GRACE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

--- Κατανώμεν --Let us consider...



The Hope of Discipline: God at Work in Genesis

By Luke Shawhan

My daughter, Roselyn, recently perfected riding her bike. This new skill has given her the toddler version of a newly-licensed teenage driver's freedom. This freedom excites her, and, as most children do, she has pushed her limits. Not long ago, she decided to pedal over to the house of another child in our neighborhood—out of my sight, blissfully ignorant of the possibility of an oncoming car—and she turned a deaf ear to my calls for her to turn around. I ran after her, caught her, and instructed her about listening to Dad and stopping when she was told. Then, a couple of weeks later, while she was riding her bike and my wife and I were walking, she decided she needed to catch up with a neighborhood dog down the road. Again, she ignored my calls to obey, and she rode away—disregarding the possibility of danger.

The need to discipline frustrates us, whether we are parents, leaders, bosses, or teachers. Nobody revels over implementing consequences to bad behavior. Yet, Scripture calls authority figures (most notably parents) to discipline. Observe these Proverbs: "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15). "Discipline

The mission of Grace Classical Academy is to provide an education designed to help our children know the love, grace, truth and holiness of our glorious God and from this understanding, strive for excellence in knowledge, wisdom and service.

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"Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart" "Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death" (Proverbs

29:17 and

19:18)

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your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart" (Proverbs 29:17). "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid" (Proverbs 12:1). "Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death" (Proverbs 19:18). If we take Scripture seriously, we must take discipline seriously—even if it can be frustrating, disheartening, or even depressing. But, there is always hope—hope that God offers His people both the example and strength to enact His command to discipline. God's actions in Scripture's first book—Genesis—demonstrate this hope in three ways. First, God's discipline in Genesis does not always rehabilitate. Second, those whom God transforms still swim in the wreckage of their previous sins. Finally, God's discipline always lays the foundation for Christ's sacrifice.

Before the first point, it must be noted that any event of punishment, judgment, or testing in Genesis will be classified as a form of discipline by the Lord. Secondly, while methods of discipline often bring fervent debate among Christians, only the importance of enacting discipline will be addressed here.

Recall the events of discipline in Genesis: the expulsion from the Garden, the mark of Cain, the Flood, the scattering of people after the Tower of Babel, Sodom and Gomorrah, the sacrifice of Isaac, Laban testing Jacob, and Joseph with his brothers. Testing, discipline, punishment, and judgment permeate Genesis. Yet, not all of them rehabilitate those who experience the event. From our viewpoint, they do not all seem effective. Few circumstances agitate parents more than when inappropriate behavior from their progeny continues, especially after correction! But, observe some of these circumstances from Genesis. What happened after the expulsion from the Garden, or after the Flood, or after Sodom and Gomorrah? After the expulsion, Cain murdered Abel. The Flood? Noah abused wine, lost consciousness, and brought shame upon himself in his drunken stupor. Sodom and Gomorrah? Lot's daughters intoxicated their father and then committed incest in order to become pregnant. Did they not understand what just happened? God spewed fire and brimstone upon their hometown for this kind of behavior! Did Noah forget the flood and why God poured water onto the earth? Was Cain unaware of what happened to his parents for their sin? No, each individual pursued his sin even after enduring or witnessing the judgment for sin. They knew the consequences but acted sinfully regardless. A disheartening reality, to say the least. But, we must look to God's example. He executed the righteous requirements of

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His law, even with the omniscience of knowing the outcomes. We, as parents, teachers, and other leaders must realize that rehabilitation of behavior is an important goal, but even when rehabilitation does not take place, we can trust that God is just and can bring goodness from proper discipline.

By God's grace, not every occurrence of correction in Genesis was ignored. God's discipline of Adam, coupled with the circumstances of Cain and Abel, seem to have brought about a change with Adam's subsequent son, Seth. Scripture records that people began to call upon the name of the Lord in Seth's day (Genesis 4:26). Abraham presumed the truth of God's promise to the point of trusting in the resurrection of Isaac, and Paul records that "No unbelief made [Abraham] waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:20-21). Jacob, whose name means "trickster," went from a man who placed contingencies upon God to earn his trust to a man who exclaimed, "[The Lord] answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone" (Genesis 35:3). The Lord's rod against these men wrought a change only possible by God, and this same faithfulness and repentance comes about from the discipline we place upon those whom God has put under our care. But notice one truth: each man cited had to swim in the wreckage of his former sins as transformed, faithful men of God. Adam raised Seth, a godly son, while remembering his act of treason in the garden that brought about the downfall of Abel. Abraham trusted God but lived every day with the result of his actions toward Hagar and Ishmael (consequences still felt today). Plus, the deceit shown by Abraham and Isaac in lying about their wives (Genesis 12, 20, 26) morphed into bribery and theft by their son Jacob (Genesis 25 and 27) and transformed into premeditated murder by Jacob's sons because of the defiling of Dinah in Genesis 34. By this time, Jacob had already wrestled with God and trusted the Lord to provide his every need, but his former deceitfulness had passed on to his sons (who again, certainly knew the story of God's provision, wrestling, and kindness to their father and grandfathers). Jacob, as a changed man, lived within the wreckage his own sinful habits had created. Our lives are no different: God disciplines us, changes us, forgives us, but we still live within the ruins of our former actions, whether it is a ruined reputation, a disease, or habits difficult to break. Nonetheless, this brings about the greatest truth about God and His discipline from Genesis: His discipline lays the foundation for Christ!

Genesis both foreshadows and demonstrates the sacrifice and change Christ offers. The foreshadows should amaze us: after the Flood, God placed the bow in the sky—a bow pointed at Him. Upon Mt. Moriah, the angel steadied Abraham's clinched hand and provided the ram in the thicket—the same location as the future temple of Jerusalem and adjacent to Golgotha, the land of Christ's crucifixion. Jacob exclaimed that he "saw God face to face, yet his life was delivered" (Genesis 32:30); one day, Christians will live in God's presence, face to face, without a worry of death. God's discipline gave a glimpse of Christ's accomplishment and also prepared the way for His actions, most poignantly in the life of Jacob's fifth son Judah. Judah, following in the deceitful footsteps of his father, concocted the plan to sell Joseph for a profit in Genesis 37. And then, in the following chapter, a seemingly out-of-place event in Scripture takes place: Judah and Tamar. This occurs in the middle of Joseph's story of being favored by his father, sold by his brothers, enslaved, imprisoned, and then eventually made ruler of Egypt.

"God disciplines us, changes us, forgives us, but we still live within the ruins of our former actions."

But why? It solidifies, without doubt, the fraudulent character of Judah. He refused to honor his promise to his widowed daughter-in-law Tamar. Judah swore to provide one of his remaining sons to her as a husband after his own wicked sons, Er and Onan, failed to uphold God's command to provide an offspring for Tamar. Genesis 38 records that Er and Onan were killed for their wickedness before God. Later, Judah's own wife died, and Judah traveled with a friend on a business trip. During the excursion, Judah visited a prostitute who happened to be on the side of a road. She demanded payment of his signet, cord, and staff. Three months following, Tamar revealed her pregnancy by an unknown man to Judah, and he demanded her punishment. Yet, Tamar disclosed Judah's hypocrisy by displaying the signet, cord, and staff. She said, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant." By all accounts, Judah's vileness ruled him at this point in his life. But, something changed within him. Ostensibly, God's Spirit, through these events and coupled with time, deconstructed Judah's heart of stone and replaced it with a heart of flesh. By the time Joseph, as a ruler in Egypt, tested his brothers in Egypt a decade later, Judah was a new man. After Benjamin's life was threatened during Joseph's ruse, Judah declared, "For your servant [Judah] became a pledge of safety for [Benjamin] to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father all my life.' Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers." (Genesis 44:32-33). Gone was the man who only regarded his own gain. Gone was the man who lied to get what he wanted. Present was the man who cared about his father and the damage losing Benjamin would bring to him. Present was the man who pledged his own life to save Benjamin's; present was the man whose descendant would be the one who pledged His life for those of sinful humanity's-Christ is a direct descendant of Judah! Through these disciplinary acts of God, the line of Christ was established, the foreshadow of Christ seen, and the change from Christ shown. God's discipline provided the foundation for Christ to bring redemption to all!

Although veteran and experienced parents, teachers, leaders, and the like know the good discipline can bring, those moments of conversation and punishment never carry enjoyment. We must remember: sometimes the correction does not take. Yet, when it does, it still may not remove the wreckage of previous sinful deeds. But always, discipline prepares the soil for Christ to work.

To finish my story, after Rosie disregarded my instruction and pedaled away, I caught up with her, declared her error, carried the bike home, and took it away for the evening. Roselyn walked home with her mother and cried the entire time. Once back at home, Rosie and I discussed her disobedience and why Daddy punished her by taking away her bike. Ever the emotional girl, she cried and questioned, "Dad, do you still love me even when I disobey?" I replied, "Baby, of course I do." She blurted out, "Does Mom still love me?" "Absolutely, she loves you." Then, she asked, "Does *God* still love me?" To this I smiled and answered, "Yes, baby, God still loves you; that is why Jesus died!" She sniffled and lunged toward me for a hug.

Roselyn's questions are the fertile soil turned up by discipline, and they give Christ the space to work inside my daughter—and me—revealing to both of us our need for Him. May we trust the Lord in our discipline, and may He redeem us through His discipline!

"Discipline prepares the soil for Christ to work...Roselyn's questions are the fertile soil turned up by discipline."

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Interview with Mr. Hyde

Grace Classical Academy added two new full-time staff members this school year: Janelle Schriver in first grade and David Hyde in the Junior High and High School. We are excited to feature both of them in our newsletter: Mr. Hyde in this edition and Mrs. Shriver in a forthcoming newsletter.

What is your background and what gave you a desire to teach?

I pastored for several years in two different churches and in that role, I had the wonderful opportunity to disciple. We (my wife and I) have always believed that God's command is to make disciples. God always sees fit to provide the tools needed to accomplish that task. We did that in Columbus and Toledo, OH. While we did that, our church



was 52 years old and had never taken a missions trip, so we took a group of people to Mexico. At the time, it was easy and inexpensive. We took our first trip and then came back, and it really changed the makeup of the church. It gave a real purpose to [the church's] giving when it came to reaching the world with the Gospel. We even saw people beginning to take trips themselves, which was exciting! After taking several trips there year after year, I was asked to attend a pastor's conference in Mexico. It was during that time that God made it very clear that it was my turn to answer the call. It was one thing to stand in the pulpit and encourage other people to do that, but now the Spirit of God was saying, "What about you?" I had been in the church ten years. I resigned the pastorate in 1999 to raise funds and go to Mexico.

Ministry in Mexico was incredible; if there is anything that I can point to in my life to say that I really saw God at work, it was in Mexico. After, Johann and I had done 8 months of university language training we were involved in evangelistic Bible studies every night of the week, and there was potential for more. Out of that, we started a Bible study in a lady's house. Now, I had learned formal Spanish in a university language program, there I was on the mountaintop, trying to teach, but they could not understand my Spanish and gave me strange looks! But, this old lady in the Bible study, Rosa, asked me if I would teach her the Bible. I said, "Rosa, I'm sorry, I don't know enough language to teach you the Bible." And here, this lady, who had less than a 4th grade education, said, "I will teach you Spanish if you will teach me the Bible." And so, that is how it worked out. She started teaching me all the ways one communicates that do not fit the conjugations, because their Spanish was so poor—and what a blessing she was to me. However, I'll never forget when I found out that Rosa couldn't read. She was constantly mixing up Moses and Jacob and Adam and Noah: she would tell the Bible story, but with other people's names. And it was so much fun just to see her grow. One day during Bible study, I said, "Rosa, why don't you read this verse to us." And she looked horrified, and I said to myself, "uh-oh." She replied, "I hate to tell you this, and I have been trying to hide it, but I cannot read." I said, "Oh Rosa, I wish you would have told us that." So, our study group gave her the Bible on CD. I will never forget her taking that and hugging it, and with tears streaming down her face, saying "My Bible, my Bible." And back then, you could not fit an audio Bible on one CD, it was more like 15. It was a big deal.

So ministry in Mexico was a big deal. We loved it there. And through some events—the sickness and death of my mom—God brought us back to the states. When He did, we chose to live in the Springfield area because Johann's parents were becoming elderly. I had drug Johann all over the world in ministry, but it was time to minister to her

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family. So, we kind of settled here. She got a job, and I started working at Sears. Now, I believe that Christians are always on mission, and that geography does not mean nearly as much to God as it does to us. Where we accomplish mission does not matter. So, Johann and I were doing the same thing we had always done, meeting people and seeking to exalt Christ and watching people being drawn to Jesus, right there at Sears. It was a blessing to do that, and not from an office inside of a church building, but right there in Sears. That became my office. We saw people come to Christ. God is great at exalting Himself and it was a joy to see him do that there. We made some great contacts and had great relationships with people. After Sears closed down, I started at Ace Hardware in Ozark and did the same thing there. Out of this, there are Bible studies we started still going on today, including three former co-workers I regularly meet with.

The Lord really brought me here to GCA through a trip I took to Haiti. I met several students and their parents in preparation for that trip. Being in Haiti bonded us together; but, I did not think about the possibility of teaching at GCA. In the months that followed, I kept contact with students through meetings at Steve Edney's house, one of the parents who had gone. One day, while at Ace Hardware, Mr. Moss texted me and asked if we could meet for lunch. What came out of that meeting is that it would not work for me to teach at GCA part-time and Ace Hardware full-time. So then about a month before school started, Mr. Moss called me and said "Hey, we need to talk. Can we meet again? Some things have changed and God has opened up an opportunity and I wondered if you would pray about that?" I responded, "I have been praying about this since the beginning of the summer and I don't have to pray anymore. I know this is what God wants." For me, it has just been an incredible time coming into the school, meeting the parents, meeting the kids. I am just so glad to be a part of this. I'm sure that a honeymoon season will be over at some point— I'm hoping not— but I can't believe that I get to do this. I am having a great time!

What kind of surprises have you encountered since starting here?

There have been a couple of surprises. I had forgotten the difference between teaching an 8th grader and a senior, and teaching those age groups have been an incredibly fun challenge. It is not that I teach differently, but the 8th graders have an incredible energy that I don't necessarily see in the mature 12th graders. You walk into that 8th grade class, and they are bouncing off the wall and it has been fun to come alongside that— it energizes me! This experience has been a huge surprise to me. I mean, I have 5 children, but I forgot what they were like in 8th grade.

As far as the material is concerned, I am learning every week. I love the classics and have always read them, but it has been a long time. To delve back into the material thrills me. And to look at Ancient History [one of Mr. Hyde's courses], the best that man can do is worship thousands and thousands of gods, and then there is still no peace. There is the pursuit of peace, but never getting there. What a blessing for us that God pursues us and did so when He sent His Son. One of the things that we have learned is that when you look at Gilgamesh or the Egyptian's gods, those are gods created in man's image, when Scripture teaches God created man in His image. Big difference.

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High School at GCA

By Emma Barnhouse



In the High School this school year, we have a yearbook and newsletter elective. Shelby Cron, Hannah Herzog, and Emma Barnhouse will all be hard at work writing, editing, designing, and documenting the school year to share it with the GCA community. Emma wrote this article, sharing the impact of GCA upon high school life.

Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Grace Classical Academy is, as Mr. Bradley says, "A Christian community with an emphasis on education." GCA provides not only the education that a student needs, but the encouragement from a family of believers that a young Christian requires. Children must be trained in the proper way, and GCA works to prepare children to become young adults that share the gospel of Christ. Teaching children facts gives them the base they need to build their faith, but teaching them to love truth and reason well allows them to strengthen their faith and make it stand. GCA accomplishes both while teaching students that God must be at the center of everything they do.

Teaching facts to children achieves nothing if they are not also taught to organize them and reason through them on their own. The same holds true for teaching children about religion and faith: if they cannot form their own ideas based on truth, they have simply been filled with useless information. What good does it do a student to be given information but not taught how to fit its practical usage into their life? How can a future leader be trusted to make informed decisions if they are not first taught to reason well? Educational specialists have noticed the glut of information but poor usage among recent high school graduates. Anna Aldric, MIT graduate and tutor at PrepScholar (a company that tutors kids for college placement tests), calculated the average of the ACT scores nationwide from 2004-2014. She showed that, in the last ten years, the test scores have gone up substantially. Although scores have gone up, ability has not. David Brooks, writer for the New York Times, says this about the upcoming generation: "When I ask veteran college teachers and administrators to describe how college students have changed over the years, I often get an answer like this: 'Today's students are more accomplished than past generations, but they are also more emotionally fragile.' That rings true to me. Today's students are amazing, but they bathe one another in oceans of affirmation and praise, as if buttressing one another against some insecurity. Whatever one thinks of the campus protests, the desire for trigger warnings and safe spaces does seem to emanate from a place of emotional fragility." Though this is an incredibly smart generation of teenagers and young adults, there is no toughness to their person. Any small critique becomes a brutal punch to their self-esteem, and challenges and accountability are often seen as an assumption that someone is not adequate. Because of this, our society today is one that no longer teaches people to challenge one another but is instead breeding teenagers who can't think for themselves.

Grace Classical Academy fights this trend by providing the spiritual encouragement, nurturing, and challenges young Christians need. The school's atmosphere of accountability and prayer is a rare example of love in a dark world. When senior student Rachel Bulger talks about the difference she sees in GCA versus other schools around it, she states, "I think the main difference is that GCA has its priorities straight. God, community, and relationships are top priority. Academics is obviously the main "business" (I mean, it's a *school*) but it's not solely a place of academic learning. It's a

place that prepares you for the real world and fosters godly friendships. You don't just get a good education, but you learn how to properly defend your faith and live a life worthy of the calling you have received." Freshman student Silas Garrison says this about the school: "It [GCA] is a positive environment that has created a space for us to learn how to defend our faith, and it is a great place of education." Just like finding an oasis in the desert, this school provides an atmosphere of love for its students that inspires them daily. GCA then follows through on this idea with their emphasis on teaching students to build their own faith and share it with others. Class prayer meetings are not uncommon, and teachers urge the students to involve themselves in one another's spiritual lives. This school teaches something different than those around it: God is the center of everything, and Christians must share that news with the world.

The staff is passionate about seeing their students do great things in the name of the Lord. Their passion creates memorable lessons. Mr. Cymbaluk taught a lesson to his 8th Grade Bible Survey class that many remember to this day. He reminded his students that they are sinners. They are no less a sinner than the man who cheats on his wife or the man who deals drugs to kids. The world sees these men as worse, but God sees sin as sin. He taught students this because he wanted us to remember that we weren't better than anyone else. The class would laugh and repeat, "I am a dirtbag," in the most comical voice that each student could muster, but (all joking aside) they remembered that very important lesson. Many long-time students of GCA still recall the lessons taught by Mrs. Flores, the kindergarten teacher. One of the greatest lessons she teaches students is about her time as a shepherdess. As her small students sit in the classroom and listen to her stories, she gently reminds them of their all-loving shepherd who longs to protect them in his fold. In Mrs. Winkler's seventh-grade science course, she never fails to show the complexity of science, and how all those complexities are amazingly evidence of a divine creator. Every day in school, students learn from those who communicate their love for God in all subjects or grades they teach.

Many of the high school students have stated that it is these open discussions and debates about faith, and the inclusion of God in every other discussion, that have really sharpened their faith. Many said that in other schools, sports, music, drama, or science are priority number one, but GCA is not that way. Sophomore student Samantha Sellers encourages, "In our world, it is more important than ever that we know WHO we are and WHOSE we are. GCA teaches the foundations of our faith integrated into the subjects we study. When people are brought up knowing the Lord and the Truth, it is that much easier to share our faith with others." Freshman student Katie Cullins also replies, "The fact that we can take any type of discussion, like a discussion about crafts, and turn it back around toward God is awesome. That shows me how, when having a conversation with an atheist, I can turn it into a discussion about faith really fast." God is kept at the center of everything, and the staff enforces every day the idea that Christians must be vessels of God's love, and that it is never our own goodness that should shine through us, but only God's. It is this idea that makes Grace Classical Academy a truly rare and beautiful find. Junior student Josiah Williams, when talking about how the school has trained him, summarizes it the best: "I've attended GCA ever since Pre-K, so I've never really known anything else. Nonetheless, I still go through the same trials, feel the same temptations, and endure the same afflictions as those not in GCA. Because Grace Classical Academy provides a Christ-centered curriculum, I have been taught to approach a situation with a Christ-centered attitude. When distressing situations do arise, instead of relying on my own understanding in an attempt to comfort myself, I offer up those hardships to Christ. Not only has Grace Classical Academy provided insight into how discomforting scenarios should be handled, but also a Biblical guide into how numerous other reallife situations should be approached."

"In our world, it is more important than ever that we know WHO we are and WHOSE we are...when people are brought up knowing the Lord and the Truth, it is that much easier to share our faith with others."

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Yet, some of the best lessons at the school do not come from the teachers but from the students themselves. There has been a movement toward the mission field in the past several years, but this year in particular. GCA students traveled to Haiti, Zambia, Tanzania, Nicaragua, and many accomplished mission work within the US as well. Not only that, but students also formed their own after-school Bible studies and prayer meetings, seeing this fellowship with and encouragement of one another as a crucial part of their Christian walk. When asked what she admired most about her peers, junior student Paige Steelman says, "[I admire] the fight in them for Christ, the love for one another, the drive to do hard things, and the common distaste for being complacent or comfortable." Paige's fellow classmate, Eden Barnhouse, talks about how she admires the same ambition in her fellow students, and says about them: "I admire how on-fire and passionate they are. Most of them don't do things halfheartedly. When they've decided that something is worth doing, they do it well." The line between "classmate" and "family" becomes more and more blurred as some of us reach the end of our time at GCA, and senior student Christina Burks acknowledges that when she talks about her experience with her class. She says that they accepted her with open arms and says, "I admire how much love they've shown me, how they've been there for me through both the ups and the downs, and how they seek after the Lord. They've encouraged me to be a better person, and I thank God almost every day that they're in my life."

In the end, Grace Classical Academy shapes the hearts and minds of students and their families in an undeniably important way. GCA shows a rare form of encouragement—the encouragement to show the love of Christ. Christians see the glory of God as a gift that must be shared with someone, and the beauty of this gift can be seen when the person who hears grows into a leader for others to follow. God has raised up GCA and allowed it to be a light to so many people, and it has truly been a blessing for us, the students.



"Not only has Grace Classical Academy provided insight into how discomforting scenarios should be handled, but also a Biblical guide into how numerous other real-life situations should be approached."

The First Day of School













Staff Birthdays

October

10/3—Jody McNulty 10/2— David Hyde 10/18—Lincoln Amstutz 10/22—Melanie Brookie



November

11/8—Marion Winkler 11/11—Charlie Williamson 11/14—Stephanie Beeson 11/15—Michale Nelson 11/27—Jill Sellers

December

12/5—Robin Harrison 12/26—Tracy Mercer Page 11 Volume 10, Issue 1

Around the School



Tyler Hildebrand in P.E.



Noelle Frazier on the monkey bars.



Ryan Edney in Photography Class



Analeigh Otwell and Layla Johnson



Mrs. Loyd's Fifth Grade Class



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Return Service Requested

October 2016

- 1 Tuition Due
- 3-7 No School, Fall Break
- 11-12 Optional Parent/ Teacher Conf. 4-6pm
- 14 Early Out 11:30am Teacher Training
- 20 Family Skating Party 6:00-8:00
- 21 Nifty 50s Day
- 31 Reformation Day

November 2016

- 1 Tuition Due
- 4 History Day (1st through 8th Grade)/ All-School Open House 6:30pm
- 6 Daylight Savings Time Ends
- 16 Fabulous Foot Day
- 21-25 Thanksgiving Break

 No School

December 2016

- 1 Tuition Payment Due
- 2 Choir Concert 7:00pm
- 8-15 Finals Week (7th-12th)
- 16 Christmas Dress Day End of 2nd Quarter All-School Chapel Early Out: 11:30 AM
- 17-31 Christmas/New Year's Break — No School