



Sharing a bird's eye view of God's Story at Pella Christian  
FEBRUARY 2025





# A Word from our Head of Schools



Greetings from Pella Christian,

It is my hope this edition of the Eagle Eye finds you feeling blessed at the start of 2025. Turning the calendar prompts reflection and a look back where God has led and where He is leading.

What will things look like in another quarter century in 2050? What about 2075 or even 2100? Scripture tells us in Psalm 90:4 that "A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night." It is always healthy for us, God's creatures, to be reminded of our finiteness and how small our place is within the span of eternity.

God is doing amazing things right here, right now at Pella Christian. I'm excited about these things, but I'm also excited and in wonder at God's much bigger plan. It is my hope and prayer that you are experiencing that same joy and wonder in your life at the start of 2025.

In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Zylstra".

Dan Zylstra  
PC Head of Schools

## On The Cover

Community Building through Homecoming Activities!

The Freshman Class (pictured on cover) nabbed Runner Up in the Homecoming Lip Sync competition while the Junior class took first place. The top two grades performed during halftime of the homecoming games.

### Homecoming Court 2025

King Grant Kelderman and Queen Esther Ford were crowned during Homecoming 2025.

### Homecoming Court Members:

Addison Bandstra  
Faith Kacmarynski  
Erika Van Maanen  
Madeline Vanden Bosch

Nathan Brouwer  
Landon Fransman  
Camden Parker  
Cooper Spronk



# Board of Trustees Update

By Mark Van Wyngarden, Pella Christian School Board President

In December the Board of Trustees passed our 2025-2026 Budget. This included raising starting teacher pay to \$46,500 along with increases across the salary schedule. While this resulted in a tuition increase, it was needed to ensure our teachers were fairly and competitively compensated. In January we approved a large playground project at the grade school which should commence this summer. We also approved the academic calendar for 2025-2026 and continue to work with school leadership to ensure we deliver outstanding Christian education to students. Our Nominations Committee has been actively recruiting the next group of board trustees and planning for leadership succession.

We are also taking stock of the big picture. Maintaining an excellent school today is important, but the board's most critical function is preparing for the next generation. What challenges will we face? What should we prepare for? What opportunities exist now to ensure we're better positioned to teach Christ to our students in 5 or 10 years? We are wrestling with these questions from the crow's nest of the ship, looking out on the horizon for challenges and opportunities. The Lord has blessed us with the capacity and gifts to think and prepare for what is yet to come. It is the board's privilege and duty to exercise those gifts in the coming year.

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**Each winter, the Early Education Ambassadors host a Family Fun Day for PC preschoolers and their families. Over 230 attended for a morning of activities in the gyms and a yummy hot chocolate bar in the lunch room.**

# Information on ESAs

The 2025 Iowa legislative session is underway. Every year laws are proposed and passed that affect our schools. As a 501c(3), Pella Christian does not endorse any political party or candidate. But we do speak in favor of relevant issues and encourage our supporters to do likewise.

Please thank lawmakers for passing and maintaining Education Savings Accounts (ESAs). Christ's Lordship over all subjects is being taught to more students than ever in Iowa. This is, in part, due to ESAs which have empowered more parents to choose Christian education.

We've all heard the "concern" that ESAs take money from public schools. This is misleading. The money follows the student as it always has. A student from Lynnville-Sully could always choose to transfer to North Mahaska, taking their dollars with them. ESAs just mean parents can utilize that same choice for a non-public school. ESA dollars come from the state general fund, the same money used for infrastructure and other state expenditures. If ESAs are defunding public schools, so is repaving Highway 163 or continuing the Iowa Tuition Grant for colleges. Remember too that local public schools receive \$1,200 for each resident student using an ESA. Next year Pella Christian's 785 students mean our local public schools will receive an additional \$942,000 in state funding for students who don't even attend there.

The Lord accomplishes his purposes through many means, including through the work of earthly authorities. ESAs are a way God is currently increasing access to Christian education. Please encourage your elected officials to continue supporting school choice through Education Savings Accounts.







# Eagle Athletics - Winter 2025

By Dan Branderhorst, PC Activities Director

The winter athletic season brings basketball, bowling, cheer, Shine dance, wrestling and swimming opportunities to the students of Pella Christian.



This year's girls and boys basketball teams are made up of 106 student athletes from 7th to 12th grade. With nine teams total, we are on course for 145 regular season games. The boys' teams have focused on showing Urgency for Him based on John 9:4. The girls' teams dug into the program pillars of relentless intensity, mental toughness, togetherness, and selflessness.

PC's girls and boys varsity bowling teams can be found on most Saturdays at a bowling meet across south central Iowa. Coach Rod Blunck continues to lead the teams as our program's one and only bowling coach for more than 20 years. The sport of bowling at Pella Christian offers our students a great non-contact team sport option as they dig into the pillars of PC athletics.



## Eagles Take Flight:

- Pursue Excellence
- Develop Servant Leaders
- Cultivate the Joy of Team
- Train for Kingdom Impact

The Shine Clinic and Showcase is a highlight of the season for both the dance team and over 90 young girls who participate in a day of learning new moves, making new friends and ending with routine performances for fans. This year, Pella Christian had both a Varsity and JV team, both coached by Sarah Blom.



The Pella Christian Cheer team continues to lead crowds throughout the winter season. With nearly 30 participants in the program, PC Cheerleaders radiate positivity and unity as they uplift our players and fans with cheers.

We are thankful to partner with Pella Community and Oskaloosa Community Schools in athletic co-ops for wrestling and swimming. Our wrestlers and swimmers join student athletes from these schools as they continue to use their talents and gifts to worship God.







The program focuses on skills and 3v3 sessions led by PC head coaches Brendan Foughty and Marv Van Wyk with help from the varsity players, individual team practices led by parent coaches, and participation in various AAU tournaments while instilling the values of teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship.

## Little Eagle Basketball

Little Eagle Basketball is a parent-run committee that instructs 3rd to 6th graders in basketball fundamentals to over 135 athletes who attend Pella Christian, Oskaloosa Christian, Sully Christian, Peoria Christian and Newton Christian Schools.

Little Eagle hosts an annual Take Flight tournament on the grade school and high school campuses and recently held their 4th annual event, which included 34 teams and over 300 players. Love basketball and kids? Little Eagle is actively seeking additional committee members. Contact [littleeagle@pceagles.org](mailto:littleeagle@pceagles.org) to learn how you can be part of the team!







## Winterim at PCHS

By Kevin Herdegen, PCHS Principal

Pella Christian's 13th annual Winterim program was held January 6 - 10. Winterim offers three different options for high school students, including internships, educational/service trips, and courses. Through Winterim experiences, students gain insight into their own passions and abilities, further developing their potential as God's image-bearers.

## CLASSES

Winterim Classes offer five days of learning experiences. Students choose a morning class and an afternoon class from a catalog of options taught by PCHS faculty, parents, and community members.

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I was a part of the crocheting class! We got to crochet some blankets to give to some older people at the villages! I really enjoyed this class because I got to learn more about crocheting and I had a lot of fun with the people in my class! I got to learn several more stitches and expand my knowledge in crocheting. This class was a good reminder of how creative God created humans to be. It amazes me that people could come up with those intricate stitches and patterns! Overall I really enjoyed this class and I am very glad I was able to be a part of it!



-Freshman Trinley Gibson

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I participated in Walking with Jesus in the morning and Marine Science in the afternoon. In Walking with Jesus, we read our Bibles and learned how to have a better relationship with Christ. We learned about who God is, who we are, and who people were in Scripture. We were taught SOAPS (scripture, observation, application, prayer, share) and how to make our faith our own. On Friday, we went to the grade school and went to the chapel. Afterwards, we went to Mrs. Vryhof's room and taught them about our faith journey and how everything on earth is meaningless; we can only find worth in heaven and in Christ. What I learned in this class was that everything we earn on earth or from society has no meaning at all. Our worth is not in earthly things, but only in Christ. I also learned that there are many ways to read the Bible and which one is best for me. This class helped to strengthen my relationship with God and learn about who we really are as incredible children of God. In our earthly lives with others, we need to spread the gospel and help others be drawn to God.



In Marine Science, we learned about overfishing and stewardship, invasive species, different marine life, and how everything is connected. I learned that there is so much order and connection in the ocean. If one thing goes extinct or the population lowers greatly, the whole ocean is connected and could be impacted. My faith really grew in this experience because I learned how immensely intricate God's creation is. He thought of everything. Even the tiniest of creatures has a big role in our world. Everything is connected and we should praise God even for the littlest of creatures.

-Freshman Ava Nikkel



# TRIPS

Three Winterim Trips were offered this year to Spain, Bahamas, and Mexico.

The trip to Spain included both cultural and mission experiences working with former PCHS teacher Mr. Jason Noble. Cultural activities included touring a castle, watching a Three Kings parade, and getting a closeup view of the Atlantic Ocean, complete with a picturesque lighthouse. The team also reached out to the community by attending youth group, holding a youth camp, and completing service projects. Thank you to Mrs. Rebekah Kraber and PC parent Ryan Agre for their leadership of the Spain team.

In Abaco, Bahamas, the team participated in a Week of Impact through Many Hands. They served the people of Abaco by being the hands and feet of Christ through cleaning, building, landscaping, and gardening. Thank you to Mr. Scott Roose and PC parents John De Berg, Jess Groenendyk, and Nikki Vasquez for leading the Bahamas team.

Through the Mexico trip, the team experienced cultural opportunities in the Yucatan by visiting churches and cathedrals, markets, parks, Mayan ruins, and cenotes. Thank you to Mtro. Lorenzo Escalante, Mr. Michael Turnley, and PC parents Chad and Jana Vink for leading the Mexico Winterim trip.

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For Winterim, I went on a trip to Spain. We stayed in the town of Os Muinos in the province of Galicia. We stayed with Mr. Noble and his family and helped them in their work to reach out to people in their community. My favorite activity was when we put on a day camp for kids to help them with their English, and we just had a lot of fun playing games like Go Fish, Candy Land, and Jenga with them. I learned how the people we interacted with were so welcoming and curious that they just wanted to talk and listen to us about anything. My faith grew on this trip by being able to travel to another part of the world and see His amazing creation of somewhere new.

-Junior Anna Vermillion



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I participated in a mission trip in Abaco, Bahamas where I was able to have an amazing opportunity to help people in the Abaco community. We were given the opportunity to sheet rock the inside of a man's house, and that was a great experience for me. I learned that doing things that seem little to people like me can be very meaningful to/for people that are not as fortunate as I am, like those in Abaco that we got to help out. I saw God's story unfold during my experience in Abaco on the restoration part. I saw redemption in Abaco when we sheetrocked Zhivargo's house. His house was nothing but a bare house frame of 2x4 and 2x6 blocks, with wires sticking out everywhere. While we worked at his house, we also rebuilt his entire deck with wood boards. Seeing the reaction and the smile on Zhivargo's face was so heartwarming, and our group was so happy for him and we are all so grateful for the opportunity to do that work for him.

-Junior Hunter Vander Linden



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I went on the Winterim trip to Yucatan, Mexico. One of my favorite parts of our trip was visiting Chichen Itza. I really liked this because we got to learn a lot about the Mayan culture and see all the ruins. I also liked all the swimming we did, we swam in a cenote and the ocean. I learned a lot from this experience. One of those is the impact of the past on the current generation. In Mexico you could see how passionate the people were about their culture and how they still incorporate it into their daily lives. I also learned how the geography, history and culture affect modern day Yucatan. One of the ways I saw God's story unfold during this trip was being able to see and experience another culture. I also saw God's story by using the gift he gave me and my Spanish classmates in Spanish and using it outside of school.

-Sophomore Greta Vos



# INTERNSHIPS

Winterim Internships offer students insight into future careers and how they can serve in God's world after high school. We are thankful to the many businesses and mentors who share their expertise and give of their time to partner with us for these internships.



I had an internship with LDJ Manufacturing where I was learning all different aspects of the company. A part that I found interesting about my winterim experience was learning how all the different aspects of a business work together to complete their goals. My favorite part of the internship at LDJ was being able to sit down with the finance team and learn how that all works since that is a potential job I'm interested in for the future.

My takeaway from Winterim at LDJ was how to be a servant leader in society by using authority over power. LDJ gave me a book called "The Servant" by James C. Hunter. Brad Jungling walked us through the book during the week and challenged us to use what we learned from the book in real life. I saw God's Story unfold at LDJ because they openly express their faith as a company. For example, they start each day and meeting with a devotional and prayer. They are undeniably a faith based company and they are proud of that. And they showed God's love and compassion to all of their employees.

-Junior Liam Zula



I interned at Belzer Equipment doing many different things. My favorite part was learning about the different aspects of the dealership. I learned more about how a dealership is run and not just how to work on equipment. I saw how an Ag equipment dealership can be used to show God to the rest of the world.

-Junior Ezra Ochsner



## WINTERIM INTERNSHIP BUSINESS PARTNERS 2025

641 Excavating  
Belzer Equipment  
Bill & Ray's  
Blush/Simple Treasures  
Central College/Pella Cinemas  
CRCNA/Resonate Global Mission  
De Ruiters Lawn Equipment  
De Vries Electric  
Eagle Electric  
East River Genetic Services  
Efficiency Construction  
Expressions by Design  
Full Circle Dairy  
Heartland Custom Applications  
Hope Restored Counseling & Consulting  
Iowa Interstate Railroad, LLC  
Mahaska County Conservation Board  
Mahaska Health  
Marion County Bank  
Nourish  
JD Repair  
Kinetic Edge Physical Therapy  
Klingner & Associates, PC  
LDJ  
Leever Homes  
Little Dutch Academy  
Mount Ski Gull  
New City Classical Academy  
Nikkel Construction  
Oskaloosa Christian School  
Pella Car Care  
Pella Christian Grade School  
Pella Christian High School  
Pella Community Ambulance  
Pella Corporation  
Pella Motors  
Pella Police Department  
Pella Real Estate Services  
Pella Regional Health Center  
Peoria Christian School  
Pioneer/Corteva Agriscience  
Precision Inc  
Pro Harvest Seeds  
Recker Dental Care  
RabWorks, LLC  
Randall Roofing  
Right Turn Supply  
Sincera Urgent Care  
Sully Christian School  
Thistles Flower Market  
Third Church  
Tri County Veterinary Clinic  
Van Haaften Plumbing & Heating  
Vermeer Corporation  
With Light and Lens Photography





Extended Care preschoolers enjoyed indoor recess with the residents at Fair Haven. The energy and excitement from both students and residents was just what we all needed for January fun. They used monkey moves to warm up and stretch our muscles, played catch with scarves and ended the afternoon with hugs and high fives.



## P.I.E Fundraiser for New Playground

Tickets are now available for the 4th annual PIE Auction Fundraiser! Make plans to join us Friday, February 21 at Sun Valley Barn. Doors open at 5:00 pm and a dinner prepared by Country Catering will be served at 6:00 pm. Attendees will have a chance to bid as a table on 40 delicious pies during the pie auction. This year's funds will be directed towards playground updates at PCGS including brand new play structures, a safety surface and additional activities for all students! The new playground plans will be unveiled publicly at the PIE auction!

A generous PC supporter will match every donation you make at the PIE Fundraiser, up to \$100k total. Let's fill Sun Valley Barn...purchase your tickets today!

Tickets are \$25 per person and table sponsorships are available for businesses or individuals. Buy your tickets at the PCGS office or online at: <https://tinyurl.com/25PIEnight>

## FALL BUSINESS DRIVE

Thank you to the following businesses for their generous support of Pella Christian Schools through our Fall Business Drive:

Allen & Neumann Family Dentistry  
Bank Iowa  
Cabinet Design Of Pella  
Carson Wealth Pella  
Central Iowa Roofing & Bldg Supply Inc  
Co-Line Manufacturing, Inc.  
Cranberry Stone Bakery  
Dahm Dental, P.C.  
De Bruin Farms, Inc.  
De Ruiters Lawn Equipment  
De Vries Electric  
Dutch Meadows  
Earth Works Inc.  
Financial Architects  
Franklin Street Clothing

Home Realty  
Hurk Underground Technologies, Inc  
Intellicients  
J & A Construction  
Key Cooperative  
Knoxville Dental Center, P.C.  
Langstraat Auto Body Inc  
Lauterbach Buick GMC  
LDJ Manufacturing  
Leighton State Bank  
Lely North America, Inc  
Marion County Bank  
N & C Rozendaal Farms, Inc.  
North Creek Antiques  
Pella Car Care

Pella Car Care  
Pella Heating & Cooling  
Pella Motors, Inc.  
Pence-Reese Funeral Home  
Randall Roofing  
Recker Dental Care  
Scooters Coffee  
Tamory Hall  
Tony's Auto Parts, Inc.  
Tulip City Agency Ltd.  
Ulrich Ford-Lincoln  
Van Dyk-Duven Funeral Home  
Van Maanen, Sietstra, Meyer, P.C.  
Vander Ploeg Bakery  
Vermeer Corporation



# The Power of Endowment Giving

By Pella Christian Endowment Committee

Pella Christian Grade School and High School both have long standing endowments started years ago by supporters with vision and foresight to make a long-term impact.

**How does it work?** Every dollar given to the endowment is invested. The original dollar remains untouched for the future. The investment earnings are available to cover needs as they arise or remain invested for further growth. Assuming a 5% annual draw, a \$10,000 initial gift results in a perpetual \$500 annual gift to the school. After 10 years, the original \$10,000 generated an additional \$5,000 for the school. Multiply this by hundreds of thousands of dollars, and you start to see the size of the impact!

**How are endowments managed?** Both endowments were managed by the school Finance Committees. In 2018 the Pella Christian High School Board created an Endowment Committee distinct from the board to allow more targeted management and investment growth. Following the merger, the grade school endowment will move under the management of this committee. Earnings from each endowment will be directed toward the needs of each specific campus.

**Where does the money come from?** Much of our endowment giving comes from bequests. Supporters of Christian education often designate the endowment as a beneficiary in their will or tithe on their final estate. Others give annually or periodically. A gift to the endowment is truly an intergenerational act of generosity. It's a form of time travel, blessing the generations yet to be with resources from today.

**How can I help?** If you're in a life-stage contemplating estate planning, remember the institutions that shaped you, shaped your children, and will shape our future. Consider allowing a portion of your acquired wealth to live on through them in an endowment. There are tax benefits to doing so and professionals to help make this easy. The Endowment Committee is looking for a new board member to start in 2025. To learn more, contact Bryce Arkema at 641-629-2224.

The cost of education exceeds what we charge in tuition. Gifts to the general fund, to capital projects, and to other areas empower us to do more for our students and their faith formation. The Endowment is another way you can support sustainable Christian education for future generations.



## Pella Christian FFA Chapter visits Iowa Capital

Seven members of the PC FFA Chapter had the opportunity to go to the capital for the legislative symposium. The group listened to speakers including the Iowa Cattlemen lobbyists and the president of Farm Bureau and met with Senator Ken Rozenboom and Representative Barb Kniff McCulla.

## Dates of Interest:

February 11 - K-2 Winter Concert

February 21 - 4th Annual Partners in Education Dinner and Pie Fundraiser

February 27 - HS Winter Concert

March 25 - 5th-8th Grade Spring Band Concert

March 28-29 - HS Spring Play

April 16 & 17 - A Grand Day

April 24 - 3rd-5th Grade Musical

For a full calendar of activities, please visit our website at [www.pceagles.org/calendar/](http://www.pceagles.org/calendar/)