

LIONHEART

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF INTERMOUNTAIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

— FALL 2022 —





Mr. Pethtel, head of school

LETTER FROM GABE

School-wide update from Gabe Pethtel, head of school

Our school's theme verse for 2022-23 is **Galatians 5:22-23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."**

Galatians 5:22-23 provides an excellent framework in which to develop our chapel and small group experiences for our PreK-12 students this school year, as we can dedicate an entire month of the school year to each aspect of the fruit mentioned. For example, in the month of September, we are focusing on biblical love. **While we focus on teaching our students about how God can help them develop the fullness of the Fruit of the Spirit in their lives, it is imperative that we as an entire learning community at Intermountain Christian School (ICS) dedicate ourselves to seeking to reflect Jesus Christ. We must ask God to develop a fullness of the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives as administrators, teachers, coaches, students, and parents. We know that our students are looking to our example for direction.**

As a Christian educator, and as a husband and father, I am well aware that life can be very busy; our work and family needs can quickly fill our entire calendar with important tasks and events. In times like these, we can feel stressed and drained and that the opposite of the Fruit of the Spirit is developing in our lives. **But God in his infinite mercy reaches out to us through his great love, to let us know that, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, we will boast all the more gladly about our weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on each of us." (2 Corinthians 12:9)**

In our own power, we do not have the ability to grow all areas of the Fruit of the Spirit to fullness. Still, through the amazing grace of Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins, we can trust and pray that God, who is rich in mercy, will fully grow us. Then we can be witnesses for Christ in a way that will strongly lead our lives and our relationships, including those within our school community. **Please join me in praying for the Fruit of the Spirit to graciously and fully develop in our lives and in the lives of our children.**

This year, we enter year two of our work with Teaching for Transformation (TfT). Our goal is to help our administration, teachers, and students to develop common language and goals leading ICS to become more and more the people of God's story, engaged in real work that forms the self and shapes the world.

TfT places an important emphasis on the power of story, a compelling vision of the Kingdom that connects our learners and their learning to God's greater story throughout history. As your new Head of School, I have been meeting weekly with ICS parents and friends for coffee to get to know their hearts for our learning community and to let them know more about the mission and vision of our school as we follow God's lead. One area of ICS development that I enjoy sharing during these meetings includes our TfT Throughlines. Our TfT Throughlines are specific areas of learning that express ways in which we as a community would like to focus student learning through all grade levels and subject areas.

TfT Throughlines for ICS students include focusing our students on becoming God Worshipers, Idolatry Discerners, Creation Enjoyers, Beauty Creators, Order Discoverers, Justice Seekers, Servant Workers,

Earth Keepers, Community Builders, and Image Reflectors. Of course, all of these focus us on the multi-faceted nature of our God through the person of our Savior, Jesus Christ. While attaining mastery in all of these throughlines is a tall order, I believe that as our administrators, teachers, and parents pursue these throughlines in our daily lives alongside our students, we as a Christian learning community will see God do more than all we can ask or imagine in and through Intermountain Christian School.

My Deep Hope for our ICS learning community is that administrators, teachers, students, and parents would unify in prayer and purpose to enhance joy and wonder throughout our school so that our students will be equipped and inspired to love and serve Jesus Christ and thrive in God's world. Thank you for your support and prayers as we endeavor to take this journey together at Intermountain Christian School.

BEARING FRUIT

Student life update from Pamela Smith, dean of student life

As the fall season is upon us, we see the weather getting cooler, the leaves changing colors, and fall clothing coming out of the closet. Not only is there transformation happening in the weather, but there is also a change in the atmosphere at Intermountain Christian School. Students are getting acclimated to their teachers, and teachers are building student relationships. Students are stepping out of their comfort zones; others are walking in the halls quietly and showing exemplary leadership. Friendships are forming. Our fall sports and the arts are well on their way, and the qualities of the Fruit of Spirit are displayed regularly.



Mrs. Smith, dean of student life

This past summer, the Lord laid upon my heart Galatians 5:22-23, which says: "But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law." Moreover, this verse became our school-wide Bible verse. My prayer is for our entire community to be known for authentically living out the Fruit of the Spirit. Each chapel and our monthly school-wide theme will focus on one of the Fruit of the Spirit. I see the Fruit like an orange; there are multiple sections, and if you take nine sections of an orange, each one could represent an element of the Fruit of the Spirit. Love is September's theme. October's is Joy, and we will wrap up the school year during May 2023 with Self-Control.

The most beautiful part of the passage in Galatians 5:23 is that there is "no law against them." It would be true to say that we can display the Fruit without limits or restrictions. We can never show too much love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Now that is a goal I encourage all of us to seek.

Not only is a transformation happening this fall with students and teachers, but the role of Dean of Student Life is also steadily evolving. The Lord has stretched me in many ways. I work daily to create a student life environment focused on faith and Christian discipleship while encouraging positive rewards, active leadership, communication, and self-discipline. I know there will be many testimonies as the Lord makes himself known throughout our ICS community as we authentically live out Galatians 5:22-23 in action.

40 YEARS OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Recap of ICS 40th anniversary alumni event

Intermountain Christian School was founded as a ministry of the Evangelical Free Church of Salt Lake City in 1982. This past summer, ICS celebrated 40 years of God's faithfulness to the school. ICS hosted an entire weekend dedicated to honoring current and past faculty, alumni, and families through the years. The weekend was robust with opportunities to reminisce about past times at ICS and connect with other alumni and faculty.

The weekend culminated with a dinner at the school on Saturday night. Many faculty from the past and present shared anecdotes. Mr. Robert Payne, one of ICS's founding administrators, shared how the school colors were chosen. (He drew inspiration from his college days!) ICS alum and former faculty member Matt Snyder led the evening and kept guests laughing as the host. Former ICS faculty Bill Postma reminisced about various class pranks and said he still thinks of ICS students any time the clock says 11:11, due to one of those infamous pranks.

ICS Executive Coordinator Tonya Baskett says, "The alumni weekend was such a sweet time with the ICS community from past to present. I was overjoyed with families that traveled from near and far to reconnect and celebrate the 40 years of providing Christ-centered education at ICS."

The alumni weekend solidified the fact that the Intermountain Christian School community is a blessed community. ICS looks forward to 40 more years of God's providence and faithfulness. Thank you to Tonya Baskett for working hard to plan such a successful weekend. To stay up to date with alumni info and events, please watch the alumni page on our website: www.intermountainchristian.org/alumni.

- 1) Back: ICS alumnae LesLee Boyer and Anna Madsen
Front: Ava Boyer (2nd), Stevie Madsen (2nd), and Daisy Madsen.
- 2) Former ICS faculty and staff: Robert Payne, Matt Snyder, and Andrea Townsend.
- 3) Alumna Karen Tsuyuki, Bill Postma (former faculty), his wife Holly Postma, and alumnae Danielle Scott and Brittany Martinez-Bringard.



Mrs. Hafemann directs her handbell choir students.

FINDING TRUTH IN THE ARTS

ICS Fine Arts Department update

The ICS Fine Arts Department boasts strong leadership and ample opportunities for our students to develop and showcase their God-given talents in the 2022-23 school year.

Tess Tally has directed 15 plays at Intermountain Christian School during her tenure. This fall, the Theater Department has the opportunity to go to the Utah Shakespeare Festival in Cedar City. High school theater students, who had to audition to participate in this special weekend, will perform for professional adjudicators, participate in workshops, and watch professional productions.

Mrs. Tally's goals for this school year include having more varsity shows with more challenging music. She also plans to bring back a mainstage show which is open to Grades 3-12; younger students interested in theater will be able to participate in the *Wizard of Oz* production. In addition, each theater class will have a production throughout the school year. Conservatory will be putting on *Godspell* and will take the show on the road to different locations in the spring. The cast has also been selected for the exciting fall production of *Into the Woods*, which debuts in November 2022. (Buy tickets at www.intermountainchristian.org/ics-theater.) Mrs. Tally hopes the students learn that their identity is not in

who they are as performers, but in who they are in Christ.

Shanna Hafemann joined Intermountain Christian School during the 2021-22 school year. She quickly developed a rapport with students and continues to encourage them to participate in musical endeavors outside of the classroom. Mrs. Hafemann leads worship for chapel and other events at ICS. She actively recruits students to join her on the worship team, whether instrumental or vocals.

Mrs. Hafemann believes an education in music can be a holistic tool used throughout one's lifetime. ICS's Music Department aims to cultivate classes that equip students to not only perform beautiful pieces, but also to express and process emotions, serve their community, and understand God's intent and purpose for the gift of music. Mrs. Hafemann's students will discover these values through a variety of mediums, such as semester concerts, our annual Music Tour which includes an introduction to music therapy, and various small performances throughout the community.

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Vivian Conway (5th)

JeQuita Lee leads the Art Department for Grades 1-12. Mrs. Lee's students have the opportunity to explore various art forms. Students discover mediums such as painting, drawing, ceramics, and sculpture. They are encouraged to view art through the eyes of the ultimate artist: God. Visual arts provide students the opportunity to experience God through the arts and to worship Him through finished pieces. Students learn to embrace the motto, "There are no mistakes in art, only discoveries."

The Dance Program, also under Mrs. Lee's instruction, provides students an avenue to worship the Lord through movement. The program provides dance technique and performance opportunities for K-12th grades. Students are introduced to the gift of movement and learn the beauty of offering choreography as worship to God.

The ICS Fine Arts Program continues to pursue excellence in all aspects and to bring glory to God in all they display and create.



Rebecca Wanner (11th)

desire is that our athletes win with humility and lose with dignity, ultimately growing in their walk with the Lord.

This season, Scott Sauer joined the team as our Assistant Coach. Scott is excited to work with the team and we are looking forward to having him as part of the ICS coaching staff.

Tom Hubbard previously worked with the high school volleyball team, developing players and assisting with coaching. He leads the team as head coach this year, with over 20 years of experience coaching and running clubs in the valley. We have seen fresh excitement in the team with the addition of many new players and look forward to what the future holds.

High school cross country has started the year strong under the leadership of two new coaches. Kryssi Heckman has taken over our program as the head coach after leading a variety of running programs. She is assisted by Ryan Wittstock (MS English and HS social studies faculty at ICS) who has vast personal running experience. These dedicated coaches have worked hard to create an environment of competitive excellence for our team.

COMPETING WITH EXCELLENCE

ICS Athletics Department fall update

"Intermountain Christian School Athletics exists to create opportunities for student-athletes to glorify God through competitive excellence."

Athletics at Intermountain Christian School builds a culture that is focused on growth in Christian character on and off the field. **We are committed to our four principles of developing servant leaders, growing in intentional integrity, competing with excellence, and having a united purpose.**

Our summer was full of growth opportunities in our Athletic Department. We welcomed new coaching staff, developed an athletic website (icslions.org), updated branding (see logo on next page, bottom, right), updated our facilities (see picture below), and solidified a new partnership with Nike. We are excited for the new year and want our athletes to take pride in being an ICS Lion and honoring God through athletics.

Randi Hillaker took over as athletics coordinator this summer and has worked tirelessly on multiple big projects. She took the lead in redesigning our athletic facilities and has worked to organize and manage our programs. We are grateful for the hard work, integrity, and joy she brings to our team as she works alongside our coaches, players, and staff.

This year we are excited to have George Sherrill returning as our head coach for the baseball team. George accepted the position as head coach last season. His



Noah Hillaker (10th) gets serious in one of the updated locker rooms.

Heather Harmon stepped up to lead the middle school cross country team this year. Maria Guy joined as the assistant coach. Our runners love their coaches and are putting their best effort in at the races. Mrs. Harmon and Mrs. Guy have done a great job of introducing our students not only to running, but to healthy fitness patterns for life. Also, congrats to Mrs. Guy, who just completed her first marathon. She finished with a final time of 3:13, making her eligible to qualify for the Boston Marathon!

Our middle school volleyball team is being led by two ICS alumnae, Melisa Christiansen and Danielle Scott. Mrs. Christiansen coached our varsity team from 2006-2011 and felt ready to get back into coaching for this season. Mrs. Christiansen and Mrs. Scott make a phenomenal, energetic coaching staff with a winning mindset.

Athletic Director Ryan Behmer has done an incredible job organizing and leading our Athletic Department in the last two years. **To stay informed of ICS Athletics, follow them on Instagram (@icslions), Facebook (/ICSAthletics), and Twitter (@icslions).**





Mr. Christiansen teaches 8th grade algebra.

ADDING UP THE MATH DEPARTMENT

ICS welcomes Brewster Christiansen, K-12 Math Department chair

Brewster Christiansen originally walked the halls of ICS as a student, graduating in 2002. Mr. Christiansen returns to Intermountain Christian School as the K-12 Math Department chair with decades of mathematical instruction experience. Mr. Christiansen is taking a holistic approach to math and will be involved to some extent with math in all grades at ICS. He will work through a process called vertical teaming, partnering with teachers from all grades to assure seamless transitions from grade to grade in the study of math.

Mr. Christiansen hopes to see an interest in math grow all the way up through 12th grade. Elementary teachers can look for gaps in mathematical comprehension and work to bridge those gaps, improving the student body's fluency in math skills. An ICS education allows differentiation for math beginning in 8th grade. Students can choose to take Math 8 or Algebra I during their 8th grade year. This allows students to be challenged and develop a deeper understanding of math facts and concepts, preparing them for their high school years. As students continue through each grade level at ICS, he hopes that more high school students will choose to push beyond Utah state standards and take a math course their senior year.

Mr. Christiansen has set goals for the Math Department which can be measured over time through increase standardized test scores, both on the national and local levels. He says that math is an important part of life — because beyond learning facts, math can extend into other areas of learning. Math requires critical thinking, problem solving, and logical thinking. All areas of academia require these skills. A strong Math Department will lead to a strong Science Department, and so on.

Mr. Christiansen is already showing his dedication to providing excellence in Christian education at ICS through mathematics. ICS is confident that the Math Department will challenge and encourage students to look beyond the calculator and understand the importance of math — in and out of the classroom!



Mr. Christiansen helps Westin Samuels (8th) during class.

TFT CONTINUES!

Teaching for Transformation update by Denise Buckley, director of curriculum and instruction

This summer, I was asked to speak at one of our alumni events, and it was such a challenge to decide what to share! I have so many great memories of ICS, from a variety of perspectives. As a parent, I am incredibly grateful that my kids have attended (or still attend!) ICS; to have them at a place with excellent teachers who also pray for them has been priceless. As an employee, I have loved working at ICS. As the guidance counselor I basked in the joys of helping kids make plans for their futures — both the years when the graduating class was 10 and the years when we had big classes of 26. Each one was special. As an administrator, I have been blessed to lead an excellent team of teachers. I am in awe of the gifted, committed professionals God brings to our staff.

After pondering so many excellent memories, I decided that what best sums up my memories is my Deep Hope for Intermountain Christian School.

For the past several years, we have been preparing to bring Teaching for Transformation (TfT) to our school. We began by testing the waters of this program theoretically; then we invited some teachers to try it out as our early adopters. This year, all of our faculty will be involved with TfT. In a nutshell, TfT combines intentional biblical integration with educational best practices. In full transparency, I started as a skeptic: I have been an educator for 20+ years and have seen so many programs come and go. I am no longer apt to trust the latest new idea. But I have become a huge fan of TfT; it is rich with biblical integration and strong educational protocols. TfT is going to add great things to our school.

As part of Teaching for Transformation, each person on staff is asked to construct a written Deep Hope for our work at ICS. This Deep Hope is our guiding principle of sorts — the “why” of what we do. Our Deep Hope represents why we each followed the call to work in a Christian school.

My Deep Hope for ICS is to be a school where — in all areas — learners are challenged to see themselves as part of God's Great Story. May we, as the ICS community, see our own part in that story and know deeply how much He cares for, equips, and calls us to His purpose.

Though written for this coming school year, these lines represent what I have always desired for ICS: to be a place where seeking God's purpose and plan is paramount. As a parent, and as an educator, I want ICS to be strong in what we offer academically and equally as strong in what we offer spiritually. We need to be a place where — in addition to math, science, and humanities — students learn about God, His story, and how each of us fits into His grand, purposeful plans.

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Mrs. Banta (1st grade teacher) teaches in front of her Deep Hope.



Mrs. Harmon (middle school math teacher) with her Deep Hope



Mrs. Heile (high school science teacher) with her Deep Hope

God's Great Story involves creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. Over the past 40 years our school has seen evidence of each of these steps. ICS was created with a dream and a vision and God's blessing. Through the years we have experienced moments of "falling," then relying on Christ's redemption to restore us. Over and over again, we embrace that cycle — trusting in His forgiveness, His presence, and His gracious reminder that we are indeed a part of His story.

So, as I look back and look forward, my Deep Hope for ICS remains the same. In a fallen world where confusion reigns, may we be a place where our students can know that God is real and that He has called each of them to be a part of His Great Story. Here's to another 40 years, ICS!



Mrs. Lee

SPOTLIGHT: MRS. LEE

Shining light on one of ICS's incredible teachers

The spiritual theme for this year at Intermountain Christian School is the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The ICS community would agree that it is impossible to think of this Fruit and not think of JeQuita Lee. Mrs. Lee has served as the art teacher here for 13 years. She also worked as our PreK teacher for a season, and she continues to lead our Dance Program.

When entering Mrs. Lee's classroom, there is a consistent atmosphere of peace, patience, and goodness that emanates from Mrs. Lee herself. She points her students toward their Creator as she teaches them to create. ICS is a better place because of Mrs. Lee's presence!

Mrs. Lee's Deep Hope for her students is to know they are loved and that God created them for a relationship with Him. Her prayer is that through exploring, discovering, and sharing the arts they would either deepen their relationship with the Lord or help them come to know Him as Lord and Savior. We were created for relationships — relationships with each other and ultimately a relationship with God.

The ICS community loves Mrs. Lee, and we are blessed with her leadership and heart!



Left to right: Ms. Reed (middle school science teacher) and Renee Drach (7th) build bridges in ABCs of STEM. Westin Samuels (8th) constructs a LEGO® robot in MS Robotics. Maddy Santarosa (5th) and Brooklyn Van Slooten (5th) compete with classmates to build the tallest and most stable pipe cleaner structure in Elementary STEM Lab.

STEM AT EVERY LEVEL

ICS launches a school-wide STEM program

Intermountain Christian School is excited to embrace a STEM program for students from PreK through 12th grade. STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math education. It is an interdisciplinary approach that helps students succeed in college and in their future careers. The focus of a STEM education is hands-on, problem-based learning. At ICS, we have the unique opportunity to focus on STEM through a biblical lens.

The STEM team at ICS includes Dana Pethtel, Daniel Hildebrand, and Michelle Reed. Mrs. Pethtel has joined ICS as the STEM program coordinator for grades PreK-5. Mrs. Pethtel comes with vast classroom experience and an educational background which enable her to lead the classroom in creative, unique ways. Connecting a STEM program with biblical, Christ-centered learning is fun for Mrs. Pethtel. She will draw from biblical stories to bring engineering and math to life. For example, the Tower of Babel serves as a great biblical STEM lesson. Mrs. Pethtel plans to have her students build their own tower with their own materials, going through the engineering process. Students will work through the project by drawing and writing each part with their classmates. At some point during the building process, the students will no longer be able to communicate with each other, of course causing frustration. The bridge Pethtel is able to build between STEM concepts and biblical stories sets ICS apart.

Mr. Hildebrand has coached LEGO® and robotics teams for over five years at various schools. At ICS, he hopes for his robotics class to advance in multiple tournaments for the middle school-level LEGO® robotics. This will be the second year of the program, and Mr. Hildebrand is confident the team will advance further than the inaugural year. Mr. Hildebrand is also offering the high school elective AP Computer Science. Through teaching STEM, he is confident that students will reflect the Creator's greatness and providence by creating innovative solutions to real people's needs.

Ms. Reed holds her PhD in neuroscience from the University of Utah. Ms. Reed says STEM education is important because it is a good space for students to learn how to think critically, creatively, and wisely. She hopes that skill will overflow into whatever they're truly passionate about. Critical thinking is important to utilize whether one chooses a STEM career path or not. Ms. Reed's middle school class, The ABC's of STEM, was recently seen outside shooting rubber bands to measure distance and speed. STEM learning is not only important — it's also fun!

ICS looks forward to a successful year of school-wide STEM projects. The entire student body will benefit from this integral and FUN way of learning.

ICS is a Christ-centered learning community that equips and inspires students to thrive in God's world.



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