

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:

Feb. 19-23 - February break, No School

March 1 - Hearing Screenings

March 8 - Dance The Decades Dance-a-thon - support HCA by donating [here!](#)

March 22 - Development Day, No School

March 29 - Good Friday, No School

April 5 - Term 3 ends

April 8-12 - Iowa Standardized Testing (Grade 2-8)

April 12 - HCA hosts ACSI Early Ed Conference (No Preschool)

April 15-19 - April break (no school)

May 4 - HCA's 30th Celebration



PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

HCA Celebrates 30 Years!

This year marks the 30th year of Holden Christian Academy, and we want to celebrate with you! As a school community, we want to recognize God’s enduring faithfulness to HCA. We are praising God for our most wonderful years as well as His sustaining guidance through the instability of economic downturns and Covid. It was through the most difficult times that it was evident that God has a plan and a purpose for Christian education here.

(Continue reading on page 2!)

We are so thankful for God's leading over this school and the vision He gave to Susan Hayward that launched thirty years of students learning experientially through a biblical worldview. Mrs. Hayward set the tone of the school to be a place that honors God through creative learning in a caring, fun-filled school, and we are blessed to carry that forward into the future.

This spring we will host a celebration of all that God has done and continues to do through this community. The event will recognize the impact HCA has had on past generations while endeavoring to boost the sustainability of HCA for future generations through the promotion of the Legacy Tree.

Saturday, May 4th, from 11am-4pm we will recognize what makes our philosophy of education distinct, with food and activities representing five of our 'Big Days.' We will essentially have five Big Days in one day! There will be designated areas for the Thanksgiving Feast, the Chicago World's Fair, the Greek Olympics, and the Medieval Feast. At 2pm we will have a special presentation highlighting our current students, with testimonies from alumni about the impact the culture of HCA's motto of safe, wanted, and loved has had on them.

If you would like to join the 30th Celebration Committee, please email me at ncleveland@holdenchristianacademy.org

Be on the lookout for more information and opportunities to volunteer on this day too! Either way, **save the date and spread the word!** We want to include anyone who has ever loved HCA - past and present families, staff, alumni, grandparents, and all who want to support Christian education. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

By His Grace,
Nikki Cleveland, Principal

Attention Alumni, Grandparents, Stakeholders, and Supporters of Holden Christian Academy!

HCA Annual Fund

\$15,000
GOAL

\$7,600
2/6/2024

Thank you to those who
have already donated!



Growing with HCA



read more / online giving link:

www.holdenchristiacademy.org/annual-fund



Please take note....

HCA goes to the WOOSOX!

WHO: ALL HCA FAMILIES

WHAT: We will attend a WooSox game at Polar Park together to celebrate the end of a wonderful school year!

WHEN: Friday, June 7th, 6:45pm

HOW: You must reserve and pay for your tickets through this link <https://fevo-enterprise.com/event/Holdenchristian6>

CONTACT RACHEL JOHNSON FOR MORE INFORMATION OR WITH QUESTIONS.

rjohnson@assebet.org

Save the Date:

Saturday, May 4th @ 11am-4pm with a special presentation at 2pm

HCA's 30th Birthday Celebration

ALL our invited to our epic Big Day of Big Days! Get a taste of 5 of our favorite HCA "Big Days", while enjoying time with HCA friends, family, and alumni! There will be food and activities at this fundraiser. More information is coming soon, but for now, please mark your calendar and plan to come.

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



Attention Current HCA Families: REENROLLMENT IS OPEN!

Even though Priority Reenrollment is over, **it is not too late to reserve your student's spot** for the 24-25 school year. We are currently accepting new students weekly, so please visit www.factsmgt.com and log into the Family Portal to reenroll and secure your child's spot.



Visitors from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair!



Middle School boys (above) are motivated to remove snow so they can play basketball ;-) #thinkspring



Handmotions while singing in Preschool



Nature journaling with rocks



The art of observation

Preschool News!

Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
And have you been wondering
What in Preschool we do?

I'm happy to tell you,
Our learning is fun,
These kids' hearts are filled
When their days are done!

This month we have learned about
Helpers from 'round town,
Like when Officer Aaron
Brought his police car down.

The Preschoolers played Post Office,
"Mailed" a letter to friends,
And sang songs about how
God's love never ends!

From nurses and doctors,
Mail carriers, and builders,
God gives us our neighbors,
To both love and to pray for!

Our month will conclude
With more visits from Helpers,
Lots of friendship and learning,
And, we hope, some warm weather!



Update on our safety drill: We practiced our first safety drill (other than a fire drill) last Friday, 2/9/24. This lined up perfectly with our community helpers/police week as we learn about safety. Preschoolers did an excellent job of doing exactly as their teachers requested. We begin drills by saying, "Follow me," and all students are expected to stop what they are doing and line up quietly. Our puppet friend, Officer Buckle, helped us remain silent as we sat in the corner of Room A with our lights off and waited for the all-clear. All children remained calm and mostly still while we waited. Great job, Preschoolers!

Team A News!

Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

Welcome back time travelers! I pray you had a safe return, and that the Chicago World's Fair didn't disappoint. I hope you were able to visit all the wonderful buildings and try all the yummy food. I personally enjoyed walking through the Fisheries building! It was exciting to learn all about the different fish and even see some of the fish on display. Now that we are back in the current year of 2024, I want to say how proud I am of my Kindergarten class. Each student worked so hard on their costumes, and they looked amazing. Each student, with some help from their Fourth-Grade friends, did a wonderful job researching their fish. Also, a special thank you to the parents who volunteered their time to help chaperone the students, as well as set up (and then take down!) our building. Big Days like these aren't possible without the help of our wonderful HCA families.

Can you believe it? Believe what you ask? Well, we have been in school for 100 days already! It doesn't seem possible. It feels like just yesterday, their little faces were walking through the Kindergarten door for the first time. We celebrated this milestone with some fun counting and fine motor activities. We made some fruit loop necklaces, colored headbands, and even exercised our bodies! What an exciting and busy day. Speaking of exercising our bodies, during Term 3 we will learn to make healthy food choices and how to "eat the rainbow". Parents, I need your help! Please send snacks and lunches that contain the wonderful colors of the rainbow. Students will track the different colors they eat on a chart. We will also learn about the importance of rest, drinking water, and physical activity.

Our Kindergarten class will continue to work on our fine motor skills, using tools such as playdough and clothespins to help strengthen the small muscles in their hands and wrists. When these muscles are strong it becomes easier and more comfortable to hold pencils and cut paper. Let's not forget that our gross motor skills are just as important as our fine motor skills. These skills are especially important when we are not able to go outside because of temperature and/or weather. And if they are not going outside to use their gross motor skills, then have them practice for the upcoming Dance-a-thon. What better way to move those muscles than dancing around the living room!

Everyone is excited for Term 3. Please continue to ask your children what they are learning in the classroom so you can see first-hand their skills and outstanding accomplishments.

Grade 1 Update from Mrs. Shand:

Welcome to Term 3! Our First Graders have been working incredibly hard this year. It is a great time to reflect on what we have done so far and what is also coming up ahead. They have started test taking, completed another “Big HCA Day”, formed friendships, and solidified math and reading skills. It has been very fulfilling to see the progress that has been made in two full terms. I am looking forward to these next two terms where I know they are going to continue to blossom!

This month we are continuing our reading skills focusing on blends. Students have been reading more independently with taught-spelling patterns learned thus far. Their excitement to have independent reading time is contagious and hearing them read out loud has been a joy. In Math, we are zeroing in on place value and how that can help us to add and subtract. This has been a favorite topic this year! Our little scientists have been fascinated by electricity and have been conducting their own experiments in class. They will make predictions, conduct experiments, and record their findings in their writing journals. We will continue electricity for the next couple of weeks and move on to magnets.

Students have been shocked to learn that kids their age years and years ago enjoyed entertainment by huddling around a radio listening to shows and movies. We have tried some out ourselves, and they loved this! We moved onto silent movies and revealed how technology has been increasing over the years. They have also discussed the similarities and differences to present day technology. This has led to some very in depth discussions! We will continue entertainment in Term 3 by listening to music from each decade and dancing all of the hit moves in our Dancing The Decades Fundraiser on March 8th!

Finally, your children will be working on a long-term writing project where they will write their own books and have them published! They are very excited to become authors. We are studying “how-to” books where they have to be an expert on a certain topic and teach it to someone (how to score a goal in soccer, how to make pancakes, how to add and subtract, etc.). I can’t wait to see how they come out!



Grade 1 dressed for the CWF!

Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail:

Snowy greetings to you all ! My thanks to you all for helping your children to be in full character for the Chicago World's Fair ! I hope your children enjoyed every second of this historical event. Now let's discuss Term 3, shall we?

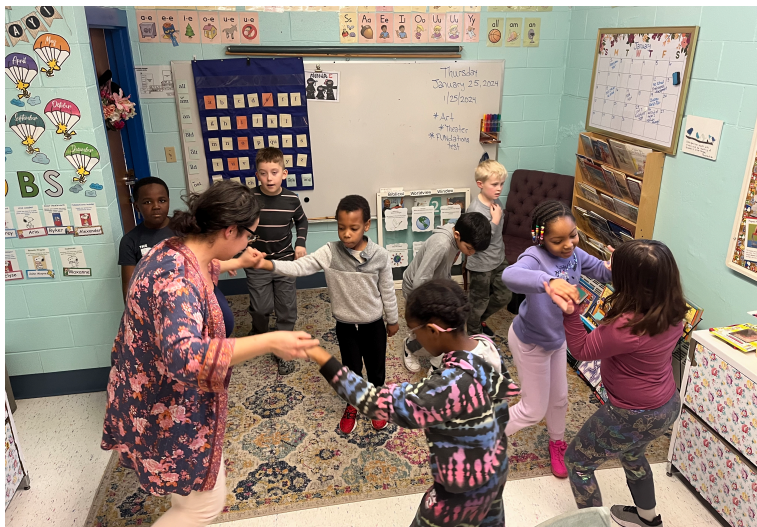
Term 3 is the point in Second Grade when students really begin to climb the mountain. Students are learning and understanding what "quality of work" means, and we are steadily molding into the Team A leaders we strive to be. Here is a review of some of the academic happenings in Term 3:

- ◆ In the Bible, we are wrapping up Old Testament stories and heading into the New Testament teachings. We are now shifting back into reading our Jesus StoryBook bible which the children have been very excited about.
- ◆ In the first half of Term 3 history, we continue on through the years into the early 1900's learning about entertainment radio, morse code, Mack Sennett, and Scott Joplin.
- ◆ Science is full of all things electricity in the first half of our term ! We have learned about lightning and static electricity. Ask your child what their favorite lightning is ! Following vacation we'll learn about wind and water power.
- ◆ Math for the first half of the term Unit 9 will focus on more additional strategies for addition and adding up to four sets of two digit numbers.

Dance-a-thon information!

Our class was assigned to the 1920's decade for the first official HCA Dance-a-thon! When it's the big marathon dance day- your child is welcomed and invited to dress up in their snazziest 1920's attire !

I wish you and your family a wonderful winter vacation full of rest, exploration, and fun !



Grade 2 practicing their Salsa moves together

Team B News!

FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

I hope that everyone finds the new 3rd grade Weekly Peek easier to follow. Thank you for reading it and for checking their binders every night. In History, we have been having so much fun watching silent movie clips and videos of past people who have shaped our culture in poetry, humor, sports, music, and inventions, etc. Our focus in Bible will be on Elisha and Elijah. We have jumped into fractions with much ease. Thank you for helping your children to be more proficient with their multiplication facts, it is important! Our writing assignment for this month is to document the events in their lives titled "Our Memorable Moments".

Thank you for helping them keep on track for their February book report that is due after vacation. We have been loving our study of electricity and will work on solar energy and then onto electromagnetics. Such fun!!

We will also be learning about the USDA My Plate for the next month. Please have them bring in empty containers with clipped food labels-Thank you SO much!! Also, thank you for the donation we received for our treasure box. If anyone else feels led to contribute-it would be MUCH appreciated!! Your support is appreciated and I thank God for your partnership. I pray you have a wonderful vacation, filled with meaningful family time.



A NOTE FROM MRS. VELARDE:

The students in 4th grade have established a strong momentum in their academics. The students are continuing to establish strong habits that will help them be successful in 5th grade. At the beginning of Term 3, they began writing instead of reciting their weekly memory verse. This past week, we began to implement the planner system. We will continue to use planners through the end of the school year in place of weekly peeks. We are making strong progress in our math curriculum and will soon be working with measurement. We will be integrating our studies of The Great Depression with money skills and our classroom economy in the next few weeks. In Bible, we have been learning about the wisdom of Solomon and will be examining the division of Israel as we learn about the World Wars in History. In March, we will be participating in the annual 4th grade Miles in March Challenge. Each school day in March, we will walk a mile in the classroom together as part of our fitness objective for Food For life. The cold weather (and ice) might make it less enjoyable to be active outside, but it hasn't stopped these students from sharing the warmth of their smiles and love for learning.



Middle School News!

Mrs. Nkrahene's News:

Happy Valentine's Day Week, HCA parents! May the light of God's love guide you and empower you as you show love to others. It's only mid-February, yet it feels like 2024 has been here a lot longer. That's because we have been busy working hard and accomplishing great things. For instance, the Chicago World's Fair reenactment was a huge success. Students dressed up as historical figures and acted the part. They dedicated their time and energy to researching characters and preparing themselves to answer questions about their characters. They also spent time recreating the buildings at the World's Fair and preparing food and activities for attendees. Our fifth and sixth grade girls collaborated and made chili and cornbread. One of our HCA parents graciously led our girls to make the warm and delicious meal. The girls really enjoyed cooking together. Thank you for your quick response to our requests for the Fair. May the Lord bless you for your generosity.

Term 3 is underway and students have been hard at work. It's only the third week and students have already begun taking tests in math. Please encourage your children to take time to study and prepare for quizzes and tests. They can create flashcards to learn math vocabulary. They can go over homework and previous quizzes or tests and solve problems again until they get them right. They can also make use of Moby Max. It's an online platform that each student has access to. Students can use Moby Max to practice their math skills gained this year or to review their math skills from previous years. They could even use it to start learning topics they haven't been taught yet. Moby Max has actual lessons they can use for self-directed learning.

Please encourage your child to consistently apply himself or herself and to persevere through academic challenges. I appreciate your partnership in this area. Students in our Fifth grade homeroom are looking forward to the Dance-a-thon. They have shown dedication in their effort to fundraise for the event. Please encourage them to continue practicing during February vacation and to continue their fundraising efforts. We have raised over \$10,000 so far! Thank you for all your help.

Mr. Shea's Shenanigans:

We are well on our way to having a wonderful third term. Students will be focusing on two main topics in our literature and writing this term. Grades 5 and 6 will be starting off the term learning about argument writing and explaining/defending an opinion. I am hoping to guide students through explaining an important belief to another person. From our literature work this term, grades 5 and 6 will be working through some of C.S. Lewis's works. Our focus will be on "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe" with excerpts from some of his other books and writings. I am looking forward to the fun and learning that we are going to be doing this term!

God Bless!

Mr. Curtis' Corner:

Welcome back to another episode of Mr. Curtis' Corner, the part of Pathways where you get to hear from the one and only Mr. Curtis. Question; can you map all 50 States and Capitals? Well, our Middle School students are certainly working towards it. Each term they are being asked to add a region and map to their repertoire. For term 3 they have added the Midwest States and Capitals, so to date that would be the Northeast, Southeast, and Midwest. Go ahead and quiz your middle school student on their mapping skills.

Well, it's not quite spring cleaning yet but you better pull out those dancing shoes from the back of your closet. Go ahead and dust them off because the H.C.A. Dance a Thon is coming March 8 th . If you haven't heard, this February's fundraiser is a Dancing through the Decades. We are pairing popular dances with music from the 20th century. Once again our fundraiser fits our current historical themes and area of study. Our students are currently looking for sponsorships to help raise monies for the school. Recently, middle school students have been challenged by their homeroom teachers to meet a specific fundraising goal and if they do they will reap a reward. Mr. Curtis' homeroom has been challenged to raise monies and in return he will be providing a Chick-fil-a luncheon. If you or a friend are looking to get behind our students please consider making a donation. We are having a lot of fun learning some nostalgic dances and looking forward to the challenge of the Dance a Thon.

Mrs. Gordon's Musings

Homeroom Update: We are preparing to represent the **1980s** in the Dancing the Decades fundraiser, and I would love to get my hands on a **hair crimper** if anyone has a connection! In devotions, we recently finished *For the Life of the World* (which I highly recommend) and are now listening to the book of John together. We draw, doodle, or write as we listen then share thoughts. As familiar as we sometimes become with the life of Jesus, there seem to always be things that hit us in surprising ways. It's been a gift to interact with this together.

Health: Last week we were privileged to have a guest speaker share about **Personal Finances** in our Financial Health Unit. We learned about the Biblical principles around money and some of the most important practices to living financially healthy lives which we can do whether we have a lot of money or very little. I encourage parents to follow up with their 7th and 8th graders about this to hear what stood out to them and see if they have questions. Next we move on, pun intended, to another one of my favorite units: functional fitness and movement as body stewardship!

5/6 Science: The middle school hallway is more beautiful and educational to walk through right now with these students' National Park posters are on display. Currently we are interacting with the **rock cycle** through Nature Journaling (see pics on page 6!), labs (did they mention how challenging it was to shave all those crayons?!), readings, and discussion. I enjoy watching them develop their ability to think like scientists!

7/8 Science: These students are currently enthralled by the incredible **circulatory system**, or at least their teacher is! Human biology gets more fascinating and moves me toward worshipping our Maker more each time I go through it. Instead of a test for assessment on this chapter, they are working on a project displaying the travels of a Red Blood Cell in its full two loops through the circulatory system.