



Valley Lutheran School
PREPARES • TRAINS • TEACHES

2025 *Ministry* Annual Report

Our Mission & Vision:

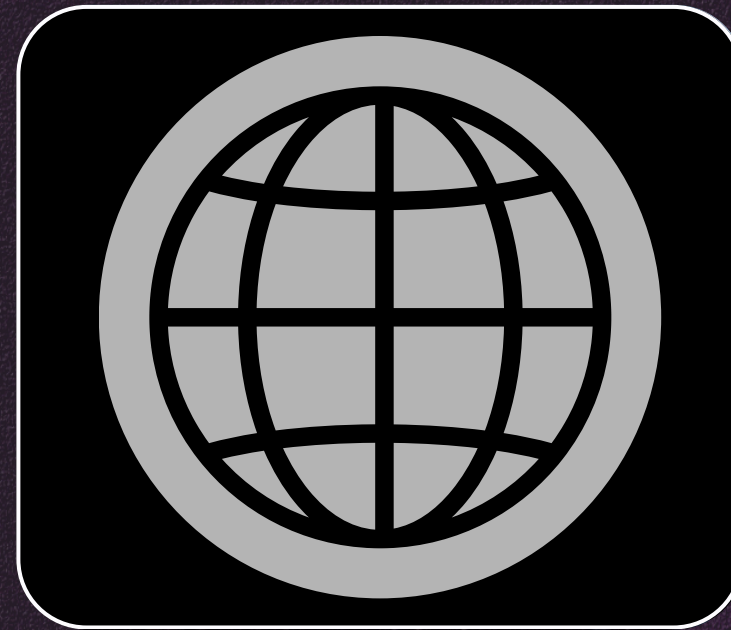
More Than A School



PREPARES

EPHESIANS 6:14-17

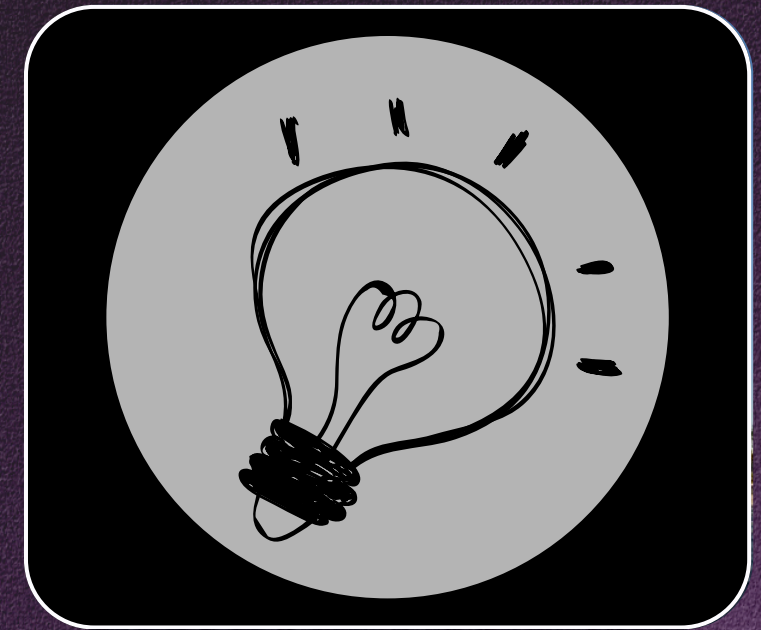
Valley equips His children with the truth as revealed in His Word.



TRAINS

GALATIANS 2:20

Valley equips His children to live out their faith and be strong witnesses for Christ in the world.



TEACHES

PROVERBS 9:9

Valley equips His children with academic excellence to fulfill God's unique calling in their lives.



Rev. Henry Pahlkötter

Executive Director

“At Valley, we value teaching God’s inspired and infallible Word, His truth, to our students K-12 in our Religion/Theology classes as well as across the curriculum (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, and more!) and even within our extra-curricular opportunities (Sports, Drama, Robotics, and more). We strive to teach Christ in all that we do, as this is one of the most important ways that Valley is *More Than A School*.

Equipping students with God’s truths prepares them for their lives this side of heaven and for eternity. It is important to us that they know Jesus is the **ONLY** Way, Truth, and Life. He is our hope and our future. We want them to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, how much Christ loves them, and to be equipped with God's armor as found in Ephesians 6:14-17.

”

PREPARES

Our Biblical *Foundation*

At Valley Lutheran School, the Bible is the cornerstone from which springboards all that we believe. Our school is grounded in the Lutheran faith, but Valley is open to students of all Christian faith traditions. Our student body represents 30+ churches throughout the Cedar Valley. Our school was founded and is supported by eight area LCMS and AALC Lutheran churches.

- We believe that Jesus Christ is our personal Lord and Savior.
- We believe that the Bible is the inspired and inerrant Word of God.
- We believe we are saved by grace (it's God's free gift) through faith alone (and not by our works).
- We believe that Jesus, being truly God and truly human, lived to fulfill God's Law for us. He died on the cross to pay the penalty our sins deserve, and He rose from the dead. All those who believe in Jesus as Savior will be given eternal life.
- We believe that there is one God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the three universal creeds of the Christian faith.
- We believe that baptism and holy communion are sacred rites that God uses to offer us His grace.



Abide

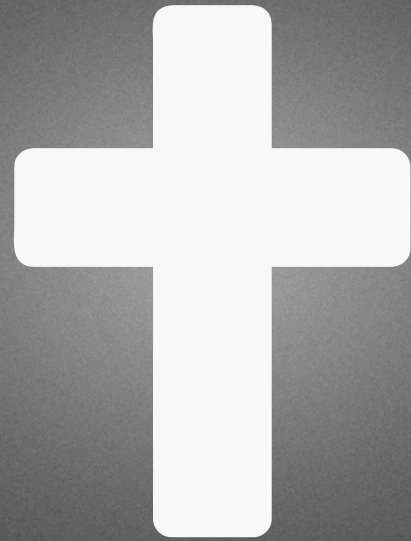
in Christ

1 John 4:13

Our ministry theme for this school year is “Abide in Christ” based upon 1 John 4:13: “By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.”. As Webster’s puts it, abide means “living or dwelling within”. We are invited in faith, through the workings of the Holy Spirit, to live or dwell within Christ as He first lives and dwells within us. In faith, we come to know Jesus as God’s Son and our Lord and Savior. In faith, we understand that Christ’s presence in our lives is essential as He is the only Way, Truth, and Life (John 14:6). It is only through Him that we have the assured hope of living with God now in this life and for eternity.

Crusader *Code*: Part 1

At Valley, we are blessed that we have the opportunity to look at character development through the lens of Scripture. Our Crusader Code guides us towards what rock-solid Christian character looks like.



CHRIST-CENTERED

Galatians 2:20
SEPTEMBER

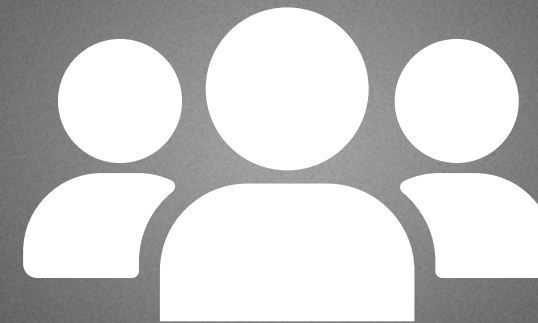
We are focused on Jesus Christ as Lord and place Him at the center of all we think, say, and do.



RESPECTFUL

Philippians 2:3
OCTOBER

We honor those around us by exhibiting care, concern, and consideration for their needs and feelings. We honor those in authority over us.



UNIFIED

1 Corinthians 12:12
NOVEMBER

We work together and treat each person as an important member of the body of Christ.



SERVANT-HEARTED

1 Peter 4:10
DECEMBER

We love serving God by serving one another and those in our community.

Crusader *Code*: Part 2

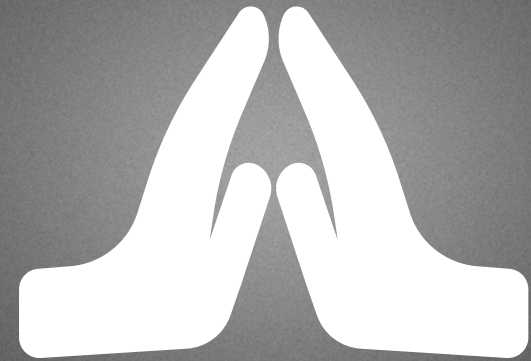
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APPRECIATIVE

Colossians 3:15
JANUARY

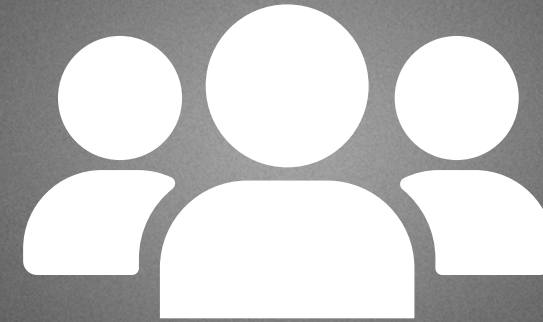
We are grateful and show thankfulness to those around us.



DEDICATED

1 Thessalonians 1:3
FEBRUARY

We are wholly committed to living out our faith in Jesus in both big and small ways.



ENCOURAGING

1 Romans 1:12
MARCH

We choose to support one another through all we say and do.



RESPONSIBLE

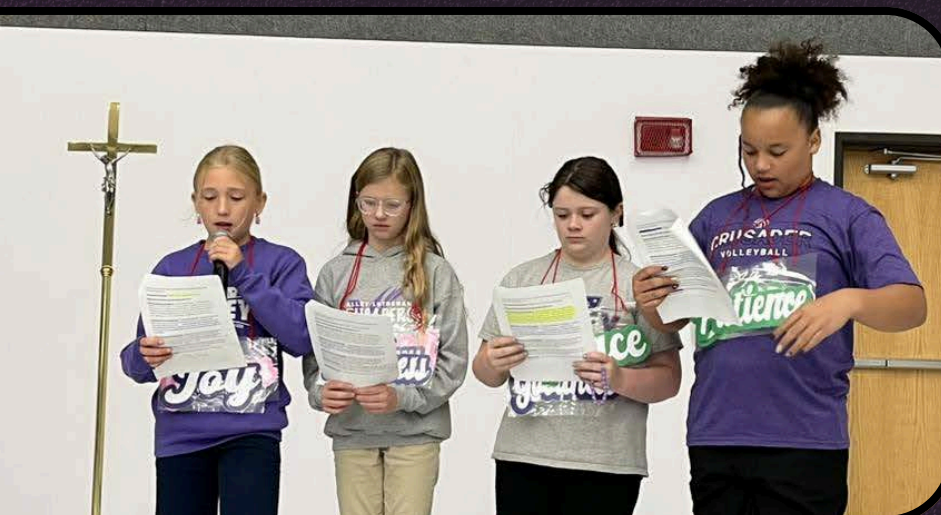
Proverbs 2:6-7
APRIL

We take control of our actions and seek to make sound decisions.

Abide & Bear Fruit

Elementary Highlight

Mr. Holtzman's 5th graders used the text of John 15:5 at our weekly chapel to remind the students that when branches stay connected to the vine, fruit grows. These fruits are not something we can create on our own by just trying harder - they are the result of the Holy Spirit working in our hearts. When people see these fruits in our lives, they can see Jesus living in us. The way we treat others, the words we use, and the choices we make become a way to show God's love to the world. On our own, we fail. But when we abide in Jesus, His Spirit produces fruit in us.



*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit."
John 15:5*





Lucas Tanney

6th - 12th Principal

“

As Christians, we are called to live out our Faith. At Valley, we strive to model for our students what a life lived by Faith looks like. We have Christian teachers who everyday pray with and for their students and who begin class with a devotion. We have Christian coaches who also pray with their teams and lead them in devotions. These individuals are able to model what dependance on our Heavenly Father through Faith looks like in all situations.

By incorporating Faith into every subject that we teach, we hope to show our students that there is no area of life that God does not care about and that every vocation is an opportunity to shine the light of Jesus into our world.

”

TRAINS

Why Chapel Families?

Mr.
Dubke's



Mr.
Kuhlmann's



Mrs.
L'Heureux's



Our students come together periodically in chapel families - either K-5th, weekly, or K-12th, about once a month. These mixed-age groups of students are an opportunity for the older students in the group to have practice at leading a family group. Depending on the activity, it allows them to lead the question time or service activity, resulting in practical experience in a controlled environment with walking out their faith. Mixed-age groups allow our younger students a safe place to explore their faith and see true leaders in Christ in action. We are blessed to have these mini families within the larger Valley family - another way we are able to keep the feel of our growing school small.

8th Grade Serves

Middle School Highlight

During their 8th grade class trip in April 2025 to Minneapolis, the members of our 8th grade class had a chance to serve at Second Harvest Heartland. This organization is a leading hunger-relief institution that partners with more than 1,000 food shelves and hunger-relief programs in Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Our 8th graders were a part of a larger group that helped sort and package over 20,000 pounds of potatoes!





Examples where students volunteered



Their home church



Northeast Iowa Food Bank



Cedar Bend Humane Society

2,068.5 *Service Hours*

From our youngest students to the oldest, we strive to instill a heart to serve within our students, demonstrating Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors. 2,068.5 hours were given back during the 2024-2025 school year!



New: *Senior Project*

Valley's Senior Project is a long-term capstone project that allows Senior students to showcase their interests and skills in unique ways. Introduced for our Class of 2026, our Seniors will have the chance to use their critical thinking and project management skills they've been honing throughout their entire education.

A Senior's project should be one that leaves a lasting impact on the organization that is being served. As part of this capstone project, students will be writing a project proposal, reflection papers, and giving a presentation at the conclusion of their service project.

In the meantime, here are a few clues to the GREAT projects that are in the works!





Brian L'Heureux

K - 8th Principal

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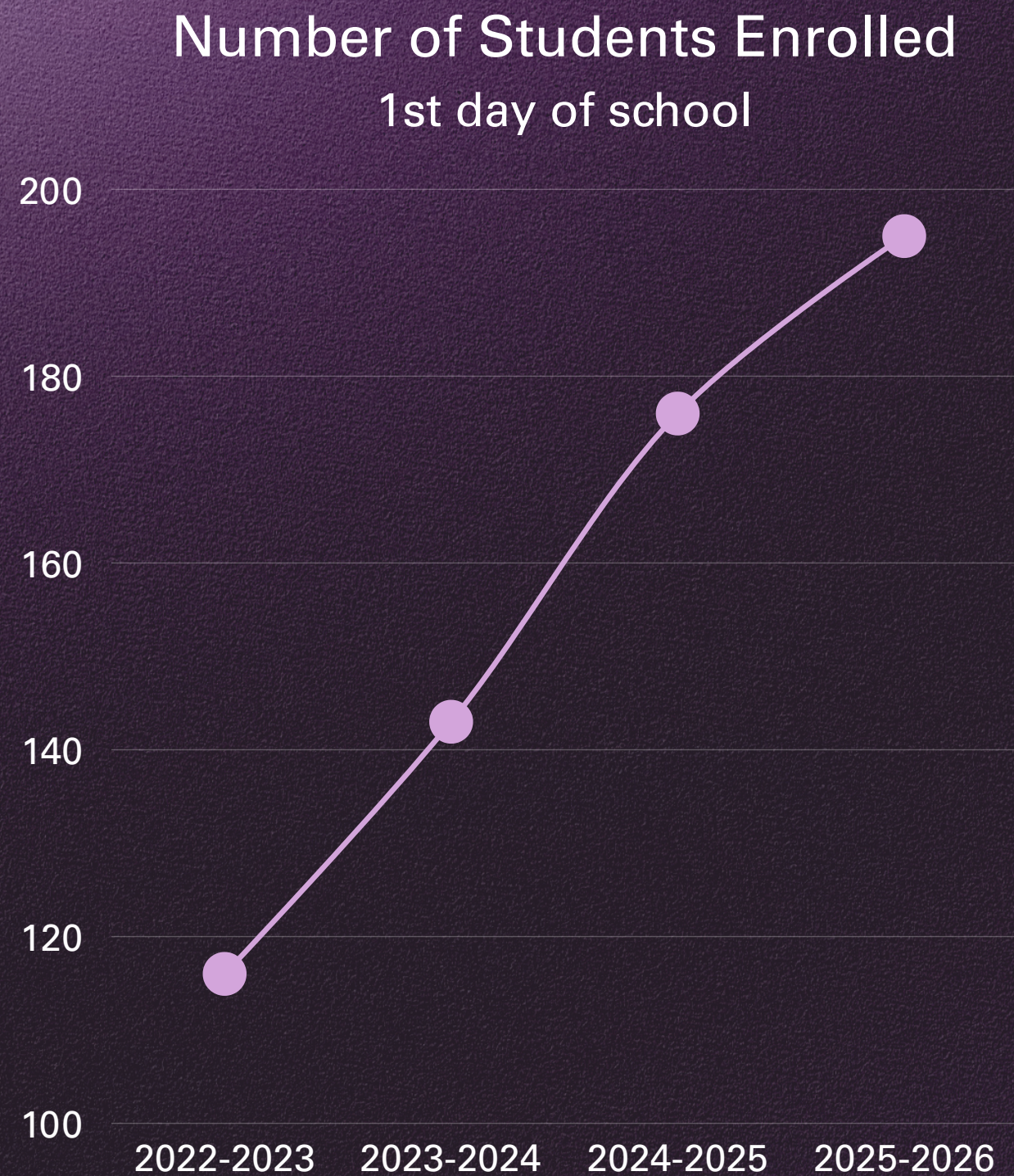
From a Christian perspective, teaching is not merely about attaining knowledge but about understanding God's truth as the foundation for all subject content. At Valley, a Biblical worldview is integrated throughout our curriculum, helping children see how every academic discipline - from science to history - connects to God's grand narrative of creation, fall, and redemption.

This holistic approach nurtures moral and spiritual growth alongside intellectual development. It teaches children core values like honesty, integrity, and compassion, helping them build a strong character. By learning to think critically through a Biblical lens, children are better equipped to navigate cultural ideas and use their education for God's purposes. It transforms learning into an act of worship and stewardship, where students use their God-given gifts for His glory.

”

TEACHES

Growing *Enrollment*



Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs) through the State of Iowa have made an education at Valley financially attainable for many more families. Over the last 4 years, we have seen an average of 30% growth year to year, school-wide. We anticipated a jump in our Kindergarten enrollment for this school year, leading us to open a second Kindergarten room.

Growth is not just happening at the natural entry point of Kindergarten. Our Middle School grew by a whopping 21% this year! We are so thankful for the opportunity to partner with parents and other caregivers to raise up leaders for Christ in our community.

Reasons parents chose Valley:

- Faith-filled curriculum
- Small class size
- Academically challenging
- “Traditional” subjects taught (math facts, spelling words, cursive handwriting, etc.)

Growing our *Teaching Team*



Our growing enrollment spurred the growth of our ministry team by 2.5 positions. We are blessed by the level of excellence these additions bring to our team.

Thank you for praying for these additions to our staff and ALL of Valley's faculty and staff.

K-12 *Spanish*

The 2024-2025 school year was the first in which Valley offered Spanish instruction to students in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

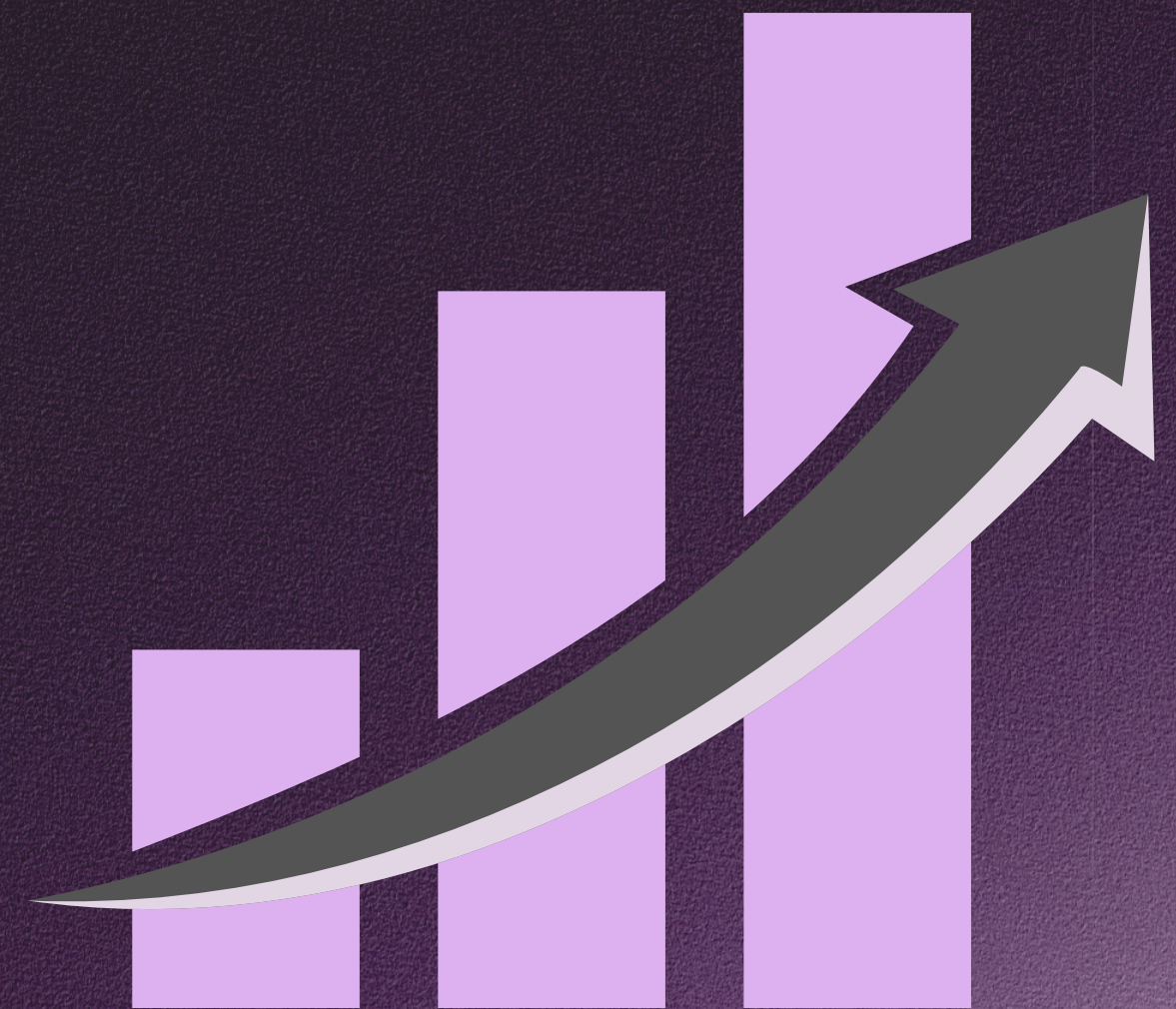
- In our Elementary, Spanish was added as a “specials” class once a week.
- Spanish 1, taken over two years as a Middle School student, has been added to the classes for which a student will receive high school credit.
- By allowing Spanish 1 credit during a student’s middle school years, High School students easily have room in their schedule for a second year to fulfill their graduation requirements. Many will go on to take Spanish 3 and 4.



MAP Testing: 3rd - 8th Grade

As part of our National Lutheran School Accreditation, we are required to administer a nationally standardized test. But beyond this requirement, a standardized test provides our administration and teachers with valuable information. Since they are a common benchmark, it ensures fairness by using the same questions and scoring for all students, which allows for accurate comparisons of performance and aids in making informed decisions about curriculum and instruction.

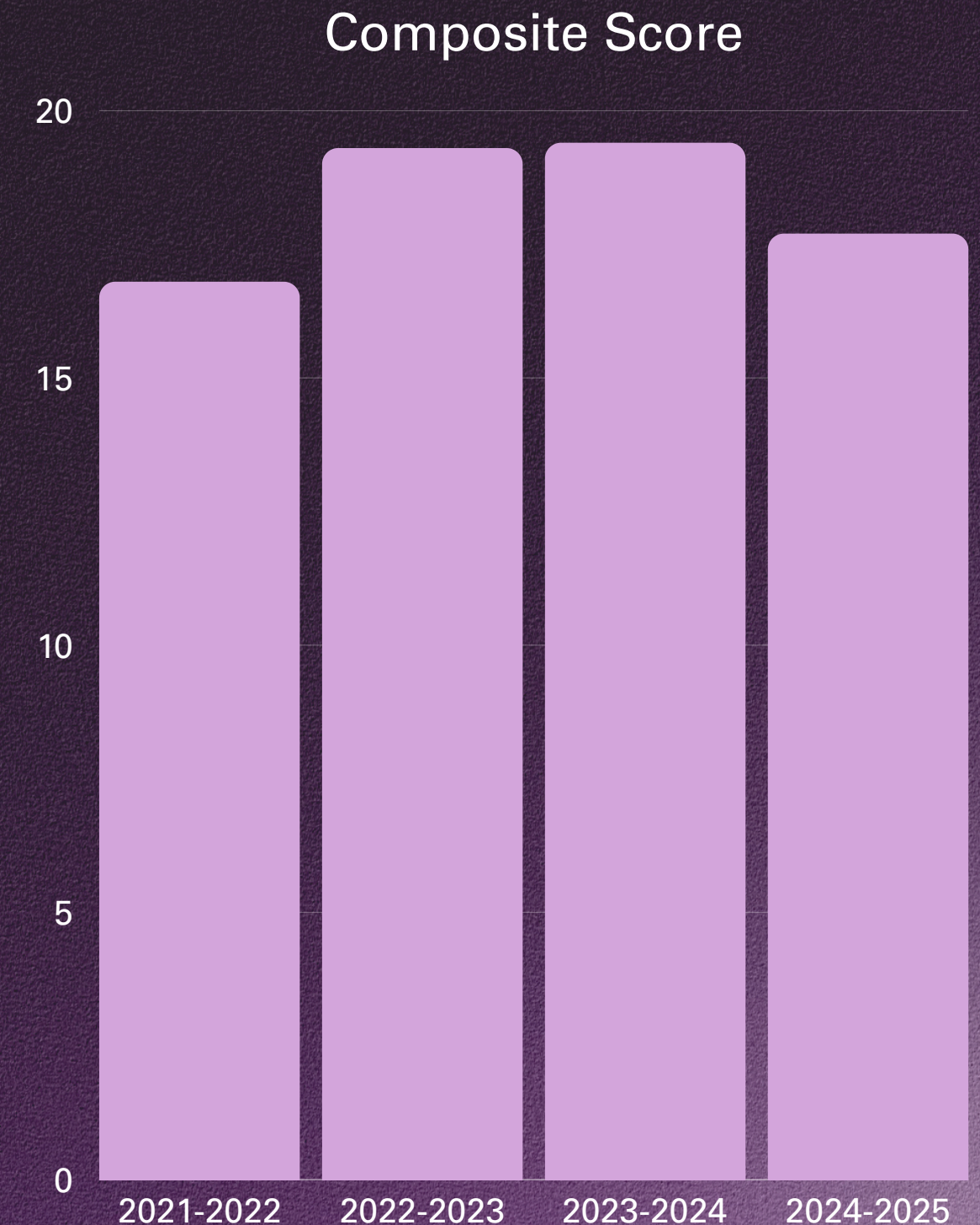
Since ESAs were established for the 2022-2023 school year, our 3rd - 8th grade classes have seen 63% growth. We transitioned to the national MAP test for these grade levels in 2022-2023 and have seen consistent growth in our students year to year - students who previously attended public school, were homeschooled, or have attended Valley since Kindergarten.



PRE-ACT: *Freshman & Sophomores*

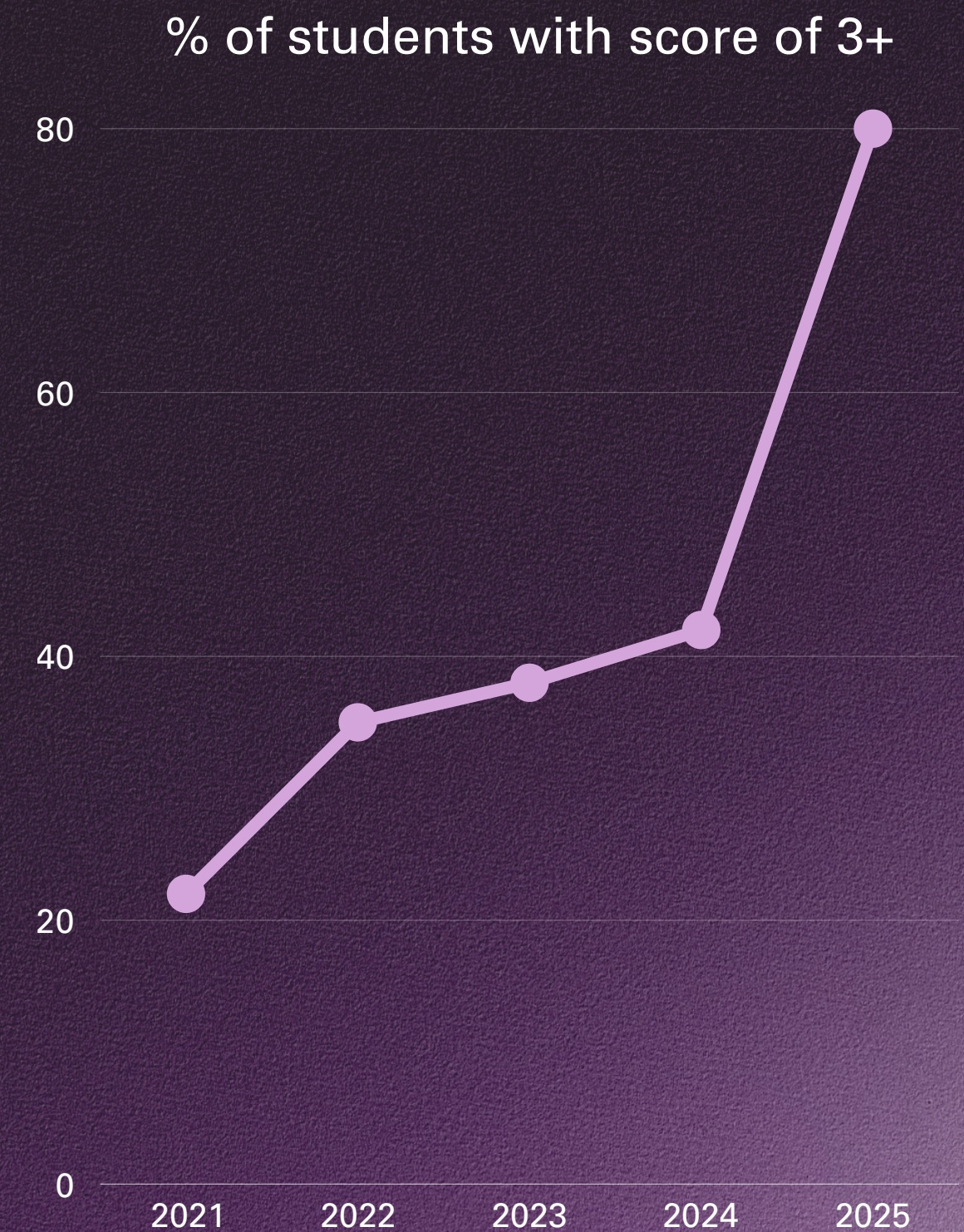
PreACT is an online assessment for freshman and sophomores, created by ACT, Inc., that mirrors the full ACT test in structure and content to predict students' future performance and college readiness. It assesses English, Math, Reading, and Science skills, providing feedback to help students and educators with ACT test preparation and academic planning.

PreACT scores predict how students will perform on the actual ACT test when taken as a junior or senior. Scores range from 1 to 36 and are a composite score (the average of the four areas covered).



AP *National Testing*

Students at Valley have the option to take seven Advanced Placement (AP) classes that conclude with a college-level exam. The exam is administered by the College Board. Across the country, high school students take it each May to earn college credit and placement at universities. The tests are scored on a 1-5 scale, with scores of 3 or higher generally considered passing, though each college decides the scores required for credit. AP classes and exams demonstrate a student's commitment to rigorous coursework and can help them skip introductory college courses, potentially saving time and money.



Extra *Curriculars*



We recognize that God gives unique talents and gifts to our students. We are excited to provide many opportunities that our students can explore to develop these gifts!



Middle School: 3rd - 8th

FLL Robotics*
Theater*
Student Council*
Chess Club*
Cross Country*
Volleyball
Basketball*
Track & Field
Cheer
Soccer



High School: 9th - 12th

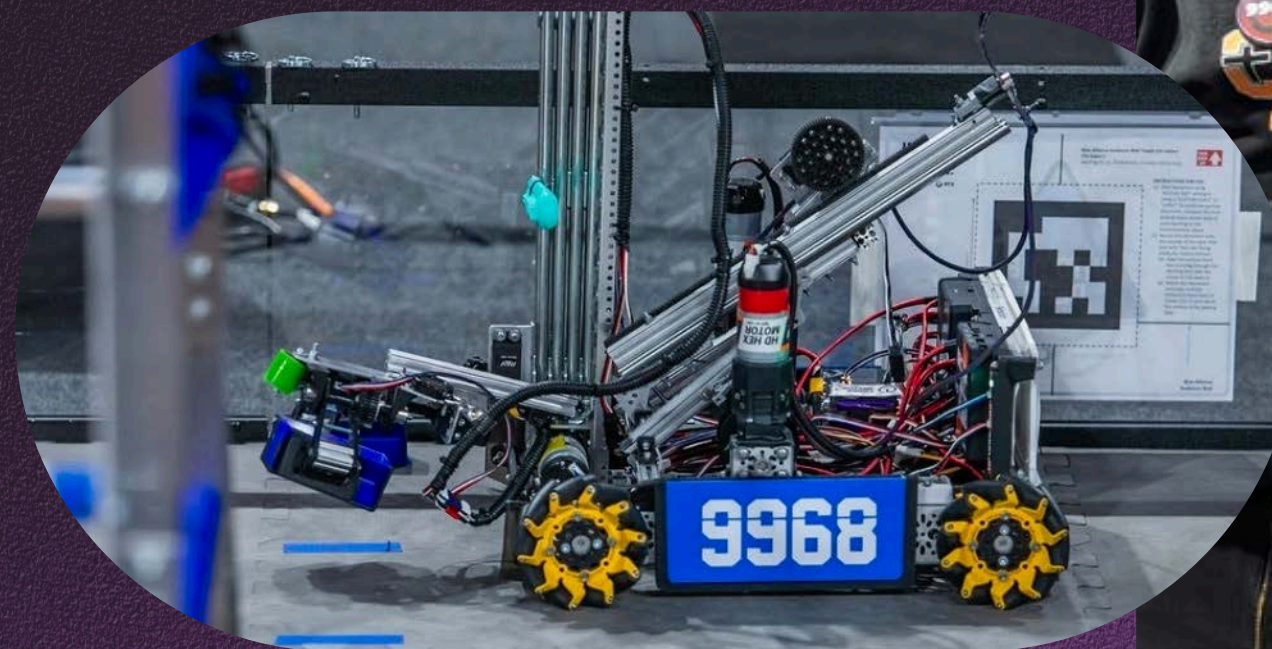
FCA
Volleyball
Basketball
Cross Country
Track & Field
Cheer
FTC Robotics
Theater
Speech
NHS*
Student Council
Chess Club
Science Club
Model UN*

*These opportunities may be open to a smaller window of students

FTC *Robotics*

High School Highlight

During the 2024-2025 season, Valley's First Tech Challenge (FTC) team, CrossFire, placed first at the League (district) Tournament, ensuring their automatic birth to State. The team also took home the Design Award for the construction of their robot. At the Iowa State Championship, the team finished 13th in their division of 72 teams and was awarded the 3rd place Connect award. This is the 3rd time in 4 years that Valley's FTC has made State. Way to go, FTC!





Jeff Dawson

President, Board of Directors

“

Valley's Board of Directors is made up of individuals representing Valley's eight Association Congregations, plus a pastor from both the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) and The American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC). These individuals are committed to investing in the students of Valley, responding to their diverse needs, enriching Valley's programs, and retaining top-quality faculty and staff.

Provided on the next slides are a synopsis of the Growing Generations Capital Campaign and our yearly budget needs. As a dad of three graduates with our youngest set to graduate this year, I've seen first hand the impact a Lutheran Christian education has had for my family. I pray the information provided gives you further insight into Valley's robust and growing ministry.

”

Growing Generations *Capital Campaign*

Since its kickoff in the spring of 2024, our Growing Generations Capital Campaign has focused on raising funds over and above our general budget to expand Valley's instructional and office space. Through the generosity of donors and God's blessing, our new entrance, administrative offices, atrium, two Kindergarten classrooms, School Success classroom, and remodeled gymnasium have been accomplished.



Growing Generations

Financial Update

Total Needed for Phase 1 Construction

\$4,200,000

Total Pledged & Received to Date

\$1,190,220

% of Total Needed vs Pledged/Donated

28%



Growing Generations

Our Immediate Need: \$825,000

For the 2025-2026 school year, every inch of our current serviceable space is being used daily to address the needs of educating 193 students.

The next project phase is to complete four classrooms in the unfinished southeast corner of our building. These additional classrooms have an approximate cost of \$1.1 million. Valley's Board of Directors has decided that 75% of the cost must be raised in new or additional pledges or donations before moving forward. That's an additional \$825,000 that is needed. Our goal is to begin construction by January so that the rooms will be completed by fall.



Tuition Charged Per Student

\$9,238

Educational Savings Accounts

\$7,988

Parent Portion of Tuition

\$1,250

Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs) through the State of Iowa have made an education at Valley financially attainable for many more families. 2025-2026 is the first year every student in the state of Iowa qualifies, as long as their status is full-time and the application guidelines are fulfilled. This program is a huge blessing to the families at Valley!

2025-2026 Tuition



Additional Financial

Iowa Lutheran Tuition Organization: **\$89,252**

The Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization assists families who desire a K-12 Lutheran education for their children. Awards are based on income and help reduce the family portion of tuition. This school year, 65 families received funds.

Crusader Family Service Grant: **1,750+ hours**

We value each family's partnership! Our Crusader Family Service Grant allows participating families who give 20 hours of service to receive \$100 off of tuition per child the following school year when they give of their time and talents. These requirements were completed by 23 families. We are already seeing hours turned in for next year!

Assistance

Since ESAs do not fully cover the cost of tuition, many Valley families take advantage of these additional programs to offset the parent portion of tuition.

Local Church Assistance

Several local churches budget grants for their members to assist in the parent portion of tuition. This year over 40 students received grants.

True Cost of Education:

\$12,700

In order to keep tuition reasonable for families, the difference between the true cost of education and what parents are charged for tuition must be raised through third-party funding. Several of our big events, for instance our Crusader Knight that happens each spring, serve as fundraisers for our general budget - labeled as our Crusader Fund. However, most of this difference comes through the generosity of individual donors.

For the 2025-2026 school year, Valley's Board of Directors made raising teacher salaries and safeguarding a competitive benefits package a priority. They felt that caring well for one of our most valuable resources, our teachers, ensures the success of our students and, therefore, our school.



General Budget: 3rd Source Funding Needed

In May 2025, the Valley Board of Directors passed a budget that went into effect on July 1st. For the 2025-2026 school year, \$720,000 is needed in third-source funding prior to June 30, 2026.

Each dollar given guarantees the continuation of our vision:

Valley Lutheran School, grounded in His truth and grace, prepares, trains, and teaches our students and families to serve and live for Christ.



6% given of \$720,000

Percentage given through first quarter



If each of us takes on a piece of this deficit, we can close the gap quickly. Would you consider a gift or pledge towards our Crusader Fund? Your gift can be given electronically or dropped off at the school office at any point.

We would like to especially invite you to drop off your gift or pledge towards our Crusader Fund on **Tuesday, November 18th, from 4:00 - 6:00 pm** at Valley. Drive through our circle drive and pick up a *free piece of pumpkin or apple pie* for each person in your family as our thank you for supporting the ministry at Valley.

Whether you drop off a few dollars or make an electronic transfer of thousands, I pray that God will bless your home and multiply those dollars to bring Him glory through the work being done at Valley.

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END OF YEAR GIVING



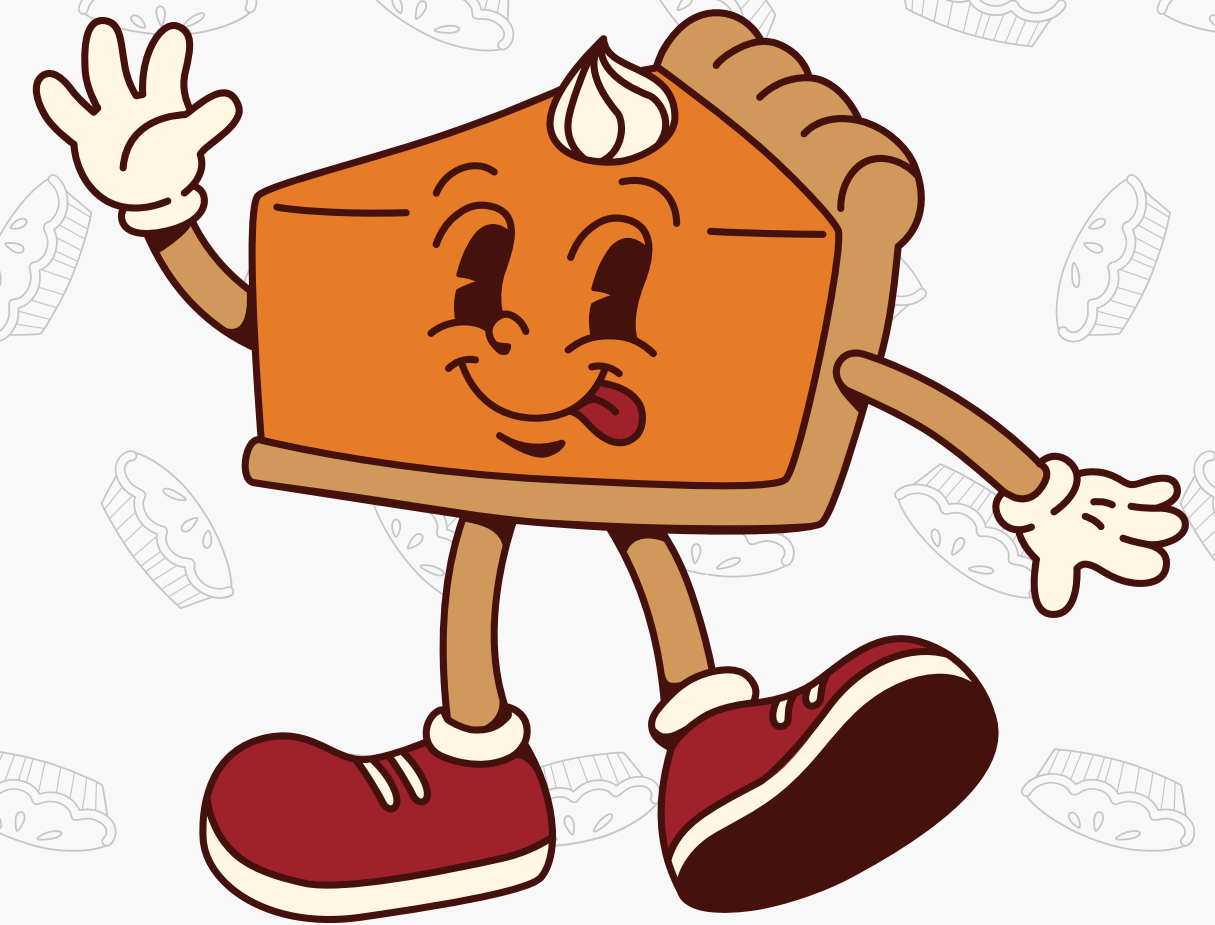
Valley's PIE

Extravaganza

Year-End Giving Campaign

Tuesday, November 18th

**Drive through for a
FREE piece of pie @ Valley
4:00 - 6:00 pm**



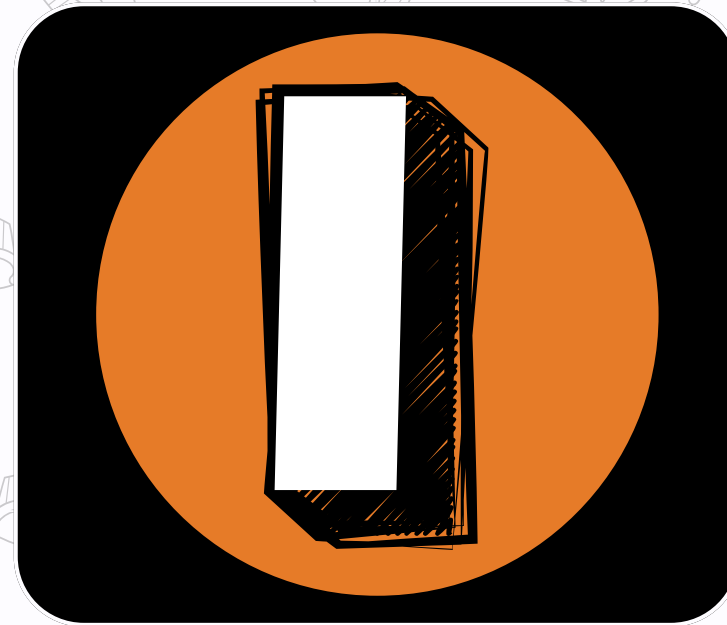
Pray for *Valley*

Thank you for lifting up prayers
on behalf of our school, students,
and ministry team.



PRAISE FOR

- *The completed work on our building*
- *Our caring, hard-working ministry team*
- *193 students - our largest enrollment yet*



INCREASE IN

- *Giving towards our Crusader Fund & Capital Campaign*
- *# of students as we begin enrollment for Fall of 2026*
- *Hunger for the Word of God*



EXPERIENCE THE

- *Vastness of the love of God*
- *Unity of being a part of the Valley family*
- *Joy found in abiding in Christ*