

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 9 - Science Museum Field trip (5-8)

May 12-16 - Scholastic Book Fair

May 16 - Fine Arts Day (see page 4 for schedule!)

May 26 - No school, Memorial Day

June 2 - Field Day (K-8)

June 3 - 8th Grade Trip

June 5 - PK Graduation, 9:30am and 8th grade Graduation, 7pm

June 6 - Last Day of School, 1/2 day (11:30am dismissal), Thankfulness Chapel @ 9am

Summer break, and then...

Sept. 2 - Student and Parent Orientation, 9am

Sept. 3 - 1st day of school for the 25-26 academic year!



PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Welcome to May! In some ways, May is a paradoxical month in a school. Although we are blessed to enjoy the growth and renewal of spring that is a refreshing 'new beginning' each year, we are also nearing the end of the school year. Outside we see buds, blossoms, and green stems all around - especially in our school garden! Last week the students and adults had the opportunity to work in the garden, beginning to bring it back to life. The students were willing participants in spreading wood chips on the paths, raking leaves, and snipping out sassafras saplings. It was such a blessing to experience joy through work alongside our students!

(Continued on page 2....)

The garden is just one place we see evidence of hard work, growth, and blessing. As we near the end of the school year, our students' growth becomes so apparent as well. It is the fruit of their hard work (and their teacher's) all year long. They are now putting their grade level skills into practice daily. The content students learned earlier in the year is referred back to and built upon. To our great joy, the impact is multiplied as they use their advanced skills to dive deeper into learning. Additionally, the evidence of students' spiritual, social, and emotional growth blesses the whole school environment. The impact of nine months of feeling safe, wanted, and loved is becoming apparent as well. For example, in recent Middle School Bible classes, the students were firing amazing questions at Mr. Curtis regarding all kinds of biblical truths. They are asking the tough questions that are required to make faith their own. Mr. Curtis answered each one with scripture to reinforce the fact that God's Word is our source for truth. God is so good! We rejoice whenever we see evidence that HCA is indeed a training ground for the Army of God. "Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come," (1 Timothy 4:8, New Living Translation). Earlier this week, the Middle School teachers and I were blessed to provide a retreat day for the eighth graders. They are an amazing group of young people with spiritual maturity that will bless the schools they enter for high school. This is not to say that the school year is over and not much is happening. It is quite the opposite! Please be on the lookout for communication regarding upcoming end of year events and a look ahead to next year. Have a blessed remainder of spring and enjoy the next season of growth in your students this summer!

By His Grace,
Nikki Cleveland, Principal

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



An Open Letter from Ms. Eileen Cunsolo

Let me take you back with me on a stroll down memory lane...

It is the summer of 1995 and I applied to be a Kindergarten Teacher at the new school my church had started the year before. I was so excited at the prospect of teaching Kindergarten again and at a Christian school where my children (ages 5 and 6) could also attend! This opportunity began my lifelong love with Holden Christian Academy!

Yes, it has now been almost 30 years of teaching, serving on the HCA School Committee, and most "recently", for the past 17 years, as a Preschool Teacher and the Early Education Coordinator. Also, during this time I worked for Holden Chapel as the Children's Ministry Director (2006-2020). What a joy and a privilege it has been to work in a place where God is honored and the motto of "Safe, Wanted, Loved" is lived out every day!

As with all good things, there comes a time for one good thing to come to an end as another chapter begins. I am writing to announce to you, my HCA family, that I will be retiring at the end of the school year. Yes, 30 years and an upcoming 60th birthday! God is so good!

I will be supporting the new Early Education Coordinator, Ms. Kristin McKean, next year as a consultant. I am excited to see how HCA and the Preschool Program will thrive under her very capable leadership. It also means I will be around a bit and may see HCA friends and families from time to time.

Thank you to all the many students, families, and colleagues over these past 30 years that have been an integral part of my HCA experience! You have woven so many cherished memories into the tapestry of my life! I am deeply grateful for the time I have spent with each and every one of you. If you have any fun pictures or memories to you would like to share with me, please reach out through my email. I would love to hear from you!

ecunsolo@holdenchristianacademy.org.

Greetings from the Art department! (& an announcement from Mrs. M)

Your child's' portfolio of art work from this entire school year will be going home the last week of school. Please know they have worked very hard and are proud of their work and skills learned. Families have been known to have an art show at home and serve treats! Please have special time to see each piece and hear what they've accomplished.

I am so thankful God has appointed me to share my talent with HCA students for 20 years. I am retiring this year and will definitely be back to visit.

**Love and Blessings,
Mrs. Mikolajczyk ("Mrs. M")**

**Pam M.
Pam.artproject@gmail.com**

GRADUATION 2025!

Can you believe that in a few short weeks, Graduation will be upon us? June 5th 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 Teddy Bear picnic and games for all PK families, even if your child is not going to Kindergarten in the fall)
- ◆ 8th grade Graduation will be held at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary, with a reception to follow. Please join us as we celebrate these students' accomplishments!



Our soon-to-be graduates!

Please take note....

HCA goes to the WooSox!

We are excited about this annual family event, where HCA has a block of tickets for a WooSox game after the last day of school. This annual event is sponsored by the Parent Teacher Council, and all HCA families are invited to purchase tickets with our group!

The game will be Friday, June 6th at 6:05pm.

Please visit the following link to purchase your tickets.
First come first serve!

<https://fevo-enterprise.com/event/Holdenchristian3>

FINE ARTS DAY

is returning to HCA May 16th!

This is a normal school-day for our students, however parents/grandparents are invited to join us at the following times:

9:15am-10:30am K-4 Knight at Dawn

10:30am-11:00am K-8 Art Show

11:00am-11:45am 5-8 Shakespeare Vignettes

A note of heartfelt thanks to our amazing HCA parents!
Thank you for blessing us during Staff Appreciation Week! Your kindness to us was amazing!
THANK YOU!!!!!!

Love, the HCA Staff

Attention Canada Trip Participants!

We have created a beautiful Shutterfly album with professional photos taken on the trip to Quebec & Montreal.

The cost of each book is \$31.23.

Please click [HERE](#) if you'd like to order one!

HCA FAMILY REFERRAL PROGRAM!!!!!!

Many families initially hear about HCA from those who have had a personal experience with the school. Your personal observations and stories about the HCA experience are impactful and our school community is blessed by your part in its growth. HCA's Family Referral Program is one way we would like to thank HCA families & staff for recommending families who become a part of the HCA community.

Here is how HCA's Family Referral Program works:

1. A new family names you for recommending HCA to them on their application.
2. New students are accepted and the new family completes their enrollment packet.
3. If the new family AND your family are up to date with all tuition and fee payments, then you (as the Referring Family) will receive a check for **\$250** for each new student at Orientation Day in Fall 2025!

PAINTER NEEDED:

Mr. Matt is an amazing part of our staff. If you don't know Matt, he is the Facilities Manager for both HCA and Holden Chapel, and he works tirelessly! Needless to say, we have a large property and he can't always get to his entire 'to do list' without help. We have plans to paint the Team B hallway soon, but would love to get it done before Fine Arts Day & Mrs. M's last Art Show next Friday 5/16. If anyone has time & talent to help us paint that hallway within the next few days, please email Ms. Graham for details.

There are other opportunities to enhance our school -so please reach out if you're handy, are good with a paintbrush....or would like some service hours! ;-)

Preschool News!

Hello All,

The birds are singing, the bees are buzzing, and there are happy sounds of children laughing and playing in Nature Explore. Preschool is learning about recycling this month. We are going to talk about how to better take care of the home God gave us.

Our spring themes are the life cycle of a chicken, birds, flowers, and bugs. We will be learning how worms and bees help us in the garden. Preschoolers will hold, measure, save scraps of food, and return the worms to the soil.

We have begun to plant bulbs inside and outside and learn the parts of a flower. Last week, we identified birds, painted cardinals and blue jays, and learned their calls.

Last, but certainly not least, our Bible focus has been friendship and kindness through the story of Zacchaeus. We have also learned about the attributes of God. I am excited to teach what an amazing God we have and all of His amazing attributes.

Please see the email from Ms. Cunsolo that went out this past week with details about graduation and our last school days!

God bless! ~Ms. Ruth



Finally it's warm enough to be outside!



Team A News!

Kindergarten Update from Mrs. Coombs:

What a joyful and transformative year we've had together! As the school year comes to a close, I want to take a moment to celebrate all the learning, laughter, and growth we've shared.

We have started to watch tiny caterpillars grow. In about a week they will spin into chrysalises and then emerge as beautiful butterflies. It is a perfect reminder of how much we've grown too! Just like butterflies, your children have stretched their wings, learning new skills, asking big questions, and becoming more independent each day. God's creation is full of wonder, and we've seen His handiwork in every stage of this journey.

One of our many fun adventures was learning about the Renaissance! We discovered how people long ago loved art, music, and learning, and how their ideas still shape our world today. The children are fascinated by the amazing art, inventions, and faith of that time. We painted like Michelangelo (even lying on our backs under the tables!).

What amazing progress we've made in Reading and Math! From learning letters and sounds to reading full sentences, your children have grown into confident readers. In Math, we explored numbers, patterns, shapes, and even began adding and subtracting.

At the heart of everything we did this year was our faith. We talked often about how God made each of us special. Whether we were learning how our bodies work, sharing with friends, or exploring the wonders of nature, we saw God's love in our everyday moments. We've prayed together, sang songs of praise, and practiced being kind, patient and forgiving to others.

Thank you, families for your support, your prayers, and entrusting me with your wonderful children. They have been a blessing in our classroom, and I know God has big plans for each of them. I hope your summer is filled with sunshine, stories, and sweet moments together.



Look it's Miss Rose & Mrs. Coombs at the ACSI Early Ed conference!



Kindergarteners hard at work!

Grade 1 Update from Ms. LeShane:

Hello First Grade Families,

We are having a wonderful start to Term 4! I'm excited to share what your children have been learning and exploring across our subjects.

In Science and Social Studies, we've been diving into body systems and the Renaissance Period. We just began learning about the muscular system and made fascinating connections to the work of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, whose art reflects their deep understanding of human anatomy.

In Language Arts, students have been identifying multisyllabic words with suffixes such as -s, -ed, -es, and -ing. They are continuing to strengthen their reading skills through small group read-alouds, where they engage in meaningful discussions and build confidence in reading aloud.

In Mathematics, students have been learning to tell time using an analog clock. They've also been introduced to geometry through the exploration of 2D and 3D shapes. A class favorite has been working with composite shapes, where they combine two or more basic shapes to form more complex ones—an exciting challenge they've eagerly embraced!

In Bible, we have been studying the Sermon on the Mount. These lessons have led to many beautiful and thoughtful class conversations. One of my favorites was our discussion around the verse, "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs" (Matthew 5:3). The students shared insightful and heartfelt reflections during this time.

Thank you for your continued support in your child's learning journey. It is a joy to teach them and watch them grow each day!

Warmly,

Ms. LeShane




Grade 1 got a visit from Mrs. Shand!



Grade 2 stepping back in time

Grade 2 Update from Mrs. McGrail

Well we're in the home stretch of the school year, and it's hard to believe how much your children have grown and all they have accomplished! Thank you for your continued partnership and support—it means so much to me. Here's a look at what's happening in our classroom over the last few weeks of school!

 What We're Learning:



Bible: For the remainder of the year we are in the Jesus StoryBook bible once again. We will continue our way through the New Testament.



Math: We are currently working on money and time- kids are having a blast with coins ! Next up will be Unit 15 - Shapes. And I can't believe I am announcing this- but following unit 15 we will have completed the entire Big Ideas curriculum for second grade ! WOOT WOOT !!



FUNdations: We are continuing to work on Unit 13 which focuses on oa/ow/oe. Unit 14 will focus on differentiation of the /OU/ sound.



History is all about the Renaissance and the great artists of the time!



Science is all about our senses and different parts of our bodies !

Please keep a lookout for upcoming Sneak Peaks of the Week as well as communications about the final couple weeks of school.

I have enjoyed every minute with your children. We have shared many laughs and memories. Thank you for allowing me to be part of their story.

Love,

Celia McGrail

Team B News!

FROM MS. RENNIE'S DESK:

I really enjoyed parent/teacher conferences. It's a blessing to partner with you in helping your awesome children to succeed academically and spiritually. I am going to miss having them in class every day. As we near the end of the school year, we will finish curriculum within the next few weeks: Math, Shurley Grammar, FUNdations packets, and reading groups. The rest of all assignments will be worked on in class unless they need extra time at home, so please make sure you check their binders and read the Weekly Peek to get the details. They are all working hard to finish strong.

Please encourage your children to continue to practice their multiplication facts and have lots of reading opportunities over the summer.

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday, May 16th for Fine Arts Day. See more details from Ms. Graham on page 4.

I am grateful for all of your support throughout the year. It's been such a great year!!



Grade 3 has such a special bond!

A note from Mrs. Velarde:

Hello 4th Grade families!

This pathways installment is bittersweet for me to write. It is mind blowing to me that we only have four weeks left together! It has been the greatest blessing to have this kind, adventurous, funny, enthusiastic group of students to learn with this year. I have seen so much growth in each student this year and they are each beautiful reminders of the ways God has created each of us so uniquely and with such detail.

Our top picks from the past month include:

1. Desk Pet Dungeon Music Video
2. Finishing the Math Book
3. Learning about Fibonacci, Pascal's Triangle and the Golden Ratio
4. Learning to play Doods and Toots
5. Day of Joy (Easter Monday)
6. Poetry month and our Renaissance Journals
7. Enjoying the Wassail at the Medieval Feast

We are looking forward to

1. Our raised garden bed design coming to life
2. The Magic Tree House Musical (NEXT FRIDAY)
3. S'mores party for everyone getting a 100 on a math test
4. Building a cathedral with packing peanuts
5. Checking out 5th grade Math topics
6. Reading Because of Winn Dixie together
7. End of Year Party

We have had so many wonderful things to do this year, but we aren't done yet! We have completed the Math curriculum, but we are continuing to practice our skills by using them on real-life application projects such as our raised garden bed. In Science, we are learning about the system of the human body. In Bible, we are diving into the Epistles and learning about the early Christian church. In History, we are continuing to learn about the Renaissance and Reformation. In LA, we are reading Because of Winn Dixie and working on using quotes from text to back up our statements. We are continuing to use our forward momentum to propel us into the final week of school and I am looking forward to every moment with these amazing students!

PS... I'm sorry for the honks, squeaks and other noises that have been gracing your homes on weekends. I promise it will get better with practice and patience!

News from Mr. Galvão

Hello parents!

I am very happy to say that Term 4 has been going great! Starting off with our Canada trip: it was an adventure, and our students (and those of you who were there) know it was a blast! Even as I write this, the students cannot stop talking about the things they experienced, saw, and learned while on the trip. For those who didn't attend the trip, they stayed here at HCA and still learned plenty about Canadian culture and history, along with experiencing some cathedrals themselves. As we approach the end of the school year, and the weather gets warmer I only have a few reminders for you. If you could please remind your child to bring a water bottle to school every day. It is getting hot, and we are reinforcing in class the importance of hydration (especially in science this term).

As for our classes, they are really enjoying learning more about the Renaissance and the Reformation, and they are handling math like pros! Also, as the end of the year approaches students tend to get complacent and start slowing down in their academics. Although this hasn't occurred with our 5th graders, it is always good to remind them to finish strong. I look forward to ending the year on a very positive note with all our students, and as always, feel free to reach out to me whenever!

Gabriel P. Galvao
5th Grade Teacher



Middle School News!

Mr. Shea's Shenanigans:

This issue of Pathways is bittersweet. As this year's final entry for Grade 6 and Middle School Language Arts, it represents both the end of this school year, and the beginning of a new chapter in our students' lives. So, as we cover the final few weeks of school, I also want to look forward to the summer break and the start of next school year as well. Let's jump into it!

The beginning of Term 4 moved very quickly with our trip to Quebec City and Montreal. Students, staff, and chaperones had an amazing time exploring our neighbor country's historical sites, trying new foods, experiencing another culture, and connecting what they've learned throughout the year with what they were witnessing and experiencing on the trip. Some of my highlights were the European style shops in Quebec City. The visual beauty of the connected buildings, preserved in their original walled city, made the area feel much more personal than our own high rises and neon lights. The pace of the culture made us slow down and appreciate all of the things that we were exploring and learning about. The Biodome in Montreal was incredible, both in terms of engineering and how close we were safely able to be to the wildlife within the exhibits. Finally, our students were able to share the love of Christ with our tour guide throughout the week, simply through the kindness, inclusiveness, and Christ-like behavior that they rocked during the entire trip! I am incredibly proud and grateful for the group of students that we have!

Moving forward to the end of the school year, Middle School will be wrapping up with a smattering of Arthurian Legends next week. The stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table represented a prominent shift in literature moving into the Renaissance, where the rich begin to collect entertainment literature and philosophy books, building personal libraries to display their wealth (all made easier by the printing press). We will then move into the Protestant Reformation with a biography on Martin Luther, who (along with Gutenberg) wanted to print Scripture in common language and distribute among the people. While we study this literature, students will be mimicking the styles by creating their own Arthurian Legend and writing a short biography or autobiography.

Finally, please be on the lookout towards the end of the month for detail and instructions regarding Summer Work and End of the Year Parties. It is important that students maintain at least some level of academic practice over the summer in order to reduce learning loss during that time. Simply reading for 20-30 minutes each day and reviewing Math facts can significantly reduce summer learning loss.

I appreciate all of the support and partnership that you all have given us over the course of this school year! Let me close out this entry with a short prayer:

Lord, thank you for the year of growth that we have seen in all of these students this year. I praise you for the fun-filled, Christ-centered education that has drawn our students closer to you. I pray, Lord, that you continue to draw each of these students closer to you as we finish this school year. Please fill each student, teacher, parent, and staff with your grace and a desire to lift up a strong finish to Term 4 as an offering to you. I lift up this upcoming summer break, and ask that you use it for your will, filling it with joy, love, and adventure. May we all undoubting feel your never-ending love for us, and may it drive us to pursue you all of our lives. In the name of your one and only redeeming Son, Jesus Christ, AMEN!

I'm looking forward to all that God has in store for us the rest of this school year, the summer break, and the school year to follow.

In Christ,

Jeremiah Shea

Mr. Curtis' Corner:

Most of our fifth through eighth graders returned from April break fresh off a trip to our "Neighbors to the North". It had been quite a few years since we had the opportunity as a school to do this trip due to Covid, but man were we excited to experience much that Canada had to offer. It is hard to believe all that we learned, shared, and experienced took place in only five days. All year, our students have been discovering the past through the focus on Ancient Civilizations and empires. The students and parents on the trip got a firsthand exposure to the architecture and archaeology of a European city as they discovered Quebec City. Through a diverse and engaging itinerary students were tasked with unpacking history, faith, culture, and science. Our group was impressed with how engaging, and knowledgeable, our tour guides were at locations like the Archaeology Museum and Wendat First Nations Village. One eighth grade student remarked, "I never knew history could be this fun". These trips serve as much more than a field trip, they immerse our students into a learning lab and shared experience where, not only are they learning, but are sharing experiences full of memories that last a lifetime. Ask any H.C.A. graduate who has experienced one of these trips and they will be able to describe it in detail and look fondly upon their time shared together. Can't wait for Washington D.C. in two years!

I cannot believe that we are already coming to the end of another school year. Whoever said, "The older you get the days get longer but the years get shorter" was right. Overall, I am extremely thankful for this school year. I know it has been a memorable one for our Middle School students and teachers. I would encourage you to take some time between now and the end of the school year to reflect back with your student on this school year. Some questions to ponder and discuss; what are some of their takeaways? What are some ways you've seen them grow? How can we all thank God for this year? Reflection and thanksgiving are important practices for all of us to implement in our lives.

To be honest, the end of the school year is bittersweet for me. Yes, it is full of fun end-of-year celebrations and activities, which are appropriate after all our students have accomplished. But, it is also time for difficult goodbyes. This spring we are saying goodbye to eight graduates who have brought so much to our school community over their years at H.C.A. I deem it fitting that their last year with us; their eighth grade year is probably the most impactful year for our school and hopefully for them as individuals. Our eighth graders are our student leaders, they set the tone for the culture of our student body. Whether they realize it or not their younger peers are always watching and emulating them. They lead worship on Monday morning chapels, they help create and embody learning experiences for younger students through events like the Archaeology dig, Reading Buddies, Timothy groups, and H.C.A. Big Days. Our eighth graders have learned elements of servant leadership in the way they have served our community through simply setting up tables and chairs for countless school wide events. This might not seem like an important factor but I tell you this helps set the tone for a school culture where our students are not just consumers, but active participants in all aspects of our community. I have been blessed to have these graduates for the last three years. Seeing them grow into the young men and women that God has been refining and equipping, as he calls them out of H.C.A. into his service for the sake of the world. So as another school year closes I ask you to join me in not only celebrating but praying for Scarlet, Luciana, Isabelle, Kylie, Caleb, David G., Benassi, and David T. as we launch them into the next adventure knowing God goes before them and with them. Trusting in God's good plans to continue to grow them and use them in reaching others with the love of Christ wherever they go.

Maranatha,

Mr. Curtis

MRS. GALVÃO'S MUSINGS

Hello, Middle School parents!

We are almost at the end of this school year, and it's been a wonderful time that God gave me as their Math and Science teacher.

The beginning of Term 4 was marked by our trip to Canada, where in the last 2 days we were able to visit a Museum of Science and the Biodome in Montreal. Another big event that we had was the Science Fair. Both 6th and 8th grades did an amazing job presenting their projects.

Now, 6th grade will get into biology, and 8th grade will have a mix of chemistry and gardening.

In Math, 6th graders are finishing grade-level geometry, and are moving to integers and statistics. Meanwhile, the 8th graders are finishing up their pre-algebra, and getting ready for a high school level of math.

As always, thank you for partnering with me!

Mrs. Galvão

