

# 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:

**May 16** - Fine Arts  
Evening

*Art show 6:30pm*

*Concert 7:00pm*

**May 27** - No school,  
Memorial Day observed

**June 4** - 8th Grade  
Field Trip

**June 5** - HCA’s  
Amazing Race

**June 6** - Preschool  
graduation, 9:30am, 8th  
Grade graduation, 7pm

**June 7** - 1/2 day, Last  
Day  
Thankfulness Chapel,  
9am



## PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

It was such a joy to celebrate 30 years with so many who have been a part of the HCA family through the years! The 30th Celebration is a milestone that causes us to both look back at all that God has done, and look forward to a future with God leading the way. *One development that we sincerely hope is in our future is a high school.* We have experienced a resurgence of interest within the last year that has me wondering what God is up to! Previously when interest in a high school for HCA would emerge, I would question whether we had the right people, time, and resources to make it happen. I was too keenly aware that such an endeavor would require a person or group to lead the charge, a high school administrator, additional space, specialized staffing, etc. With the increase in interest, however, I realized that this is a process that God may be initiating. If it is, He will provide all that is needed in due time.

In January I held a focus group meeting to gauge the current interest in starting a high school and find out a little more about what parents envisioned. It was a good meeting with good conversation, but the steps to move forward were still unclear.

However, important conversations have taken place since then that reminded me that God is at work. These conversations have been striking for their timing and their content. One conversation was with a former HCA staff member who moved out of state several years ago, but has since been developing a high school curriculum that is consistent with HCA’s philosophy, framework, and culture. She has had opportunities to put elements in place, make corrections, and refine. This fall, she will be piloting her curriculum with Canopy, a high school learning center in Virginia that is, like HCA, a member of Redemptive Education. We are both excited to continue the conversation about how this curriculum may be used at a high school for HCA!

This was an unexpected, but major element that shows the work God has been doing behind the scenes to lay the ground work while we were unaware. I wonder what else God has been preparing for us? Will you join me in seeking God for His timing and being watchful for His provision?

Please let me know if this is on your heart as well and perhaps we can join together in prayer for a high school.

*Ecclesiastes 3:11, “Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end” (NLT).*

By His Grace,  
Nikki Cleveland, Principal

Celebrating HCA’s 30th  
(Pictured from left to right)

Rev. Gary Hayward  
former Bible/History Teacher

Mrs. Susan Hayward  
Founding Principal

Mrs. Nikki Cleveland  
HCA Principal

Mr. Tom Banyai  
Founding School Committee Chairman



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

## 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](mailto:rjohnson@assebet.org)**

## **The ART SHOW and SPRING CONCERT ~Thursday, May 16th~**

Please ENTER THROUGH THE GYM to view the Art Show beginning at 6:30pm. All guests should move through the building to view the art before attending the concert which will begin at 7:00pm. Families with only Preschoolers may view their artwork in the PK Classroom, but are welcome to join us through the Gym entrance as well. Handicap accessibility will be provided through the chapel entrance. See you Thursday!

# Please take note...

**...FACTS Parent Alert has a new short code!**

**Please add 317065 to your contacts so you'll always know it's us and not an unknown**

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the 30th Celebration! Make sure to check out our photos shared on Instagram & Facebook!

## GRADUATION 2024!

Can you believe that in a few short weeks, Graduation will be upon us? June 6 is the date, so mark your calendar and plan to join us!

- ◆ Preschoolers will have a celebration from 9:30-11:00am (ceremony in the Sanctuary followed by a picnic and games for all PK families, even if your child is not going to Kindergarten in the fall)
- ◆ 8th grade class will graduate at 7:00pm with a reception to follow. Please join us!



# Preschool News!

## Nature Explore update

Thank you to all who donated to our Trike- A-Thon last fall. We were able to purchase an Akambira instrument and redo the landscaping in our beautiful Nature Explore courtyard. Thank you to Alex Bickerstaff, owner of Blackbelt landscaping in Holden, as well!



The children are loving their time outside in the fresh air and sunshine, exploring all the centers in our Nature Explore courtyard!



Can you believe we are in our last full month of school? This year has been full of joy and challenges, growth and friendships, Jesus and His Creation. The Preschoolers have marveled in the changes that spring is bringing, as they notice the buds on our trees, catch flower petals that "snow" down on them while they play, listen to bird calls and try to guess what bird it is, and observe and identify insects in our play areas. You can often find Preschoolers in the garden with Ms. Ruth, watering our plants and learning to decipher which plant or herb it is based on how it looks and smells. The greatest joy is getting to see young children learn through all that is around them, especially as they grow in their awareness of our amazing God and His love for each of them. Our biggest prayer as teachers has been that each day we point them back to Jesus by showing great love and gentleness to them in our words and actions.

### **Dates to Remember:**

Thursday, May 16th: Fine Arts Evening-join us in the Preschool classroom starting at 6:30pm for viewing your child's recent artwork and see what we've been learning about, then join us in the Sanctuary for our Spring Concert at 7:00pm, starting with the preschoolers!

Preschool Graduation Celebration-Thursday, June 6th, 9:30-11AM: Join us to celebrate our wonderful year together with a celebration in the Sanctuary, followed by a family picnic and games. This celebration is for all preschoolers, not just those moving on to Kindergarten.



# Team A News!

## Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

To quote Dr. Suess, "Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." Well it happened: we are in the last few weeks of school. The end of the school year brings many emotions for teachers and students. This includes the excitement of the last day of school, anxiety of making sure everything gets done, the joy of the upcoming summer break, and the sadness of not seeing friends everyday. For me, as the school year slowly winds to an end, I certainly feel sadness and joy. I have spent eight months with your children and during those eight months they have blessed me with their smiles, laughter, excitement, and curiosity. I feel sadness to see them leave but joy in how much I have watched them grow, learn, and mature.



Just as our Kindergarteners have grown and transformed, so will our latest area of study: the caterpillar! Every Term 4, Kindergarten gets to observe the life cycle of a butterfly and this year is no different. We have already begun to see the changes this week as we fill out our "caterpillar to butterfly" journal. The caterpillars have already started to fatten up and before we know it, we will get to see them change into a chrysalis and then transform into butterflies.

Along with learning all about butterflies, Kindergarten also learned about what plants need in order to grow and we planted our own personal "lawn". We discussed how God created our bodies like plants with needs to grow which led us into a discussion about the importance of sleep, food, water, and physical activity. We have transitioned in Math from concentrating on numbers to exploring 2D and 3D shapes. We went on a scavenger hunt throughout our

classroom and outside to find examples of these shapes. We even made our own shape collage.

The biggest and most enjoyable growth I get to experience is seeing your children become little readers. It always amazes me to see students start the school year "wrestling" with new letters and sounding them out with questionable hesitation. By the end of the year, it blesses my heart to hear them read simple books exuding confidence and excitement!

It's been an absolute pleasure loving and caring for your children this school year! I will continue to pray they walk in God's love and embrace learning on their journey. I look forward to seeing their smiling faces walk into the Team A hallway this fall ready for the next step in their learning adventure. I wish you and your family an amazing and relaxing summer and pray I see you next year at HCA!



**Grade 1 Update from Mrs. Shand:**

Happy May! I can't believe I am writing the last Pathways of the year! This year has flown by and I couldn't be more blessed to have shared this year with your children. They have blossomed into confident students who have flourished in all academic and social areas. Our first grade classroom became a family and the relationships they have created, I pray last a long time! It was an honor to witness!

Thank you to those who joined in on the HCA 30th Celebration fun last weekend. We had a blast highlighting each of the four years we cycle through. It was great to see families out and about in a little different setting. Thank you for continuing to build our community!

This month students will conclude our reading curriculum. In our parent-teacher conferences I shared that it has been a joy to see the progress that occurred and how well your child can read—and enjoys it! We will touch upon a few more spelling rules and end the year with reading, reading, and more reading. We will also end our year reviewing all of our Math skills we have learned so far from addition/subtraction strategies to data to shapes, and more! They have grown a real love for Math and taking on challenges to further their thinking. We have zoomed through the decades highlighting key events like the moon landing, disco music, and their very own decade they were born in! We will celebrate each and every student's birthday from this year and the summer in a special way. The first graders also enjoyed caring for our school garden by cleaning up trash, extra mulch/dirt, branches, and so much more. They have looked at God's creation a little bit closer and made the connection that we need to do our best to take care of His creation that surrounds us! We have had so much fun this year from dance parties, visits from Eli, singing, joking, reading, and of course always laughing! I will truly miss this special class!

We have a busy end of the year. Here is what is coming up:

- Fine Arts Evening
- Step Up Day (your child will visit the next grade)
- Author Presentation (Tammy Gerhard)
- Happy almost Summer!



### Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail

Cue the big hair music by Europe! It's "The Final Countdown"!! Our days are looking and feeling like summer will soon be at our doorsteps. Great anticipation is upon grade two as we wrap up the year! Here's what's happening:

- ♦ In Bible, we are continuing to work through New Testament teachings learning more in depth about parables that Jesus shared, God's wonderful promise, and His wondrous return. We are still striving to memorize all of the New Testament books.
- ♦ History: As we zoom through the decades, we will continue through the 70's- Sesame Street & Star Wars, the 80's Celtics & the Challenger accident, the 90's Beanie Babies, World Wide Web, and into the 00's and 2010's where we will celebrate all birthdays !
- ♦ Science: Planets have been randomly drawn and we will begin our research. Then onward to warm and cold blooded vertebrates, as well as invertebrates with and without legs !
- ♦ Math: Unit 13 which focuses on organizing data and sorting will be wrapped up by next week. Then we will move onto Unit 14 - money, and Unit 15 shapes!

#### Upcoming important dates:

- ♦ Thursday May 16th - Fine Arts & Spring Concert
- ♦ Monday May 27th - No School - Memorial Day
- ♦ Monday, June 3rd - Local author presentation
- ♦ Tuesday, June 4th - Step Up Day for students to visit their next classroom.
- ♦ Friday June 7th- Last day of school - HALF DAY !

BONUS - It'd be nice to know who actually reads Grade 2 Pathways, so I have a joke to share. If you email me for the answer, I will give your child a bonus grade !

~> What do you call a teacher who forgot to take attendance? <~

# Team B News!

## FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

What a wonderful day Saturday was, celebrating our 30th year of HCA!!! What a blessing to chat with alumni who are now adults and some with families of their own!! I thank the Lord for being a part of this incredible HCA family!

I am so proud of 3rd grade!! We are on schedule to finish Shurley Grammar, Foundations, and our Math books!! They have been working so hard to understand so many new concepts.

We continue to research, discuss, and do quick writes about so many fun facts throughout our history of the decades. We continue to learn about the Old Testament prophets in Bible.

In Science, 3rd & 4th graders have been comparing and contrasting the basic diagrams of animal, human, and plant cells in life cycles. We discussed how a group of scientists spent years researching what came before an atom? Guess what they found....? SOUND!!! How cool is that? Seeing that God SPOKE the creation into existence!! What a mighty God!!

Thank you for raising such AWESOME kids!! I am already grieving that they are won't be in my class for much longer. I am so grateful for each of you!

Blessings,  
Ms. Rennie



This student shared a Show-and-Tell from her trip to Maine.



Ms. Rennie's nephew Jared works for NOAA & was on Fox weather talking about climate rising temps. Her class got to tune in live!

### A NOTE FROM MRS. VELARDE:

The students of 4th grade have done a great job keeping their work ethic and momentum strong since April break! This past week, we finished the Cold War in our history studies and have used this conclusion to review what we have learned in history throughout the year. As part of our review, the students worked together to write Haiku (poetry is our language arts focus this month) retelling the important things to remember from each unit. Here are a few samples:

#### **US Economy Post Civil War**

more risk, more profit  
machine replaced hand labor  
machines are new

#### **WWII**

Winston C. was wise  
Adolf H. was full of lies  
This is now a war

#### **The Cold War**

The Iron Curtain  
containing communism  
Korea and 'Nam

As we begin the final stretch of our American History studies, we are also nearing the end of our Math curriculum and will finish up with our unit on symmetry and triangles next week. For the remainder of this year, we will be reviewing the skills they have built this year.

#### **Reminders:**

The Spring Concert and Art Show are May 16th, starting at 6:30pm

Book reports are due May 20th

Science packets are due May 24th



# Middle School News!

## Mrs. Nkrahene's News:

Hello HCA parents!

I can't believe that this is our last full month of academic work this school year. It's been a whirlwind of activities, events, and learning. Thank you for all the help you've given to your children and to our school this year. May the Lord continue to bless you!

This past week we celebrated HCA's 30th Anniversary. It was great seeing students outside of the classroom, in a more laid back setting. Thank you for volunteering and for supporting the event with your presence and your funds.

I am proud to say that six Fifth Graders (almost 50% of our class!) participated in the Seussical performance. I attended the opening show on Thursday, May 2nd. It was a blast! Our Fifth Graders performed beautifully. I was impressed with the amount of effort they put into memorizing their lines. Thank you for encouraging and supporting them!

As we wrap up the school year, there's a lot that we are trying to complete. There are some upcoming math events that I'd like to share:

1. **Grades 5-6 Multiplication Facts Party:** 5th and 6th graders have been promised a pizza party if they are able to master their 1-12 multiplication facts. Each student has access to [Mathfactlab.com](https://www.mathfactlab.com) for multiplication fact practice. I'll test students on May 13th. The party will be held on May 15th during lunch. Students need to score at least 90% within the allotted time to join the party. Students who are not interested can opt out of the test.
2. **HCA middle school math competition:** Yesterday and today I hosted an HCA math competition. Students have been competing individually and in teams of two. For the team competition, the first place prize is a cash prize of \$50 (\$25 for each student), the second place prize is \$30 (\$15 for each student), and the third place prize is \$20 (\$10 for each student). I paired up younger with older students to make the competition fair. Congrats to everyone who participated.
3. **Math Competition (outside of HCA):** There's an annual math competition for Elementary and Middle School students in Massachusetts. I plan to attend the competition with HCA students who are interested in participating. Grade 5 students can compete in the Elementary school competition. Students in grades 6-8 compete in the Middle School competition.

We have a packed schedule ahead. I'll continue to encourage our students to finish hard. Have a wonderful month!

**Mr. Shea's Shenanigans:**

Hello Team C&D Parents!

As we head into the second half of Term 4 (I can't believe it either!), students are continuing to learn about plot structure and character development. They are applying what they learn from our novels to their own short stories as they complete the different sections of their drafts. Please help your students pace themselves as they work through their reading and writing. We are aiming to wrap up our Term 4 novels by the end of next week in order to shift our focus. We will look at how these plot structures are used within Biblical text, stories to teach us about God, as well as the Biblical lessons we've unknowingly worked into our own stories by using the Hero's Journey plot progression.

We will be finishing our year by sharing our work with each other through a short story exhibition, where each class selects a favorite from among their classmates' work to share with the whole Middle School. This project is always a crowd favorite among the students and the stories they create clearly show both their growth and effort! I'm looking forward to seeing their creativity and knowledge shine.

God bless!  
Jeremiah Shea

**Mr. Curtis' Corner:**

Welcome back to another episode of Mr. Curtis' Corner. This spring has been quite a blur and shows no signs of slowing down before we reach the culmination of the school year. I hope my readers were able to attend the Middle School theatre production of Seussical last week. The theatre students worked tirelessly for months and I would venture to say all their hard work paid off as they successfully transported the audience into the world of Dr. Seuss. H.C.A. has always been blessed to have such gifted students especially as it pertains to the arts and this was yet another blessing for our community.

In Bible class, we are concluding the year by diving headlong into the book of Daniel. Recently, students used several different scriptures to unpack not only why God was punishing his people for their sinfulness and infidelity, but what were their emotions as they were taken into Babylonian Exile. Now as we pivot, we will be focusing on the theme of God's faithfulness to his people amidst an ever-changing world. We also will discuss remaining steadfast in your pursuit of God and not compromising in your faith when the culture around you demands it. I hope students can also take away the fact that there is always so much to learn from scripture no matter how many times you've read a particular story.

Thank you for your continued readership and support,

Mr. Curtis

## Mrs. Gordon's Musings

Believe it or not, here we are again: at the end of the end. For the 8th grade homeroom, this marks not only the end of another school year, but also the end of their time at HCA. We spend Term 4 busily preparing for graduation and other end of year excitement, but we also try to cherish the normal moments of our times together as it winds down. It's a special and chaotic time where emotions tend to be all over the place.

**Recent Field Trip:** Hiking at Wachusett Mountain with the 5th through 8th grade was a huge success! The students expressed how much they enjoyed their time in nature with friends. It integrated nicely into our yearly theme of Unchanging God in a Changing World. We shared things that changed (such as student attitudes, who we were near, our heart/breathing rates, and the types of plants as we rose in elevation) and other things through which we could observe evidence of change (such as weathering and erosion, seasons, and human interaction with the mountain). Then together we turned our attention towards our unchanging God. It was a simple and beautiful time together showered with God's favor.



**Coming Up:** 5th & 6th grade are about to make their final pivot in the Science curriculum this year from studying soil to learning a bit more about the plants growing in that soil! 7th & 8th grade are starting their Marriage & Family Unit in which they learn about the reproductive system and dating/relationships. Important dates to mark down are the 8th grade class trip to Six Flags scheduled for Tuesday, June 4th and graduation on Thursday the 6th.