

MUSIC AT GRACE!

The music department at GCS has been very busy the past several weeks. From the young ones in TK-5, to the Middle School and High School, the spring brings a lot of activity.

For the first time ever, Grace Christian is a member of the Michigan State Band and Orchestra Association (MSBOA). As a member, we can attend different festivals and competitions that previously we were unable to attend. One of these events is Solo/Ensemble. For S/E, students prepare a solo piece or a small ensemble piece. On February 28th, ten of our high school students attended our first Solo/Ensemble event at Southwestern



Michigan College. Students performed before a judge and were given a rating. A “1” rating is superior, “2” is excellent, and the ratings continue through a “5” which is poor. Students receiving a “1” or “2” receive a medal. Students receiving a “1” rating are eligible to participate at the State Solo/Ensemble festival in March.



The following High School Students represented GCS at the District Solo/Ensemble Festival in February:

- Sara Rutgers (10th) - Clarinet Solo - Division 1 rating
- Jaxon Dill (10th), Bethany Romeo (9th), Erika Romeo (9th), Alexa Schoetzow (9th) and Adam Skipper (10th) - Brass Quintet - Division 2 rating
- Donovan Hooten (9th), Sara Rutgers (10th), Alexa Schoetzow (9th), Dailee Strickland (11th) Anna Williamson (11th) - Woodwind Quintet - Division 2 rating
- Mason Green (10th), Sara Rutgers (10th), Dailee Strickland (11th), Anna Williamson (11th) - Woodwind Quartet - Division 1 rating
- Due to earning a Division 1 rating, Sara Rutgers and members of the Woodwind Quartet will participate at the State Solo/Ensemble on March 15th at Portage Northern High School.

On February 28th, the Middle School Band and the High School Band traveled to St. Joe High School to participate in the MSBOA Band Festival. Both bands had prepared three selections and performed them before a panel of three judges. The bands are judged on rhythm, tone, interpretation, intonation and overall performance. The same rating system is used as the Solo/Ensemble system. After performing the three tunes, the band relocated to a “sight-reading room”. In the sight-reading session, the band is given five minutes to prepare a song that neither the band nor conductor have ever seen. Students are not allowed to play their instruments during this 5-minute rehearsal. They can sing, clap etc... At the end of the five minutes, the band performs the song for a judge and is given a rating. It is a test of how well a band can read music and incorporate other musical skills they have been taught in class. Both the Middle School Band and the High School Band received a “2” rating, which is very impressive, especially considering it was their first time at this type of festival. GCS was the only private school in attendance at the festival.

The following week, both bands and members of the Middle School Choir attended the ACSI Music Festival in Bourbonnais, IL. This is an annual overnight event that the students look forward to each year. GCS joined

several other Christian schools from Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, to rehearse and perform a concert on March 8th at Olivet Nazarene University in Illinois. Students rehearsed for many hours on Friday and after a somewhat restful evening at the hotel, performed an amazing concert at ONU on Saturday. This event gives our students an opportunity to sing/play in a much larger group than they normally perform. It also allows them to learn musical literature that would be impossible for smaller groups to perform. If you would like to listen to the concert and see the kids in action, you can watch the concert using the following link:

https://video.olivet.edu/media/March+8%2C+2025+-+ACSI+Festival+Concert/1_tf60d301/367817362

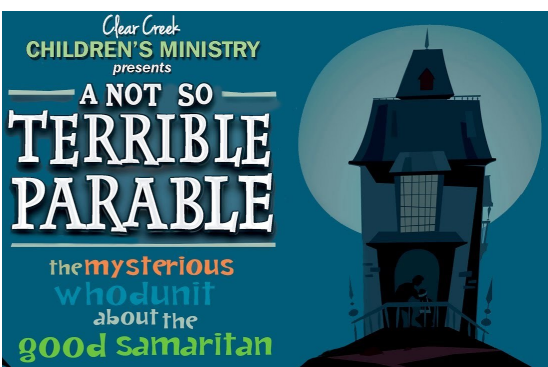
On March 24, seven middle school students will represent GCS at the MSBOA Honors Band. They will perform a free concert that evening at Andrews University along with other students from MSBOA District 6. Students attending are:

- 7th Grade - Elizabeth Malaka (flute), Abigail Rutgers (trumpet) & Sam Valenti (trombone)
- 8th Grade - Jathan Dill (clarinet), Malachi Halquist (percussion), Abigail Malaka (alto saxophone) & Zoey Tinker (french horn)

On May 2nd, several HS Band members will represent GCS at the 3rd annual Cornerstone University Honors Band. There will be a free concert that evening at Matthews Auditorium on the campus of Cornerstone University. Students representing are:

- Jaxon Dill (baritone), Mason Green (clarinet), LJ Santucci-McLean (percussion), Joshua Melton (percussion), Adam Skipper (percussion), Brynn Rose (alto saxophone), Sara Rutgers (clarinet), Anna Williamson (flute), Alexa Schoetzow (french horn), Dailee Strickland (flute), Benjamin Williamson (tuba)

Not to leave our elementary school out, these students have been working on the Spring Musical, “A Not So Terrible Parable”. You won’t want to miss this performance on May 9th!



Important Upcoming Music Dates:

- March 15 - State Solo/Ensemble (High School)
- March 24 - Middle School Honors Band (select students)
- April 24 - Spring Concert (5th-11th grade bands & 7th-11th choirs)
- May 2 - Cornerstone Honors Band (select students)
- May 9 - Elementary Musical - “A Not So Terrible Parable”
- May 20 - State Capitol Trip (8th-11th Band students)

As the director, I want to thank the parents who have assisted and will still assist our groups as we travel. It is not easy to take a group of 30+ students on an overnight trip without a great group of chaperones and parents!

Thank you for your help at ACSI!!

Rachel Carpenter

Marshall Downs

Tasha Fuller

Craig and Krista Hartman

David and Ruth Malaka

Bethany McCoy

Randy Melton

James and Rebecca Moore

Chrystal Romeo

Tasha Strickland

Whitney Tinker

Mitch Yoder

