

**Class of 2008
Praises and Challenges
Before Moving On**

On Friday evening, June 6th, our Lehigh Valley Christian High School graduates enjoyed their last time together before embarking upon the next phase of their lives. For 33 of our 35 grads that next step is continuing their education at a college or university.

For the second time in three years the school also had co-valedictorians. Gwen Elizabeth Rapp and Benjamin Michael Kusiak shared this year's highest academic grade honors.

Gwen shared memorable remembrances of her elementary years at Bethlehem Christian School and her LVCHS years. "I believe the greatest way in which I have been blessed and have grown while at LVC is spiritually. I really appreciate the way all of our teachers work to incorporate biblical truths into their classes, even math. Specifically, my Bible classes with Mr. (James) VanDuzer have really helped me to mature in my understanding of the Bible and have reinforced to me that standing up for my faith is always the right thing to do." Gwen also shared a good bit of humor including a funny story about this year's Honors English class trip to New York City when the kids forgot they needed exact bus change and had to scrounge up change and seek donations from the passengers to come up with the last four dollars. "We must have been quite a sight, but we had a ton of fun!"

After thanking all in attendance, Ben referenced renowned author C. S. Lewis as the "Great Defender of the Christian Faith." Quoting a passage of writing from Lewis about the "devilish cunning of the enemies' plan" against believers, Ben noted that Lewis issued a warning for believers against those who would deceive them and attempt to draw them away from the faith. "As Paul said, 'I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.'" Ben then added, "There is a standard by which we will be judged. That standard is Jesus Christ."

This year the baton of leadership was passed from Principal Charles Bloomfield to first year Head of School, Robert J. Brennan, Jr. who officiated over the awards and recognitions program. Mr. Brennan publicly announced the end of summer retirement of Mr. Bloomfield and recognized his 43 years of service to the Christian school movement. He also noted that "Mr. B" recently was selected to receive the *ACSI Career Service and Achievement Award*, in recognition to individuals who have dedicated all or a significant portion of their professional career to Christian schooling.

This year's commencement included testimonies from Korean students' Eunhye "Grace" Lee and JuAh "Julia" Seok. Grace acknowledged how God had opened doors, letting her "come to America, even when the situation seemed impossible." She also shared how she had "gained beautiful relationships and learned to look at all the subjects in the school through a Christian perspective." Julia spoke about her conversion from Buddhism to Christianity when coming to America and the difficulty with her language struggles in grasping both English and studying the Bible. "I received many things including coming to America and experiencing God's love." She also shared how LVCHS had helped her to grow and although her future college choice was not certain, she didn't plan to worry. "I know God already has a plan and it will be the best for me."

Mr. Scott Ott, Executive Director, Victory Valley Camp, Zionsville, Pennsylvania delivered this year's Commencement Address. His address to the graduates centered on Chapter 2 in Philippians:

¹⁹I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. ²¹For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²²But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.

Mr. Ott offered the observation that in today's busy world "it is hard to find time to be genuinely concerned for people. In fact genuine authenticity is rare." However, Timothy was not too busy for people. He was truly concerned for the church at Philippi. In fact, there was no one else like him." He added, "This one character trait set Timothy apart and made him unique. Timothy simply followed Jesus. Jesus had chosen the church and chose to love the church and Timothy did the same." Elaborating further, Mr. Ott told the Class of 2008 that if "more believers would commit to such a commitment that the local church could be a true transformation agent with fewer faults found within it by the world." To accentuate his message, he told his wedding day story of his desire to be with his wife just before their wedding to pray one last time before marriage. When entering the room designated for the bride and her wedding party, his knees literally buckled seeing his wife in all her blinding, brilliant white adornment. Using this real life analogy, Mr. Ott urged the graduates to:

"Make the bride of Christ the object of your affections.
Love the church that Jesus loves."

Award Recipients:

Benjamin Kusiak

- The Board of Directors Award for All-Round Senior
- -Keystone Nazareth Charitable Foundation award for scholastic achievement, service & leadership
- Lehigh University Dean's Scholarship

Gwen Rapp

- The Donley Award for Excellence
- Cohen Feeley "Best of the Best 2008" Award
- Charles Dent Congressional Award for Citizenship

Kimberly McKeever.

- The LVCHS School Spirit Award
- LVCHS Scholar Athlete of the Year
- Samuel A. Green Scholarship-First Trust Bank
- Moravian College Trustee Scholarship

Melissa McFarland

Future Teacher Scholarship

Grayson (Gracie) Davis

The Barbara Bolich Memorial Award for the study of Music

Mathew Cooper

Calvin Presidential Scholarship

Donovan O'Rourke

Sun Devil Scholarship for outstanding non-resident student academic achievement

Young Eun Oh

Presidential Scholarship – Drake University

Rania Hanna

Comenius Scholarship

Gwen Rapp, Benjamin Kusiak, and Stephen Green

Lehigh University Scholars Program Participants

Awarded in Chapel

Kimberly McKeever and Jon Seiple

Girls and Boys Soccer Scholar Athletes

Brittany Castle

Recognized for spearheading the Worm Project to provide medication to children in Third World countries

Grace Lee

Simon of Cyrene Award for outstanding international student

Tirela Bennett

The Paul Award for dramatic improvement

LVCHS Christian Character Award recipients:

Leadership: *Colton Hinkl & Brittany Castle*
Servanthood: *Chris Lunger & Julia Craig*
Faithfulness: *Samuel Yandrofski & Gwen Rapp*
Encourager: *Philip Kochsmeier & Ashley Dean*
Courageous: *Christopher Mullane & Audrey Lea*

Future Graduate Plans

Student Name

College

Josiah Barr	Workforce
Tirela Bennett	Liberty University
Andrew Coffarelli	U.S. Naval Reserves/Northampton County Community College
Matthew Cooper	Calvin College
Grayson Davis	Philadelphia Biblical University
Amy Frei	Gordon College
Stephen Green	Moravian College
Kelli Gunkle	Lehigh Carbon Community College
Rania Hanna	Moravian College
Tiffany Hess	Eastern University
Kimberly Jones	Tentative: University of Japan
Rushi Kanani	Perdue University
Aaron Kochsmeier	Pennsylvania College of Technology
Benjamin Kusiak	Lehigh University
Eun Hye Lee	Pennsylvania State University
Alyssa Leto	Culinary Institute of America
Mark Lomastro	Geneva College
Kennon Matthews	Florida Institute of Technology
Melissa McFarland	Liberty University
Kimberly McKeever	Moravian College
Donovan O'Rourke	Arizona State University
Young Eun Oh	Drake University
Aaron Pilch	Undecided
Gwen Rapp	Philadelphia Biblical University
Briani Rendon	Eastern University
Britney Restivo	Eastern University
Lydia Reynolds	Eastern University
Jon Seiple	Rowan University
JuAh Seok	Howard University
Sunny Shah	Oakmont Community College
Timothy Steward	Widener University
Brittany Trawin	Warren County Community College
Brittany Troyer	Elim Bible Institute
Lecora Willis	Lehigh Carbon Community College
Allison Yost	Lehigh Carbon Community College

Photos



Benjamin Kusiak – Co-Valedictorian



Gwen Rapp – Co-Valedictorian



Ministry in Music: Donovan O'Rourke, Andy Coffarelli and Matt Cooper



**New Graduates!
Lydia Reynolds
and Brittany Troyer**



**Kay Jones in
Japanese kimono
at post-graduation reception**



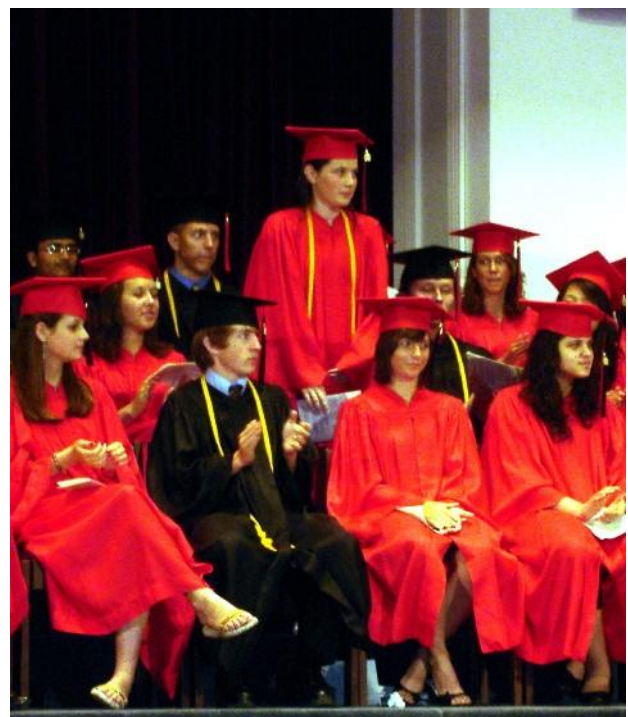
Aaron Kochsmeier and Co-Valedictorian Gwen Rapp



Grace Lee testifies before Class of 2008



Kelli Gunkle receives hug from Mom



Kim McKeever Award Recognition