

## In Awe of the Sacred: How one HMS Alumna's Enrichment Cluster experience inspired her vocation

***"We loved that she was more concerned about us becoming husband and wife above all else. She is a light and we knew that was something we needed as we stepped into our marriage together – someone who cared for us as people."***

– Brittany Graham (Emma Harling Photography bride)

Emma (Hurst) Harling '14 photographed 22 weddings this year, more than half of which took place out of state. Her curiosity in photography began when she picked up her mother's point-and-shoot camera as a child. That curiosity was nurtured in middle school through HMS's Photography Enrichment Cluster where she was free to explore and grow in her skills with others. HMS began offering Enrichment Clusters 20 years ago in an effort to give students of all academic levels the opportunity for enrichment. For seven weeks in the spring, students gather in multi-grade-level groups to learn



7<sup>th</sup> grade Emma (pink sweatshirt) taking photos from different perspectives with the rest of the 2013 Photography Cluster (L to R): Sari Smoker '13, Janessa Eshleman '15 and Malise Landes '15.

about a shared interest, like photography. Emma says this was significant for her because, "For the first time, I had a weekly time to practice photography with others who enjoyed it as much as I did."

As a natural entrepreneur, Emma credits Mrs. Quirk, middle school teacher and librarian, as a significant cheerleader and role model. She remembers thinking, "If Mrs. Quirk can teach photography to a bunch of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, I can be creative and make it [photography as a business] work." By the time she graduated 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Emma had taken some of her classmates' 8<sup>th</sup> grade photos. In high school, her photography began to grow into a business. She attended and photographed her first wedding when she was sixteen and as a senior, she shot 20 senior photo sessions in just two weeks!

Today, Emma is a Philadelphia-based luxury wedding photographer documenting wedding celebrations. Traveling around the U.S., she captures joy and relationships through an editorial, emotional feel. She believes one of the reasons she has been so successful stems from her bold social media witness. She shares that 80 percent of her clients are believers who share her view of God's design for marriage.

***The mystery of marriage as a picture of God's heart for the Church awes Emma and***



From her website: [emmaharlingphotography.com](http://emmaharlingphotography.com),  
*"Wedding days are special because you're committing to serve and love your spouse. Documenting your emotions from that promise is how I view my role as a wedding photographer."*

***she desires to preserve the vintage nature of God's picture of marriage.***

She credits both her parents for helping her get to where she is now. They modeled having a heart for people, service, and excellence in everything they did, from parenting and encouraging Emma in her dreams to running their own business. They showed her how to minister to people in the business world. She is also thankful to HMS teachers for coming alongside her parents by pouring into her life. The "one big family" feel and the way her teachers took time to know and support her are some of her fondest memories of her time at HMS, a foundation that continues to ground her today as an adult.

# Creating Space for Awe, Wonder & Curiosity at HMS

**School should be about creating an opportunity for students to experience Awe, Wonder & Curiosity in learning.**

Many of us can recall a time when we were trying to learn something and we just weren't getting the concept. After we worked at it in different ways, suddenly a light bulb came on and we had mastered a new skill or understood a concept! A major part of learning is not being afraid to try and to learn from our mistakes.

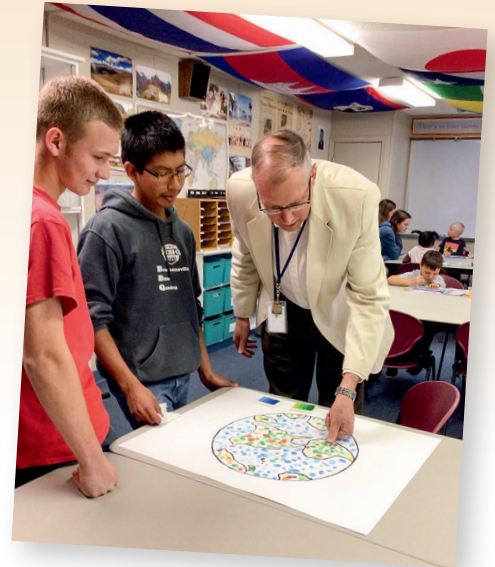
One of HMS's core values is believing each person is both a learner and a teacher. Our goal is to create a safe environment where students can ask the right questions in the learning process. It is a privilege to notice this happening regularly in HMS classrooms. Recently, I observed this in action as:

- Kindergarten students worked in small groups to develop reading, decoding and comprehension skills.

- Second grade students worked in three groups to learn math (online computer option, fun math games in small groups and a group working with the teacher).
- A fourth grade class read a drama script and began planning who would fill various character roles as they worked together to create a production.

At HMS, students discover how to ask the right questions as they experience the *Awe, Wonder & Curiosity* of learning under the guidance of caring teachers. As students learn new things, we want to keep them focused on **Psalm 25:4** where we are encouraged to ask, **"Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths."** Thank you for your continued prayers and support as the school year unfolds.

— **Miles Yoder**  
**Administrator/Principal**



God's truly got all of HMS in His hands! Mr. Yoder, with (L to R) Weston Martin '27 and David Umble '27, recently participated in a Venture Program-led school-wide art project based on this year's theme, "He's got the whole world in his hands." The community art piece they created of planet earth is colored by every student's thumb print, including Mr. Yoder's.

**Handprints** is published twice a year and distributed to friends of Hinkletown Mennonite School.

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**Hinkletown Mennonite School**

272 Wanner Road, Ephrata PA 17522

**Email:** office@hinkletownschool.org

**Website:** www.hinkletownschool.org

**Administrator/Principal:** Miles Yoder

**Director of Advancement:** Maria Chase

**Director of Enrollment:** Melissa Beidler

**HMS Board of Trustees:**

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## Help Spread the Word: Enrollment is now open for the 2024-2025 school year!

Families can schedule a visit to tour the campus, see classes in action and meet with teachers.



Call **717-354-7100**

or email

Melissa Beidler, Director of Enrollment at

**mbeidler@hinkletownschool.org**

to schedule an appointment

## All Creatures Great & Small: Nurturing Curiosity by Embracing the Unfamiliar

I have always enjoyed animals of all kinds, but especially those that are often seen as “unlovable” to many people. I designed my middle school classroom to be a place where wonder and curiosity are encouraged, where a variety of animals including turtles, lizards, snakes and insects live.

Many elementary students have visited my classroom over the years. During one visit, a student was visibly afraid when I brought the corn snake out, but after seeing her classmates’ excitement, she realized that it was safe and decided to hold it. The curiosity and wonder

inspired by God’s creatures in my classroom can be a profound life lesson; we are often eager to love and embrace what is comfortable and familiar, and fearful of what is not. **By enlarging our perspective and learning to appreciate all of God’s creatures, we can open our hearts and learn to love “the least of these” as Jesus called us to do.**

— **Michael Lichty**  
*Patron and Middle School Teacher*



Mr. Lichty recently introduced Flint the Bearded Dragon to first grade students (L to R) Nathan Akinin, Desi Martin, Annaleigh Coblenz, Hudson Lusk, Kai Lopez-Pham and Addie Horning. They cheered Flint on as he ate a cockroach!

## Imagination & Dedication Result in Wonder-ful Middle School Drama

Imagining yourself as a barnyard animal in front of a crowded audience takes a combination of curiosity and courage, but middle school students were up to the task as they presented *Charlotte’s Web* last winter. “You just make sure you are completely in character and not yourself,” said Eve Martin, who played Wilbur the pig. **Lily Zimmerman agreed, saying that one of her strategies was to work at memorizing her lines so well that she could focus on imagining being her character, Charlotte the spider.** Eve and Lily also credited their acting community with helping them take on this challenge – directors giving freedom to add personal touches to their roles, castmates they could rely on in each scene, and costumes so good that Eve went on stage thinking, “I’m no longer Eve... I’m Wilbur now!”

— **Jeremy Horning**  
*Alumnus, Patron, and Middle School Coordinator*



At the climax of *Charlotte’s Web*, Wilbur the pig, played by Eve Martin, and Charlotte the spider, played by Lily Zimmerman (both current eighth graders), figure out how to rescue Charlotte’s unborn babies.

## Wonder Leads to Appreciation: Dual Enrollment Opportunities for Venture Program Students

**Describe the dual enrollment opportunities you have through the Venture Program.**

In Venture, we have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment classes at a number of colleges, including Lancaster Bible College (LBC). I am so grateful to be able to attend LBC as a Jump Start student. Owen, Miles and I took “Interpreting the Bible” because it’s a prerequisite for other Bible classes at LBC.

— **Matthew Degan, ‘25**

**How has this class helped you grow in your love and understanding of Scripture?**

I can now confidently say that I am more deeply rooted in Scripture, because I know how to read it properly. I will always remember the Interpretive Journey (the process we used to understand the Bible). It has helped me to delve into Scripture with an open heart and better understand the Biblical narrative as a whole. I have found that I want to read Scripture more now that I know that I can understand it.

— **Owen Chase, ‘25**



(L to R) Matthew Degan ‘25, Miles Rissler ‘24 and Owen Chase ‘25 share at Pastors’ Day about their dual enrollment experience at LBC.

**From Dr. Samuel Harbin’s faculty page on Lancaster Bible College’s website**

“I want my students to deeply appreciate the importance of the gospel for every aspect of their life and ministry.”

~ Dr. Harbin



HMS Throwback to the 2013 Robin Hood Production (L to R): Logan Sensenig ‘15 as a soldier, Braydon Martin ‘13 as Friar Tuck, Malise Landes ‘15 as Beth, Dustin Becker ‘13 as Robin Hood, Maxwell Gehman ‘13 as Sheriff of Nottingham and Brynn Youndt ‘13 as Lady Merle.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

HMS Middle School Performing Arts  
presents:

**ROBIN HOOD**

**Friday, March 1, 2024**

Dinner Theater: 5:30 pm  
reservations required

**Saturday, March 2, 2024**

Shows: 2:00 pm & 7:00 pm  
reservations recommended

**TICKET SALES OPEN IN FEBRUARY**

## Alumni Spotlight: Jeremy Snader, HMS Second Grade Teacher

*"It's fun to look back, and imagine myself in these classrooms and these hallways. It's surreal to think 20 years ago I was a first-time student, and now I'm teaching here."*

Jeremy Snader '12 attended HMS from Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, followed by Garden Spot High School. He graduated from Lancaster Bible College with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education in 2020. Coming full circle, he is currently in his first year teaching 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at HMS.

Reflecting on being a student at HMS, he shared, **"The teachers were, 100% the best part of being at school!** They were always so helpful and accommodating to my needs, especially with my disability." He also appreciated how they focused on hands-on learning activities and didn't just teach from a textbook. Jeremy has a twin brother who also attended HMS and they were always together in every class, but had unique and different interests. Enrichment Clusters gave them both a chance to branch out more, and explore their own individuality and curiosities. As a student, he enjoyed the Kites, Bird-Watching, and Graphic Design Clusters. While he always wanted to be a teacher, Jeremy also considered the idea of being a meteorologist! This year, he will have the chance to teach a cluster himself, related to weather experiments. "I have always been in awe of the weather, especially storms. I love how lightning shows God's

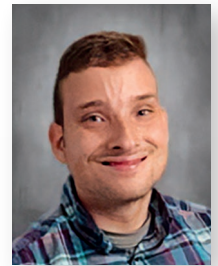
power. I hope to demonstrate a tornado in a bottle for the students, among other surprises."

From serving in his church as a Sunday School teacher, to working in a daycare for three years, Jeremy has always loved working with children. **"There's something about children**

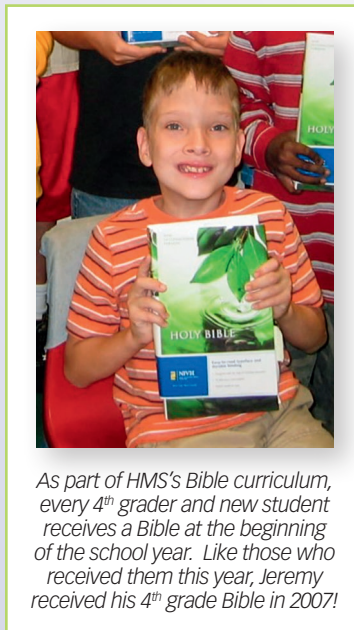
**that doesn't intimidate me. If you put me in front of 14 adults? No way! But children? No problem!" he said with a smile.** "I'm continually learning to be more patient and understand how to teach students at different ability levels by making a space for everyone to learn."

The transition to HMS from Jeremy's previous job was rather short. Even so, he never stressed about coming here as a new teacher. "I'm amazed at how quickly it happened for me. It's always been a dream of mine to come back and teach here someday. Now, I get the opportunity to share a wall with Mrs. Martin, who was my Kindergarten teacher! I'm still learning from her, now as a colleague. Everyone here has been so welcoming and supportive, with this being my first year. God made me aware of what I needed

to do in advance to prepare my classroom and lesson plans, and so far it's been going very smoothly. **I feel very in line with where God wants me to be."**



*In the yearbook again, this time as one of HMS's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers!*



*As part of HMS's Bible curriculum, every 4<sup>th</sup> grader and new student receives a Bible at the beginning of the school year. Like those who received them this year, Jeremy received his 4<sup>th</sup> grade Bible in 2007!*