



Volunteering at Rehoboth Christian Schools has stretched us educationally, culturally, and spiritually. At Bob and Mary Ippel's encouragement, we made our first volunteer trip to Rehoboth in 2017. We have been back each of the six years since. At first, we thought that we could contribute some of our retirement free time to help out Rehoboth Christian School. We have come to find that we benefit as much as, if not more than, we contribute. Coming from a relatively monocultural setting back in west Michigan, we are blessed by the snapshot of the beautiful diversity of the kingdom of God that is represented at Rehoboth. We find that leaving the familiarity of our home and immersing ourselves in this community helps us experience the depth and breadth of God's care and love for His creation. In fact, we have come to recognize that our two weeks in Rehoboth is an annual spiritual "high" for us. We have to sometimes step outside of our comfort zone in the tasks that we are asked to do, and that helps us lean on God, as well as experience the support and interdependence of the community.

Since we are both volunteers in the school, we have had the opportunity to see the staff and teachers at work. We are impressed by the passion and patience of teachers who daily encourage and support students. In the middle school, Bob helps out in the math classroom. Since it has been awhile since his own middle school math days, he has had to brush up on his math skills. He is encouraged by Maureen Bia's poster on the wall of her math classroom, "Make Mistakes". It is a reminder that there is often more than one way to find solutions - true for math as well as life! Susanne has been helping Marie Ippel in the middle school science room. During one of Marie's faith and science lessons, she told her students that when something is repeated more than once in the Scriptures, it means, "Pay attention. This is important." She then proceeded to tell the students that the Genesis creation account repeatedly mentions seed-bearing plants. She said that seed-bearing plants are concrete evidence of God's ongoing care for His creation, and for each one of us. What a great example of a Christian education!

As volunteers, we have found Rehoboth to be a caring, supportive, and fun-loving community. Laughter is common! The staff, the teachers, and the other volunteers have enfolded us and encouraged us to use our gifts and to sometimes discover new gifts. We love Rehoboth and hope to be a part of it for years to come.

*Bob and Susanne Jordan*