

## Thank You!

- **150+** golfers joined our tournament April 29, raising more than **\$38,000** for student financial aid and the athletics program.
- **123** donors gave **\$27,570** to EMS during the Great Community Give on April 20 to help with auditorium upgrades (curtains and technical equipment).
- Three new endowments were set up through bequests. The Doris and Norvell Trumbo Endowment will fund science, technology, and engineering programming; the J. Mark and Virginia Martin Endowment will fund mission-supporting operations at EMS; and the EMES Gardening & Outdoor Learning Endowment was created in memory of Laban and Helen Mumaw '46 Peachey.
- Donors contributed **\$435,577** through the Virginia Education Scholarships Tax Credit program this school year for financial assistance to EMS students who qualify.

**Join other supporters!** Thank you to the supporters who encouraged us over the last year! Your gifts make it possible for us to join home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world. If you would still like to make a year-end gift, please visit [easternmennonite.org/support](https://easternmennonite.org/support).



## New Auction Plans!

**Fan the Flame live auction**, Friday, Sept. 23 at the Barn at Cross Keys, Keezletown. Catered meal and music by The Rain Pickers with Perry Blosser '14 on mandolin.  
**Online auction:** Sept. 17-26. Proceeds benefit EMS fleet upgrades. [easternmennonite.org/auction](https://easternmennonite.org/auction)

*Photo: Junior boys washed EMS buses to transport seniors to surprise banquet location. Photo by Debbie Katz*

## Homecoming: Oct. 14 and 15, 2022

### Come to Connect!

- Reunions for classes ending in 2 and 7; details coming from class reunion coordinators
- Friday evening picnic and Homecoming Concert
- Saturday:
  - Homecoming breakfast
  - Tours of upper and lower buildings
  - Girls volleyball and boys varsity soccer
  - Fun Run/Walk
  - Evening Bonfire

[easternmennonite.org/homecoming](https://easternmennonite.org/homecoming)



## STUDENTS OF COLOR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Thanks to two new gifts and a strong market in the first quarter of this year, the endowed Students of Color Scholarship grew to over \$250,000 by March 31 with 11 scholarships awarded from this fund for the 2022-2023 school year.

More at [easternmennonite.org/support](https://easternmennonite.org/support)

Today is written by Andrea Wenger, director of advancement, and designed by Lindsey Kolb. Editorial support from Trisha Blosser. Photos by Andrea Wenger unless otherwise noted. Athletic photos by coaches.

Paul Leaman, head of school

Send feedback to [today@easternmennonite.org](mailto:today@easternmennonite.org)

Find past issues at [easternmennonite.org/today](https://easternmennonite.org/today)

*In admissions processes, Eastern Mennonite School does not discriminate on the basis of any race, color, handicap, national or ethnic origin, or religion, and admits students to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.*

*The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the school's non-discrimination policies, including its Title IX policy: Andrea Wenger, director of advancement, 540-236-6026. For assistance related to Title IX or other civil rights laws, please contact OCR at [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov) or 800-421-3481, TDD 800-877-8339.*



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# TODAY

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Photo by Trisha Blosser

## A Nearly "Full House"

Do you know a student who would benefit from EMS? While grades K-7 are at capacity for fall 2022, we have openings for a few more students in grades 8-12. Contact Marsha Thomas, admissions counselor, to begin the summer admissions process. Email [admissions@easternmennonite.org](mailto:admissions@easternmennonite.org) or phone 540-236-6012.

To begin the application process for the '23-'24 school year, complete an inquiry form at [easternmennonite.org/admissions](https://easternmennonite.org/admissions).



Photo by Rebecca Yutzy



Fifth grade team building at Camp Horizons. Photo by Erika Gasho

## Doing Hard Work

I am grateful for the 362 K-12 students who were part of our learning community this year.

When that many students come together, there are inevitably times of conflict and behavior that cause harm to relationships. As teachers and administrators, we have a choice at times like this. We can choose a punitive response. Or, a restorative approach.

We choose as a school to invest the time and energy it takes to use restorative practices when relationships are harmed.

This time-consuming work is not easy. But each day I see our

teachers and principals taking time to model and teach Christ-like ways of addressing hurt between students and others. These lessons help us fulfill our mission to call students to faith in Jesus Christ and pursue compassionate service in the world.



**Paul Leaman, PhD**  
Head of School

## MISSION:

Eastern Mennonite School joins home and church in calling students to faith in Jesus Christ, academic excellence, personal integrity, and compassionate service in the world.

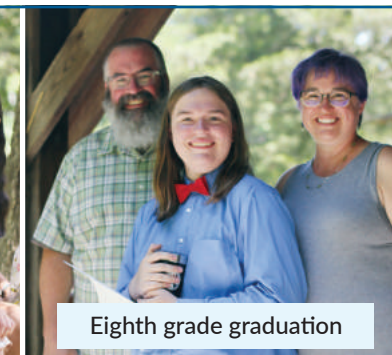
## VISION:

Eastern Mennonite School aspires to reflect Christ's light as a learning community where every student belongs, thrives, and lives God's call.

## FOLLOW US:



Eighth grade graduation



Fifth grade graduation



We celebrated 18 fifth graders and 33 eighth graders who graduated this spring in the school's auditorium and at Hillandale Park. Both ceremonies included words of affirmation for each student from teachers, the principal, and peers.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

FAITH COMMUNITY

THE ARTS

[easternmennonite.org](https://easternmennonite.org)



## Restorative Justice “RJ” at EMS

Using restorative practices involves creating space for people to listen fully. Sometimes that is a conversation between two or more students, facilitated by a teacher, counselor, or principal. All parties involved agree to the process before starting.

In larger groups, a circle process provides the opportunity for everyone to speak and listen. The speaker holds a “talking piece,” such as a stone or a ball, and passes it to the next person when they are done. There’s always the option to pass.

Eastern Mennonite Elementary School was founded in 2005 with an RJ lens woven into the fabric of this new school culture. That mindset has gained momentum in our school, spreading into the “DNA” of our middle and high school. Currently, restorative practices are gaining momentum not only at EMS, but in schools nationwide.



Fourth grade photo by Bethany Gibbs

### RJ at EMES

Teachers Heidi Byler (grade 3), Bethany Gibbs (grade 4), and Erika Gascho (grade 5) created materials to explain restorative justice for school parents as part of an assignment in a Restorative Justice in Education class at Eastern Mennonite University.

#### What does restorative mean? In students’ words...

- To fix things.
- To build trust back.
- To find a solution.
- To put the relationship back together.

#### How to build relationships Tips from students...

- Include others.
- Try to work things out.
- Have fun together.
- Be honest. Trust each other.
- Be able to share personal things.
- Help each other. Share and be kind.
- Spend time together.
- Talk; get to know each other.
- Learn each others’ likes and dislikes.
- Be there for each other, and stand up for each other.
- Be patient; allow space when needed.



Watch a video the teachers made. Use this QR code or go to [easternmennonite.org/rje](https://easternmennonite.org/rje)



### A 5th Grade Circle

“A class with a lot of drama.” That’s how the fifth grade class (pictured, left) described themselves earlier this year. But, during a class circle process – initiated and facilitated by the students – they passed a talking piece and listened carefully. At the end, they created a list of hurtful words they sometimes hear from classmates, and signed an agreement with alternative words, committing to do better and do less harm.

Photo by Erica Gascho

## Senior Class Culture Shift

Jodi Hertzler and Shannon Roth, senior class sponsors, looked at all of the traditions and practices of the class through an RJ lens, resulting in changes that built up the class culture and connections.

#### Examples:

- Students chose class officers in a way that felt less like a popularity contest and focused more on the gifts of each prospective leader.
- The entire class did a community service project together.

- Class meetings used a circle process if there was a conflict or situation that needed space for everyone to share and be heard.

- During class meetings, several students heard affirmations written earlier in the week for them by classmates, teachers, and staff.

- The final senior chapel invited each student to share a favorite memory from their time at EMS, offer advice to returning students, and share something about future plans.

“Over the year, we saw the class grow closer,” says Roth. “We have worked with the senior class for



seven years together, and these RJ practices gave us new practical tools.”

See Ms. Hertzler and Ms. Roth’s message for the class of ’22 during the final chapel of the year; search “Eastern Mennonite School chapel” on YouTube.



## Congratulations class of 2022

The school’s 104th commencement ceremony celebrating 36 graduating seniors was held Sat., June 4 on the auditorium lawn. Family and friends enjoyed the outdoor venue for a second year with fewer Covid restrictions than last spring.

Osheta Moore, pastor and author, called students to move out into the world with the assurance that God loves them deeply. She gave graduates a benediction, blessing them with the words “you are beloved” and encouraged them to remember this in the difficult moments to come.

Elisabeth Fink, salutatorian, commended her classmates for their truth seeking as each student explored their own faith in different ways. Sidney Rhodes read “Gratitude” by Mary Oliver and – with the same appreciation Oliver expressed – described each graduate’s unique gifts.

See a photo gallery, benedictory prayer by Amy Mumbauer, mother of Kate ’22 and board vice chair, and video link, at [easternmennonite.org/commencement](https://easternmennonite.org/commencement)

Tiffany Showalter Photography



## Flames News

The Flames had several “firsts” this winter and spring.

**Basketball:** The boys varsity basketball team brought home the first EMHS VISAA DIII state title in March, with a 64-56 upset win over top-seeded Fairfax Christian. **Trey Gillenwater ’22**, was named the VISAA DIII basketball co-player of the year.

**Golf:** The boys varsity golf team brought home the first EMHS VISAA DIII golf championship in May, shooting a 312 to defeat Veritas. **Ryan Slonaker ’24** won his second consecutive VISAA DIII state golf title as an individual.

*Team photo: (left to right) Coach Chris Slonaker, Andrew Lantz ’24, Drew Hatter ’24, Adam Hatter ’22, Schuyler Harmison ’22, Ryan Slonaker ’24, Grant Pennybacker ’22*

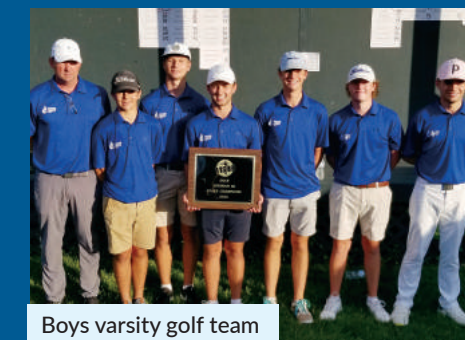
**Track and Field:** Our 4 X 800 relay team (**Jakob Gerlach ’23**, **Ricky Castaneda ’22**, **Eli Stoll ’22**, **Jedrek Sneary ’25**) won the VISAA DII race with a time of 8:36. **Jedrek Sneary ’25** finished third in the 800m and **Christian Meixner ’24** finished third in the shot put.



Basketball VISAA DIII state title win



Track and Field relay team



Boys varsity golf team



Trey Gillenwater and Coach Eli Crawford

**Soccer:** **Sarah Drooger ’24**, was named Blue Ridge Conference Player of the year, finishing the season with 26 goals and 12 Assists. The girls team fell in the VISAA DII quarterfinal, finishing the year with a 12-4-1 record.

#### “Coach of the Year” Recognitions:

- **Eli Crawford**, EMS first-year coach, was named VISAA DIII boys basketball coach of the

year with a 16-10 overall record and championship season.

- **Chris Slonaker**, local business person and EMS dad who is in his 8th year as boys varsity golf coach, was named VISAA DIII golf coach of the year.

- **Andrew Gascho**, athletic director and girls varsity soccer coach, was named Blue Ridge Conference girls soccer coach of the year.



## Cross Gift

Jerry Holsopple’s 500 lb. stained glass cross found a permanent home in the EMS auditorium foyer this spring. The 12’ by 6’ foot work had been in storage since 2009 when Holsopple, a visual and communication arts professor at Eastern Mennonite University, created it for Mennonite Youth Convention. The donation provides a beautiful focal point for the school and broader community.

More images and details at [easternmennonite.org/cross](https://easternmennonite.org/cross)