



ECHOES

Time to put technology down?

BY MARLENE BERGSMA, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVANCEMENT

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Being tech-savvy today means more than knowing how to use the latest apps, how to schedule a meeting on Zoom, or how to back up your data. We also need to know how to put technology in its proper place.

That's why Smithville Christian High School, which issues a MacBook computer to every incoming student, is also being very intentional about when it's time to put technology down.

In her book, *The Liturgy of the Ordinary*, author Tish Harrison Warren describes how her morning ritual of reaching for her cellphone began to shape her day and

Continued on page 2 ...

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turned her into an excitement junkie. When she banished the cellphone from her bedroom and deliberately chose to begin each morning with quiet reflection, prayer, and inviting God into her day, she became more aware of God's presence.

As part of their weekly Research & Development sessions, all teachers at Smithville Christian High School are reading and discussing the book, *The Tech-Wise Family*, by Andy Crouch, and considering what of Crouch's advice might be relevant for their work as educators. As parents of teenagers, Crouch and his wife were intentional about putting technology in its proper place by making room for creativity and conversation in their home.

Crouch distinguishes between technology that is used to consume and technology that is used to create. At Smithville Christian, where student creativity is a key facet of every subject area, the new default place for cell phones, which are often a distraction and typically used only for consuming, are hidden in lockers, pockets, or the collection baskets in the front of a classroom. Even while students are usually expected to bring their laptops to class, cellphones are no longer welcome. "We realize students

are more likely to focus on activities that lead to flourishing if they are not distracted by social media," said principal Ted Harris. "We want their learning time to be as free from distraction as it can be."

There are other reasons why a break from social media is good. A recent presentation to Christian school leaders from Toronto education legal expert,

Eric Roher, included sobering statistics about cyberbullying. Data from a 2016 survey indicates 49.5% of students reported being cyberbullied, 25% of students have been bullied repeatedly through their cellphones, and 52% of teens will not tell their parents when cyberbullying occurs. A Nova Scotia task force on bullying concluded technology has forever changed the nature and scope of bullying because cyberbullying now follows you home and into your bedroom, and as a result, you can never

SCHEDULE TECHNOLOGY CURFEWS & SABBATHS

Set a household technology curfew, and ensure all technology "sleeps" in a room other than family members' bedrooms.

For a real rest, the entire family should get unplugged:

- One hour a day
- One day a week
- One week a year

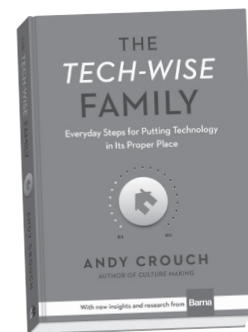
On average, parents say their children spend 5 hours using an electronic device on a typical weekday.



Research provided by Barna

The Tech-Wise Family by Andy Crouch | Learn more at Barna.com/TechWise

WANT TO JOIN THE CONVERSATION?



Copies of *The Tech-Wise Family* are available in the Smithville Christian High School library and can be signed out by parents. Discounted copies are also available for purchase from the school office for \$10 each. Please contact office@smithvillechristian.ca

feel safe. It is “non-stop bullying.”

Crouch says a tech-wise family chooses a “better way” by making three key decisions, making ten tech-wise commitments, and scheduling technology curfews and sabbaths (see sidebars), but he acknowledges that in today’s technology-saturated world, these are difficult choices.

“The better way is radical. It requires making choices that most of our neighbours aren’t making,” writes Crouch. “It requires making choices that most of our neighbours in church aren’t making.” But what would it look like if a community of parents surrounding the students at a Christian school began choosing this “better way?”

The teachers at Smithville Christian are reading this book together, and we invite you to read it too. Copies of The Tech-Wise Family are available in the Smithville Christian High School library and can be borrowed by parents. We have also ordered a number of copies from the publisher at a discounted price of \$10 each. If you would like to purchase one, contact the office at office@smithvillechristian.ca

THREE KEY DECISIONS OF A TECH-WISE FAMILY

1. **Choose Character** – make the mission of your family the cultivation of wisdom and courage
2. **Shape Space** – put the development of character and creativity at the heart of your home
3. **Structure Time** – build rhythms into your life to make it possible to get to know one another, God, and our world in deeper ways

TEN TECH-WISE COMMITMENTS

1. We develop wisdom and courage together as a family
2. We want to create more than we consume. So we fill the centre of our home with things that reward skill and active engagement.
3. We are designed for a rhythm of work and rest. So one hour a day, one day a week, and one week a year, we turn off our devices and worship, feast, play, and rest together.
4. We wake up before our devices do, and they “go to bed” before we do.
5. We aim for “no screens before double digits” at school and at home.
6. We use screens for a purpose, and we use them together, rather than using them aimlessly and alone.
7. Car time is conversation time.
8. Spouses have one another’s passwords, and parents have total access to their children’s devices.
9. We learn to sing together, rather than letting recorded and amplified music take over our lives and worship.
10. We show up in person for the big events of life. We learn how to be human by being fully present at our moments of greatest vulnerability. We hope to die in one another’s arms.

“The devices we carry to bed
to make us feel connected
and safe actually prevent us
from trusting in the One
who knows our needs
and who alone can protect us.”

The Tech-Wise Family by Andy Crouch | Learn more at Barna.com/TechWise

Grade 12 Retreat



Three days of fun, food, team-building, leadership development and worship at Silver Lake Camp



STORM REPORT

BY FRED BREUKELMAN, DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

THE GROWTH OF CROSS COUNTRY

The percentage of students participating in our individual sports programs has been increasing over the past years. An example of this is the success of our Cross Country program. Under the tutelage of our knowledgeable and passionate coach, Sylvia Antonides, the program has 24 runners this year! Training two to three times a week, in addition to the weekly Cross Country meets, leads to a busy yet rewarding schedule. In addition Mrs. Antonides has added exhibition meets to prepare our runners for their Christian School, Zone, SOSSA and OFSAA competitions. Thank you for your commitment to our runners!



JUNIOR AND SENIOR ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?

Our philosophy at the junior level is to prepare athletes for senior success. When athletes are in Grades 9 and 10 they are still 'growing' into their bodies, adjusting to new coordination challenges, and figuring out how to contribute to the creation of a strong, positive team chemistry – which includes individual character development. This is the goal of junior play. Junior players can also be asked to play or practice at multiple positions or categories, to determine how they can best utilize their gifts to their fullest potential supporting the team.

When the athletes move up to participate on a senior team, the primary goal becomes winning. This is not to say that we don't pay attention to the other factors which were enhanced at the junior level. In fact, many of those other factors support a winning environment -- chemistry, role players, encouragement, sitting when you aren't playing well, etc. As a result, even though we are a mid-range size school in comparison to other Christian schools and very small school in comparison to Catholic and public schools, we compete at a high level and win our fair share of competitions and tournaments.





COACHING

Many of our sports teams are coached by our capable staff members at school. All coaches will tell you that you really get to know the student athletes when you coach them. It's a different platform to see the individual shine in a different light...for some student athletes it's what gets them through school! We are grateful for these opportunities.

Coaches improve their craft by attending various clinics and supporting each other at partner schools. In addition, many of our coaches become convenors of tournaments. Often when you become good at something, you are 'rewarded' with additional opportunities -- like convening! A coach's task includes countless hours of preparation, practice times, competitions, and travel to and from events with athletes. But the highlight for most coaches is the time they get to spend with the athletes: growing in relationship with each one of them, and watching them grow in skill, confidence, and maturity in both character and faith.

We also recognize that our community is loaded with people who would shine if given the opportunity to coach a team with the support of a school staff member. For this reason, nearly 50% of our teams are led or assisted by a community coaches. This gives the opportunity for our athletes to learn from someone other than their teachers. In many circumstances this opportunity has developed into some incredible relationships which last way beyond the graduation of our students... Thank you to all our Community Coaches!

If you are interested in a coaching opportunity, whether it be a head coach or assisting in some way, send me a note at fbreukelman@smithvillechristian.ca.



WELCOME TO THE



Eric Beck



Colton Brown



Reuben Buys



William Caughill



Ceaira Chapman



Valerie Cook



Jacob Crittenden



Gavin Damm



Bethany DeHaan



Cole denBak



Tyler Doornbos



Emily Droppert



Jordan Ellens



Isabella Flores



Justin Gilks



Brooke Gilpin



Laurel Graham



Emmett Hardie



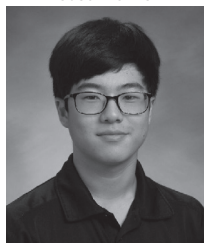
Ephraim Huinink



Evan Janssen



Brady Langendoen



Ben Lee



Eleanor Lee



Anderson Liddell



Connor Lucas



Carter Lunshof



Izak Maloney



Braden Marr

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Mikayla May



Caleb McHugh



Natasha Meinders



Regina Mushegera



Matthew Nywening



Mitchell Paterson



Theo Ricker



Lindsay Riddell



Cadence Rypstra



Brynlea Smit



Eric Stiff



Kristen Toohey



Karson Vahrmeyer



Jody Van Hoorn



Abby Vanderlinde



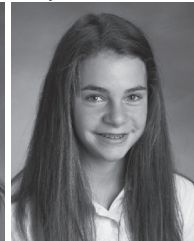
Keegan VanderWier



Lucas VanderWier



Kyra VanGeest



Morgan VanStaalduinen



Emma Vedder



Elizabeth Voskamp



Quaid Waters



Connor Williamson



Tim Xu



Daniella Zondag

GRADE 9 BIKE TRIP

35 kms + 106 wheels ÷ 56 cyclists =
One day of fun, fresh air and getting to know each other!





Overcome

BY STUDENT COUNCIL 2019-2020



Each year at our fall retreat, the Student Council members select a theme to help us navigate our year. We put it on T-shirts, but more importantly, we use that theme as a way for the student leaders to keep ourselves focused on our mission: to be the voice of students at Smithville Christian High School.

This year we chose "Overcome" as our theme, based on 1 John 5:5: "Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (NIV) We know that life is not easy. Everyone has things they struggle to "overcome." We chose this theme because we know that as students we can "overcome" some of these challenges if we have people around us cheering us through life. The Bible shows us how this is done through the life of Jesus.

Overcome – so what does that mean for the students of Smithville Christian High School? We don't have all the answers, but join us this year as we struggle in this journey to overcome. Love others with us this year through their challenges. Let's work together to help every single person in our school community to hold on to the hope we have in Jesus and to be an overcomer.



Welcome Week 2019-2020: In addition to collecting food for the Community Care Food Drive, Smithville Christian students were divided into cross-grade teams and handed a list of photo and video challenges to complete, including: a teammate in a tree, entire team airborne, a human pyramid, leapfrog, and organize tallest to shortest.



Student Council for 2019-2020:
Matthew Nywening, Paul Veldman, Tyler Woodland, Steven Ghaly, Kinja Nyakabasa, Janelle Buist, Casey Wagter

President:

Kinja Nyakabasa, Grade 12

Vice All:

Casey Wagter, Grade 12

Treasurer:

Steven Ghaly, Grade 10

Secretary:

Matthew Nywening, Grade 9

Media:

Paul Veldman, Grade 12

Communications:

Tyler Woodland, Grade 11

Activities:

Janelle Buist, Grade 12

Staff Sponsor:

Ms. Linda Booy-Korvemaker

Smithville Christian by the numbers

BY TED HARRIS, ADMINISTRATOR



Every year, we gather data that helps us understand a few things about our character or our performance as a school. Here's a peek at what the numbers are telling us.

What is the Class of 2019 doing?

- 57% went to university. A quarter of this group is attending a Christian university.
- 21% went to a Community College
- 21% of the class is working, pursuing, an apprenticeship or taking a gap year before entering a post-secondary program

Which churches do our students attend?

- 47 churches are represented in our student body.
- Of our students whose families live in Canada, 59% attend a Christian Reformed Church, while 40% of our students attend a host of other churches.

Are our partner elementary schools growing?

- Yes! Our four partner elementary schools have grown 6.1% in student population from last year to this year.

What about our own numbers?

- This year, we have a Grade 9 class of 53 students and an overall student population of 258. This is up by 7 students from last year despite a fairly small Grade 9 class.

What is the nature of our international student population?

- This year, 13% of our students come from international communities, including China, Nigeria and South Korea.

Is tuition going up or down, relative to Canadian Median Income?

- Though we are only able to generate these statistics a year later, here are the trends over the last several years:
- Parents paying full tuition for one student (with a child attending a Christian elementary school) are paying 12.6% of the Canadian Median Income. This has gone steadily down from seven years ago, when it was at 13.6%.
- Parents paying full tuition for one student (with no children attending a Christian elementary school) are paying 16.5% of the Canadian Median Income. This has also gone steadily down from seven years ago, when it was at 17.7%.

How healthy is our bursary fund?

- Between September 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019, our bursary fund drew in a total of \$232,714. Here is where that money came from:
- Donations – \$142,854
- Golf Tournament proceeds – \$13,600
- Undesignated used uniform sales and gratitude contributions from clothier – \$4,787
- Foundation disbursements and flow-through gifts – \$71,462

Introducing Act Five: Good for us and good for some of our graduates

BY TED HARRIS, ADMINISTRATOR



Every year a number of Smithville Christian graduates hit the pause button before carrying on to post-secondary education. Last year 21% of our graduates did not move on immediately to a college or university program. There could be a few reasons for this: (1) they might be entering into employment or an apprenticeship; (2) they might not know what they want to do or might not be ready for it.

We see growing numbers of students take option no. 2. Unsure of what they are being called to do after high school, they take a “gap year” while they consider what the Lord has in mind for them. It often makes very good sense to wait, to save money, and to seek other learning experiences which will inform decisions about future paths.

Two years ago, we joined four other Christian high schools to form a plan for how we could support such students. That conversation gave rise to Act Five, which is now a Redeemer University College program operated in connection with Smithville Christian and four other Edvance Christian high schools. (Visit <https://www.redeemer.ca/act-five/> for more.)

We want to see Act Five flourish, which is why we are giving it three years of financial and leadership support. Why?

- It continues the conversation among Christian high school leaders who are pursuing a vision to allow students a nearby Christian gap year experience that fits with the mission of our schools.
- It is an excellent way for students to cap their Christian high school experience while branching out to test their independence.
- It allows students to consider the call of God on their lives in an intentional Christian community and through a series of impactful experiences.
- It needs an initial injection of leadership and financial support in order to be sustainable.

In short, it's good for us, because it's a good choice for some of our students.

Act Five is now in its first year with a dozen students. They do most of their living and learning in a house in downtown Hamilton, where they have the opportunity to connect with and serve the people of that city.

It is my hope that the program will fill what we have recognized as a need, and that it will serve recent graduates from our school as well as many others. It is also our prayer that the program will be a loving presence in downtown Hamilton and beyond, and that the students in this program will be trained to live as responsible disciples of Jesus Christ – also happens to be the purpose statement of Smithville Christian High School.

Calvin College: January Series

BY MARLENE BERGSMAS,
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
AND ADVANCEMENT

Smithville Christian High School is proud to be a Canadian site for the renowned January Series of inspiring and informative talks of Calvin University. Every weekday from January 8 to 28, 2020, grab your lunch and come to Smithville Christian High School from 12:30 to 1:30 to hear live-streamed talks on topics such as “The Fool and the Heretic: How Two Scientists Moved Beyond Labels to a Christian Dialogue about Creation and Evolution,” or “The God Who Sees: Immigrants, the Bible, and the Journey to Belong.”

For a full list of speakers, topics and dates, visit calvin.edu/January. Admission is free. Mark your calendars: we look forward to welcoming you.



Act Five House

Spiritual Emphasis Week:

Come to chapel during Spiritual Emphasis Week November 25 to 29 every day at 9 a.m.
Featuring student praise teams and returning guest speaker, Mike Gordon. All are welcome!

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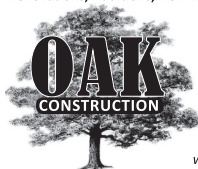


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