

## State of the School

As we approach our 5<sup>th</sup> year as Cornerstone Christian Academy, we are starting to feel more and more like an established school. And what a journey it's been! We've grown from six faculty members during our first year to over thirty for this coming fall. We've grown from 45 preschoolers to just under 300 students in preschool through 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We've expanded from two classrooms to three different locations. We've gone from the planning and preparation steps to the strategic plan and future vision stage. God has gone before us time and time again.

Many of our families have been with us since our inception. We certainly value their trust in CCA and the leadership here. What is a source of continual amazement to us is that families continue to come to CCA not because of our facilities, but in spite of them. Why is that? From the many comments heard, we've determined some of those reasons.

*It's because the teachers are great* – We do have wonderful, godly teachers. If you were aware of what a candidate goes through to become a CCA teacher, it would surprise you. By the time they take their place in front of the students, each of them has been through a lengthy and thorough application and interview process. We pray daily that God will bring us only His best! And He has been so faithful to do just that.

*It's because the curriculum is challenging* – Our curriculum is more accelerated than most, and our students thrive on it! We have high expectations academically, and it is a joy to see our students exceed them. Our kindergarteners read by Christmas and write in cursive by June. Our 7<sup>th</sup> graders are tackling Algebra. The academic bar is set high, and our students do a great job of reaching it.

*It's because the class sizes are smaller* – The size of CCA classes is small so that each student receives personal attention. Students won't 'slip through the cracks' at Cornerstone.

*It's because the presence of God is felt here* – God is at work in this place! We hear often from parents, grandparents, and even visitors who sense God's presence here and want to be here as a result. Those of you who have been here know it's not the building!

There is something so compelling about God's presence that draws us in and transcends commonplace brick and mortar. People love to hang out where God is!

Families come to us for all of the above reasons. We believe they stay for the last one.

Yes, God is at work in this place. His very real presence guides us, upholds us, encourages us, and blesses us beyond measure. We pray that His extraordinary love will overflow to those we meet outside these very ordinary walls.

## Annual Fund Update

One of the philosophies that sets CCA apart from other private schools is our Fundraising Policy. It states that we will not hold fundraising events, or sell products in order to fund the school. Recently we heard from a Christian school with an enrollment of over 1000 students. They had completed a magazine drive which netted them about \$40,000 for their Annual Fund. It is a yearly event that takes a crew of people to manage, hundreds if not thousands of man-hours, as well as every student

selling subscriptions. With another event planned in the spring, that school hopes to have close to \$100,000 in their Annual Fund by the end of their fiscal year. Where do we stand in comparison?

No magazine or candy sales. No crew of people in the Development Office managing hours and hours of paperwork and week after week of publicity. No student going door-to-door selling subscriptions or candy bars. No parents having to go to their offices in order to sign up co-workers.

No, at Cornerstone, we have committed donors who have given **over \$150,000** in the past 12 months. They give to the Annual Fund, the Building Fund, or the Tuition Assistance Fund. And because of their generosity over the past years, Cornerstone Christian Academy has operated completely in the black since day one.

What is the Annual Fund you might ask? It is a yearly fund that meets operational costs not covered by tuition. We currently have over 200 donors who support us in this way. The breakdown for this fiscal year ending June 30, 2001 is as follows:

Operations (Annual Fund) - \$95,451.68  
Tuition Assistance Fund - \$18,548.43  
Building Fund – \$36,242.12  
Total: \$150,242.23

Our 2001-02 Annual Fund has begun! We are praying for God's abundant provision.

#### Building Update

As you can see by our building logo, we continue to wait for God's perfect timing with regard to moving to our property on Ireland Grove Road. We are praying for God's leading each and every day as we look forward to the move. When the crop has been harvested this fall, the land studies will begin which will tell us the placement of any and all buildings. It was great for the staff to meet on the property right before school was out for a time of prayer together. We dedicated the property to the glory of God and prayed that He would bring us there soon.

“. . . if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.” Proverbs 2:3-6

#### Tuition Assistance Fund Update

Twenty-five students were recipients of tuition assistance in the 2000-01 academic year. With the monies received in the last fiscal year, and the monies carried over in this fund from the previous year, the total amount of assistance disbursed was \$30,030.00. Even though we did not have the money in hand when the assistance was committed to, God was faithful to answer our prayers and we received all that was needed.

Not all who receive assistance one year apply for it again the next. We received the following note this summer:

"Last fall our son received a scholarship to attend school. We have recently been blessed financially and would like to do the same for another child. Thanks for doing such an awesome job with the school!"

This year, twenty-two students have been granted assistance, with more applications yet pending! Pray with us that God will again provide so that these students can attend Cornerstone.

## God's Corner

We would hardly have thought just a year ago that God would have provided property for us to build a school upon. He has been so gracious to us! But it didn't stop there, because in His wisdom and foreknowledge He knew we would outgrow the facility on Bell Street before we could build on our land. For the fall of 2001, we have added 50 new elementary students! But where to put them was a problem.

So, God did the unimaginable. He provided not one, but two other locations for our expansion. The idea of multiple locations had never even occurred to us.

First, it was brought to our attention that Heartland Headstart was moving from a location at Evangelical United Methodist (Union Street, west of Main) to their own building. They were leaving behind several rooms already fitted for preschool use. They also were leaving a wonderful fenced-in playground! We approached E.U.M. about moving our current pre-school classes (we have five of them!) and the rest is history.

But we still faced expansion on Bell Street. We added an additional kindergarten section (making three), along with 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes. That made 14 classrooms in a building that had only 13! But God had it all planned out.

While at 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian Church (downtown) for another meeting, we remarked to ourselves how perfect their facility would be for several of our older classes. So, we wrote them a letter telling them about Cornerstone, and asking them for space. We understood that they had nothing to gain from housing us, and possibly something to lose (like wear and tear on their facility, etc.). But if God wanted us there, He could move their board to grant our request. And move He did.

Once we had the space we needed, we were still lacking sufficient desks and chairs for two classrooms. Problem solved – 2<sup>nd</sup> Pres. had almost-new desks and chairs in their storeroom which they graciously allowed us to move into our classrooms! God had it all planned out.

Because the Middle School moved to a church that has a gymnasium, we are able to offer P.E. instruction. This is another first for Cornerstone, as we watched another piece of God's plan fall into place.

God continues to expand our territory with our preschool at Evangelical United Methodist, our kindergarten through fifth grades at Grace United Methodist, and our middle school (6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grades) at 2<sup>nd</sup> Pres. God has been so good! And He had it all planned out.

## Praying for Cornerstone

**Cornerstone was founded on prayer.** For a number of years, interested Christians prayed for a non-denominational Christian school for our community. Cornerstone was the result.

**Cornerstone is sustained by prayer.** Our teachers pray. Come into the building between 7:45-8:05 AM and you will see them on their knees. Our board prays. Our families pray. We have seen God work here because of it.

**Cornerstone will continue to succeed because of prayer.** We will not succeed because of the wisdom of the Board alone, the talent of our administrators alone, the dedication of our teachers alone of the caliber of our children and families alone. We need God's hand of blessing as we grow and look forward to the challenges of the future.

**Will you pray for Cornerstone?** We covet your prayers! Please put CCA on your daily prayer list, and count it a privilege and joy to pray for a work which was founded on prayer and is sustained by prayer. When God's people pray, God's hand moves.

Our Board Members are:

Dr. Jeffery VanGoethem, Board President (East White Oak Bible Church)

Norma Brown, Trustee (First Assembly of God)

Dan Cole, Secretary (East White Oak Bible Church)

Ray Fisher, Trustee (First Christian Church)

Becky Shames, School Administrator (Eastview Christian Church)

Connie Urosevich, Trustee (Eastview Christian Church)