



The Pathfinder

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

Nurture - Develop - Educate

Principal's Message

Graduation 2025

Now that we have entered the final month of school, we are looking forward to our 8th grade graduation. This year, God has blessed us with 10 graduates: Olivia De Haan, Alicia Fynaardt, Dylan Klaasen, Elijah Molde, Josiah Molde, Anna Roose, Aleah Van Wyk, Alexa Van Zante, Will Ver Meer, and Ellie Vos. It is amazing to see how they have grown in their faith this past year and have been leaders of our school.

Here are some examples of how they have shown being leaders:

Helping the 7th graders transition to the 7th/8th grade class.

Helping the new students transition to our school and making them feel welcome.

Playing with the younger students at recess and making sure they are safe.

Helping the younger students make good choices on the bus.

Helping the new van drivers know the route and bus stops.

Helping to lead their chapel group discussions.

Learning to defend their faith including a young earth viewpoint.

We all know that it takes the home, church, and school to train up a child (Proverbs 22:6), and it is such a joy to see the fruits of those efforts when our students are thinking and speaking Biblically. Please continue to pray for and pray with (Colossians 1:9-11) these students as they transition into high school.

Finally, I want to personally invite you to our 8th grade graduation on Thursday, May 15th at 7:00 PM at Peoria CRC. Mr. Al Bandstra is our scheduled speaker, and I hope you will be able to join us as we celebrate together what God has done in the lives of each of our graduates.

Thank you for your continued support,
Jeremy Copenhaver



8TH GRADE GRADUATION

8th Grade Graduation is scheduled for 7PM on Thursday, May 15th. Parents, all students are expected to be in attendance on this night and participate in the ceremony. All community and society members are also invited to join us for this joyous evening as we celebrate our 10 graduates. PK-7th grade students will be participating in the ceremony and are expected to be present no later than 6:45PM.

SOCIETY MEETING

Please save the date of Monday, July 7, for the Peoria Christian School Annual Society Meeting. The meeting will be held in the school gym. Parents will have the opportunity to meet with a member of the finance committee for tuition payments and financial information for the 2025/2026 school year. The Society Meeting will be held to hear reports on the 2024/2025 school year, elect new board members, and approve the budget for the 2025/2026 school year.

"Teach me Your way, O Lord, that I may walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify Your name forever." Psalm 86:11-12

SCHOOL CALENDAR

May

May 12-14

Pure Freedom Presentations

May 15

11:30AM 8th Grade Dismissal

2:20PM PK-7th Dismissal

7PM 8th Grade Graduation

May 16

11AM Picnic in the Park

May 20

2:45PM Kindergarten

Graduation

May 21

8:30AM Chapel

Facilitator Thank You

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL!

May 30

All Parent School Cleaning

June

June 2

7PM School Board

June 30

ESA Application Due



TRACTOR RIDE

The Peoria Christian Tractor Ride is scheduled for Saturday, June 21. Registration will begin at 8:00AM that morning in the school gym. Lunch will be provided back at the school gym after the ride. Contact Ruth De Bruin at 641-204-1855 with any questions.

Peoria Christian School Board

School Board Meeting: May 5, 2025

The Board sang from Psalter Hymnal #471, All Hail the Power of Jesus Name. Adam Fynaardt read from I John 4:1-6 and opened with prayer. Nick De Haan was absent with notice.

From the Education Committee:

- Motion was approved to dissolve the Spanish position
- Motion was approved to purchase 3rd grade Bible curriculum from Answers in Genesis.
- Motion was approved to increase curriculum budget
- Current open positions: Principal & 7th/8th Science Teacher

Principal's Report:

- Society Meeting will be held July 7, at 7:00PM
- 8th Grade Graduation will be held on May 15, at 7:00PM
- Kindergarten Graduation May 20, at 2:45PM
- All parent cleaning day is May 30
- 8th grade class gift was discussed and approved
- Mr. Copenhaver plans to move the week of June 16

From the Promotions Committee:

- Tulip time went well. Bikes are showing age and need about \$2500 worth of repairs (mostly tires). Discussion was had on whether to repair the antique bikes or have kids bring their own bikes.

From the Bus Committee:

- We do have a couple part time drivers in the process of taking their tests.

From the Building Committee:

- Teacherage rent value was discussed for the new staff

From the Athletic Committee:

- Nine square has been assembled and is in use

A special meeting was called, for May 7, to interview a Lead Teacher candidate.

A list of names was created to contact for interest in serving on the 2025/2026 School Board.

Next Meeting: June 2, 2025 at 7PM.

Jayme Veenstra closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Fynaardt

PK/ KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP

We want to thank God that 8 students attended Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Round-Up on April 16th. Please pray for these families and others as they consider sending their children to Peoria Christian School.



2025/2026

JOB OPENINGS

Peoria Christian is prayerfully looking to fill the following positions for the 2025/2026 school year:

Principal or Lead Teacher
(Full-Time)

7th/8th Science Teacher
(Part-Time)

Librarian
(Part-Time)

Bus Driver
(Part-Time)

Hot Lunch Cordinator
(Part-Time)

Individuals interested in these positions should contact:

Jeremy Copenhaver at principal@peoriachr.org or

Michelle De Haan at office@peoriachr.org.

Please pray for the Lord's guidance as we look to fill these open positions.



NEW STAFF FOR 2025/2026

Please join us in welcoming two new members to our teaching staff for the 2025/2026 school year. We praise God for bringing these individuals to Peoria Christian School. Please pray for these teachers as they finish out their current school years and transition to these new roles at Peoria Christian for next year.

MaryAnn Williamson will be joining us as our new 1st/2nd grade teacher. "I was born and raised in Washington State. I moved to Iowa to attend Faith Baptist Bible College, graduating with a BA in Elementary Education and Biblical Studies in 2024. During my student teaching, I taught 4th grade at Ankeny Christian Academy and Ames Christian School. I spent my first year after school teaching 5th grade at Grandview Christian School. I enjoy baking, laughing, and spending time outdoors. Christian education is an incredible gift to offer our families and students. It is fascinating to see how Christ is at the center of all things, including math, science, history, and beyond. It is a blessing to be able to share the gospel every day in the classroom."

Laura Merrin will be joining us as our new 3rd/4th grade teacher. I am originally from Indiana and attended a very small Christian school, much like Peoria Christian. I received my Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and minors in Music and English from Spring Arbor University in Michigan. After student teaching in the Indianapolis area, I then met and married my husband from Washington state. We lived there for 2 years, and I taught in a one-room schoolhouse as the Grade 3-6 and Music Teacher. God then led us to Southern California where we would forge new connections, new jobs, and navigate the road of fostering to adopt. We were foster parents to a total of 8 children, four of which are now our forever children! While in California for 14 years, I spent 11 years working at a Classical Preparatory Charter School which infused logic, virtue, and critical thinking into daily lessons and placed History and Classical Literature at the foundation of the school. God moved on our hearts to finish raising our adopted children in the Midwest. God opened doors here in Pella, IA with a job for my husband at Pella Christian Schools. I am very excited to be joining the family at Peoria Christian School and to be working in Christian Education where God and the Bible are now the foundation of the academics in my classroom. My deep hope is for each student to fully grasp that they are Difference Makers in God's Kingdom. They are able to be a light reflecting the one true Light- Jesus Christ!



DONATIONS NEEDED

Throughout the year, Peoria Christian School has a need for the following items. This is a tangible way for society members to contribute to Peoria Christian School. These items can be purchased and dropped off at the school:

- Forever Stamps
- Dry Erase Markers
- Thank You Cards
- 3x5 Lined Notecards

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Parents, be looking for more information in your child's classroom newsletter or in separate emails.

- Friday, May 16, 11AM: All School Picnic at the Park at West Market Park in Pella
- Monday, May 19: PK & K to Blank Park Zoo

CHAPEL

Please join us at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, May 21st, the last day of school, for chapel at Peoria CRC.



Classroom News

PreK & Kindergarten

It's hard to believe that we are already at the end of the year. We have learned and grown in so many ways this year. It was fun to have PreK/Kindergarten roundup this past month. The PreK students enjoyed being Kindergarteners for the morning. We also welcomed three new friends that, Lord willing, will be in PreK next year. Our last science units this year are about living things. We have learned how God designed seeds to help them grow in plants. We will also be learning about animals and are excited to go on a field trip to the zoo, to see many of the creatures we will be learning about.

~ Mrs. Krista Klaasen

1st & 2nd Grade

The 1st grade students had a wonderful time showing off their cultural fair project at grandparents day. We worked on the country of Egypt in our classroom. We learned lots of fun and interesting facts about the country both in the present and during the Biblical past. We have been studying Egypt in our Bible lessons as well. Starting with the account of Joseph and going through Moses bringing the Israelites out of slavery. The students had a great time learning about Egypt and its vast history. It was fun seeing a country that is so prominent in the Bible and how it is still relevant today.

~ Mr. Jonah Stanage

3rd & 4th Grade

It is hard to believe we are close to the end of the school year. We have done a lot in April, and have a lot left to do in May. In April, we had a lot of fun during Christian Education Week. On Friday, we enjoyed having our special guests and grandparents join us for the day. Each year we have a cursive contest on that day, and this year, Josiah won! All the students showed glory to God in their beautiful cursive work. Right before Easter, we were at Ag Day, one of our favorite field trips. This is a yearly event put on by the Mahaska County Farm Bureau for all 3rd graders in Mahaska County. We started our time by enjoying a wonderful hamburger lunch made by the Cattleman's Association. We then went to stations and learned about soil, corn, honey and bees, welding and machinery, horses, cows, pigs, chickens, rabbits, sheep, and more. Here were some of the favorite things we saw and did: learning about recycling, welding with graham crackers and frosting, petting the animals, learning about the rabbits, horses, and how sheep are sheared. They even let us keep some of the wool if we wanted. These pictures are from Ag Day. We are looking at bees and the other picture is FFA students teaching us about goats. Praise the Lord for these great opportunities to learn more about His wonderful creation!

~ Ms. Erica Taft



Thank you to the Class of 2024 for gifting the school 9-Square-in-the-Air! Our students have enjoyed learning and playing this new game!



5th & 6th Grade

This year the theme of our room was Glorify the Lord! Throughout the year we added sunflowers to our bulletin board with different ways we glorified God or saw God's glory in the world around us. We found throughout the year that we have a great and wonderful God who has blessed us in so many abilities for us to use to glorify Him. Here are some of the ways we glorified God this year:

- Being made in God's image
 - Singing praises
 - Playing our instruments
 - Loving one another
 - Doing my best in school
 - Trying your hardest
 - Reading the Bible
 - Being thankful for what we have
- ~ Mrs. Laura Fynaardt

IXL

IXL is nearly over for the school year. The students have worked so hard! As a school, we have mastered nearly 5,000 objectives which equates to nearly 118 mastered objectives per student! What a great year of learning and growing our God-given minds!
~ Mrs. Melinda Vos

Music

I am so proud of the 6th through 8th grade students participating in 4 out of the 6 Tulip Time parades this year! They marched with the Central Iowa Christian School Marching Band for three parades and worked really hard at improving their musical and marching skills. It was a joy to collaborate with our sister schools and to represent our communities, schools, and Savior together.
~ Mrs. Carolyn Ansley



KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION

This year's Kindergarten Graduation is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20, at 2:45PM. We invite everyone to join us as we celebrate what God is doing in the lives of these students.

GRANDPARENTS & SPECIAL FRIEND'S DAY

We want to thank all the grandparents and special friends that prayed for and attended our special day with the students on Friday, April 11th. Thank you for taking the time to share those special memories with our students as they were able to share items they were learning in class, worshipping together at chapel, eating lunch with them, and taking the time to support them with their cultural fair project.



Peoria Christian School

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[igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=](https://instagram.com/peoriachristian?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@peoriachristianschool-pell248>

ESA APPLICATIONS

Applications for the 2025/2026 school year opened on Wednesday, April 16.

First-Time Applicants:

- Parents/guardians must sign up using an email and password.
- A confirmation email from Odyssey will be sent—follow the instructions to verify your email.
- Once verified, log in to the ESA portal to complete the application.

Returning Applicants: Parents/guardians with an existing ESA portal account can simply log in and submit their application for the 2025-26 school year.

Funding & Benefits: Families enrolling eligible children in an accredited Iowa nonpublic school will receive funding equal to the per-pupil allocation provided to public school districts for the same year. For the 2025-26 school year, this amount is \$7,826, with potential increases based on the increase voted on by the legislature for public school funding. Funds are deposited into an Education Savings Account (ESA) and can be used for tuition, fees, and other approved education expenses.

FACILITATOR THANK YOU

Please join us on Wednesday, May 21st, after chapel at approximately 9:30 AM, as we take a moment to express our appreciation to our facilitators, who have faithfully served our students this year. We will have a brief time of thanks and then share a special snack together.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Please note these early dismissals through the end of the year:

- Thursday, May 15: 11:30AM for 8th grade students
- Thursday, May 15: 2:20PM for PK-7th grade students

ALL SCHOOL PICNIC:

On Friday, May 16, we will be having lunch at West Market Park in Pella, spending some time playing some games at the park, and concluding the day with some ice cream. If you are interested in eating lunch with us in the park, please contact Melissa Copenhaver at hotlunch@peoriachr.org and send \$3 to the office to cover the cost of your lunch.

TRACTOR RIDE

The Peoria Christian Tractor Ride is scheduled for Saturday, June 21. Registration will begin at 8:00AM that morning in the school gym. Lunch will be provided back at the school gym after the ride. Contact Ruth De Bruin at 641-204-1855 with any questions.

PARENT ALL SCHOOL CLEANING

All school cleaning for all parents is scheduled for Friday, May 30th. There will be two shifts. The first shift during the morning and the second shift during the evening. Parents are expected to be here and help during one of the two shifts and community members are welcome to come help as well. More information will be sent out in the Weekly Pathfinder.



Full Name: Alexa Shea Van Zante
Hobbies: Puzzles
Dream Job: Travel Agent
Favorite book to read? The scrapbooks my grandma makes for each of my birthdays.
Funniest memory while at Peoria? Banana Man at the program
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Going to the Ark Encounter & Creation Museum
Favorite hot lunch meal? Ham balls and mashed potatoes
Favorite quote: "Everyone shines, given the right lighting." -Susan Cain
Favorite Bible passage: John 3:16
What advice do you have for younger students? Always trust in God even in the hard times and have a positive attitude.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... the way I always try to trust in God even when I don't feel like it.

Full Name: Josiah Steven Molde
Hobbies: Workout, eat food, and sleep
Dream Job: My dream job is one that provides for my family and that I can spread the Gospel.
Favorite book to read? Bible
Funniest memory while at Peoria? 8th grade Christmas party
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Science Center
Favorite hot lunch meal? Chicken patty all the way
Favorite quote: "An athlete won't judge you for working out. A millionaire won't judge you for starting a business. A musician won't judge you for trying to sing a song. It's always the people who are going nowhere that have something to say."- author is anonymous
Favorite Bible passage: Philippians 4:4
What advice do you have for younger students? Don't be mean to the teachers
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... using proper grammar.

Full Name: Alicia Marie Fynaardt
Hobbies: Reading, Writing, and Crafts
Dream Job: Teacher
Favorite book to read? Any realistic or historical fiction book
Funniest memory while at Peoria? Ellie calling sheep poop blueberries.
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Urban Air & Ice Skating
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza
Favorite quote: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." -Lao Tzu
Favorite Bible passage: Deuteronomy 31:6
What advice do you have for younger students? Make the most of your time at Peoria.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by . . . The way I stand up for my faith.

Full Name: Anna Elizabeth Roose
Hobbies: Reading, Swimming, Piano, French Horn, Basketball, Soccer
Dream Job: Engineering
Favorite book to read? Anything by Melanie Dickerson
Funniest memory while at Peoria? Acting out the Three Little Pigs in seventh grade
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Ice Skating
Favorite hot lunch meal? Chicken Bacon Casserole
Favorite quote: "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." -Corrie ten Boom
Favorite Bible passage: Proverbs 3:5-6
What advice do you have for younger students? Be the friend you want to have. Being kind is always the best choice.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... my positive attitude and Christ-centeredness.

Full Name: Dylan Trevor Klaasen
Hobbies: Building legos and sports
Dream Job: Programmer
Favorite book to read? Jeff Gordon
Funniest memory while at Peoria? The play with Mr. B.
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Ice skating
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza
Favorite quote: "Anything the Lord lets me do, I do it. I pray before every game, I do everything I can for Him." - Freddie Freeman
Favorite Bible passage: Psalm 23
What advice do you have for younger students? Do not make Mrs. Van Wyk mad at you.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... how I act around other people in public.



Full Name: William Brandt Ver Meer
Hobbies: Sports and farming
Dream Job: Farmer
Favorite book to read? Eric Liddel
Funniest memory while at Peoria? The play that we did with Mr. B.
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Ice skating and Urban Air
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza
Favorite quote: "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast, and when I run I feel His pleasure." - Eric Liddel
Favorite Bible passage: John 3:16
What advice do you have for younger students? Don't wish away your life.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... my kindness.

Full Name: Ellie Elizabeth Vos
Hobbies: Playing with my pets and hanging out with friends
Dream Job: Cosmetology or 3rd/4th grade teacher
Favorite book to read? Any Harry Potter book
Funniest memory while at Peoria? When I called sheep poop blueberries in 4th grade
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Urban Air or Ice skating
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza
Favorite quote: "Believe you can and you're halfway there." Theodore Roosevelt
Favorite Bible passage: Proverbs 3:5-6
What advice do you have for younger students? Don't look to the future, you will miss what is right in front of your eyes.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... how I always strive to do my best for God even when nobody's watching.

Full Name: Olivia Faith De Haan
Hobbies: Basketball, Running, and Softball
Dream Job: Cosmetology
Favorite book to read? The Bible
Funniest memory while at Peoria? When Ellie called sheep poop blueberries
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Urban Air or Ice Skating
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza!
Favorite quote: "If it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you." -Fred DeVito
Favorite Bible passage: Isaiah 40:8
What advice do you have for younger students? Stay organized and do everything for God's glory!
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... my biblical perspective I display in my work.

Full Name: Elijah Chad Molde
Hobbies: Metal detecting, investing, backflipping
Dream Job: Business owner
Favorite book to read: Summer of the Monkeys
Funniest memory while at Peoria: Making spudoodles in science
Favorite field trip while at Peoria: Urban Air
Favorite hot lunch meal: Chicken patty on a bun
Favorite quote: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." -Franklin Roosevelt.
Favorite Bible passage: Philippians 4:13
What advice do you have for younger students: Don't waste your life on things that don't matter.
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... how I try to answer questions from a biblical perspective.

Full Name: Aleah Hope Van Wyk
Hobbies: Reading, Basketball, Volleyball, & Biking
Dream Job: Teacher
Favorite book to read? Christy Miller Series
Funniest memory while at Peoria? Ellie calling sheep poop blueberries
Favorite field trip while at Peoria? Ice skating, Chick-fil- A, and Children's Museum
Favorite hot lunch meal? Pizza
Favorite quote: "You may never know that Jesus is all you need, until Jesus is all you have." - Corrie Ten Boom
Favorite Bible passage: Isaiah 43:2
What advice do you have for younger students? Smile and try to be friends with everyone!
They will know I'm a Peoria Christian graduate by... the way my attitude and actions reflect the love and joy I have in Christ.

