



Dear RCS Families,

October 2020

On September 9, carloads of students spilled on to our campuses with smiles, laughter, and squeals of delight. Remarkably, face coverings and social distancing failed to rob the energy and excitement marking our first day of school. Seeing and hearing the mix of thrilled students, staff, and families offered wonderful reminders that God designed us for community.

The last six months of sound public-health practices however, exiled many of us into isolation. Last Sunday, my pastor addressed a related theme from the book of



Jeremiah. Interestingly, Jeremiah poked the exiled Israelites, now in Babylon, with what seemed like unreasonable commands.

“The Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the God of Israel, says to all those he sent into exile to Babylon from Jerusalem, ‘Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and allow your daughters to get married so that they too can have sons and daughters. Grow in number; do not dwindle away. Work to see that the city where I sent you as exiles enjoys peace and prosperity. Pray to the Lord for it. For as it prospers you will prosper.’”  
Jeremiah 29:4-7



One interpretation for our COVID context suggests that it is not a time to be idle or in despair. Given the Israelite’s 70-year judgement, Jeremiah dishes out counterintuitive commands: build, plant, eat, marry, grow, work, and pray. Pastor Steve summarized a key point this way, “*You don’t have to be free in order to be free.*”

That is, a mindset fixed on external circumstances clogs God’s purposes and provision. Trusting God for the renewal of our minds is further amplified in Rom 12:2, 2Cor 4:16, and Col. 3:10.

Getting school reopened safely and in motion aligns with Jeremiah’s admonition to prosper during difficult times. Thank you to everyone for nourishing a sense of community while adhering to public-health guidance. Let’s keep up the good work with our face shields, social distancing, and pray for peace and prosperity.

Rainier Christian prospers through its signature fundraiser, the auction. Our lavish plans for a plated dinner and live auctioneer at the Fairwood Golf and Country Club sank under the weight of Phase 2 restrictions. In its place, we pivoted to an online-auction portal.

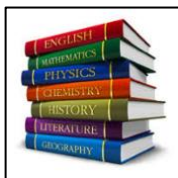
**Oak Harbor Freight Lines**, our premium sponsor, did their part to fund the bidding-service platform, Greater Giving.



Sarah Rickel, RCS auction coordinator extraordinaire, and her team of rock-star helpers will showcase the auction items beginning on October 30. [Register here](#) and

browse through dozens of items from October 30 to November 7. Bid generously.

The auction proceeds flow toward the purchase of a reliable compact tractor, new textbooks, digital tablets, and the construction of a Multipurpose Event Center, MEC.



Your support propels the mission and vision of RCS forward.

I need to take one step back to the MEC. Originally, the MEC's funding strategy was structured around the sale of property and our application to King County's 4:1 program. However, the June 30, 2020 letter from King County's Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget denied our application. God has another plan or season to see the MEC materialize.



While the news stung, it was during this time, a five-figure gift arrived for capital-type projects. The foundation granting the gift stipulated that it must be spent by next May. The Board and I continue to pray how best to direct

the money to advance God's kingdom. With the county's decision in hand, funding for the MEC now leans into a model of generosity inspired by the [National Christian Foundation](#). One example, featuring an NCF testimony, the power of non-cash giving, is illustrated in the following [two-minute video](#). Along with the Board, I appreciate your prayers as the MEC is a God-sized ask.

In the spirit of asking, families of 6<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> graders please mark your calendar for Thursday, October 15. Starting at 6:30pm, principals Dave Rehnberg (RCHS) and Don Garnand (RCMS) will host a virtual town-hall meeting to discuss and answer questions about relocating the middle school, grades 7 and 8, to the high school. Our leadership



team discussed the idea for several months and reviewed last Spring's survey data on this topic. Relocation is contingent upon COVID guidance and is proposed for the 2021-2022 school year. Join us on October 15 @ 6:30pm via the following Zoom link: [Relocating MS to HS](#).

Relocation or retirement? During last Tuesday's general meeting, Kent Bruce, former RCS Board Chair, officially announced his retirement from the board. Mr. Bruce served with distinction for over five years. The Bruce's stand among a class of super supporters for RCS. Over the years, their generosity, hospitality, and encouragement positively affected the entire school district multiple times. I want to publicly thank Kent for his wisdom, wholeheartedness, and being instrumental in my prayerful decision to say yes to RCS. Thank you, Mr. Bruce.



To our new and returning families, I also want to thank you for saying yes to RCS. I trust your child's emotional well-being, spiritual growth, academic progress, and physical development flourish this year. Abundantly. Lastly, I tip my hat to the heroic efforts of our preK-12<sup>th</sup> staff and administrators who kickstarted the year along lines of excellence. Opening school in the COVID era squares with the prophet Jeremiah's exhortations. Well done, RCS!

My best,

Bruce Kelly

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce Kelly".

president, Rainier Christian Schools

