

STUDENTS— GIVE THIS TO YOUR PARENTS TODAY!!!

Parents, are you feeling out of the loop?
Do you know that Pathways is for parents?

Since the beginning of this school year we have had many conversations and phone calls with questions or frustration from parents, because they missed critical information that had been published in Pathways, but they hadn't read this important timely newsletter.

Pathways is our primary form of communication with you; please be sure to read it when it comes out, either the paper version that is sent home or the online version on our website; an email is sent each time a new issue is available.

The December 5, 2013 issue is attached :-)



Pathways

Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. Ps. 25:4

A Newsletter for Holden Christian Academy

December 5, 2013

Principal's Corner

Dear Friends,

As I prayed about what to write this week I kept hearing "encourage them" in my heart. I believe that God wants you parents to be encouraged because life on planet earth is not easy and sometimes we can be filled with doubts, fears and anxiety. Parenting changes every day and the energy, perseverance and faith it takes to raise up a child is monumental!

Life is a faith walk and like Peter who hopped out of the boat and walked toward Jesus, we must keep focused on Him as well. As soon as he took his eyes off Jesus, Peter began to sink. He was spooked by the wind. Swells are always around us as well. We don't know what lurks below the surface. We can't believe we were dumb enough to even jump out of the boat! But here we are, standing on the water of life and like Peter we start to sink. He cried out for help in his fear; Jesus reached out and lifted Peter back to his feet. He does the same for us.

Choosing to send your child to a Christian School is a faith walk. It is not easy. It is often sacrificial. This is exactly where I believe God wants me to encourage you today. You've made the decision, jumped out of the boat, and now keep your eyes on Jesus. He supplies the grace for each day. He provides the strength, faith and finances. He loves and cares for your children even more than you do and has great plans for each one.

My husband and I too have walked this faith walk. Twenty years ago when all four of our children were finally school aged, we had to decide if I would take the secure route and teach in a local elementary school or follow the desires that God placed in my heart and start HCA. We had just suffered a messy church split, had to leave the parsonage we'd lived in for 13 years, had no home, very little money, and were feeling rather beat-up and discouraged. What a perfect time to launch a new school and new church! When our emotional and financial reserves were spent and we were at our most exhausted God said jump into the water and walk! We jumped, are still walking, and have never regretted it!

God is faithful. God is so faithful! God really, truly is faithful and we can trust Him one shaky step at a time. We can trust Him to lift us up when we start to sink. We can trust Him to walk us through the inevitable ups and downs, disappointments and joys, and ages and stages of parenthood. We

can trust Him when our kids are rebellious, make dumb choices and disappoint us. This is real life. These are real kids who are learning to navigate their ways through the very choppy waters of their complex lives. It's messy and sometimes gritty just like it was for Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem.

We've had our share of parenting challenges, but let me tell you how faithful God is. Despite the church split and pain involved God answered our prayers to keep our kids oblivious to the conflict and have good associations with church. Despite inevitable questions, doubts and challenges, all four of our children are walking with God and involved in four different church plant ministries all over Massachusetts! The three married ones all chose strong believing spouses and the youngest is praying for the woman God has for Him. Our four (and ½!) grandchildren are being raised in Christ and we have no greater joy. God is so good.

Be encouraged. We were far from perfect parents but we did jump out of the boat and God did the rest day by day, step by step. He is worthy of our praise and our complete trust. He will not let us sink!

You are precious and have wonderful children who are blessed to have you all as parents. You jumped out of the boat and I guarantee you will be glad you did!

Blessings,
Susan Hayward, Principal

Chocolates for Belarussian Orphans \$5.00 per box

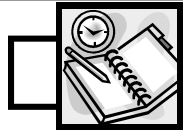
HCA has a long-standing relationship with a mission to orphans in Belarus through our friends and coworkers in the Kingdom, Olga & Yasha Goncharenko. Olga started Spring of Revival Ministry many years ago as a single woman. Today they serve hundreds of orphans in several different orphanages. The traditional Christmas present for Belarussian children is a box of chocolates. For the orphans it is a special treat and if Olga doesn't provide it then the kids will get no gift! Every year we raise funds so Olga can purchase the chocolates.

This year, in light of our study of Israel, our seventh grade made Tzedakah boxes for each classroom to collect coins for our annual coin collection for the orphans in Belarus. We pray you will give generously and provide the funds for at least one child. The final day for the collection is next Friday, December 13th. As your kids come to shop for their family, please remember those kids who have none.

Our Mission ~

To challenge children to a lifetime of learning, working in partnership with families, to integrate Biblical truth with academic pursuits.

Holden Christian Academy
508-829-4418
www.holdenchristianacademy.org



HCA Calendar

Dec. 3-6	Bring in items for Christmas Shoppe (see attached)
December 10	Picture retakes
December 13	Christmas Shoppe, afternoon
December 19	Preschool class Jesus' birthday party
December 19	Christmas Program 7 p.m.
December 20	Classroom Christmas celebrations K-8
Dec. 23-Jan. 1	NO SCHOOL—Merry Christmas!
January 17	NO SCHOOL—Term 3 Development Day
January 20	NO SCHOOL—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 24	Term 2 ends
May 31	Save the date! HCA 20th birthday party! (Rain date June 7)
Fridays: ice cream sales after lunch, \$1 each.	

PRAYER (Psalm 68:19)

- For Dane Burk: that the doctors will see nothing except good brain tissue in his MRI on Dec. 14, that he gets the good rest that he needs each night, and that his family continues to see God's hand in dealing with his health.
- For new families being called to HCA, that they will hear God's call and trust in Him.

PRAISE & THANK YOU

- Thank you to Ali Graham and the Parent Teacher Council and Student Council, for the coordination of next week's Christmas Shoppe!
- Thank you to Christine O'Brien for all of her fabulous work on the cookbook!
- Thank you for all of your donations for the auction and the Christmas Shoppe!

Here are some Christ-based Christmas activities your family may enjoy...

Holden Chapel is hosting a Christmas simulcast: An Evening of Hope and Joy on December 6 at 8 p.m., with refreshments in the Community Room at 7 p.m.

Bravo Family Theater at First Baptist Church on Main Street in Holden will present "The Three Gifts", directed by Beth Lundergan and featuring former and current HCA staff and families Binley, Lundergan, Theodoss, and Wren. Friday and Saturday 12/6 & 12/7 at 7:30 pm, Sunday at 2 pm Tickets \$6 at the door.

Living Nativity, 6pm to 8pm, December 7th and 8th, Westminster Our Savior Lutheran Church, at the junction of Routes 2 and 140. This has been a favorite of many of our staff members over the years.

December 14, Night in Bethlehem, live nativity and activities at Bethlehem for families at Covenant Evangelical Church in Barre, MA (the Haywards' church)

Don't forget HCA's Christmas program Dec. 19 at 7 p.m.!

Principal's Book of Excellence celebrates...

Kindergarten

Jocelyn, for telling a friend "we can take turns and share!"

Matthew, for using self-control even while a friend was trying to distract him.

Grade 3

Alison, for volunteering to sweep the floor after Family Night.

Brianna, for always being willing to help others.

Charles, for being willing to share snacks with other students.

Madeline C., for taking the initiative to study topics that she is interested in and reading non-fiction books to pursue information.

Michael, for thinking about what he needs and letting the teacher know.

Steven, for listening to requests and making great efforts to improve *and* for standing respectfully, the way one should, for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Grade 6

Elu, for helping younger children with homework in the After School Care program.

Middle School

Cameron and Conway, for graciously offering help to Mrs. Mikol.

Thank you from Cross International received

Our dollars made a difference! We received a beautiful card this morning from Cross International that reads: "Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus as we work together to feed the hungry. May God bless you for your love and compassion for the poor."

There was also a handwritten note: "I just wanted to thank you on a more personal note for allowing Holden Christian Academy to participate in World Food Day 2013. What an awesome gift to the hungry; **your school provided 952 meals for hungry children and families.** That is so amazing. Thank you so very much for all that you do. I will be in touch with the update soon. **God bless and tell your students they rock!!**"

Annual Fund 2013 update

As of yesterday afternoon, we have received \$5,825, which is 53% of our budgeted goal of \$11,000

As you are preparing your end of the year charitable giving, would you consider a donation to HCA's Annual Fund? If you need another copy of the appeal letter for yourself or to share with family and friends you'll see at Christmas festivities, just let the office know and we'll get those right out to you.



Classroom Happenings

Preschool

Time is flying by in the preschool classroom! The Thanksgiving unit is finished and we are now busy learning about the birth of Jesus! The children are excited and are very enthusiastic about all that Christmas has to offer.

The Christmas program is scheduled for December 19th @7pm so be sure to save the date. The children are working hard on the songs they will sing. We are very proud of them!

We will be celebrating the birth of Jesus with a celebration to be held on Thursday December 19th. A sign-up list for food will be posted outside of the classroom at the beginning of next week. The preschool class will have a gift exchange during the celebration. Girls will bring a wrapped gift for a girl and boys will bring a wrapped gift for a boy. Please limit the cost of the gift to \$2. The Dollar tree is a great place to shop for this purpose.

We are truly blessed by your children. God Bless You! ~Mrs. Younger

Team B ~ Grades 3&4

Mrs. Burk has scheduled a visit with a dairy goat at HCA this coming Friday! We will be learning about goat keeping and goat milk. Upcoming events will include learning how to make farmers cheese and making butter with cow milk. Even though winter has just started, the third grade class will be investigating plants that we will grow for the spring plant sale. I thank the Lord to be working with your children and hope you all had a blessed Thanksgiving!

~ Mrs. Mikol

Team A ~ Grades K-2

Peace and Blessings to You and Yours this Season! Shalom Parents! !

As we continue our study of Israel and integrating 'Food for Life' the Team A children have been learning about goats and how cultures from around the world use goats as a staple in their diet. We have learned that worldwide people drink more goat milk than cow's milk! As a result, we are excited for Friday(6th) as we expect two 'goat' visitors at 1:00 p.m., arranged by Mrs. Burk, our Food for Life teacher. Your child will have a chance to milk a goat and make butter (from cow's milk). So exciting!

During Center Time Switch on Tuesday we learned about Hanukkah and why it is celebrated by the Jewish faith. Ask your children about the Maccabees, Menorahs and Dreidels. During Hanukkah the Jewish also have a tradition of 'tzedakah'(tsah-DAH-kah) which means justice. They place a box on the table for money to give to the less fortunate. We also each have a 'tzedakah' in our classrooms to collect money/change for the orphan children of Belarus. The cost of a box of chocolates traditionally given to each orphan is equal to \$5.00.

On Wednesday, December 11, please dress your child (K-2) in red and/or green; they be filming in Theater class.

Friday of next week (Dec.13th) is our Christmas Shop. This is your chance to rid your house of unwanted items worthy as a gift for another deserving friend. Please send in gently used unwanted items this week and next week. Your child should come to school on Friday of next week (13th) with **quarters, a list, wrapping paper and labeled tags**, so they can buy gifts for parents and family members.

The Christmas Concert is Thursday, December 19th at 7:00pm; your child should come dressed in their 'Sunday best'.

For our Christmas Party this year we are having a 'Birthday Party for Jesus' on Dec. 20. We are looking for a volunteer to make the cake or cupcakes :-).

WOW!! That was a lot...please read again and write notes on the calendar/cell phones for reminders :-). Thank You for your cooperation and partnering in this busy, joyful season!

~Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Caron and Mrs. Poirier

Greetings from 4th grade. It's that time of year when I start to feel sad about how quickly the year is going by :(

We have been busy learning about the history of Jerusalem, the 12 Tribes of Israel, the birth place of our Savior, and Advent! **Israel test will be this Friday, 12/6.** No book report for the month of December.

Third and Fourth graders will be picking names out of a hat for our Christmas Party on Friday, December 20th. Please spend \$5 or less. Some of the students have also brought in extra money that we are planning on purchasing some chickens for a family through World Vision. Only contribute if you feel led....no pressure. We're collecting \$ for Belarus orphans as well, if you feel led to donate to that instead.

Please keep a look out for the back of the Weekly Peek ~ the week of December 16th with details about the Christmas Party, ie: food & movie.

Thank you, again for your beautiful & GENEROUS gifts and making my Birthday awesome!!! I love you all!!! ~Mrs. Reed

Team C ~ Grades 5 & 6

The 5th and 6th graders enjoyed the middle school field trip to Temple Emmanuel Sinai. The trip was intended to expand our understanding of the practices in Judaism. Here are a few responses from 5th and 6th graders when they were asked what they learned there: "The Torah is the Old Testament on animal skin written in Hebrew.", "You can't touch the Torah. You have to use the pointer to touch the Torah.", "Hebrew reads from left to right.", "I will remember the curtain (that the scrolls are kept behind.)", "Children learn Hebrew too!", "When they write, they don't use any vowels." Our 5th grade blogger writes, "On December 3, the middle school went on a field trip to a Jewish Synagogue. At the Jewish syna-

gogue we learned about Jewish holidays and got to see a Torah. I personally enjoyed learning about their traditions on Hanukkah."

Christmas Party Update: The Christmas party for Team C will be held on Friday, December 20th. A list with your child's food contribution will be forthcoming through Engrade. We will be exchanging items to keep us warm this year. Students can bring in their choice of a pair of socks, a hat, a pair of gloves/mittens, or a scarf. Boys should bring in a gift suitable for boys, and girls for girls. The gifts should be wrapped with a label that says boy or girl.

~Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. Torres



Classroom Happenings *continued*

Grades 6-8 Language Arts

Shalom from Mrs. Campbell. We had a great time on our field trip to Temple Emanuel Sinai and are enjoying our study of Judaism and the nation of Israel. As we plug away through, grammar and literature, we are learning about different literary genres, including Jewish folktale (grade 8), tall tale (grade 7), and using excerpt of novel for specific knowledge (grade 6). In Grade 8, the students created beautiful posters to adorn our hallways with scripture and art to remind of us thanksgiving, righteousness, charity, and joy. Also in Grade 8, through our study of Jewish folktales, we learned about Tzedakah, charitable giving in Judaism, having a philanthropic heart. We made Tzedakah boxes for each classroom to collect coins for our annual coin collection for the orphans in Belarus. We pray you will give generously. ~Mrs. Campbell

Team D (Grades 7 & 8) Christmas Celebration:

On Friday, December 20th we have a full day of school, to include Party, Craft, & Caroling. Bring canned goods and your assigned party food, details will be sent home at a later date. In lieu of a gift exchange, we would like to collect canned goods for an organization that provides for the needy. We are asking for each student to bring in at least 1 canned good on the day of the party. Thank you for your generosity.

Cardboard needed:

Schoolhouse Rock production needs 30 sheets of 3 ft. x 2.5 ft. sheets of corrugated cardboard- or something heavy like that.

If you can donate let us know- or if you know of a source let us know as well.

--Pam Mikolajczyk and Beth Lundergan

HCA 2014 Calendars are now available!

Thank you to all who submitted digital photos for consideration for the 2014 calendar. Each family who had at least one of their photos printed will receive a free calendar; stop by the office to see the new calendar, and to see if one of your photos was used!

*****Order Cookbooks and Calendars here !*****

Please return ASAP- Quantities are limited!

I would like to order ___HCA Healthy Family Cookbooks (1=\$12, 2 or more=\$10 each)

I would like to order ___HCA Nature Calendars (\$10 each)

Total included \$ _____. Checks should be made out to HCA, no cash please.

Name _____ Email: _____

You will receive an email when your order is ready to be picked up in the office.

Team D ~ Grades 7 & 8

We are off to a strong start in Term 2 and have begun taking a closer look at the Israeli culture. We are spending one day a week focusing on Israeli foods and one day a week on history and geography. The students are working on creating an Israel Travel Brochure in Tech Class with Mrs. Torres. In addition, we will have a jeopardy game with the 7th grade this Friday to test our knowledge. This week we will finish up our science focus on weather with a test on Chapter 3 this Friday. Next week we will transition to studying climates and biomes.

In Math, both 7th and 8th grade classes completed our first round of Benchmark Tests. These tests allow us to track competency in specific skill sets. Students grade and track their progress on report sheets. This information will show me and the students where, if any, extra attention is required. We will complete 4 Benchmark Tests this year. These tests are not a part of the students' grade.

In Partnership, Mrs. Holgate

Calendar Note:

Our Christmas Program (Grades PK-8) on December 19 will be at 7:00 p.m.

An older version of our calendar said this was a school day event, but this concert *will be held in the evening.*

Picture retakes December 10

If you are not pleased with your child's pictures taken by Lifetouch in October, or if your child was absent, Lifetouch will be returning to HCA on December 10. If your child was absent and you need a new order form, please let the office know and we'll send one home. If you would like retakes, send your unwanted photo package in on December 10. Lifetouch will try to get the new packages to us before our Christmas break, but cannot make that guarantee.