

Alumnus Spotlight

Luke Netjes ('16) had quite the journey to study in the Netherlands at Delft University of Technology, the third-ranked technical school in the world. In order to qualify for admission, Luke needed to pass three advanced placement tests in Physics and Calculus. After passing one of the three tests in his first attempt, Luke began studies at Spokane Falls Community College to prepare for a second round of testing.



In his second attempt, he passed all but one test, which he failed by only one point. Looking back on those two years of testing as he applied to TU Delft, Luke clearly saw God's hand. "I don't look at [those years] as a waste of time, because during those years I gained the Lord," Luke commented. Determined in his desire to study at TU Delft, Luke retook the test and finally passed. TU

Delft promptly accepted him, and he began his undergraduate studies in Mechanical Engineering this past September. "I am grateful to be here in Delft," said Luke, "but wherever I am, and in whatever situation, my foremost goal is to gain Christ."

Resources

The Oaks Benefit Auction is set for Friday, March 1st at the Historic Davenport Hotel. This evening will provide an opportunity for people to continue to partner with The Oaks through both live and silent auctions. All proceeds raised the night of the event will directly benefit The Oaks. Interested in being a corporate sponsor or table host? Contact Shelley Moss at (509) 991-6177. Tickets are now available on The Oaks's website!



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To: Family and Friends of The Oaks
From: The Oaks Classical Christian Academy
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The ice and freezing rain this time of year can make for a precarious walk between buildings at The Oaks, so we've done our best to make sure the path is salted and shoveled. From my office, I have seen students safely stay in the salt path, their footing secure. But for some students, the snow and ice have a magnetic effect, drawing them from safety to the ice, where they slip and slide. They may giggle for a moment, but their laughter stops as soon as they fall, and they finish their walk on the clear, salted path, their feet firmly planted on solid ground.

As parents and educators, part of our job is to show our children and students the stable way. The Oaks is eager to partner with parents in this task and wants to equip parents with tools to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Just last week, The Oaks hosted speaker Keith McCurdy who encouraged parents with a message on raising sturdy kids (see more information inside). Sturdy kids become faithful, steadfast adults in a world that would prefer that children stay flimsy, blown and tossed around by every wind of emotion and doctrine.

We cannot expect to raise sturdy kids if our feet are not first set

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on solid ground. Sturdy kids need sturdy adults in their lives to show them where to place their feet, how to endure hard things, and how to pursue peace and rest in Christ above happiness and success. We must evaluate the foundation we give our children by the example we set. When they come home with a failed test, what is our response? When they confess their sin, what is our response? Our responses reveal whether we've set our feet on the slippery promises of the world or the sure promises of God.

Let us then look to Jesus and set our feet on the Solid Rock, whom the author of Hebrews calls the "author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 12:2, NKJV). Raising sturdy kids is counter-cultural; placing their feet firmly on the truth of Scripture will invite ridicule from the world. But think of the joy that is set before them as they learn to treasure Christ above the things of this world. May their feet be set on the Solid Rock, and may we show them how.

- Charlie Dowers, Headmaster

Student Life

Music has increasingly become an integral part of the culture and community of The Oaks, but singing is not merely to be done for singing's sake. To help students steward their voices well for the glory of God, The Oaks invited Dr. Cody Laun, a classically trained vocalist and former student of Mr. Kent Young, to observe and critique music classes for one week. Dr. Laun specializes in helping students increase their physical awareness while they sing, and he brought his expertise to The Oaks to refine the students' choral technique. Utilizing unique imagery and tangible tips for vocal performance, he built the students' understanding of how beautiful sound is made, even through simple adjustments of their posture. In addition to these pointers, Dr. Laun blessed the secondary students with a lunchtime concert.



A familiar story is taking the stage for this year's spring theatre production, but a few changes are in store. The Oaks is preparing to present Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, and while it will be



complete with goofy stepsisters, mice, and a decadent ball, be ready for a few twists and turns that will surprise and delight you from start to finish. The cast is set, and they invite you to experience the familiar story of *Cinderella* in a brand new way. Mark your calendars for this year's spring theatre production of *Cinderella* on May 16th-18th.

Academics

Vaulted ceilings and stained-glass windows served as a classroom for the fourth graders as they took their study of medieval history to St. John's Cathedral last month. The students enjoyed a tour of the cathedral that included a close-up view of the baptismal, which reportedly was "bigger than all our lunchboxes combined," according to Luke Van Horn (4th). He and his friends marveled at the grandeur of the cathedral and at how long it took to build. Before leaving the cathedral, the fourth graders filled the nave with beauty as they sang the *Doxology*.



History Emphasis Days have always been a highlight for secondary students at The Oaks. This year, The Oaks is spreading the delight of History Emphasis Days throughout the course of the school year and is introducing a History Emphasis Day once per quarter. This year's theme is the story of Israel, and the first Emphasis Day focused on the Israelites' time in and exodus from Egypt. "My favorite part was learning about different pieces of evidence that suggest the exodus actually happened," commented seventh grader Noah Clark. "Chariot wheels were found in the Red Sea!" Special thanks to Dr. Timothy Edwards, from New Saint Andrews College, who spoke on the Israelites' exodus, which the students reenacted later in the day. Students also learned about ancient sacrifices, Egyptian math, and how to make slings as they studied different aspects of the history of God's people. The story will continue next month for the second History Emphasis Day of the school year.

Campus

Kindergarten Enrollment opens February 1st for new families. The Oaks offers a wide variety of flexible options for families who would like to enroll their children in kindergarten. Depending on availability, morning, afternoon, or enhancement classes allow families to choose a time that best suits their schedule.

The Oaks is eager to come alongside parents who are raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by not only educating the children, but encouraging parents as well. Most recently, The Oaks invited speaker Keith McCurdy for an evening talk entitled, "Raising Sturdy Kids." Mr. McCurdy is a renowned speaker and consultant whose wisdom has blessed and challenged many families at countless churches, businesses, and schools. The Oaks hopes to invite more speakers to visit and support the families in the community in the task God has given them to raise their children in the Lord.



Open House season has begun, and The Oaks has eagerly opened its doors for families who might be interested in joining the community of The Oaks. Guests may witness first-hand the Christ-centered and classical education that is offered at The Oaks by touring the campus, visiting classrooms, and getting their questions answered. The next two open houses will be held on February 26th and March 26th from 9-11 a.m. If someone you know might be interested in learning more about The Oaks, please pass this information along!

Faculty Spotlight

After two years as a part-time teacher at The Oaks, Mrs. Abigail Jones made the switch to teaching full time in second grade this school year. "I'm so thankful to get to spend the whole day with my students," commented Mrs. Jones, and her students would agree. "Mrs. Jones makes learning very fun," commented second grader Malachi Farley, whose favorite parts of second grade are Mrs. Jones's jokes and learning addition and subtraction facts. When not teaching, Mrs. Jones enjoys spending time with her husband and children, venturing outdoors as a family, and working on house projects. All three of her children attend The Oaks, where they have the delight of seeing their mom on campus from time to time. Mrs. Jones, we are thankful for you!



Athletics

Athletes may not remember their record of wins and losses in a few years, but they will remember who coached them and how. This basketball season has brought some familiar faces back to The Oaks. Ramah Mannan has continued to coach the girls' teams, much to their delight. Scanning the JV boys' bench, fans will see coaches Bruce Williams and Tal Williams ('09), who have teamed up together for this season. Jeff Schlect and Levi Szymanowski ('13) are coaching the Varsity boys' team. Thank you, coaches, for giving of your time and energy to encourage and mentor athletes at The Oaks.

