist air cling to her skin. It was the spring of 1864, and Charlotte was invited to a conservatory. Charlotte looked around the glass walled building. It had garden beds as far as the eye could see, full of lush plants and flowers. Exotic flora and fauna filling up the room. Charlotte carefully walked down the brick floor, gazing in awe at the wonder before her.

Suddenly, a colourful something flit past her. It was black butterfly, but with a red stripe across the wings. Charlotte gingerly stuck out a pale finger, and the butterfly landed on it. And it was such a strange sensation. The legs tickled against her skin, and the wings brushed up against it as they delicately fluttered up and down. Charlotte was mesmerized.

"Charlotte!" called out a sharp voice. Charlotte's head snapped up, as the butterfly flew off. Her eyes landed on a figure clad in green marching toward her. It was Mrs. Edith Jones, who invited

Charlotte to the conservatory. She had her ebony black hair pinned up under her hat, and her deep blue eyes studied Charlotte up and down.

"Hello Mrs. Jones," Charlotte greeted, dipping her head slightly. Mrs. Jones nodded, then pulled out her fan. It was made of black lace, and looked quite expensive. She flapped it up and down against her neck. But the only thing Charlotte could focus on was the big golden ring on Mrs. Jones' thin finger. It had a large sapphire set into, sparkling in the sunlight.

"Did you hear me Charlotte?" asked Mrs. Jones loudly. Charlotte looked up at her face, and shook her head. Mrs. Jones pursed her lips together, putting her other hand on her hip. Charlotte felt her cheeks burn slightly, embarrassed for making Mrs. Jones repeat herself.

"Tsk, do you want to go for a stroll?" Mrs. Jones questioned, more quietly. Charlotte smiled and nodded.

"I would like that very much Mrs. Jones. Which direction shall we go in?" Charlotte asked, looking at the ways they could go. One had trees that towered to the ceiling, and had very peculiar leaves. The other two had plenty of flowers and colour. Mrs. Jones turned around and started walking down a path full of flowers. Charlotte followed behind hurriedly, not wanting to disappoint Mrs. Jones anymore.

"Do you know my son Rupert?" Mrs. Jones asked, suddenly, after about thirty seconds. Charlotte pressed her lips together and thought. The young man with black hair and brown eyes? Charlotte met him once at a party for Mr. Jones' birthday.

"Yes, I believe I do. I met him once at your husband's birthday party," Charlotte responded, watching a butterfly flit past, a blur of yellow. Did it enjoy being trapped in a beautiful glass house, full exotic plants, and swarmed with warm, moist air? Charlotte felt like she would be unhappy in a place like this, no matter how pretty it was.

"What do you think of him?" Mrs. Jones asked, stopping to turn around and look at Charlotte. She snapped her fan shut, the ring on her finger glinting blue like one of the butterflies trapped in the conservatory. Charlotte pressed her lips together in thought, tilting her head to the side. Her blonde hair slipped behind her shoulder, bouncing in its ringlets.

"He was rather polite when I met him. But I think he was busy, but I didn't mind." Charlotte responded, studying Mrs. Jones' expression. It was firm, but thoughtful.

"Yes, well that was the night I gave him the deal." Mrs. Jones responded, hitting the fan against her other hand repeatedly in thought. Charlotte felt rather curious, wondering what deal Mrs. Jones could have possibly made with that independent son of hers, who was determined to do everything by himself.

"I don't mean to pry, but what deal could you have made with Rupert?" Charlotte asked with the meager amount of courage she mustered up. Mrs. Jones' mouth curved into a sly smirk, glancing down at her gorgeous ring.

"If he manages to find a wife I approve of, he gets Uncle Howard's ring. It is priceless, and quite pretty as you can see," Mrs. Jones explained, holding up her hand, which the sapphire ring sat upon. It was quite pretty, but worth finding a wife for? Charlotte wondered how desperately Rupert could have possibly wanted the piece of jewelry.

"I see. Who does he have in mind?" She asked, trying to carry the conversation. Mrs. Jones retracted her hand to open her fan, and she looked Charlotte up and down.

"Well, I don't know if he does. But I certainly do, Charlotte..." Mrs. Jones responded, her tone thick with underlying intention. Charlotte felt her cheeks burn as red as the butterfly that perched on a branch a stone-throw-away. Mrs. Jones couldn't possibly want her to marry her son! She hardly knew him, let alone want to marry the boy.

But, she was interrupted by a loud voice shouting at her to get on her knees. Charlotte quickly obliged, as did Mrs. Jones. The voice was wearing a black mask, and a fine black dress suit. Charlotte however, was more focused on the silver revolver pointed at her face. She felt herself freeze up, as

the voice started to shout instructions, but she couldn't hear anyone. But she was awoken from her numbness as she felt a sharp tug on her arm. Charlotte whirled her head around to see Mrs. Jones.

"He's telling you to take your jewelry off." Mrs. Jones whispered harshly at Charlotte. Charlotte meekly nodded and began taking off her ornaments. After a minute, a string of pearls, pearl earrings and a golden bracelet lay in Charlotte's hand. She glanced over at Mrs. Jones, who was staring longingly into her hands. The sapphire ring glinted in the sunlight, as blue as Mrs. Jones' sad eyes.

The masked man stuck out his hand, and Charlotte carefully put her jewelry in his hand. It was rough and large. Charlotte glanced at the silver revolver pointed at her head, then at Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones put what was in her palm into the masked man's, but still clutched onto the ring. Charlotte pressed her lips together, her eyes widening. The masked man grunted angrily and plucked the ring from Mrs. Jones hand and stuffed it in his pocket, where Charlotte assumed the rest of the jewelry was.

"Please... I need it for my son," Mrs. Jones pleaded, her pale face even paler. Charlotte trembled as she placed her hand on Mrs. Jones sympathetically, shaking her head no. Mrs. Jones burst into tears, sobbing silently, reaching into her pocket for her handkerchief. She looked back around for the masked man, but he was running off, the revolver glinting in his hand.

Charlotte carefully stood up, and silently followed him, wanting to get a glimpse of his face, so she could report it to the police. The masked man ducked behind a bush, and crouched down. Charlotte carefully moved so she could still see him, but he couldn't see her.

She watched him reach into his pocket, and pull out Mrs. Jones' ring. The precious sapphire glinted in his hand, as he ran his surprisingly clean finger over it. Then, the masked man reached up, and tugged off his mask. He had black hair, and brown eyes. Suddenly, everything made sense to Charlotte. He didn't want to get married. So he had to resort to other, monstrous ways to get the ring.

"R-Rupert?"

Never Enough

By Eden Vandergugten – Grade 8

Esther collapsed onto her bed, dumping her heavy backpack on the floor. She had math homework due the next day, a group project she wanted to work on, and some science notes she wanted to read through.

"Esther!" Her mom called, coming into her room. "Do you want a snack?"

"I'm good. I have a bunch of homework I want to work on." Esther began opening her backpack and pulling out her books and papers.

"Okay... if you're sure." Her mom left, carefully closing the door behind her.

Esther sighed. She did want a snack, and she wanted to relax and read the books she had just gotten for her birthday, but she just didn't have time.

After a few hours of schoolwork, including practicing her violin, with supper in between, Esther finally closed her laptop. She slowly got ready for bed and, feeling tired and worn out, pulled the covers over her. Esther was just nodding off when she remembered tomorrow's Socials Studies quiz.

Esther bolted upright in bed, all possibilities of sleep disappearing. She switched her light on, and quickly found her notebook to review the questions.

"The Children's Crusade was in 1212...."

Esther continued to quiz herself for an hour, until she felt she could finally sleep. Exhausted, she lay back down and tried not to worry.

The following day, Esther wrote her Socials quiz. It had gone fine, and she had been confident in her answers. As she worked on her French project with her group, she couldn't stop yawning. She supposed she shouldn't have stayed up so late studying, but at least she would get a good mark.

"How do you think you did on the quiz?" Esther's friend Lucy, who was in her French group, asked.

"I think I did okay, I studied a lot." Esther responded, glancing up from her paper.

"Oh, I didn't study at all, I probably did terrible." Lucy laughed, and started talking to another person nearby.

Esther looked back at her work. *Why did I stay up to study last night? Lucy doesn't seem to care about studying and getting good grades.* Esther looked around the classroom at all her chattering classmates. She could almost guarantee that none of them had been up late studying for the quiz. *Why am I so worried about my marks?*

As the days went on, the homework piled up, and Esther began staying up late regularly to do homework and to study. She was often tired, and almost dozed off in class a few times. She had two big tests coming up, one on Tuesday and the other on Friday.

Tuesday morning, Esther got up at 6:30 for some extra studying time. She yawned throughout the questions and fought off sleep until she got up and got ready for school. She poked at her breakfast of toast and eggs, leaving most of it behind, before she finally got onto the bus and did some more studying.

Esther stepped off the bus, and found her friends, who were all in a group, talking and laughing.

"Hey Esther!" Lucy said.

"Hello, are you guys ready for the test?"

"Maybe, I don't know. I did actually study this time!" Lucy giggled as her friends all laughed.

The bell rang and the girls went into their classroom. The teacher handed out the tests after devotions, and Esther began writing. Her heart rate quickened as she realized she couldn't remember some of the answers. Esther tried to recall the facts that she had just gone over a few hours ago, but she felt so tired and couldn't think. After twenty minutes of half-confident guesses, Esther finally handed in her test, trying to hold back a sob.

The rest of the day, Esther felt exhausted and anxious, and when she could finally go home, she went on to study for the test on Friday, to make sure she would do well on that one.

On Thursday, Esther's palms began to sweat as her teacher handed out the latest tests. When Mr. Rander placed Esther's test on her desk, Esther held her breath, hoping she hadn't gotten a terrible mark. She flipped the test over and saw in blue pen: 78%. A tear rolled down Esther's cheek as she took a shaky breath. That was the lowest mark she had ever gotten. She had studied so hard, and for so long, and somehow she had only gotten 78%. Esther took the test, and shoved it into her binder, not even bothering to check what she had gotten wrong.

"Alright class, let's get into our Social Studies lesson, and then you guys have a project to start!" Mr. Randers distributed the remaining tests, and began teaching. Esther couldn't pay attention. She was too focused on the lump in her throat and the knot forming in her stomach.

Finally lunch came, but Esther wasn't eager to eat. She had no appetite, and instead found a spot on the pavement near the soccer field to sit and study for the test the next day. She was by no means going to get a 78% on that test, even if it meant giving up her break.

"Watch out!" A voice cried out, interrupting Esther's focus. A soccer ball soared over her head and landed nearby with a soft thud.

Esther quickly got up to go fetch it, but instead of walking forward, she found herself falling down. Instinctively her arms went out to catch herself, and she landed heavily on the pavement. The last thing she heard before she slipped out of consciousness was alarmed voices from her classmates, calling for a teacher.

When her eyes flickered open, Esther realized she was on the couch in the classroom, and Mr. Rander was beside her, on the phone. She could faintly hear him talking to someone in a worried voice.

"Esther, you're awake! You seem to have fainted. I've asked your mother to come pick you up. Just rest until she comes." Mr Rander smiled and handed Esther some water.

Esther nodded, took a sip, and closed her eyes again. Only moments later, her mom was there, guiding her to the vehicle, and settling her in the front seat. Esther's left wrist ached, and her mom said they'd have to go to the Emergency Room to have it checked out.

Esther felt sleepy as the doctor checked her for injuries, and was relieved when he reported that it was only a minor sprain. She would have a sling for a few weeks, but otherwise it would be okay. The doctor talked to her about getting a healthy amount of sleep and eating enough, and recommended getting some other tests and blood work done to ensure nothing else was wrong.

Her mom brought her back home, and Esther lay down on the couch, with a blanket and a smoothie.

"Lucy's on the phone for you," Esther's mom handed her the phone, and Esther could hear Lucy's anxious voice.

"Hey, are you okay? I was so worried!"

"I'm fine, I just sprained my wrist, and I'm supposed to get more sleep and eat more. I've kind of been stressing about school too much. I just wish I could be like you, and not care so much."

"Oh, Esther, I'm so sorry! You don't need to be perfect, nobody expects that from you. At the end of the day, Mr. Rander read Isaiah 41:10, and it reminded me of you. You can read it later if you want. Anyways, I just wanted to check on you. Get some rest now, okay?"

Esther smiled and agreed, handing the phone back to her mom.

"How are you feeling?" Her mom asked, kneeling down beside her.

"I'm okay. I just didn't realize that all of my late nights and skipping lunch would lead to this. I thought I was doing a good thing by prioritizing my schoolwork."

"Oh, honey," Esther's mom took her hand. "I wish I could've prevented this. Your health is more important than your grades. I love you no matter what, and God loves you no matter what. You don't need to be perfect, you just need to take care of yourself and try your best without overdoing it."

Esther felt a tear escape, and soon her eyes were streaming. Her mom handed her a tissue and rocked her back and forth. "It's okay. You don't need to go to school for a few days, you can just hang out with me, and get started on those books you've been wanting to read."

Esther smiled through her tears. She understood that she needed to stop being so hard on herself, and instead prioritize her health and happiness over marks and assignments. God wanted her to be diligent and work hard, but more than that He wanted his daughter to love herself for who she was. Esther realized that everyone around her wanted her to be happy, they didn't want her to suffer just for grades. Esther opened up her bible and found the verse Lucy had suggested.

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

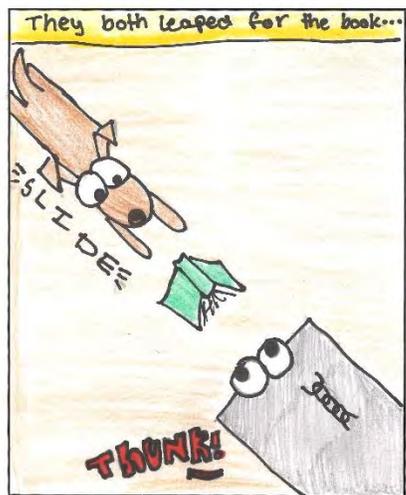
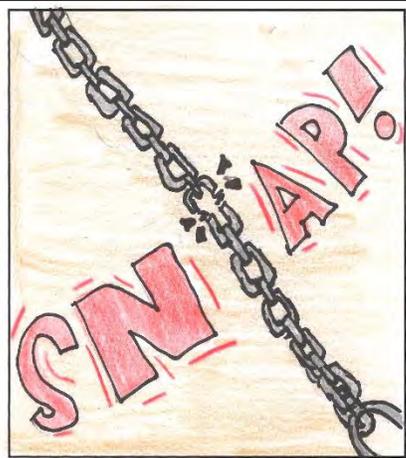
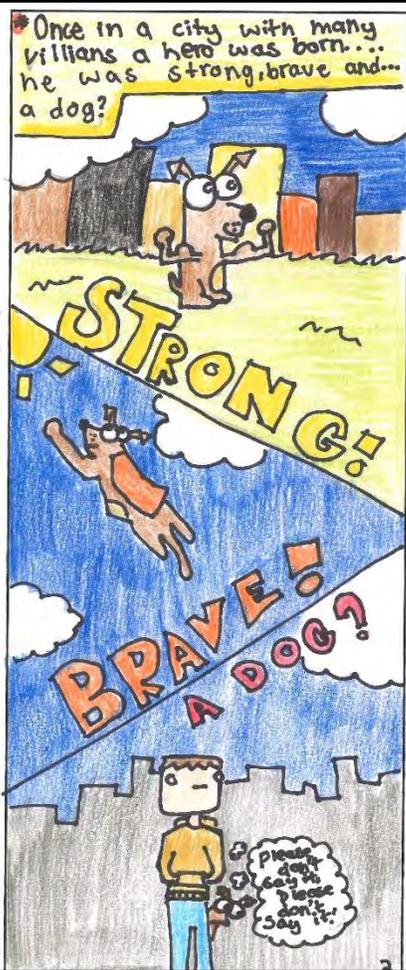
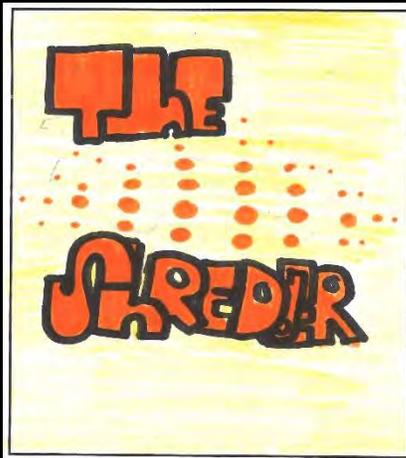
Esther lay down on her bed, feeling the love and strength of her God. He would be with her, and he would strengthen her.

Thank you Father, for making me your daughter, and for giving me so many gifts and opportunities. Thank you for my mom and my friends, who take care of me and support me. Please help me with my perfectionism and anxiety, and help me to look to you first when I am struggling. In your most holy name, Amen.



Middle School Comic Winner

By Sadie deBoer - Grade 6



JOIN OUR TEAM SEPTEMBER 2026



21919 52 Ave
Langley BC V2Y 2M7

The Credo Christian Elementary & Middle School Board invites applications to fill **teaching** positions beginning in **September 2026**.

Our K-8 school, located in the beautiful Fraser Valley, serves approximately 240 students in a welcoming, Christ-centered community. Staff members value the positive, collaborative teaching culture and appreciate the strong support from parents and the broader school community.

We're looking for teachers who are:

- **Committed** to teaching in a predominantly Canadian Reformed context
- **Active** communicant members of a Canadian Reformed, United Reformed or other sister church
- **Certified** to teach in BC or eligible to obtain BC certification

Inquiries and applications can be directed to:

Otto Bouwman, Principal

o.bouwman@credoces.org

604-530-1131 (school)

360-510-1524 (cell)



2025 - 2026 Board & Staff

CCES Board of Directors

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Alice Wu	Grade 1
Mary MacDougal	Grade 1 / 2 LA
Meghan Visscher	Grade 3
Deb Minderhoud	Grade 3
Ben Vanderuguten	Grade 4
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Natasja Vanrhee	Grade 5A
Nathalie Snyder	Grade 5B & Music
Alyssa Vanderstoep	Grade 5B
Nadine Krikke	Grade 6
Spencer Pruij	Grade 7A
Amber Vantil	Grade 7B
Kathy Noort	Grade 8
Deanna Van Dyke	Grade 8
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Crystal Koat	SpEd
Shelley Sikma	PhyEd (6-8)
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Natalie Hoogstra	EA
Yolanda Hoogstra	EA
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Jac Spoor	EA
Mikayla Stam	EA
Gerrine Stebbing	EA
Sharon Struik	EA
Esther Vanderuguten	EA
Krista Vanderhorst	EA
Tianna Vanrhee	EA
Joy VanVliet	EA
Maddie Visscher	EA
Caitlin Warkentin	EA
Jackie VanOene	Librarian
Belinda Dykstra	Bookkeeper

save the date READY SET LEARN

Thursday April 9 2026

9:30 - 11:30 AM

for children born in 2022

more details to follow

Fee Structure 2025-2026

Membership - 160.00	Credo Aid
Kindergarten - 465.00	Brenda Beukema
Elementary (1-5) - 730.00	Joni VanderHorst
Middle (6-8) - 800.00	Su VanderHorst
Junior High (9-10) - 940.00	Georgene Van Delft
Senior High (11-12) - 1000.00	Jackie Vanderploeg
	Rebecca Wildeboer