

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

April 15-19 - April break (no school)

April 24 - 1/2 day, Parent-Teacher Conferences (in person only); dismissal at 11:30am (no ASP)

April 26 - Service Day

May 4 - HCA’s 30th Celebration - admission may be purchased for this fundraising event using [this link](#)

May 16 - Fine Arts Evening, Art show 6:30pm, Concert 7:00pm

May 27 - No school, Memorial Day observed

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

June 7 - 1/2 day, Last Day



PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

The Pearl

Every once in awhile, it is important and helpful to refocus on the mission of our jobs here. It is easy to get distracted by the details of the to-do list and focus on the next thing, but zooming out for the bigger picture really provides the motivation for what we do on a daily basis.

This Sunday, HCA will be highlighted as a ministry of Holden Chapel during the 10:00am service. You are welcome to join us for “HCA Sunday”! As we were reflecting on this event, Ms. Cunsolo reminded me of what our friend, Jenn Jonay, used to connect our mission to. She would relate the ministry of HCA to the parable of the hidden treasure and pearl in Matthew 13:44-46.

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy, went and sold all he had and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.' (New International Version, 2011).

Like the man in the parable, our faculty, staff, and parents have so much joy over the treasure of the Gospel, that they joyfully and sacrificially use their time and talents for this treasure - to educate and train disciples for Christ. As my pastor reminded me last Sunday, we are stewards of a message of hope! What an honor it is to be a part of this mission every day!

This is also why we are *celebrating* what God has done here over the last 30 years of this ministry. As with the creation of a pearl, there have been trials and challenges along the way, but even these difficulties have produced the beauty of the ministry we have today.

I hope to see you this Sunday if you are able, and on May 4th as well, for the celebration of God's work at HCA ~through different people over many years~ to further the Kingdom of God. Thank you for your part in this ministry!

By His Grace,
Nikki Cleveland, Principal



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

Holden Christian Academy's 30th Celebration

We are so excited about our upcoming 30th Celebration! There are a few ways you can help our efforts to make this day a wonderful event.

1. Purchase wristbands and come enjoy the event! Wristbands will be available at that link until noon on May 3rd, and also available for purchase at the registration table at the event on May 4th!
2. Invite friends, family, and alumni! They can preorder wristbands or purchase the day-of as well.
3. Preorder a commemorative t-shirt! We have a short window of time left to preorder - all are invited to join our group order by April 17th to get the best pricing, colors, styles, and sizes (see page 4 for pictures). We will have a limited # of t-shirts available for sale at the 30th Celebration, however the prices may be higher depending on how many shirts sell during our preorder window.
4. Volunteer to help! We will gladly provide a free wristband (value \$25) to any adults who sign up for **two 1-hour shifts, or who volunteer to prepare a curriculum-related dish.** This allows you to help and enjoy the festivities! You can see all the updated volunteer needs, including the dishes we are looking for, on that Sign Up Genius.

This event is for kids and adults alike! There will be obstacle courses for all ages, inflatables, lawn games, 9-square, jousting, "axe" throwing, a bounce house, food, an alumni-led worship team, a student performance, and so much more! Please mark your calendar and plan to join us as we celebrate 30 years of God's faithfulness to HCA, and look with expectancy at the next 30 years to come!

PREORDER YOUR 23-24 YEARBOOK!
Current families, please reserve your copy of our yearbook by filling out this form. \$17 per yearbook, to be billed through FACTS on May 15th.

Please take note....

HCA Celebrate's 30 Years!

Click [HERE](#) to purchase your all-inclusive wristbands for our 30th Celebration on Saturday, May 4th, 11am-4pm with a special presentation at 2pm!

There will be amazing food and a variety of activities for all ages - adults and kids alike - at this fundraiser. To register and read all about the day, click [here](#).

We are also selling COMMEMORATIVE T-SHIRTS - to get the best pricing, please shop a variety of sizes, colors, and styles by clicking [here](#). Join our group order by April 17th!!!!



Order your commemorative t-shirt before April 17 to get the best price!

Available in 16 different colors/styles

short sleeve, long sleeve, raglan

purple, navy, or royal

sizes Youth XS - Adult 4XL available in most styles and colors.

SPRING SERVICE DAY!

Friday, April 26th is Spring Service Day at HCA! There will be will be service opportunities for K-8 students, staff, and parents to work together to clean up the space God has entrusted to us! We are looking for someone to use our power washer, some general help, and a few items donated. Check out our [SIGN UP GENIUS](#) to lend a hand.

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



ATTENTION PARENTS!

We look forward to Parent-Teacher conferences, which will take place on Wednesday, April 24th. **This is a ½ day for all students, with no After School Program.** Please note that Parent-Teacher conferences are designed to be an opportunity for homeroom teachers to have focused communication with parents, *without the student present*. If you haven't already, please use the links below to sign up for a slot with your child's homeroom teacher. Thank you!

[Preschool Conferences](#) *

[Kindergarten Conferences](#)

(Grade 1 Conferences already happened; if you missed them please email Mrs. Shand!)

[Grade 2 Conferences](#)

[Grade 3 Conferences](#)

[Grade 4 Conferences](#)

[Grade 5 Conferences](#) ***

[Grade 6 Conferences](#) ***

[Grade 7 Conferences](#) ***

[Grade 8 Conferences](#) ***

**Preschool parents*, because of the size of the Preschool, Mrs. McKean will be having conferences on Tuesday, 4/23 and Wednesday, 4/24.

****Middle School parents*, these slots are reserved for you to have a conference with your child's homeroom teacher only. If you need a conference with another teacher, please contact him/her directly to schedule a meeting on a different day.



Preschool News!

April snow storms bring May.....? What an exciting way to begin our month, with a beautiful snow blanketing our landscape. Then, just a few days later, warm sun melting it as we prepared for an eclipse! What amazing ways to see God's order and design for His creation!

We began our month preparing our children as they learned about a "Sad and Happy Day": the death and resurrection of Jesus. While it was sad when Jesus chose to die for us, it was also happy because we can be with Him in Heaven one day. The children spent special time with Mrs. Cleveland, searching our classroom for eggs. They sorted eggs by color, and then learned about the significance of each tiny object inside and its role in Jesus' life and death.

'Thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' were given for each part of the story, reinforcing the sad and happy day we remember each year. Children took to heart the deep significance, and they were captivated by the greatest story of love, told by Mrs. Cleveland. We created a beautiful mural together as a class to celebrate Jesus is alive, that can be enjoyed by those who pass through our preschool foyer.



April brings with it sunshine, warmth, and the blessing of taking our learning outside! Nature Explore starts to turn green with growth, and we love discovering where God is bringing new life to all of His creation around us! We will naturally engage in our learning as we discover the beauty and order around us: in the worms and flowers, in the bugs and the rain, and the mud. We will be getting some fresh changes to our Nature Explore area this month, and we hope you can join in our excitement and wonder at our 30th birthday celebration on May 4th!

As our school year heads towards the finish line, we are given the gift of seeing our Preschoolers grow and flourish, change and mature, and we are reminded daily of the precious way God has gifted each of them. We are delighted to share this journey with you, our Preschool families.

Save the Date: Preschool Graduation/End of Year Celebration Thursday, June 6th.

Team A News!

Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

Sing it with me, "Turn around... a total eclipse of the heart". Wait a minute! That's a different eclipse! I meant to say solar eclipse. I hope you were all able to safely watch the solar eclipse that took place on April 8th. It was so fun to learn about the solar eclipse in class, go home and then apply our classroom learning. What a phenomenal event to experience. God is so amazing.

Just as God has perfect timing, so was the solar eclipse as we just entered Term 4 Science. We are starting the term learning about space and astronauts. Kindergarten will be studying the solar system and the planets. These topics connect well with our Social Studies unit this term, as we will be learning about the decades starting with the 1960's. This will include some famous astronauts: Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong and John Glenn. We will continue to travel through the decades, learning about things/events/people that were famous during these years. As we transition in Science from planets and space, we will discuss something a little more closer to home, the plant and animal kingdom.

Term 4 is an exciting term for our class. As we get closer to the end of the school year, the weather begins to warm, and the sun is out which means we will spend more time outside exploring the wonderful world around us that God created. Kindergarten will be helping out in the garden and while doing so will get to learn more about our classroom shrub, the low blueberry bush. During the last term of the year, Kindergarten learns about butterflies. There are many native butterflies to Massachusetts, but Kindergarten will focus on only three which include the monarch butterfly, the painted lady, and the red admiral. Along with learning about these three butterflies, we'll learn about the butterfly life cycle, and we will even get to observe this in the classroom!

I would also like to bring to your attention an important event that is upcoming. On May 4th HCA will be celebrating 30 years. Please come and join us in this celebration as there will be great food, entertainment, and highlights of the big days that HCA highlights every year! I look forward to seeing you all there!

Grade 1 Update from Mrs. Shand:

Welcome to Term 4! I can't believe we are nearing the end of the school year! In Term 3, we enjoyed the Dance-a-thon, became published authors, and learned about a total solar eclipse! Another highlight was collecting data in math and learning how to graph. They have accomplished so much, and still have more to go in our final stretch of the year!

This month, we are excited to enjoy the outdoors and focus on our HCA garden by cleaning, researching, and taking care of our first grade plant. We will also look at our garden as a whole and make connections to God's creation and learn what our responsibility is with what He has gifted us. Students will continue to dig deep into decoding as they are learning more and more sounds and trick words! They will learn a total of 93 trick words by the end of the school year! Our readers have been reading independently during down-time—this has become a very peaceful and enjoyable time for them. They will have a collection of over 12 books that they will read in rotation that is kept in their chair pockets. It has been exciting to see their growth in reading the past three terms. In Math, we will dive into telling time, learning about shape's attributes, and fractions. We will look at special events from the decades of 1960-early 2000's to learn about our country's big milestones like the moon landing, Sesame Street, Beanie Babies, and more. We will also study space and plant/animal kingdoms. We have a ton of animal lovers and we are excited to learn more specifically about the animals we already know and how they fit into our environment. God is so detailed, and it will be exciting to watch students make those connections. We will also highlight favorite Bible stories like Daniel and the Lion's Den & Jonah and the Whale.

A special event coming up in less than a month is HCA's 30th celebration! This will be a day filled with fun! There will be food, games, and many more activities to participate in. We can't wait to celebrate and honor the work God is doing in this school!

Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail:

Greetings Second Grade families - I hope you were blessed by witnessing one of God's majesties during the solar eclipse ! The next time the U.S. will witness another solar eclipse will be on August 23, 2044 ! As we enter Term 4, Second Graders are now rising as the Team A leaders they strive to be. Towards the end of Term Three they had two leadership opportunities. One opportunity was teaching K and 1 how to make windmills, and the second was reading the Bible to Kindergarteners and guiding them to build a wall in connection to the Bible story.

Independent expectations for students in their quality of work is improving as they are becoming more self aware. IOWA testing is a major step for Second Graders. These little ones have given their all. I am beyond proud of them for staying positive, upbeat, and most importantly trying their best (that's all I ask for as their teacher!)

Although we are in the first week of Term 4, no official academics have started due to the IOWA testing. It is actually bittersweet to announce that we are officially in Term Four. I just cannot believe it, but before I become weepy thinking about the goodbyes we will soon have, I will instead let you know what's to come in the first half of Term 4.

- ♦ In the Bible we are continuing to work through New Testament teachings. We are still striving to memorize all of the New Testament books.
- ♦ History: We continue to zoom through the decades. In the first half of Term 4 we will be going from the 1960's through the 1970's.
- ♦ Science: Upon returning from spring vacation, we will learn all about planets! Students will begin working on their first official big project about a planet they chose by random draw. We will also touch base on cold blooded vertebrates before midterm.
- ♦ Math: Upon our return we will begin working on Unit 12, which focuses on solving length problems. We will then work at Unit 13 which focuses on organizing data and sorting.

I wish you and your families a blessed spring vacation break ! Have the best time traveling, or staycationing ! See you soon !

Team B News!

FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

First let me say that your children did an **OUTSTANDING** job on their Presidents/First Lady book reports and presentations!! They were informative, animated, and had such great fun facts to share with us. I am so proud of how far they've come in so many ways, but especially their confidence in public speaking.

All the information for the April/May book report (Fiction-in Mint Tins) are in their binders and all books have already been chosen. Our focus in our reading groups is the elements of a story. This will help them to give lots of great details in our April/May book report. There is only one more book report after this for May/June.

After vacation, Team B will begin our Science studies in Plant and Animal Kingdoms. We look forward to warmer weather so we can work in our garden more, too. We had so much fun building a model of the solar eclipse. What an amazing God we serve!!! Even though we are studying graphs and data in math, please continue to play any fun games to continue mastering math facts. Here is a [link](#) to find some online math games.

As you have probably noticed....hopefully, if you read the Weekly Peek, we have been mainly focusing on famous people and events in tv, movies, music, sports, artists, and academia. We will get an appropriate gist for an 8/9 year old on what was happening in the history of the decades. We will dive into my favorite 1970's decade after vacation!! It's so fun to share my living history with them from the 60s until present day. In Bible, we will start to focus on the prophets. We are really moving along in FUNdations. Then onto chapter 12, where there are only 2 more chapters left. We'll start chapter 13 in Shurley with only 3 chapters left. They are doing fantastic learning so many new skills in grammar. Be on the lookout for end of the year party information and I look forward to seeing you at Parent/Teacher conferences on the 4/24.

Blessings,

Ms. Rennie



A NOTE FROM MRS. VELARDE:

The classroom had a quiet, buzzing energy this week as we worked through the Iowa assessments. I am so proud of the diligence I saw in each student as they worked through the testing and showed what they have learned. We were blessed with beautiful weather at the beginning of the week, and students really enjoyed their time outside (especially to watch the eclipse on Monday). The beautiful sun brought out some lovely flowers and plants, both outside and inside our classroom. We are growing Victory Gardens in our classroom inside mason jars. The students have been very excited to see the sprouts growing and have enjoyed the responsibility of watering them and making sure they receive enough sunlight. It was a lovely and fragrant way to close out Term 3.

After break, we will begin the closing stretch. This will include a Tic-Tac-Toe book report on a book which they get to pick. More information for this will come after break. We will also be going on a "tour" of the decades where we will get a glimpse of what life was like from the 1950's to the 2000's. In Math, we will continue with more Geometry. Geometry can be a subject that some students find comes naturally to them, while others tend to find it more challenging. In Bible, we are finding God's faithfulness through the writings of the prophets. The 4th grade has grown a wonderful class culture and really enjoy working together and spending time with each other. I am grateful for their smiles, laughter and love and that we still have a whole term ahead of us.



Middle School News!

Mrs. Nkrahene's News:

Hello HCA Parents! I cannot believe that it's already April. I am thankful to the Lord for a peaceful and fulfilling school year. I hope that you have had a good experience so far.

Our Fifth Grade homeroom learned a lot from Genesis. More recently, we have been reading the book of John. I am grateful that your Fifth Graders are willing to engage in meaningful conversations about the faith. One of those conversations centered around the expression, "worship in spirit and in truth." We learned that God desires authentic worship from us no matter where we are. We also learned that our worship should be based on who God really is, as revealed in His Word, rather than what we think He is like. Thank you for explaining this verse to your children. I enjoyed hearing them share what they learned from you. We will continue our reading of John. I plan to emphasize Jesus's unique role as the Savior of the world, our sinfulness and need for repentance and salvation, and the importance of a genuine and personal commitment to Christ. Please partner with me by sharing these same truths with your children.

We have been working on standardized testing this week. Students have been enjoying the more relaxed schedule.

Our students are looking forward to April vacation. Some of them have already shared family plans with me. I hope that your children have a rewarding vacation and that they are able to rest well before returning to complete the school year.

In terms of academic work, I am pleased to say that our Fifth Grade students are growing in their personal study habits. Thanks in large part to your partnership in this area, a number of them have started studying for tests. Others are growing in their independence, where they study without being told. My hope is that they continue to take ownership of their academic work and grow in their willingness to invest their time into understanding what they are taught and preparing for future assessments. I would appreciate your continued support in this area. Please encourage them to give their best effort academically to glorify God and to honor you as their parents.

Thank you for all you do for your children and for the HCA community!

Mr. Shea's Shenanigans:

Hello Middle School Parents!!

The final term of the year is upon us! The year has gone by quickly and I'm excited to have students bringing all of the things that they've learned together in our final projects for the term. We are learning about how the different elements of fiction and writing work together to tell amazing stories, and explain important life lessons and truths. Grades 5 and 6 are continuing on their journey in CS Lewis's world of Narnia, learning about how the ways characters develop and interact with events and other characters can help them define the morals and themes the author is trying to share. While we are working through the book, we are also starting the long process of creating our own works of fiction to share with each other at the end of the term. Student work will follow the same plot paths we are discussing in class as a way for them to explore the process with their own creativity. Students will be sharing their favorite pieces in a small gathering at the end of the term.

Students will also start working on their term 4 Book Reports. The assignment sheets will go home with students on Friday (before break). The requirements for the report are the same as term 3's book report. Students may choose any grade appropriate book to use for the report (including Graphic Novels as long as they check in with me first).

I'm looking forward to teaching and learning in the nicer weather this term!

God bless!

Jeremiah Shea

Mr. Curtis' Corner:

Welcome back to another episode of Mr. Curtis' Corner. This past week as you well know our students just participated in Iowa Testing to ascertain how our school is doing in preparing our students to be lifelong learners. While our students were busy testing, the Middle School teachers shifted our normal regimen to that of one more focused on physical activity and communal learning opportunities. Students hopefully experienced the shift as an opportunity to recalibrate their brains and bodies as we enter April vacation week and Term 4.

As we enter the last term of the school year, in Bible we are continuing to study the 'minor prophets' and how God is always speaking to his people. We will conclude the year with a study of the book of Daniel focused on the fact that God always keeps his promises. In History, we are trying to understand the many effects World War 2 had on our society and the world, all while seeing how it set up the Cold War Era. Term 4 will also provide us with an opportunity to unpack the Civil Rights Movement and the many changes our country has made over the last 60 years. These are just a few areas of study we will embark upon this term. If you have personal connections, experiences, or can help our students better understand and relate to any of these topics of study, please let me know I would welcome your contributions. Hope you all have a restful, and healthy April Break!

Looking forward to a sunny albeit jam-packed Term 4,

Mr. Curtis

Mrs. Gordon’s Musings

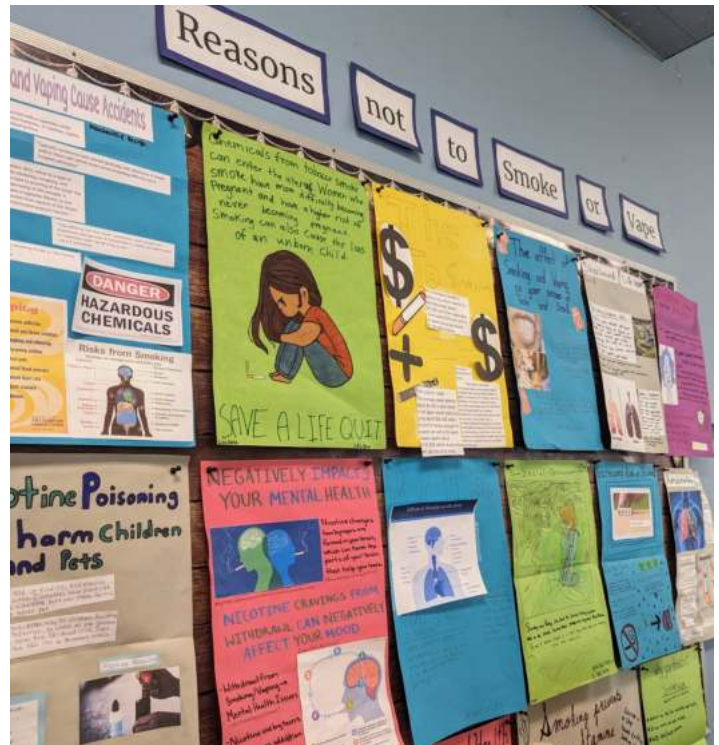
A few recent highlights:

- It was wonderful to view the **solar eclipse** in the upper lots with many people in the HCA community. What a neat experience to share! I enjoyed watching people of all ages get nerdy and excited about what was going on in relation to our place in space. Thank you to the school for purchasing the glasses and valuing teachable moments like these!
- 5/6 Science - painting with dirt as we begin to learn about **soil composition**
- 7/8 Science - creating and sharing informational posters about some of the **reasons not to smoke/vape**
- Health - working to be **students of our own bodies** as we did various movement assignments such as comparing exercises that were familiar and unfamiliar, a 5 mile walk, stretching with and without cardio warm ups, and so on
- Homeroom: the 8th graders continue to have **special lunch visits** with the same team A or B class every Thursday. Ask your child if they can tell you the name and one thing about each child in the class they spend time with weekly.

On the horizon: The 7th and 8th grade **Marriage & Family Unit** is fast approaching! Students will have the opportunity to learn about the reproductive system, puberty, pregnancy, dating, and more. Parents of these students can be expecting more information soon.



These future Middle Schoolers watched the eclipse with Mrs. Gordon, as referenced above in her ‘recent highlights’



7th & 8th grade informational posters