SHEKINAH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

THE FLAME

Oct. 2026 Volume 43/Issue 2

VOL. 43

Fall is here, and we are fully immersed in the school year. Students have successfully completed their first academic quarter and have already been involved in a variety of activities, including field trips, plays, and junior/senior fundraising. Our golf team has concluded a successful season, while the volleyball season is quickly coming to a close.

As we reflect on the school year so far, we are grateful for this community and look forward with anticipation to all God has in store for Shekinah in the months ahead!

You can also stay connected with us through Facebook and Instagram
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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in him. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
Ephesians 1:3-14 (ESV)

Administrator's Angle

Mike Riley- Head of School



Greetings, Shekinah Friends and Families!!!

The 2026–27 school year is well underway, and Shekinah Christian School (SCS) continues to have a powerful impact on the spiritual, educational, and relational development of our students. We have much to celebrate and many reasons to be excited about the work happening throughout our school community! We are already a quarter of the way through the school year, and our staff, many of whom are brand new to Shekinah and the classroom, have not missed a beat. I have been incredibly impressed with the professionalism, skill level, dedication, and work ethic demonstrated by this team. Their commitment to our students and our mission has been evident from the very beginning, and I am grateful for the energy and passion they bring to Shekinah each day. From the first day a student walks into kindergarten until the day we read their name at graduation, we will likely have spent more than 15,000 hours with them. Think about that for a moment! Those are 15,000 hours of opportunities to develop academic skills, explore and challenge spiritual perspectives, build meaningful relationships, strengthen character, discover individual gifts, and begin discerning a likely life's work. What an incredible opportunity, and what a tremendous responsibility! Simply put, the trust you have placed in us to influence your children's perspectives on the world and their mission within it is both highly challenging and deeply motivating. We recognize that education is about much more than what students learn from textbooks. It is also about who they are becoming, how they treat others, what they believe, and how they choose to use their gifts to serve God and their communities. We are mindful of the trust you have placed in us, and we are committed to responding to it with intentionality, excellence, and care.

From our office staff and support staff to classroom aides and teachers, I see a team that understands the magnitude of the influence we have been given in the lives of children. Each person plays an important role in creating an environment where students can learn, grow, feel valued, and develop the confidence to become whom God has created them to be. As Head of School, I spend a good bit of time observing our daily operations. I intentionally visit classrooms and seek feedback from parents, staff, and students. What I see encourages me greatly! I see classroom after classroom where students are engaged in meaningful lessons and working toward important learning goals. I see students smiling, asking questions, solving problems, and experiencing the joy of learning individually and in groups. I see students rising to spiritual and relational challenges through Bible classes, chapel, and mentoring relationships with caring adults. I see students intentionally communicating value and kindness to one another. Perhaps most importantly, I see students reaching out to classmates who may be struggling to connect, choosing to interrupt someone's loneliness with friendship, encouragement, and compassion. These moments may seem small, but they are powerful reminders of the kind of community we are building together. They represent the heart of a Shekinah education, where academic growth and spiritual formation go hand in hand. I see wonderful things happening at SCS that would make your hearts happy! We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with you in this important work. Finally, please know that your perspectives matter to us! We value open communication and believe it is critical to our continued growth, effectiveness, and impact. Your questions, ideas, encouragement, and feedback help us become a stronger school. We welcome your input and look forward to continuing this partnership with you.

Thank you for trusting us with your children and for being such an important part of the Shekinah family. Together, we are building something meaningful that will influence lives well beyond the classroom. Go Flames!!!!

October Chapels

by: Natalie Wurschmidt



Justin Harrington

On Wednesday, September 30th, Justin Harrington was the secondary chapel speaker. The theme from the morning was “Destination determines direction.” He challenged two secondary students to give directions from memory to Chipotle and Starbucks. Students were ultimately challenged to set our minds on Christ, to make decisions that honor him, to love him with all our hearts, and to obey what he told us to do. This looks like spending time with God, setting reminders, and looking in His word for direction.



Jace Weber

On Wednesday, October 14th, Jace Weber challenged the secondary students to follow Jesus now and not wait until they get older. Mr. Weber pointed to 1 Timothy to remind students that young people can teach and proclaim the word of God, just as powerfully as an older person. He also challenged students to set an example and not conform to older people's negative expectations. The last point he made was that progress is a good thing; it is part of an ongoing challenge and encourages others with our progress.



On September 30th, Rhoda (Showalter) Miller ‘94 and her son, Michael, spoke to elementary students about building inner strength through mission field testimonies. They shared how prayer and perseverance helped them overcome hardships and adapt to a foreign culture, emphasizing contentment in all circumstances. Mrs. Miller also shared a few sentences in Mandarin Chinese.



On October 14th, Jewel Showalter shared her experiences of starting a home church in Turkey with just seven people. She taught students that a church is defined by its people, not a building. By focusing on hospitality—serving tea and pistachios despite language barriers—her small acts of service eventually led a guest to follow Christ and become a pastor. She challenged students to perform five kind acts and share two encouraging words.

Mentoring groups

by Sara Sensenig



Mentoring groups first started in the fall of 2024. The main purpose of mentoring groups is to build relationships and encourage one another in their walks with Jesus. There are six junior high groups and seven high school groups separated boys and girls. Throughout the year, each group goes through a guided devotional booklet. Mentoring groups share their personal troubles about school, home, and friends with each other. Students go through the inevitable highs and lows of the school year with a trusted group of friends and a mentor to help them through.





Mentoring chapel

Once every quarter, the mentoring groups take over chapel. They can bring in food and games to play. Some mentor groups have gone to The Red Hen Cafe. The 8th grade boys' group even brought a Nintendo to use. Mentoring chapels give a time for mentoring groups to just hang out and get to know each other better.

Kindergarten corn maze

by Benji Wanty







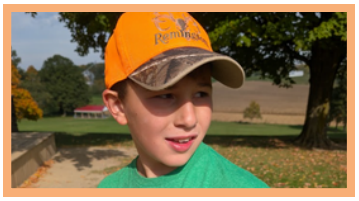
The kindergarten class went to the Maize at Little Darby Creek on October 7. There they learned about corn, went in the maze, played on the playground, and got pumpkins while having a fun time. Colton says that his favorite part was going in the corn maze and playing on the playground. While Clayton's favorite part was the playground, Emma enjoyed learning which foods have corn in them. Ireland says that playing with the bubble wand was a highlight.

4th and 5th grades visit Ohio Caverns

On October 13, the 4th and 5th grades went to the Ohio Caverns. At the caverns they were able to play on the grass and go to the gift shop. After they were done playing, they descended into the caverns! The students and chaperones went down 103 feet and saw crystals and stalactites on the ceiling. Eleanor says that her favorite part was the gift shop because she got a cute bracelet, and it was fun. Tabitha really liked seeing the king crystal and going gem mining. Evelina's favorite part was going down into the cavern, and another cool thing was looking at the rock couch.







ROMEO & JULIET

This year in English class the freshmen have been learning about Shakespeare. They have focused on one of his most famous works, *Romeo and Juliet*. They started out by being assigned roles and reading the play out loud in class. Then they were assigned partners and a scene from the play. The freshmen memorized the scene they were assigned with their partners and acted it out in front of the class.









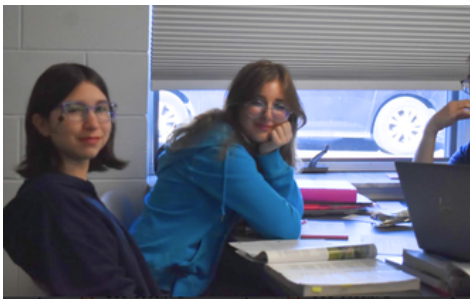
GREEK MYTHOLOGY

The sophomores started out this year learning about Greek mythology in Mrs. Schrader's English class. They have learned about the Greeks' lifestyle, myths, Epics, and how all these things shape the world we know today. Mrs. Schrader also taught the sophomores about the Greek gods and what ancient Greeks believed about them. One student said that it was interesting to think about how our God is a loving and caring God. The Greeks feared their gods and did not love them all. They believed that if they did anything wrong the gods would strike them down. It really highlights that we have a forgiving God.











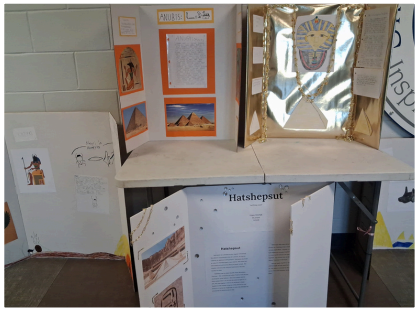
One of the projects that the sophomores did was Greek mythology videos. The students were split into groups and each group picked a myth to act out. They videoed themselves acting the myth out and made it into a mini movie. The sophomores say that this was one of the most fun projects they have done at school. Lilly says that she really just loves to put herself in ancient Greek culture, and it's cool to see how their lives still affect ours, in the present day. Anna says "It's really interesting to learn about Greek mythology. Mrs Schrader is the best English teacher I have ever had."

6th Graders Bring Ancient Egypt to Shekinah!

Ms. Driskill's 6th grade history students recently wrapped up their unit on Ancient Egypt with a fantastic hands-on project. Students researched and created colorful information posters about famous pharaohs, influential queens, and mythical characters who shaped Egyptian history and lore.

The completed displays are currently up in the main hallway for the whole school to see. Visitors and students alike can stop by to learn about the "boy king" Tutankhamun, the powerful female pharaoh Hatshepsut, and the dramatic myths of gods like Osiris and Isis.
After hanging their posters up for display, the students brought their projects to life by sharing their reports with the class. Each student took a turn presenting their topic and sharing top facts about their person/character.

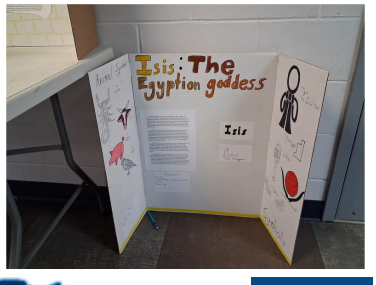
The posters are packed with neat details, including hand-drawn maps, illustrations of pyramids, and even student names written in hieroglyphics. Everyone did a wonderful job researching their characters and sharing their reports with the class!











JUNIOR CLASS FUNDRAISING

What is the Jr-Sr Banquet?



The Junior Senior Banquet is a yearly tradition at Shekinah. These banquets celebrate our Seniors and are planned each year by the Junior Class. It is a large event held in the spring and includes a dinner served by the juniors, speeches from the seniors' parents, pictures, decorations, and more. The juniors keep most details secret, making the event a surprise for the seniors upon getting there. A fun mode of transportation is always used to drive the Senior Class in, and the whole night is dedicated to honoring them and their families. The many successful banquets would not have been possible without the devotion of junior classes, and the generous donations from supporters. Raising funds is essential in planning this event, and every year there are many ways to contribute. Hot lunch, pumpkin sales, Valentine's Day carnations, and home game treats are all examples of fundraising events that go straight to the Junior Class. Our Junior Class this year is currently raising money for the banquet, and here are some ways to help out!

Hot lunch



Every Friday, Shekinah offers a hot lunch made and served by the Junior Class families. Hot lunch serves two purposes: feeding the Shekinah student body a warm, home-cooked meal and raising money for the Junior-Senior Banquet. The money spent each month on hot lunch goes toward the Junior Class Banquet fund. Shekinah families are working extremely hard every Friday to make and serve meals at the school. This is why we want to encourage Shekinah families to order hot lunch each month. Each plate ordered helps tremendously in raising money for not only the banquet, but other Shekinah needs as well. If we reach our goal, the rest of the funds from hot lunch will go to the Junior Class graduation and the Seniors' gift. Therefore, please consider ordering hot lunch each month for your child; every little bit makes a difference!

Pumpkin fundraiser





Another fun way the Junior Class raises money is through our pumpkin sale! Each year, when autumn rolls around, the current juniors sell pumpkins outside near the school's entrance. Shekinah alumnus, Adam Ferguson, supplies the pumpkins from Ferguson's Farm. These pumpkins are usually a great way to raise money, whether you're carving a jack-o'-lantern or just using them as decoration; they're a fun fall-themed activity. We are currently selling large ($10), medium ($5), small ($3), and colored ($8) pumpkins. They are selling fast, but we will restock soon. Remember to check out the pumpkins on your way home from school!

SPIRIT WEEK

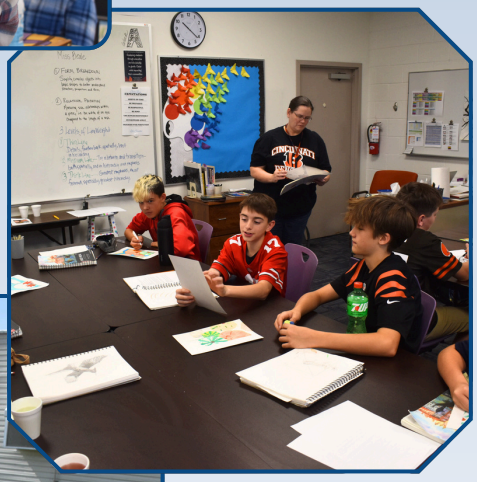
by Sara Sensenig

On the second week of October, Shekinah celebrated the fall sports teams with a spirit week. On Monday, students and staff arrived cozy in their pajamas. Tuesday everyone was welcome to wear their best school spirit wear. Cowboy boots were donned on Western Wednesday. Thursday everyone could wear their favorite football jersey. On Friday anything for baseball caps to beanies were worn for hat day. Throughout the week the seniors went around to all the classes and judged which class dressed the best for each day of the week. On Friday morning the school gathered in the gym for a pep rally and to find out which class had the best over all school spirit. They had a few mini games for extra points. This year the 5th grade class won a pizza party!

















Senior Night

by Cara Dobey





On Tuesday, Oct 6th, Shekinah held our Fall Sports Senior Night to honor our seniors! Four volleyball seniors: Eleyna Beachy, Rachel Eichorn, Marly Johnson, and Ali Troyer were honored before taking on the Liberty Christian Eagles in a decisive 3-set win. Also celebrated on senior night was golfer Camden Miller. Cam was team captain, and he had a great season!

Lots of family and friends, alumni, staff, and students came out to support these seniors and enjoy the fun evening. The night was bittersweet as we celebrated all that these seniors have accomplished, while knowing that each of these athletes is moving on to the next chapter in their journey.











BOARD News

October Board Meeting Highlights

- We updated the senior trip policy for part time students and are making all seniors who need help with their portion of the senior trip aware of OCEN scholarship money.
- We discussed continuing to help Shekinah students prepare for a productive future. One of the ways in which we will pursue this is stregthening Shekinah's relationship with Tolles.
- We discussed the Head of School search process as well as new board members.

Next meeting: November 30
Contact us at:
schoolboard@shekinahchristian.org

ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES

Birth:
Joshua '10 and Aubrey (Yutzy) Gingerich '12; Leona Drew on September 30, 2026; first child, first daughter.

Marriage:
Tyler Helmuth '11 married Shelby Powell on October 10, 2026.

Attention Alumni!

We'd love to hear from you. Please send updates about your lives to kdriskill@shekinahchristian.org. Tell us about births, weddings, new jobs, promotions, ministry opportunities, or anything else you'd like to share. We look forward to your responses!

THREE CLASSES COMBINE FOR A REUNION

Twenty Shekinah alumni from the Classes of '85. '86 and '87 attended a reunion on the evening of September 19. The 38 attendees included 16 spouses and two former teachers, Arnold and Linda Shetler. Some alumni traveled from as far away as Oklahoma, Colorado and Virginia. The group enjoyed a BBQ meal catered by Clint and Jolene (Miller) Ellis '85 at Hygge Ministries.



CLASS OF '86

L to R: Don Plank, Mike Mast, Rita Coblentz, Joyce Rinehard-Kutz, Melanie Swartzentruber, Lisa Troyer, Kenlyn Miller, Harold Hoover

The Class of '86, who are celebrating their 40th year, had the best representation with eight of their twelve graduates attending.Seven of the twelve graduates from the Class of '85 and five of the ten graduates from the Class of '87 attended.

CLASS OF '85

L to R: Aldine Gingerich, Matt Yutzy, Marlin Yutzy, Galen Yoder, Charlene Troyer, Rosanne Gingerich, Jolene Ellis



The evening's activities included great food, conversations, reminiscing about the past, and catching up with each other. The memories recalled and made that evening will not be forgotten. We were reminded that life is fragile and relationships cannot be taken for granted when a few short weeks later, Michael Swartzentruber, husband of Melanie (Gingerich) Swartzentruber '86, passed away unexpectedly, on October 5. Pray for Melanie and her children as they grieve this sudden loss. Michael Swartzentruber Obituary



CLASS OF '87

L to R: Dave Miller, Nathan R. Yoder, Lamar Sweigart, Susan Yoder, Shannon Scheffel







Mark Your Calendars.....

November

13- PreACT 9th-10th
18 - Progress Reports
19-CCP/Career Informational Meeting 6:00 pm
23-27 - Thanksgiving Break

December

11 - Christmas program
16-17 First Semeseter Exams
18 - Early Release/ Teacher In-Service
21 - Jan 1 - Christmas Break

Congratulations to our September Challenge winner, **Keith Lambert**! Keith was the first to correctly identify Shekinah's first MOCAL Championship won by the 2016 Boys Golf team under the direction of coaches Laura Lambert and Brian Hershberger.

October Challenge:

Ms. Maust is currently teaching her 33rd school year at Shekinah! What year did she teach her largest single grade class, and what birthday did she celebrate that school year?

Text: 606-568-6156 if you think you've got the answer!

THE STUDENT ACTIVITY BOOSTER CLUB

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BRONZE

Yutzy Pastures

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