

In 2006, my family moved from the Chicago suburbs to St. Louis. At the time, our three children were in preschool, Kindergarten and 2nd grade at Timothy Christian Schools, a school in Elmhurst, Illinois that would educate them through 12th grade. Our school community was such an important part of our family life, so it was a priority to find the same kind of Christian school community in St. Louis. Friends at our church put us in contact with a family who lived in St. Louis, who had also lived in our town of Elmhurst years earlier, attended our church and even taught at Timothy Christian Schools. Mrs. V was so gracious to speak with me, acquainting me with the Christian school community in St. Louis and helping me to explore our options. I was delighted to get this "insider" viewpoint from a family with such a similar experience. Mr. V taught at Westminster Christian Academy and their family attended Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church – what a great connection! We visited Twin Oaks Christian School and discovered another connection: my daughter's 1st grade teacher in Elmhurst was a cousin of John DeMaster, the Head of School at Twin Oaks. We all liked Twin Oaks – the playground, the ball field, the classrooms, the teachers and other friendly people we met. We made our decision to enroll our children for the upcoming school year and began to shop for a house within a few miles of school. Since that time, I can recall more blessings through the Twin Oaks community than I can even begin to count. Only God could have orchestrated the straight path that lead us to our new home and school community. At the end of the first day of school my children – at a school where they didn't know a single soul – each came bounding out to carpool like it was an old habit, smiles on their faces and lots of stories about the new friends they met.

Encouraged by their positive experiences, I dove into the volunteer opportunities that awaited me and quickly had friends of my own. My husband learned that there were opportunities to coach our children's sports teams, and he happily joined other parents on the Pre-K soccer fields at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings, meeting other parents and making friends of his own. Now, as I look back at that first year at Twin Oaks, I have wide eyes of wonder when I think where those few tentative steps to join in at this school has led us. When our youngest daughter, Teagan, graduates from 8th grade this spring, my family will round out an even decade of involvement with this school community. My children have each gained so much more than an academic education from Twin Oaks, and with my older two children excelling in high school at Westminster and our youngest to follow them next year, I am so thankful to the teachers who taught them and loved them during their years at Twin Oaks. But through this school, my husband and I have found community and blessings, too. Between our three kids, my husband can count over 25 sports teams that he has helped coach over these years. I personally have been blessed to have had many different experiences in this community. Twin Oaks is the kind of place where a mom can serve hot lunch on Monday, bring the family turtle to 2nd grade science class on Tuesday, visit Onandoga Cave on the 5th grade

fieldtrip on Wednesday, make caramel apples at the 4th grade class party on Thursday and pray with other moms for each of the 3rd graders at the Moms In Prayer group on Friday. But it's also a place where you can get a hug when your child is undergoing surgery, or hear that someone is praying for your husband to find a job. It's a place where you can find busy, hardworking parents gathered together on a Saturday morning to assemble a new school playground. This is a place where you can walk into the gym on a Sunday night and find students, parents, teachers, and school staff standing shoulder to shoulder, pounding on the doors to God's throne room in prayerful intercession for a dearly beloved teacher who lies gravely ill in the hospital. I have personally experienced each of these blessings here at Twin Oaks Christian School. This is so much more than a place where children are educated, although that is done very well here. Twin Oaks Christian School lives out the Gospel in word and deed. These are the reasons, among so many others, that I will thank God always when I remember Twin Oaks Christian School in my prayers.