



**TRAIN UP A CHILD  
IN THE WAY  
HE SHOULD GO**

**“GOOD MORNING, MRS. DARTMANN;” THAT’S HOW IT ALL BEGAN.**

Our oldest daughter, Madison, was enrolled in Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church’s preschool. At that time, Concordia’s elementary school (Bread of Life) was also operating out of the church building. The preschool classrooms were located directly across the hallway from Mrs. Dartmann’s kindergarten classroom. Over the course of the year, as our daughter would be dropped off for preschool by my husband, a relationship began between our family and the Concordia staff. This relationship eventually led to all three of our children attending and graduating from Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha.

My husband, Kirk, has a 34 year background as a public school teacher. His father’s career was spent as a principal and teacher in public high schools. If my husband was impressed by the faculty, staff, administrators, and environment, I knew it was the right choice for our children. Kirk can describe how walking down a school hallway or into a classroom is different when God is the focus. That difference starts with the heart of teachers who lead and nurture children 5 days a week. With God at the center of the classroom, a teacher is able to live out their faith by praying with students and incorporating His word into everything from curriculum

to recess games. Those early interactions with staff provided assurances to us about a familiar environment, one where the Holy Spirit was welcomed.

As young parents, however, we were in the unfamiliar territory of Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go.” While Concordia was helping in that training, that was only part of our child’s weekly life. Concordia gave us the opportunity to develop relationships with other like-hearted parents and grandparents and to be part of the body of Christ. While we were waiting for school to be dismissed, for concerts to start, for practices to end, or for games to be played, God gave us opportunities to share life and gain wisdom and insight from other parents. Volunteer opportunities like coaching, serving as a “lunch lady”, being a congregational delegate, assisting with the gala, working as a substitute teacher, and volunteering on the Concordia Foundation Board have all provided opportunities for Kirk and I to further these relationships and witness God at work in big and small ways. We are grateful for what God taught us through others and for guidance through the unfamiliar territory of parenting in the various stages of our children’s lives.

And so stepping out in faith those many years ago, we enrolled our first child in kindergarten, and reenrolled each year after. God provided volunteer time and tuition treasures one year at a time over nineteen years to help us meet our tuition commitment. We feel strongly about continuing to support the mission of Concordia with our time, talents, and treasures. Our three children are now adults and we treasure God’s promise in Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.” We thank the Lord, for the opportunity to raise three of His children and the blessings upon our entire family realized through our experience at Concordia Lutheran Schools.

*A Sister In Christ, Gail Hawkins*



## *Why We Support Concordia*

**Tom and Barb Mueller** have made it a practice to continue to support Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha long after their children have graduated. This commitment was modeled in Tom's life by his parents, Glen and Mary, who were both Lutheran school teachers. He learned from them that having the ability to teach children about Jesus in the classroom is so important for that child and for the community.

When Tom and Barb's children were young and they lived in Fremont, Glen and Mary were part of a feasibility study that took place in preparation for the establishment of Concordia. Once Concordia opened its doors, Tom and Barb's first child Elizabeth started in 9th grade. This meant daily drives to and from Omaha. Over time, the family moved to Omaha and their next two children, Matt and Becky, would also be enrolled. Today, Matt is a Math and Engineering teacher at Concordia and leads Robotics Club. In the fall of 2021, Matt's first child, Thea, started Kindergarten at Concordia Academy.

While the Muellers had children enrolled at Concordia they volunteered in many roles; they were leaders in the Booster Club and were instrumental in building the first ever concession stand for football and soccer. For seven years, Barb also worked for Concordia as an assistant to the Activities Director. Even though their children have long since graduated, the Muellers have continued their financial support of the school and stepped up as leaders

on the recent Forward With Faith capital campaign. When asked why they continue to invest in Concordia, their answer was natural and had two points. First, they continue their support because they want children to have a relationship with their Lord, they want to foster that faith. Secondly, they value the Christian environment found at Concordia, they believe that to be around adults who live out their faith each day is powerful. Tom says, "the various opportunities like Faith in Action Days are building blocks for students to gain confidence in how to make a difference in the world around them." Again, this mindset was modeled for Tom when he was young, his father Glen (who is 88 years old) continues to send financial support to his Lutheran high school in Milwaukee.

Tom and Barb encourage parents and grandparents to continue to support Concordia with prayers, gifts of time and finances. They have used the services of Craig Stirtz with the LCMS Foundation to help them with their estate planning and this has helped them be intentional in their giving. In closing, the couple shared that they knew they had made the right choice when their oldest daughter was graduating and they attended the Senior Blessing service. Barb explained, "we looked at each other as we drove home and we agreed that the service was an amazing experience and we had made the right choice. We knew our kids were exactly where God wanted them to be."

## **Celebrate the Season!**

Please plan to join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior this Christmas season! Concordia Academy will hold their Christmas concert on Tuesday, December 7th at 7:00pm in St. Mark's sanctuary. At the Jr.-Sr. High School, the Jr. High will perform on Thursday, December 16th at 7:00pm and the Sr. High will perform the next night, December 17th, at 7:00pm. Free will offerings will be taken at these Christmas Concerts.



# Why I Serve: Charista Baye

As an alumni of Concordia's second graduating class, in 2006, and now a parent of a kindergartener at the Academy, Charista Zehnder Baye has witnessed many changes within the school system. Charista's experience as a student was so positive and rewarding that she and her husband, Peter, have decided to invest in their children's future, both financially and spiritually, by choosing Concordia for their children's education. In addition, she has committed to serve on the school board as a way to connect with others and be involved in the future of Concordia.

Charista came to Concordia for 9th grade after attending middle school at a large public school. At that time, the school was so small that all students interested in sports played every sport. The small student population also impacted friendships. Charista shares that students were friends with everyone,

even students who had very different interests or personalities. This was great preparation for adulthood. An aspect of Concordia that she treasures was her relationship with teachers. She remembers them truly investing into her life and speaking truth to her about her choices even outside of the classroom. "They took an interest in who I was and where I was headed," Charista said.

The Baye's wanted their children in classes with students whose families are like minded and share the same values. "The Academy has been recognized as a Blue Ribbon School and is a place where Jesus is taught and the academics are challenging. It's a good choice," says Charista.

She made the decision to get involved on the school board because she enjoys looking at the big picture, strategic planning, and having a voice. She is also happy to represent a younger dynamic and women in leadership. Charista is excited about the future of Concordia, and said, "I would love to see the school have both the elementary, junior and senior high school on the same campus, continue to grow strong sports programs, have our student population reflect more diversity, have a bigger impact on our city, and most of all share Jesus with more children!"

## Named Scholarships at Concordia

Did you know that Concordia has many annual named scholarships? These include: *The Rev. Dr. David Block Scholarship, The Gabe Rademacher Scholarship, The Bill and Berniece Grewcock Scholarship, The Jean Morris Scholarship, The Leona Kernen Memorial Scholarship, Lloyd S. and Helen M. Jones Endowed Scholarship, The Walter and Nancy Griffith Graduate Scholarship, The Walter and Nancy Griffith Scholarship Endowment, The Darlene Schwarting Memorial Scholarship and Pacific Hills Lutheran Church/Simonsen Scholarship Endowment.* These scholarships make a huge difference in the lives of our school families. Funds donated are invested by the Concordia Foundation and a portion is dispersed as a student scholarship each year. Could this be something you would like to set up? If so, please contact Rob Cooksey at 402-445-4000.

## MEET MARIO ALEJANDRE

We are pleased to share that Mr. Mario Alejandre has been hired for the role of Advancement Officer. Mario joins the team to fill a vacancy left by Steve Gedwillo's transition last spring. He is a school parent and an ordained Lutheran minister who has a passion for Christian education and God's people. Inviting people to participate in and support the vision that Mario is passionate about is one of his many gifts that he will utilize in this new role. "I am committed to ensuring that we continue to form young men and women who embody the Kingdom at 156th & Fort, and by the power of the Spirit, move into the spaces wherever it is needed," says Mario.



## RECORD ENROLLMENT!!

Concordia has continued to welcome one new student almost every week this school year. Just recently, we broke the school record for student enrollment with 565 students between our two campuses! To God Be the Glory!

**GIVING  
TUESDAY**

Please consider supporting the Concordia Omaha scholarship fund on Giving Tuesday, November 30th! If using Venmo you can find us at CLSO-Mustangs or go to [ConcordiaOmaha.org](http://ConcordiaOmaha.org) to give. If you have any further questions, please contact the school at 402-445-4000.

**CONCORDIAOMAHA.ORG**

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LUTHERAN SCHOOLS OF OMAHA  
FOUNDATION **FALL 2021**

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- Mr. Rob Cooksey*
- Mr. Aaron Sailer*



**SAVE THE DATE**  
*for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual*  
**Concordia Gala**

**FRIDAY**  
**MARCH 4**



**Homecoming**  
**Tradition**

On Friday, September 24<sup>th</sup> during the Homecoming football game a tradition was recognized between the Academy and Jr.-Sr. High School campuses. Before the game officially began, the kindergarten students met the senior class symbolically in the middle of the field where they received a new Bible from the Seniors. This tradition started three years ago and has become a very special part of our Homecoming celebrations. What a great way to encourage these young children to value God's word, and to remind the Seniors that they are the leaders of tomorrow.