



TODAY

Volume 33, No. 4
April 2016

SAVE THE DATE!

- April 6-13: E-Term/Explore Week
- April 24: EMES Earth Day Extravaganza @ 2 p.m.
- April 29: EMHS Junior/Senior Banquet @ 7 p.m.
- May 6: Flames Golf Benefit @ Heritage Oaks Golf Course
- May 6: EMES Spring Concert @ 7 p.m.
- May 12: Middle School Instrumental Concert @ 7 p.m.
- May 20-21: Brigadoon Musical @ 7:30 p.m. & matinee 2 p.m. May 21
- June 2: EMES 5th Grade Graduation @ 10 a.m.
- June 3: EMHS Commencement Concert @ 7:30 p.m.
- June 4: EMHS Baccalaureate & Senior Tea @ 7 p.m.
- June 5: EMHS Commencement @ 2:30 p.m.



Living Our Mission With Integrity

by Kathleen B. Roth, EMS Board Chair

Eastern Mennonite School joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.
– EMS Mission Statement

The word integrity is defined as adherence to moral and ethical principles, soundness of character, honesty, and the state of being whole, entire or undiminished. Personal integrity means to be ethical and honorable in the face of strong inducements to be otherwise, to act upon one's convictions. In other words, integrity means one should talk the talk and walk the walk. That is a lofty goal for an individual, and an even loftier goal for an institution to have as its mission.

As administration, faculty and staff, student body, supporting community, and the Board of Directors, we are called to communal integrity as well as personal integrity. At EMS board meetings, we begin with prayer for our work and with a "moment in mission" to help us properly focus our discussion and actions on the missional work of our school. Often, we then recite the school's mission statement in unison. We do this so that we begin our board meetings in communion and centered on the reason behind our ministry and charge as leaders of our school.

As we hear the reports from the various school divisions and the committees that carry out the daily work of education at EMS, I am repeatedly struck by the depth of the integrity that is shown. This integrity is based in the common commitment to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ in the classroom, in committee meetings, at the board table, in the cafeteria, on the sports fields, the concert and drama stages, in our homes and churches, and in the one-on-one interactions that happen daily. What a blessing and privilege to be able to support these expressions of faithful living that are carried out with personal and communal integrity.

As a board representing the communal interest of the school, we welcome your feedback, questions and ideas. As you read this issue of *Today* focusing on integrity, I ask that you remember the EMS Board of Directors in your prayers as we strive to make decisions that will provide the leadership and direction the school needs as it continues to call for personal and communal integrity.



Kathleen Roth, EMS Board Chair (Photo by Lynn Roth)



Enjoy a magical journey to the hills of Scotland in this beloved classic musical. Proceeds benefit the EMHS Touring Choir summer trip to England and Scotland. Tickets available online at www.easternmennoniteschool.org.

faith excellence integrity service

www.easternmennoniteschool.org

Integrity Through Service

by Elwood Yoder

Stephen Lowe '16 is a young man of vision. He has a unique gift for coming up with ideas and then seeking help from others to implement his plans and carry them through with practical details. Since 10th grade, when Stephen began leading songs in chapel, both teachers and students have come to realize the leadership gifts he carries in our student body.

Last fall, when the Syrian refugee crisis was at its worst and much in the news, Stephen had an idea to conduct a 24 hour prayer vigil at Eastern Mennonite School for refugees fleeing Syria. Stephen brought his idea forward to be vetted by the National Honor Society and school administration. After receiving enthusiastic approval from both groups, a committee of seniors went to work in order to make the vision a practical reality.



Syria Prayer Vigil Planning Team (from left) Luke Hertzler '16, In-Kyoo Hwang '16, Karina Pidroutchniak '16, Bradley Bontrager '16, Stephen Lowe '16, Joseph Harder '16, Larissa Graber '16, and Deanna Byler '16 (Photo by Editor)

On January 29-30, 2016, the vision for prayer about Syria and the refugee crisis settled into the school building, beginning 7:00 p.m. on a Friday evening and ending 24 hours later. There were three worship services, hymn sings, and a prayer-through-art event facilitated by EMS art teacher Barbara Gautcher.

A highlight of the prayer vigil was a sermon from J. Daryl Byler '74, who is the Executive Director of the EMU Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. From years of experience living in the Middle East and a lifetime of learning how to pray, Daryl helped attendees understand why we pray. Prayer helps us remember who God is, Byler stated. It helps us remember who we are, it helps us remember who our neighbor is, and prayer, Byler concluded, helps prepare us for action.

Integrity In Leadership

When asked to define her understanding of personal integrity, Student Council Organization President Carter DePoy explained that it means more than not cheating or plagiarizing. Rather, Carter said, personal integrity means being accountable for all your actions in terms of owning everything you do and say.

(Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Byler cautioned his listeners at the prayer vigil to not expect immediate results from hours of prayer. But Stephen Lowe, the week after the event, was well aware that sluggish peace talks about the Syria refugee crisis started up again in Geneva, Switzerland, at almost the exact moment the vigil ended.

Integrity Through Stewardship

by Mary Golden Hughes, EMS Director of Advancement

The 2015-16 Christmas Fund Drive campaign came to a successful close this January with students, faculty and staff raising over \$154,000 toward the school's annual fund, which supports the school budget as well as student financial aid needs.

An EMS tradition of student stewardship and integrity, Christmas Fund Drive began in 1955 when EMS students would often work and donate their earned wages back to their school to show support. Today student volunteers in grades 6-12 work with the EMS Advancement department during the six-week multi-platform fundraising campaign, which includes writing personal letters to alumni and friends of EMS, hosting phone-a-thons, asking for donations, and working to donate earned wages directly to the campaign like EMS students did in the 1950s and 1960s.

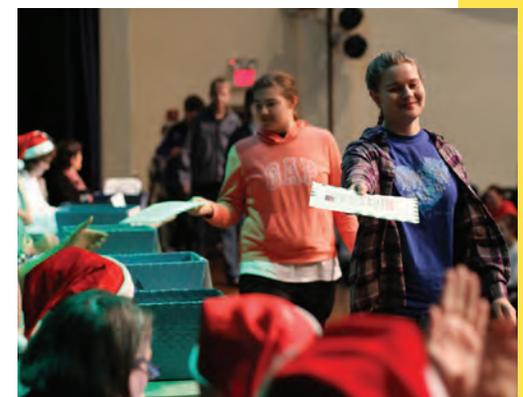
The overall emphasis of the campaign is participation and ownership in the livelihood of our school. Through participation students put the integrity portion of our mission statement into action through setting goals individually and as a class. Students are encouraged by peers serving on the committee to take part in the campaign and ensure its success. Students are also motivated to participate through inter-grade competition and motivational rewards, including earning an extra day off from school during spring break. Additionally, the Middle School class and the High School class which raises the most funds per student earns a planned reward day away from school to celebrate.

For this year's campaign, 70% of students participated and assisted in exceeding the goal of \$150,000. For the Middle School division competition, the 7th grade (Class of 2021) won, raising \$13,456 or \$363 per student. For the High School division, Seniors (Class of 2016) won, raising \$42,272 or \$844 per student. We are thankful for the leadership shown by these classes and all students who actively participated in the campaign. Above all, we are grateful for the caring EMS community of alumni, donors and friends who value our mission and give generously to sustain it.

For more information on the EMS Annual Fund or Christmas Fund Drive campaign, contact Mary Golden Hughes, EMS Director of Advancement at (540) 236-6026 or hughesmg@emhs.net. You may also support our Annual Fund needs by using the envelope inserted in this issue or by donating online at www.easternmennoniteschool.org.



The EMS Commons was packed every day after school as students in grades 6-12 wrote letters to hundreds of alumni asking for support of this year's Christmas Fund Drive campaign. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Bailey Rhodes '16 (right) delivers her CFD packet of donations during the annual offering assembly. Bailey was the top fundraiser in this year's campaign, raising \$14,670 on her own. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)



Students, faculty and staff work together to total donations during the CFD campaign. (Photo by Editor)

VISION:

Eastern Mennonite School aspires to reflect Christ's light as a learning community where every student belongs, thrives, and lives God's call.

Integrity in Project Planning

by Elwood Yoder

The EMS Science Fair is an annual event for students in grades K-8. Students in elementary grades K-2, create projects by grade, often focusing on recycling and stewardship of found materials. Students in grade 3-5 work on individual projects and are coached by their classroom teachers on how to use the scientific method to investigate personal topics of interest.

In Middle School, 6th grade Science Fair projects focus on data collection with guidance on research methods and result presentation from their science teacher Larry Martin. In grades 7-8, students are encouraged by science teacher Lee Good to “pursue their passion” when selecting Science Fair topics.

Lukas Early, 8th grade, studied the role of memory and how information is retrieved in our brains. During his research he learned the method of loci, which uses visualization to organize and recall information. Will Hess, 7th grade, asked if we can trust what we see, and studied the ways our minds can be tricked by illusions. Ryan Brunk, 7th grade, probed whether yawning is contagious. With a wry bit of humor, Ryan concluded that “sleep can and will most likely decrease the effects of contagious yawning.”

In addition to scientific discovery, students also learn critical lessons in personal integrity, including adhering to planning schedules and deadlines as well as valuable communications and presentation skills as they display and discuss their work.



Ryan Brunk '21 presents his project alongside his science teacher Lee Good. (Photo by Editor)



Sabrina Forbes '25 investigated which type of water produces the best result for growing grass. (Photo by Staff)

After School Care Meets Crucial Parent Need

by Mary Golden Hughes

As demand for enrollment in Eastern Mennonite Elementary School continues to rise, so does the need to support families with transportation and care beyond the school day. Many EMES families have more than one parent working outside of the home and several have students enrolled in multiple divisions of our school, making after school pick-up challenging for busy families. After a survey indicated a strong desire by elementary parents to have after school services provided by EMS, EMES After School Care began this academic year.

EMES After School Care provides safe and engaging activities for EMS students age 12 or younger in a relaxed school setting. Housed in our Main Campus Dining Hall and the outdoor spaces which surround it, the program is run by EMS tutor Donna Blosser and assisted by EMS high school senior Gabby Archer. After School Care students enjoy a full afternoon of programming which includes a healthy snack, homework time and support, craft activities and recreational time. Participating students are transported from the Elementary Campus off North 11 to the Main Campus at Parkwood Drive. Students may stay until 5:30 p.m. each day that school is in session and parents may purchase care by the day or week, as their schedule demands.

Since the program began, attendance has averaged between 10-20 students daily. In addition to the benefit of assisting family schedules, EMES Principal Maria Archer noted, “A beautiful result of the program is the inter-grade interaction it allows, including mentorship by older students with their younger schoolmates. This community feeling of shared experience spills over into everyday life at EMES as students enjoy spending time with new friends gained in the program.”

EMS Administration will continue to survey participating families and refine future program offerings based on feedback and interest in the program.



EMES students, left to right, Judah Yoder '28, Sydney Hole '28, Layla von Arnswaldt '28, Amos Coleman '27, and Maeve Scherpereel '27, enjoy a snowy day at EMES After School Care. (Photo by Editor)

Seeking Jesus First

by Curt Stutzman, EMHS Bible and Social Studies teacher



Curt Stutzman, shown teaching a recent Kingdom Living class. (Photo by Andrew Gascho)

Eastern Mennonite School's mission statement includes a call to "personal integrity." That phrase often creates a vision of integrity on an academic level simply because we are an academic institution. My initial response then focuses on issues like plagiarism, cheating, and violations of the handbook covenant.

What a narrow reading! As I contemplate a Christ-centered integrity, I must focus instead on the reason for the outward trappings of integrity. True integrity inherently begins with my recognition, understanding, and acceptance of Jesus' statement in John 14:6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." If we don't begin there, integrity becomes a concept no deeper than the shallow accessories of an external display.

Integrity is not a reliance on rules and regulations, not a dependence

on the old covenant, but instead becomes a relationship with the author of life, mercy and grace. It creates a recognition of the light within us, given as the spirit shining out through these imperfect clay vessels. Integrity is a reflection of God, of His love for us and others. We are created in His image, born to seek and to express His vision for our lives. Integrity allows us to value others as we ourselves have been valued.

This understanding goes well beyond acting in the right ways or engaging in socially valued behaviors. Integrity becomes more than a word describing a political ideal or a desired norm. It becomes more than an appropriate trait or action. It means seeking Jesus first!

Eastern Mennonite School's mission statement calls for the light of integrity to flow out of us, illuminating the darkness. We will know integrity as we view our lives through the life and teachings of Jesus. To experience true integrity, we cannot start with integrity; we must start with Jesus Christ. He shapes us, and as we are shaped, we create a community where integrity of thought and action is a natural by-product of our active knocking, seeking, and finding.

Today is published six times a year for families, alumni and friends of Eastern Mennonite School. We value your input. Send your feedback and story ideas to: today@emhs.net.

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Elwood Yoder (Editor),
Mary Golden Hughes
(Managing Editor),
Christine Fairfield
(Copy Editor),
& Paul Leaman
(Head of School).

Integrity



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MISSION:

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Centennial Spotlight

Eastern Mennonite School held its first academic classes in the fall of 1917. However, during the winter months of 1916, a hundred years ago, leaders conducted a six week Bible school session, with 40 students in attendance. There were five teachers, all area Virginia Mennonite ministers, with Lewis J. Heatwole as head of the Bible school. An active search began in early 1916 for a principal who could begin in the fall of 1917.

Celebrate with us! Homecoming 2016, October 21-23. Reunions for classes ending in 1s and 6s. EMS Centennial Homecoming October 13-15, 2017 includes joint celebrations with Eastern Mennonite University, reunions for classes ending in 2s and 7s and numerous community events.



Athletic Director and Basketball Coach Dave Bechler encourages personal integrity in all athletes as they represent the school on and off the courts and athletic fields. (Photo by Editor)



Flames Varsity Basketball girls put service before self by making their last home game of the season a "Pink Out" to raise breast cancer awareness. (Photo by Editor)