

# PATHWAYS

“SHOW ME YOUR WAYS, LORD, TEACH ME YOUR PATHS.” PSALM 25:4

HCA’s vision is to inspire students to love learning and live lives worthy of the calling of Christ.

## UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

**April 5** - Resurrection Egg Hunt

**April 7** - Good Friday (no school)

**April 10-14** - D.C. Trip (Grades 5-8)

**April 11** - Frontier Day (Grades PK-4)

**April 13** - OSV Field Trip (Grades K-4)

**April 17-21** - April break (no school)

**April 26** - 11:30am Dismissal, NO ASP - Parent-Teacher Conferences (in person only)

**May 5** - Middle School Science Fair, 3pm

**May 6** - HCA 5K! **\*sign up** to run/walk/stroll!\*

**May 9** - “Children of Eden” play, 7pm

**May 18** - Art Show & Spring Concert, 6:30pm

**May 26** - Fine Arts Day

**May 29** - Memorial Day (no school)



## PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

Overnight field trips are a privilege of being in the HCA Middle School. Since we are studying our nation’s heritage, our destination this year is our nation’s capital! Grades 5 through 8 will leave in the wee hours of the morning on Monday, April 10th for a five day exploration of our national heritage in Washington, D.C. With the input of HCA staff, our five day excursion has been planned and organized by the student tour company Christian Discoveries, a division of WorldStrides. Our tour guide will provide biblical historical perspective throughout the trip, guiding students to reflect on things like the cost of freedom and the biblical principles the nation was founded on.

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Field trips like these are not just fun, but they contribute to students' understanding of the world. The engagement of their senses helps them connect history with real life. Students will walk the fields of the Fredericksburg Battlefield as they hear about the events that took place there. When they visit the war memorials and walk through Arlington National Cemetery, students gain a little perspective on the sacrifice that has been made for the freedoms we cherish. After seeing the site where approximately 400,000 veterans and their families have been buried, students will reflect on the value of each single life as they respectfully observe the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. These experiences impact students lives in ways that books or even video cannot.

Learning comes to life when students get to see the handwriting of our Founding Fathers on primary documents at the National Archives. It is then that lessons on first-person documents in Language Arts and History classes gain functional and memorable value.

The visits to presidential memorials, Capitol Hill, and the Smithsonian Complex deepen students' understanding of our nation's history further. We will even see firsthand how Food for Life and history have a natural connection when we visit the home and gardens of George Washington at Mount Vernon. Students will also have the opportunity to visit the Museum of the Bible, which puts God's Word on display and brings it to life in a state-of-the-art facility right in the heart of D.C.

It is through experiences like these that life-long learning is fostered. Students minds will be broadened as they realize that the real lives of long ago continue to impact our lives today. Students make connections between what they have learned about in school and what they are seeing in person. Although field trips of this magnitude require sacrifice of time and money, they are, as Mastercard would say, "priceless." Thank you to all of the families who are sacrificially supporting this enriching and even life-changing experience.

In His Service,  
Nikki Cleveland, Principal

Honoring God through  
Creative learning and strong  
Academics in a caring, fun-filled school!

# FRONTIER DAY

At Holden Christian Academy  
On Tuesday, April 11, 2023  
9:30 am – noon  
Preschool – grade 4 students  
....and their grandparents!

Join us for a morning of fun and learning with your grandchild as we celebrate our American heritage! We'll gather at the "campfire" for a sing-a-long, visit the homestead, travel to our frontier town, and visit a dance hall!

We ask that children come dressed in frontier/pioneer style clothing; grandparents can dress up too! Here are some costume ideas:

\*Girls - long dress, shoes, bonnet, apron

\*Boys - pants, shirt, boots suspenders, cowboy hat, coonskin cap, vest

Children will be able to visit the General Store to purchase 5 cents worth of penny candy, so bring your pennies!

*We realize that not all children will be able to have a grandparent present, so we ask the grandparents who are attending to please "adopt" a classmate into their group. It is nice to know our friends' grandparents too!*

**We look forward to seeing y'all real soon!**

## Fundraising Update from The American Challenge!

THANK YOU to all who participated in this fundraiser for our amazing school - whether you completed activity challenges, raised money, or generously donated funds!

Together we raised \$14,727 for Holden Christian Academy!

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!



# PLEASE TAKE NOTE...

## POP QUIZ!

**Q: What is happening Wednesday, April 26th?**

**A: It's a half day for students because of Parent Teacher Conferences!**

Bonus points for anyone who knows dismissal is at 11:30am and there is NO After School Program this day!

All conferences will be IN PERSON this year!



## Interested in serving on the Parent Teacher Council?

Click [HERE](#) to sign up for more info, or to join! The next meeting will be TODAY, April 3rd, at 3:15pm in the Holden Chapel Welcome Center (or on the playground if the weather is conducive).

Upcoming PTC events that we need help with include our Resurrection Egg Hunt (next week, 4/5), Teacher Appreciation Week (5/8-5/12), and some fun end-of-year activities!

# Save the Date Saturday, May 6th! ~ The Annual HCA 5K ~

Info can be found at [www.holdenchristianacademy.org/5k](http://www.holdenchristianacademy.org/5k)

Current HCA families can register NOW

HCA friends & alumni can register soon!







Middle School bonding over scooterball



Great drawings accompany a wheel-of-information on the back of this book report!



Kindergarten buddies and future lifelong friends!



# Preschool News!

What a whirlwind month! Preschool felt like a stuttering car, between school days and snow days breaking up our time together! We thank God for His beauty in all seasons, and His protection and provision through all the storms.

We spent the month of March going back in time to the Little House on the Prairie times! Our classroom centers were converted into opportunities to live like the pioneers did. From Life in the Home, we learned about daily chores like washing on the washboard, ironing (most preschoolers did not know what an iron was!), to spending time making our own butter and forming dough into biscuits. Children practiced "mending" by lacing and adding shape decorations to their very own quilt square for our HCA Preschool ABC Quilt.

From Winter on the Farm, preschoolers were given opportunities to take care of the farm animals by collecting eggs from the chickens, and milking the cow. We practiced adding and subtracting farm animals and toy veggies from the garden.

Our one room school house appeared this month! Preschoolers loved being called by the ringing bell to come to "school", where they created their own Pioneer Primer, and practiced self control by only speaking when they were spoken to (easier said than done!). They thought this was a great (and funny) game!

Preschoolers practiced matching coins and learning their names and differences, after learning how Laura and Mary Ingalls went to the store for the first time ever as young girls! Kids this age may not remember, but in their short lives, there was also likely a time they hadn't ever gone to a store either (during the pandemic). It was interesting to talk about the similarities and differences between the time of Laura and Mary and our time, and you could really see the wheels turning in their little minds!

Last week took us on our journey west, as we built our covered wagon and used our imaginations to begin life in a new land.

We spent time learning a few simple hymns, like "The Doxology" and "Trust and Obey". These are just some of what may have been sung by children and families long ago, about God's provision and love for us. The preschoolers were introduced to the Lord's Prayer, and God's Good Rules, the 10 Commandments. They especially liked learning about the 10 Commandments with a mystery box of visuals to remind them how we show God love by obeying his rules.

We look forward to wrapping up the learning from the past month with a celebration on Frontier Day. This will be on next Tuesday, April 11, and students are encouraged to invite their grandparents to attend with them! Please see the invitation that went home two weeks ago.

## Upcoming Dates to Remember:

**Tuesday, April 11, 9:30-11:30AM** – Frontier Day with your grandparents!

**Wednesday, April 26 – half-day (no ASP) 11:30 Dismissal**

*optional* parent teacher conferences (see forthcoming email with sign up genius)

# Team A News!

## Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

I cannot believe we are in the final stretch of the year. We made it to Term 4! As I look at the students in Kindergarten, I see so many changes that have taken place since the beginning of the school year. We have learned so many new things and each child has grown in their own unique way. I am amazed and encouraged every day by their resilience, enthusiasm and joy. God has been working in and through these students.

Term 3 brought many opportunities for Kindergarten and we will continue our pioneer learning. I encourage you to ask your children to tell you about all the things we have been doing. In addition to these hands-on activities, we have been reading through the "My First Little House" books. This is an amazing series written by Laura Ingalls Wilder that brings pioneer life into the classroom and to real life. We had wonderful discussions about the contrasts between children during the pioneer times and how children are today. We discussed the differences in daily chores, transportation, and how we "gather" food. Please continue to ask your child about their learning experiences. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage with them on what they are learning.

Over April vacation, ask your Kindergarteners to use their five senses. Use the fresh Spring weather to ask them if they can smell the growing grass or flowers. Have them look to see if anything new is growing or flying in the air. Ask them to listen for new sounds and touch the thawing ground. Have them use their sense of taste to try fresh, new fruits and vegetables.

Spring is finally here, and as the weather warms we will be venturing back outside. Warm weather is a great opportunity to move our learning outdoors. Term 4 Science will include life cycles and pond life. What better way to learn about pond life and some life cycles, then to go to an actual pond! Teams A and B will make weekly trips to Trout Brook. At the brook, we will get to journal and observe pond life and maybe even bring things back to the classroom to study further. This is a great opportunity for the class to close out the school year enjoying nature and learning in a new and exciting way.

### **Grade 1 Update from Mrs. Richardson:**

Springtime, the completion of Term 3, and the end of March- WOW! Where did this school year go? I cannot believe we only have one term left of this school year.

First graders have been busy bees during Math. We have been learning double digit addition, double digit addition with regrouping, and now we are working on measurement. We even made measurement monsters. First graders measured out the parts of their monsters and wrote down the measurements. After they finished drawing, they double checked that their measurement recording matched their drawings. Looking ahead in Math, we will be learning how to sort and organize data, read graphs, tell time, and learn all about shapes.

In FUNdations, we are at the start of unit 11. Pete the Cat is our unit 11 friend as we are learning all about 'silent e' at the ends of words. First graders are also working diligently to learn our unit 11 trick words.

Bible time has been filled with learning about the miracles of Jesus. The questions and conversations that have been led by first graders during Bible time have been such a joy! First graders are at the age of pure curiosity and wonder about the world.

Keep an eye out on the school calendar as well as emails. This last term is PACKED with HCA events! Stay tuned because you do not want to miss out on all the important end-of-the-year events! Be blessed this spring.

### **Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail:**

And just like that, we are embarking on the final term of grade 2 ! I am overcome with emotion thinking this is the last term of the school year. Our final term is full of many events. Here's what's to come during April and May in Term 4: Resurrection Egg Hunt, Frontier Day, Parent Teacher conferences, HCA 5K, weekly trips to Trout Brook, Science Fair, theater performance, the Art Show and Spring , Fine Arts Day.

**Math:** The numbers just keep getting bigger! In the next few weeks students will add numbers within 1,000, then will learn how to subtract within 1,000.

**FUNdations:** We are in the final stretch of FUNdations. In these last four units students will start off by digging deeper to learn about the 'long o' sound, and having some reading/spelling options during April and May as they complete units 14 and 15.

**History:** Civil war will be the starting topic of Term 4.

**Science:** Life cycle.

**Bible:** New Testament and Old Testament, too. We will be going back to the story of Moses and Egyptian culture!



# Team B News!

## FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

We are so excited about the upcoming events for Teams A & B! Frontier Day will be on Tuesday, April 11th to celebrate our American heritage with our grandparents (see info in your child's binder!). Make sure you also see that on Thursday, April 13th we will be going to Old Sturbridge Village. The permission slips are also in your child's binder. In hopes to keep the cost down, we are not getting a bus and we are looking for chaperones who are willing to drive. Thank you ahead of time for your commitment and remember, this can be documented as service hours. The permission slips are due back on April 6th. Thank you so much for helping make HCA so fun!!

Third grade has been working on telling time the 'old-fashioned way' with an analog clock!! Ask your child for the time to help them practice. We are finishing up the metric system of liquid and mass, and then onto quadrilaterals. We are really improving on and still working towards mastery of our multiplication facts. Thank you for your continued support.

In L.A., we continue with our in class reading groups, rocking Shurley grammar, and our stories about our journey on the Westward Expansion. Check out their creative Mint Tins Story Wheel book reports (photos below).

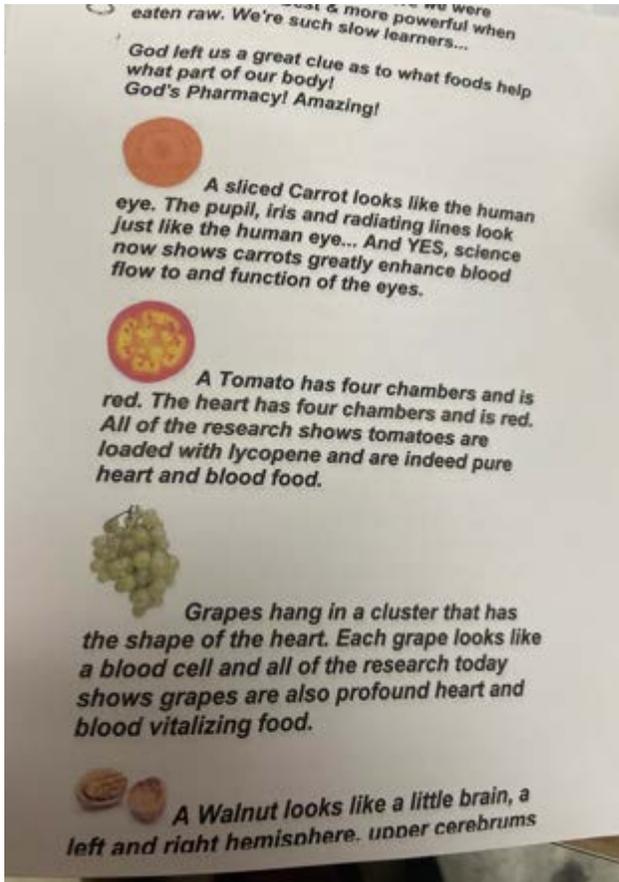
In Science, both 3rd and 4th graders are finishing up our study of senses. Last week we learned about God's perfect design of fruits and vegetables. Did you know that kidney beans look like a human kidney and are good for your kidneys, celery looks like bones and are good for your bones, sweet potatoes look like a human pancreas and actually balance the glycemic index?! There are SO many more connections from our food to our bodies created by our AMAZING God!!

As we begin Term 4, we are gearing up for our study in Life Cycles. We will be visiting Trout Brook in Jefferson on Mondays in May. An email from Mrs. McGrail was sent with information, and we are hoping to get drivers for this fun, hands-on science time.

In Bible, we will finish up Exodus and dive into Leviticus and Deuteronomy and also focus on Holy Week next week. What an honor it is to be at HCA where we do not have to turn our faith on and off. Have a blessed Easter and thank you for sharing your awesome kids with us!!

Much love, Ms. Rennie





Team B learned about God's perfect nutrition design!



Mint Tin books reports!

**A NOTE FROM MRS. VELARDE:**

As we finished testing week, the month of March, and Term 3 all last week, I am reminded of the story of Jesus calming the storm. Through all of the chaos in and out of the boat, Jesus was steady and calm. Unfortunately, unlike the disciples in the boat, our schedule will not calm until April break! (But, that's the way uh-huh, uh-huh we like it!) Book Reports, field trips and singing OH MY! As April springs into action, so will our little cherubs. We will travel to Sturbridge Village to explore more of America's heritage. We will divide our time learning about fractions and decimals; directly and indirectly focus on objects; and wander through the later years of Moses' life and the Israelites after their departure from Egypt. (Thankfully, our study will not take 40 years!) We will make a splash in our weekly trips to Trout Brook coming up in May. Also in May, we will join the cast of Children of Eden in a couple of cameo appearances, as well as cheer on 2 of our own in a couple of speaking parts as young Cain and Abel. We are certainly looking forward to producing our own music video based on Moses and the Burning Bush.



# Middle School News!

## Fifth Grade Update from Ms. Legro:

In last month's edition of Pathways, I shared how the Preschool and Kindergarten teachers inspired me to add elements of play to our morning devotions. During the last few weeks, the teachers were tasked with putting together a schedule for the week of standardized testing. Each time the subject of standardized testing was brought up, Mrs. Gordon reminded the teachers how important it is for the students to move and laugh before testing. This immediately resonated with me since it lined up so well with the elements of play that I was trying to bring to my classroom. It has been so much fun moving and laughing together before each testing session. Philippians 4:4 came to mind as I have reflected on all of this fun and laughter, so I opened God's Word and started reading the chapter. As I was reading, I realized that Paul tells us not to worry about anything (an appropriate reminder for those students experiencing test anxiety) just two verses after telling us to rejoice always. "Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."- Philippians 4:4-7

I have known that the solution to experiencing God's peace is praying and giving thanks, but it dawned on me that joy and rejoicing are also a part of this equation. I have been amazed seeing this play out firsthand as each student seems much more relaxed than I expected.

~Keep laughing, Miss Legro

## Sixth Grade Update from Mr. Shea:

I hope that you are finding rest as we finish out Term 3! This last week of the term was focused on our standardized testing. The IOWA test was a great opportunity for your child to show off what they have learned, and more importantly a great opportunity for us to improve our teaching!

Looking forward to our very busy April, we will be spending next week focusing on DC prep. Our lessons will reinforce the things that we have learned about our country's beginnings, as well as help students practice procedures and prepare for the trip. Please be on the lookout for suggested packing lists as we get closer to our departure date!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions about the trip!

Looking forward to our shared adventures!

~Mr. Shea



Welcome back to another episode of Mr. Curtis' Corner. I know it has been awhile since our last episode, but don't let that fool you. Middle school has been up to a lot, and learning a bit more than our students maybe realize. I can liken it to nature during the winter months; it appears as if not much is happening. From the outside, it appears snow covered, frozen, and sometimes even dead. You wonder if the sun even exists anymore because you see it so infrequently. Life in the New England winter can seem to take on a monotonous tone. But as we have all so wisely learned, you cannot judge things purely from what the exterior looks like. So as we search deeper, past the outward appearances, we begin to see subtle signs of new life. What we see is growth. And that, my friends, is what we are seeing in our Middle School students.

The winter months are training ground for Middle School students. They are constantly battling illness, increased irritability with peers and siblings, busy social and church calendars, as well as the increased work load at school. While this time of year certainly can attribute for increased stress levels, it also is a major time of growth for our students. They are learning the importance of rest and how to prioritize time as they catch up on missed assignments, and learning how to manage strained relationships while compromising and problem solving. They are beginning to develop these paramount skills and muscles that they will use for the remainder of their lives. This is the growth that is going on behind the scenes. It may be subtle, but it is happening. As an educator, it is encouraging and exciting to see.

In Bible class, students have continued their journey through the Old Testament and most recently spent some time with the Patriarch Moses. There are so many life lessons that can be harvested and gleaned from the life of Moses. From his humble beginnings, God was protecting and providing for him and the nation of Israel so even in their suffering God was working. Isn't that an important lesson for all of us to learn?! The difficult reality is that, yes, murderers are extended the same forgiveness that God offers to everyone else. We also have seen how God used Moses and Aaron to bring the plagues which eventually led Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. To help us connect with this part of the story, students created their own artistic interpretation of what the plagues looked like through the interpretive and imaginative lens of drawing their own Moses and the Plagues comic strip. I always enjoy these types of activities because it really provides a window into what students are thinking and pinpoints areas that God is highlighting in their lives.

Lastly, our History classes have been abuzz in anticipation as we draw nearer and nearer to our Washington D.C. trip. We are just ten days away from embarking on our adventure to our nation's capital. This is personally one of my favorite trips to take with students, as it presents an opportunity to bring to life what we have spent all year in history class learning. It takes people who seem to be just characters in a story to being real life heroes and villains. Places that seem like a world away are right in front of us. History isn't just some boring class in Middle School - it's what has happened in our collective past that shapes our lives on a daily basis. As our students have been preparing for the trip, they have been learning about the pillars of our unique government and how the Founding Fathers were very intentional with how they set it up. Most importantly, our students have been learning about the rights given them by God and protected by our constitution. I believe it is so important that as Americans, we not only know our rights but participate in them. It has certainly been an eye opening experience for our Middle Schoolers to learn the rights awarded to them as Americans, and that people in other countries do not have such rights. We are so blessed to be where God has placed us and so blessed to be able to bring learning to life through this upcoming trip. I ask that you please support us with your prayers for a safe and fruitful trip. I look forward to updating you in our next episode. I want to make a special shout out to an avid reader of this corner; J.B. thanks for your encouragement and support. For now, this is Mr. Curtis signing off. Long live the Republic and God bless all of my readers.

## Science Update from Mrs. Gordon:

**Science Fair Update:** Explorations are wrapping up as students are baking, surveying, building, coding, and more through experimentation and engineering! Our students are working hard to discover something for themselves through the steady work of observation. We spent time being inspired together by famous scientists notebooks, and we have practiced all year through nature journaling, so hopefully students are putting those patient counter-cultural skills to good use! In the first week of April we will be analyzing their results and drawing conclusions.

**Some 8th Grade Homeroom Highlights include:**

- starting to grow broccoli from seeds sent to us (John Jay) by Alexander Hamilton through the Pony Express
- hosting another great Stay, Play, & Pray event where the Middle School had a chance to move, laugh, and bond a bit
- watching *For the Life of the World: Letters to the Exiles* together as part of our morning devotions and trying to open our imaginations to the bigger picture of the purpose of life
- using the standardized testing week as practice to prepare us for similar tests we'll take throughout life (in our education, to get a driver's license, and to open occupational opportunities)
- planning fun community-building options for the Washington DC trip which is bound to be a memorable and wonderful time together!

