

the view from *behind the lens . . .*

August 26, 1998. That was the first day that I unloaded students in front of Cornerstone Christian Academy on Bell Street in Bloomington, something that would turn out to be a daily event. It was an exciting morning! We had moved into the school building attached to Grace United Methodist Church just a week and a half earlier. It had taken a staff of six with nine volunteers just 2 hours to make the move. We occupied four rooms in the basement of that building. Newly carpeted and painted, we were anxious for the students to arrive. And 54 preschoolers and 34 kindergarten through 4th graders did just that. We even had one student enrolled in Before School Care! At 8:45 AM, I stood on the sidewalk in front of the school and took a picture of our 34 elementary students posed by the beautiful Cornerstone Christian Academy sign (a story in itself). School officially began. It was a momentous moment, and I have looked at that picture often. Of those 34 original elementary students, 24 were still with us this year.

August 25, 1999. One year later. I wrote the following in the CCA history journal that I'd been keeping:

Today was our official First Day of School! We had 97 elementary students arrive in a mass of cars! An exhausting day, but all our teachers have survived. We begin in earnest to pray for a larger parking lot . . .

And just as we had done the previous year, at 8:45 AM the students filed outside where that year I was poised on a ladder across the street to take what would become the “annual picture.”

This ritual was repeated in 2000 and 2001 until CCA grew so large that we had to split and move into three different facilities. I was sad not to have an all-school picture, but thrilled with what God was doing in expanding our territory.

August 30, 2004. Our first start-of-year in our new building. Having moved in November of 2003, we had yet to have a first day picture taken here. I was looking forward to it as it had been three years since we had all been together. The students in kindergarten through 10th grade filed out of the building, all 340 of them! We didn't have a ladder tall enough, so this time I was poised in a cherry-picker some 30 feet in the air with my camera. Another great picture. It felt good to be together under one roof again!

August 24, 2005. The whole school will be together once again. I will no doubt take another picture because I've learned that every picture tells a story. When I review each one, I see students who have moved away and others who have stayed with us for a season. I see students who have come to know Jesus Christ here; some of whom I have prayed for and with. I see students who have suffered through difficult times and have persevered because of the love and prayers of the CCA family. I see teachers and staff members who will never be the same because of this place. I have seen faith grow and expand as we have trusted God to do the impossible time after time. I know that God has had His hand on every person who has ever stepped through the doors of Cornerstone Christian Academy. And while I delight in reviewing each yearly photo, I know that God sees a different one. He sees the bigger picture. He is the only one who sees the end from the beginning, and each personal journey our students will take. I look forward to learning what God will accomplish with those He has entrusted to us, even for a time. Meanwhile, I'll continue to take the annual picture.

I've already reserved the cherry-picker.

In Awe of Him,

April Kinzinger
Director of Development



Above – First Day Picture - 1998
Below – First Day Picture - 2004



God Stories!

In March we received a call from a school-outfitter in Washington, Illinois. He called to say that after fitting out grade schools in the Washington area, his warehouse was still full of desks due to a mistake in the original shipment. After trying time after time to have the furniture company come to take the overshipment, he was left with the task of disposing of the furniture himself. He had heard from his brother that CCA might have need of some additional student desks and chairs. So the call came. We were interested and at a savings of over 75%, we were delivered 40 brand new adjustable height student desks, 36 chairs, and 18 high school chairs with attached tablet arms. We added this story to the hundreds of “furniture” stories already in our history file.

But there’s more! That same week, Aurora Christian School called and asked if we wanted some new lockers that had not been needed in their new school project. We did! So up went a truck to Aurora with Dan Kinzinger and our Athletic Director John Schwartz. They picked up 75 boxes of lockers. We unloaded them after school and put them on the stage. The next day, another call from ACS. Could we use additional new lockers (worth \$64,000) that were stored on another piece of property? Yes, we could! The catch? We would have to go pick them up in several trucks and they wanted an answer by noon. Our problem was that we didn’t have a place to store them. After calling around and researching warehouse spaces, we didn’t have an answer. It was 10:30 AM. What should have been our first response became our last resort. We prayed. And God began to move!

On the way to an appointment at 11:30 AM, one of the staff drove by a piece of property owned by a CCA family. On that property was a shed. Suddenly the idea came – would that family allow us to store lockers in their shed? A call back to school was made, and the family contacted. Within a few days, two trucks unloaded hundreds of lockers at the shed. God had known all along just what to do, and just in time provided His answer to our problem!

Opportunities & Grants

How thankful we are for all our volunteers! We have Moms who are in the building on a daily basis copying, cutting, and organizing. We have Dads who go on Outdoor Education trips and help drive on field trips. We have grandparents who fold, stuff, stamp, and mail letters. Thanks so much to all of you who have helped in any way this past year!

Want to volunteer? We’d love to have you! This summer we could use painters! We have hallways and walls to be touched up. In August, we’ll have books that will need to be laminated. Call the school at 662-9900 if you have time to volunteer. We’ll find a time that suits your schedule best!

Are you a State Farm employee or retiree? State Farm’s Good Neighbor Grant Program donates \$500 to the school when you volunteer 40 hours or more. This past year we’ve been blessed with many SF volunteers! Thanks for your hard work!

2004-2005

Giving to Cornerstone

Beyond the Bake Sale: The Ultimate School Fundraising Book by Jean Joachim was featured recently in a development publication that arrived at the school. It suggested the following ideas for successful school fundraising:

1. Turn less-prominent holidays such as Cinco de Mayo and Presidents' Day into a moneymaking opportunity by holding a potluck supper and charging admission.
2. Photo sales: Find parent photographers to take photos of special school events such as award ceremonies, plays, and graduation; sell the photos to parents who forgot their cameras.
3. Start a garden on school property. Let students plant, tend, harvest, and sell the produce and flowers. Hold a Thanksgiving eve pumpkin pie bake sale. Right before the holiday break, have parents show off their favorite pumpkin pie recipes. Selling seasonal specialties saves people a trip to the bakery or the trouble of making it themselves. You'll build in steady sales if you do this annually and people come to expect it.
4. Do you have any parents who are singers? Musicians? Stand-up comics? Sign up parents with such skills for a grownups' talent show and charge admission. Teachers can participate, too.
5. At a street fair or other family event, rent costumes and have parents dress up as the Cat in the Hat, Pippi Longstocking, Curious George, or other popular children's storybook characters. Have the characters circulate along with a photographer armed with a Polaroid camera. Charge to take posed pictures.
6. Have a schoolwide art show of students' work. Offer free admission, but charge for refreshments.
7. Try a 50/50 raffle where the prize is half the pot. Interest grows the more you collect and buyers realize that the winner will take home at least \$500, for example, if you've sold \$1,000 worth of tickets. Watch the pot grow! Check local and state laws before you try this, however. Raffles are regulated in many areas.

The author had helped to raise over \$100,000 per year during her ten years of participation with her local school. She recounts fundraising nightmares, and events that just didn't work. Sounds painful, doesn't it?

Cornerstone's fundraising policy is what makes us unique among other private schools. Our policy states that we are committed to seeking financial partnerships through voluntary gifts. It affirms that we will avoid the sale of products to finance the school. Why? Because fundraising by product sales demeans the very idea of mission. That philosophy in effect, says: "Our school isn't worthy of asking for your support. But if we offer you an object for sale at a marked-up price, you won't mind if we allocate the profits to help finance our school, will you?" Actually, *Sports Illustrated* uses the same philosophy.

Fundraising by product sales also relies on the public's desire for an exchange of goods in return for money, rather than the benefits of donating to God's work for His glory.

Does the policy we have work? We believe it does. God's people will give to God's work with no strings attached. How do we know? This year's giving portrays it well. Consider the following:

July 1, 2004-May 31, 2005

Annual Fund Giving - \$109,682.33

Tuition Assistance Fund Giving - \$87,464.33

Building Fund Giving - \$151,622.70

Total Giving (11 months of 12): \$348,769.36

We have learned well that God's work, done God's way will never lack God's supply.

"I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD, the deeds for which He is to be praised, according to all the LORD has done for us – yes, the many good things He has done..." Isaiah 63:7

dates to Note . . .

August 22nd – First day of High School (Grades 9-11)

August 22nd & 23rd - Visitation Days (Grades K-8)

August 24th – First Day of School (Grades K-8)

September 8th – School Picnic – 5:00 PM

September 27th – Open House

October 6th & 7th - No School – Teacher Convention

October 13th & 14th – School Pictures Taken

October 20th – Founder’s Banquet at the Radisson, Dr. Bill Brown, President, Cedarville University, Guest Speaker

Note: The entire 2005-2006 school calendar is posted on our website: www.cornerstonechristian.com

School Growth Update

Here we grow again! God continues to bless us by bringing the students of His choosing to Cornerstone. We are anticipating at least a 10% growth. Pray that we will have the room for all the students who want to be here!

