



# THE KCC STORY

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A FULL TRIBUTE TO OUR LEGACY

*The purpose of this tribute  
is to glorify God,  
to tell the story He has written for  
Kansas City Christian,  
and to preserve it for those  
who will come after us.*

*It is beyond important  
for us to know the foundation  
we are building upon,  
and to be able to share  
the greatness of God  
with future generations.*

# KANSAS CITY CHRISTIAN

*Lord,*

Thank you for calling us to provide a place  
for Christian education in Kansas City.

You've guided us from the beginning, and  
been faithful and present as we've grown  
and changed through the years.

We praise You for the people, places, and  
provision that You continually provide  
so we can continue teaching with the love  
of Christ and the truth of His Word  
with each new generation.

We are grateful for the faithful men and  
women who have brought us to this place,  
and we trust You to continue leading us in  
the years to come.

Help us to keep our eyes on You,  
and to support and love one another well.

May your light always shine in the KCC  
community, and into the world through us.

In Jesus' Name,

*Amen*



## THE BEGINNING

In the early spring of 1950, a group of 10 families met for prayer regarding the education of their children. They shared a deep concern about the cessation of prayer and the teaching of evolution that had begun in schools. They were passionate about providing a Christ-centered alternative to public school—a solid biblical foundation that presented every subject in the light of God’s unchanging truth.

They were called to serve their own families and the Christian community of Kansas City—both in Kansas and Missouri. They stood on the truths in God’s Word regarding the upbringing of children in the Lord. Among them was Ephesians 6:4: *“And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”*

By the following spring, the group had grown to represent eight churches and was incorporated as the Kansas City Christian School Society. Through a series of faith-building events, God began to clarify their purpose and strengthen their calling. In 1951, a school loan was given for the large building on 4645 West 47th and Booth St. (formerly St. Agnes School) from the Dutch Reformed Christian School Foundation in Chicago, Illinois. This was a great answer to prayer and confirmation that God was not just blessing the school with a more permanent facility, but also preparing them for a greater purpose in the future.

## ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Founding fathers who signed the “Articles of Incorporation of Kansas City Christian School Society” with the Secretary of State of the State of Kansas were: Donald H. Johnson, Clifford O. Hunt, Marvin W. Heter, and Roy A. Hammar. Other men who were involved in the beginnings were John Groot, Rev. Dwight H. Johnson (writer of the school song) and Dennis Sullivan.

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The Kansas City Christian School opened on September 10th, 1951 with 50 children enrolled in Kindergarten through eighth grades; three full time teachers made up the faculty.

## FIRST COMMENCEMENT

The following spring, on May 29, 1952, the first commencement exercises were held in the basement of the building with a graduating class of five eighth grade boys. The graduates were:

- John and Larry Groot (twin brothers),
- Tommy Heter
- Ed Calkins
- Carmen Klaber (an 18 year old)

## THE SCHOOL SONG

Rev. Dwight H. Johnson wrote the school song in 1954. He was passionate about Christian education and loved to write music. The song, written with a march beat, was inspired by Psalm 37:1-7.

## GROWTH

In his forward in the 1956-57 yearbook, Rev. Thomas N. Golden mentions that it was the sixth year of KCC, his second year as teacher, and his first year as principal.

There were 18 graduates in 1957: Susan Bartholomew, Kent Brush, Betty Caddell, Carol Cox, Janet Crouch, Judy Durham, Phyllis Eppler, Linda Fisher, Mike Hunter, Timothy Johnson, Bradley Kahler, James Kenney, Janet Kenney, John King, Stephen Marrs, Joyce Smith, Corla Strehlow, and Kathy Sullivan.

## GROWTH UPDATE FROM THE '56-'57 YEARBOOK

*[Since its doors opened in 1951] the school has experienced steady growth, influencing the lives of over 700 children from at least 30 different churches and denominations in the greater Kansas City area. Of the first graduating class, now in their first year of college, three are preparing for definite Christian work. A total of 70 boys and girls have been graduated from the school. The majority have entered local high schools where they have shown consistent scholarship and leadership qualities.*

*Each year of growth has had its problems, but, the Lord teaches as He tests us and proves Himself. When transportation was an obstacle to be overcome, God supplied two busses and a station wagon. When a safe playground was a necessity, the Lord spoke to one of His own who built and paid for a tall steel fence to encircle the entire area. Our children needed hot lunches, so our Mother's Club, by sheer faith, began a hot lunch program that meets all State standards for health and operation.*

*But any history would be incomplete without recognition for those who have so generously given and loaned of their substance for God's glory in this project. Children have been taught to obey God because they gave. Children have been won to Christ because they gave. Truly, whether old or young, we are created for His glory!"*



# KCC 1960s [A DECADE OF EXPANSION]

## GROWTH

In 1966-67 the school employed seven full time teachers to train approximately 100 students. From this group, 9 eighth graders graduated (including two associate students who had joined the class after the second semester began.)

## COMMENCEMENT

The commencement was held May 25th, 1967, at the Crest Bible Church in Kansas City, Kansas. The graduates were: Ken Bowes, Cindy Brown, Gregg Carlock, Shirley Dunham, Rebecca Fight, Dennis Hodges, Betty Johnson, Esther Martin and Debra Stock.

## EXCITING NEWS FROM THE '69-'70 YEARBOOK

Another milestone in KCC history is shared. A letter written in the foreword says:

*Dear Friends,*

*In the 1969-70 school years we have seen God bring into existence a new instrument for His glory – The Kansas City Christian Academy. The Christian community has shown their interest by enrolling eighty-five choice young people in grades 7 through 10.*

*The Academy is an outgrowth of the Christian elementary school which has had a unique and excellent ministry since 1951. The elementary school enrolled 176 students this year. The Academy will continue Christian education through all the high school grades in the near future.*

*We invite you to share the friendships which are evident in this '69-70 yearbook and to enjoy the memories of our first year as KCCA. We believe that friendships begun at Christian school can be among the best and most lasting. We commend this book to these young friends.*

*In Christ,*

*Charles Ramsey, Principal*

*Ronald Krestan, Administrator*



## GROWTH

There was a lot of growth (and some growing pains, too!) in all areas of the school—academics, athletics, music, and the arts.

## A NEW VISION

Our vision was to start grade schools around the city that would eventually feed into the KCC high school, growing it large enough to compete with area public high schools—academically (offering electives) and with sports (offering a wider range of athletics) and to give an option for those who value a Christian educational system and environment through the high school years.

Kansas City Christian High served grades 7-12 and was located at 57th and Merriam Lane in Merriam, KS.

The elementary schools were divided into territories based on location:

- **Kansas City Christian School** – Center (grades K-6)
- (This was the original school.)
- 4645 Booth in Kansas City, Kansas
- 
- **Kansas City Christian School** – Southeast (grades K-4)
- Met at Blue Ridge Bible Church
- 8524 Blue Ridge in Kansas City, MO
- 
- **Kansas City Christian School** – West (grades K-6)
- (This eventually broke away and became Maranatha.)
- 6824 Lackman Road in Shawnee, Kansas
- 
- **Kansas City Christian East** – Center (grades K-6)
- (This was the original school.)
- 4645 Booth in Kansas City, Kansas

## NEW LOCATIONS

In the 1970s, God provided for two moves of the school—from Open Door campus to Central Bible Church to the Merriam Campus. He faithfully met our needs for growth, for funding, and finding property.

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### **NEW LEARNING STYLE**

The ACE (Accelerated Christian Education) program was started in the high school, which provided a more non-traditional atmosphere: students worked at their own individual pace to accomplish a set amount of core academic paces for the school year.

### **HONORING ATHLETES**

The Raymond Templeton award was established: Raymond was a young KCC student with cystic fibrosis who loved sports, and who passed away during his Junior year in 1976. In his honor, the award is given out every year to a senior who has participated in sports all three seasons of each year of high school.

### **FIRST HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING CLASS**

The Class of 1972 became our first class of high school graduates, with 15 students.

### **K-12 IN ONE LOCATION**

As the school sought a greater sense of identity—both spiritually and academically— we were led to move from the Booth (elementary) and Merriam (junior high and high school) campuses to a combined Prairie Village campus. At this time, Huebert Hartzler, a man with a passionate heart for Christian Education, was brought in to help strengthen the spiritual focus of the school and change the location to provide more room for the school to grow as a whole—K-12 in one location.



#### NEW MASCOT

In 1987, the Open Door School merged with us, and our mascot changed from Cougars to Panthers.

#### YEARBOOK NAME CHANGE

In 1988, the yearbook name changed from *Scepter* to *Legacy*.

#### BACK TO TRADITIONAL LEARNING

At this time, changing back from the ACE (Accelerated Christian Education) program to traditional teacher/student classrooms was also a move forward academically.

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The logo features the letters 'KCC' in a bold, dark blue, stylized font. The 'K' is on the left, and the 'C's are on the right. The '1990s' is written in a smaller, dark blue font, centered between two horizontal yellow lines that intersect the 'C's. To the right of the '1990s' is the text '[A DECADE OF MILESTONES]' in a dark blue, sans-serif font, enclosed in square brackets.

# KCC 1990s [A DECADE OF MILESTONES]

## STEADY GROWTH

Through God's guidance, we grew steadily in all areas, and the quality of our students – their character and performance – helped us to become a program that was taken seriously in the community.

## CELEBRATING 40TH BIRTHDAY

During the 40th birthday of KCC, the 1990-91 yearbook records that five of the founding fathers came to the school to enjoy a time together of celebration:

"The foundation of the KCCS School System was begun in 1951. Today it has grown from the first student body of fifty to 480. We look forward with anticipation to the great things the Lord will do for and through KCC."

## NEW COMPUTER LAB

In 1994, we were given an anonymous gift of \$50,000 from a foundation to start our computer lab.

## FIRST MISSION TRIP

We also started our first Senior Missions Trips that year to challenge our students to serve and learn to minister to others. The senior class went to Costa Rica.

## MERGER

In 1995, Dominion High School merged with us – bringing 29 students.

## INCREASED ATTENDANCE

An upward trend in enrollment began in the mid 90's, with the next 16 years having over 500 in attendance each year.

## ACCREDITATION

In 1996 we invested the time and effort to earn our first ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) accreditation.

## OFFICIAL COMPETITORS

In 1998 we became a full member of the KSHSAA – Kansas State High School Activities Association.


 The logo features the letters 'KCC' in a large, dark blue, stylized font. The 'K' is on the left, followed by two 'C's. The '2000s' is written in a smaller, dark blue font between two horizontal yellow lines that intersect the 'C's. To the right of this, the text '[A DECADE OF JUBILEE]' is written in a dark blue, sans-serif font.

The year 2001 was our Jubilee Celebration year where we celebrated 50 years of God's faithfulness to our school.

#### GOD'S FAITHFULNESS FROM THE '00-'01 YEARBOOK

The Sounds of the trumpet of Jubilee echo in the halls as parents and teachers celebrate 50 years of training students with the truth—God's truth. In 1951 the doors were open to Kansas City Christian School as some fifty students entered to have a God-centered education.

*"Investing in our children's training was one of the wisest uses we made of our family's time and money. Our prayer is that you remain grounded in the Word of God which the founders of KCCS built you on,"* said Dr. Richard Ochs (parent of four grads and a former board member).

There have been hundreds of parents who have chosen to educate their sons and daughters in the classrooms of KCC. Teachers have chosen to be God's instruments—not for money alone, but for the joy of being part of student's lives. *"God led me here, and until God chooses to lead me on, I will continue teaching here."* said Mr. Huebert, teacher of twenty-eight years here at KCC. *"We are blessed to have our children under Christian teachers who reinforced and challenged them in their walk with the Lord."* he added. The halls are changing and the new gym and soccer field is becoming a reality, but the need for Christian education is even greater. To all parents and teachers who have chosen to invest in young people here at KCC, and supporters who give to help make Christian education possible, we dedicate the 2001 Legacy.

*"The rich heritage of our school provides an excellent foundation for God's blessings for our next 50 years! Great is Thy Faithfulness."*

Tony Ryff  
School Administrator

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## A NEW GYM

In 2001, the Lord provided the funds and building of the new gym.

## ANOTHER LOCATION

In order to accommodate our growing enrollment in the middle school we added a new property in Kansas City Kansas—Oak Grove Bible Church—where students were bussed back and forth each day.

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

AP and Honors courses were added in the high school, and there was an intentional increase in professionalism.

## URBAN PARTNERSHIP

Through the Urban Education Initiative, KCC partnered with Freedom Fire Urban Ministries to provide educational and spiritual opportunities for disadvantaged youth that reside in the urban core of Kansas City and are connected to Freedom Fire Urban Ministries.

In 2004, Bill Fitzgerald and Allan Chugg, on behalf of KCC board members, approached Bruce McGregor of Freedom Fire with the idea of sending Freedom Fire youth to KCC. When the program started in 2006, there were three children enrolled. KCC was responsible for their education, and Freedom Fire was responsible for their transportation. The program has grown since then, and has included as many as 19 Freedom Fire youth involved at one time. The initiative has also seen its first graduates go on to college.

There is an observable trajectory of the student's lives that is very different from their parents and older siblings who did not attend KCC. Over 35 students from Freedom Fire have attended KCC. This has greatly impacted their bicultural and spiritual growth and opened the door to future job opportunities.

For the KCC community, this partnership provides a more racially and culturally diverse environment, which allows for a richer experience that prepares our students for the modern adult world. Additionally, it expands opportunities for practical racial reconciliation through personal relationships among students and families.



### EXPANDING OUR REACH

Through the years, our school has grown into a caring community with a heart for reaching the most children in the most diverse, effective and transformative ways for Christ. With God's guidance, and the dedication of our staff and the families we serve, we have been able to reach more for His Kingdom than we ever thought possible.

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

In 2018, KCC launched its first ever capital campaign to renovate and add onto the building at the Prairie Village campus. Once again, God used the generosity of His people to make it possible for us to enlarge our existing building in order to meet the needs of our growing school and make it more appealing for new families. After studying various options, the Board decided to focus the development on expanding Prairie Village while divesting of the Oxford Park land. Families and other donors responded with \$5 million in pledges to support the effort. Construction began in the summer of 2018.

### THE BLESSING OF LEADERSHIP

KCC was blessed with the right leaders for the season.

Kathy Hirleman retired in 2015 after serving at KCC for 12 years in a variety of roles, primarily as Academic Dean. Kathy had a vision for escalating academic excellence within the KCC programming and executed that in an orderly way: first with high school, then the middle school, then the elementary. KCC's leadership continues in pursuit of that vision today. The community has benefited in record ACT scores and excellent college options for students.

After working in a shared leadership model with Kathy Hirleman and Allan Chugg, Bill Glotzbach took over as Head of School and led KCC through exciting changes before moving to a career in counseling in 2017. After a formal process, the search committee was excited to announce Todd Zylstra as the new Head of School beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

We look forward to all the ways God will continue to shape and grow this community in the years to come.



## [KCC TRADITIONS & INSIGNIA]

### SCHOOL SONG

Rev. Dwight H. Johnson wrote the school song in 1954. He was passionate about Christian education and loved to write music. The song, written with a march beat, was inspired by Psalm 37:1-7.

: *“Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the*  
 : *workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither*  
 : *like the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the*  
 : *land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord and He shall*  
 : *give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in*  
 : *Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as*  
 : *the light, and thy justice as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for*  
 : *him, fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the*  
 : *man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.”*

### LYRICS

Forward we march 'neath our colors blue and gold  
 Standing for Christ and the Bible as of old.  
 Holding to life in its fullness, we are bold!  
 This is the glory of our purpose, Christian School.

Fret not because of evil doers, envy naught.  
 Trust in the Lord and be grateful, hunger naught.  
 Delight in the Lord and He gives us what we sought.  
 This is what we learn to practice, Christian School.

Yielding our way to the Savior—We are sure;  
 Resting in Him with all patience—We endure;  
 Wait on the Lord; keep His way, for that Way is secure;  
 This is our purpose, plan and program—CHRISTIAN SCHOOL!

## YEARBOOK

The 1970's yearbook shared an interesting fact about KCC's original yearbook name, The Scepter:

- *"A scepter is the symbol of authority and regality. Since God's Word is our final*
- *authority and Jesus Christ is our Savior and King, we thought it fitting to name the*
- *yearbook of Kansas City Christian High, the Scepter.*
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- 
- *Our school colors are blue and gold and our athletic team is known as the Royals —*
- *hence the name—Royal Scepter."*

## LOGOS AND BRANDING

Around 1960 was the creation of the original KCC logo. Later that decade, the logo was further altered by KCC board chairman Norm Hutcheson, an engineer at Hallmark Cards, who worked with a team of Hallmark artists. The main design elements were the shield, wreath, cross and Bible. Gold and blue were the school colors. The logo was inspired from many scriptures including Luke 2:52 and Ephesians 6:4. It visually represented the heart of KCC, which was the authority of Jesus and the centrality of the Word of God to our faith in today's culture.

In 2009, a redesign of the KCC logo was done by local artist, Jill Jones, and the logo was presented at that year's KCC auction. In addition to the logo, Brenda Tally and many other leaders led new marketing and branding strategies at that time that we are still using today.

In 2018, a new brand was established which included a redesigned logo package. KCC partnered with a local ministry called Art Set Apart to create a logo that was anchored in KCC's rich tradition and heritage, while reflecting a modern, yet timeless style. Each component within the logo intentionally represents the heart of the school and what we want for those we serve: faith, knowledge, character, excellence and community. (See the 2018 Style Guide for a detailed description of the significance of each component.) The team of artists from Art Set Apart that created the new logos are current or former Hallmark artists. Their names are: Sam Cangelosi, Michael Davis, Mary Lynn Iskak, Michael Miller, and Brent Morris (KCC Board Member and Executive Director of the Art Set Apart). Brenda Tally (KCC Board Member) has continued to help with the branding.

## MASCOTS

- Prior to 1969, KCC did not have an official mascot.
- In 1969, we officially adopted our first mascot—the Royals.
- Five years later, in 1974, we became the Cougars.
- After 15 years as the Cougars, we adopted today's mascot—the Panther— in 1989.



### SPORTS PROGRAM HISTORY

Our school has offered a variety of sports for both boys and girls since we were established in 1951. No matter what sport they are participating in, our students are taught that all should be done “to the glory of God”—whether on or off the field.

### BOYS’ SPORTS

The boys have had nine different sports to participate in throughout the years.

- Basketball (the only sport offered every year since 1951)
- Track
- Wrestling
- Cross Country
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Golf
- Tennis
- Bowling

### GIRLS’ SPORTS

The girls have had 8 other sports to participate in throughout the years.

- Cheerleading (the only sport offered every year since 1951)
- Cross Country (first offered in 1973)
- Track (first offered in 1973)
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Bowling

There have been so many student athletes through the years who have accomplished hard-earned team records and individual goals.



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As with everything else in Kansas City Christian history, this story wasn't told alone.

We would like to thank each person who has given their time and expertise to preserve the story of KCC! Countless hours have been spent researching, going through archives, sorting through papers, looking through yearbooks, locating people to interview, recording conversations, recounting stories, organizing information, editing copy, designing this document, gathering the nitty-gritty details...and consolidating it into this comprehensive God story that is now preserved forever.

- Allan Chugg
- Betty Chugg
- Paige DeRuyscher
- Norm Hutcheson
- Kristin Morris
- Brent Morris

Thank you for your commitment to this project! Because of you, we have been able to help Kansas City Christian School honor their past, have faith in the present, and look to the future with confidence and hope in God's direction and provision for our every need.

May our legacy continue, always for His glory.

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# THANK YOU!

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