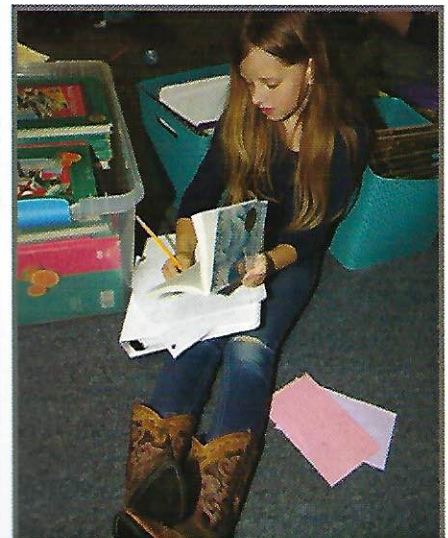
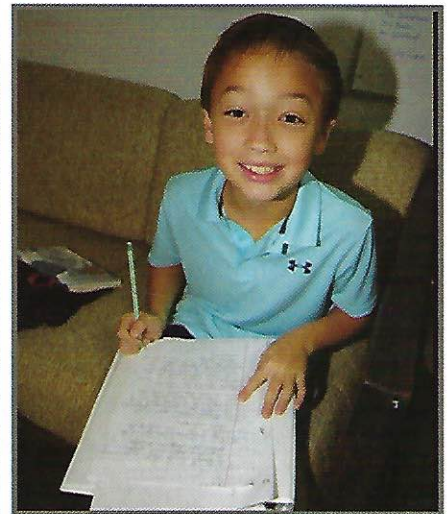
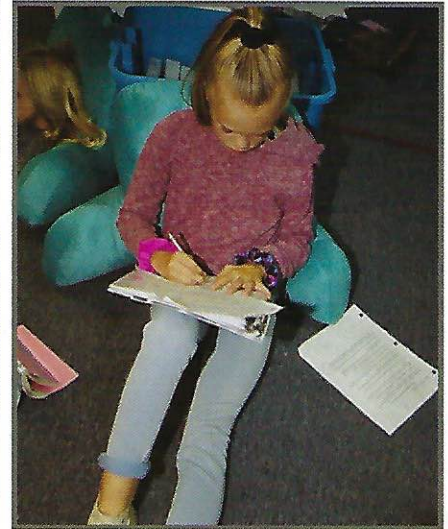
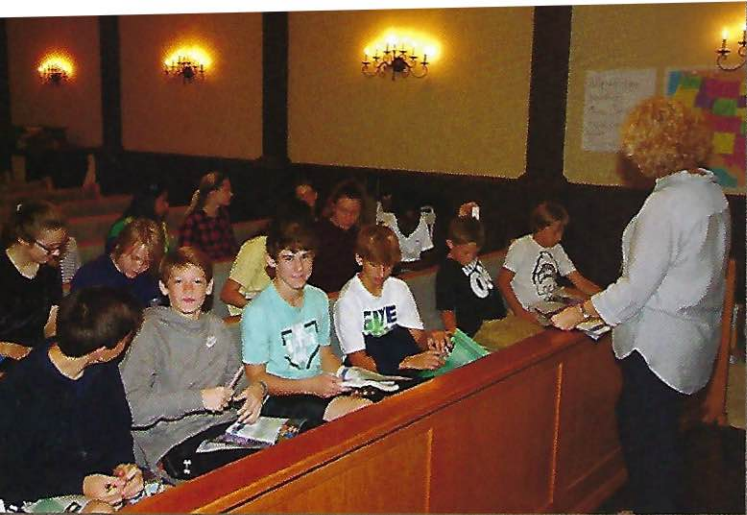


MVP
MOST
VALUABLE
People



JUDY HUGHES



On Sunday night, October 7th, while the Head of School for Holy Nativity Episcopal School (HNES), **Judy Hughes**, was in Athens, Georgia, a 60 mph storm in the Gulf was forecast to become a Category 2 hurricane with projected landfall somewhere around Panama City. "Looking at those Monday morning emails to everyone at HNES, I must have believed this new storm was going to be business-as-usual. After the horrible truth that was Hurricane Michael, October 10th was filled with the terror, the same terror many experienced, of trying to know that our son was alive, then it took six agonizing days to locate all 57 of our employees and know each was safe, at the same time we slowly discover the sweeping extent of damage to our historic and treasured school."

With phenomenal support from Fr. Steve Bates and the members of Holy Nativity Episcopal Church plus the warm welcome from St. Thomas by the Sea Episcopal Church, Holy Nativity Episcopal School was the first school in Bay County to reopen, welcoming the majority of our students to our pre-portable school at Holy Nativity Episcopal Church and over 60 students to the satellite school at St. Thomas by the Sea on the west end of the beach, just 19 days after Michael.

Over fifty percent of the school's faculty and staff had to move out of their home for a minimum of six months, and every employee of the school is dealing with major damage to their home. Their heartbreaking personal challenges make it especially remarkable to realize that the school was able to start back without classrooms, chairs and having very limited supplies. Children sat on the floor, in church pews and newly purchased pet beds. Teachers shared the limited space—one location between multiple grade levels, not knowing from day-to-day how many children would be in class. The teachers showed up every day full of love, greeting kids with big smiles and with planned, enjoyable learning activities. Remarkable.

After serving as Head of School at Holy Nativity for eight years, Judy had submitted her intent to retire as of June 2019. On October 14th, she withdrew that letter of intent. "I knew the Holy Nativity recovery from Michael was my job, I wanted to be working with these people I love and rebuild our beautiful school as well as our excellent program. And, then, there is this circle pin, a pin intended as a retirement gift from the faculty and staff. When they surprised me with it in the church sanctuary at the end of our first faculty meeting after we re-started school, I was floored, emotional and so very touched. I think it might have been my most uplifting moment. That day I said I would wear my beautiful pin every day. I have worn it every day. I will love this faculty and staff forever, we have survived so much together."

Judy realizes the sacrifices her staff makes every day to be there for the children, and one of her most important challenges is being sure that they all get scheduled time during the week to be away from school to address the business of his or her own family.



Matthew 19:26

*But Jesus beheld them and said unto them,
With men this is impossible,
But with God, all things are possible.*