



The Messenger

Washington Christian Academy
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REFORMED DISTINCTIVES AS APPLIED TO EDUCATION

The Christian School: The Hope of America (excerpt)

An essay by J. Gresham Machen delivered in 1934 at the National Union of Christian Schools, which is today CSI, the umbrella organization for Reformed Christian Schools. The essay is published in J. Gresham Machen's *Essays on Education, Christianity, and the State*. Machen was admired by believers and unbelievers alike for his remarkable clarity and cogency as an apologist. He wrote frequently for *The New York Times* and other major newspapers, as well as for Christian periodicals.

The Christian schools ought indeed to be welcomed even from the point of view of a merely secular broadening of the mind. They ought to be welcomed by every friend of real education simply because they tend to liberate our people from the dead hand of monopolistic state control which keeps education in a miserable rut and checks true intellectual advance. Even in their mere capacity as private schools they are worthy of all support.

But incomparably greater is their value as *Christian* schools. As Christian schools they are like a precious salt amid our people, a precious salt that checks the ravages of decay; as Christian schools, too, they offer blessings with which all the blessings of this world are not worthy to be compared; they offer a liberty of which the civil liberty... is but a by-product; they offer the liberty with which Christ has made us free.

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Memorable Sports Dinner. More than 180 members of the WCA family attended the Third Annual Sports Dinner on May 21 at the Church of the Atonement in Silver Spring. Each student athlete received a trophy for participating in his or her respective sports, with individual honors presented in each sport for the most valuable and most

improved players. Marvin Cofield, boy's varsity basketball coach, received an award of appreciation for his work with the sports program over the last two years. Of the more than 70 students who participated in athletics this season, 31 were recognized for achieving academic honors. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Student-Athlete of the Year Awards to Agur Adams and Laura Holtrop. This Award is presented to the student-athlete who embodies the qualities WCA seeks to instill in each of its students.

—Julio Barreto
Parent, WCA Booster Club

Track Makes Headlines in The Journal. We give glory to God for the talents and the faithful hard work of our young people and their teachers.

“Washington Christian Academy's middle school girls track team won first place at the Mid-Atlantic Christian Schools Association track meet.

The Wildcats, coached by George Sanker, scored a meet-high 77 point to take the regional meet held at Messiah College in Grantham, Pa. Twenty teams competed.

The Washington Christian Academy's team was led by Stephanie Springs and Laura Holtrop.”

—The Montgomery Journal
Thursday, May 20, 1999

Tennis. Thanks to WCA's expanding sports program, this year the school could offer a varsity tennis team for the first time. There was a fairly good turnout, with about twelve students signing up from a wide range of grades. Starting at a variety of skill levels everyone showed visible improvement throughout the weeks of practice. Coach Barnhart worked very hard to line up tennis matches for our team. We went to a total of three

matches. A fourth one was scheduled, but was cancelled twice by Grace Brethren due to rain. All of the participants showed good Christian sportsmanship during the games, both in defeat and victory. It was a rewarding experience, and we look forward to tennis camp this summer and varsity tennis again next year.

—*Arpad Korossy*
Junior

Summer Sports Camps. God graciously opened the possibility to have high-quality sports camps and general summer camps at our school this summer. The general camp will include swimming and other sports, computer work, math challenges, music, theater, and spiritual discussions. A truly enriching experience for body, mind, and soul. The specialized basketball, football, soccer, volleyball, and tennis camps are designed to nurture Christian character, in addition to improving individual, and team skills in the given sport.

—*Coach Barnhart*
Athletic Director

STUDENT LIFE

Kindergarten. With God's gracious provision of beautiful weather, the children put to good use their schoolyard naturalist zoo kits. They were reading, observing, experimenting, as they learned about many aspects of plant and insect life!

Elementary School.

First Graders were treated to a live production of *Ramona* at Tawes Theater of University of Maryland. Wow!

They also visited the Otolaryngology and Audiology departments of University of Maryland Medical School. What big words! What great experiences!

Third graders participated in a plant demonstration class at Brookside Gardens, by God's gracious intervention to provide the opportunity.

Fifth graders made paper airplanes, using their recently acquired knowledge in geometry. Each student designed and made two airplanes, decorated them, and tested them in a contest. The winning plane flew a distance of 44' 11". What a good memory this will be!

Sixth graders had the traditional Medieval Feast, but with a new twist. Unexpectedly, Robin Hood and his men (our own Mrs. Bratt and three 8th graders) raided the scene, taking the treasures away from the rich, and throwing it to the poor. The sixth grade classes followed another tradition of our school. They spent three wonderful, exciting and exhausting days at **Spruce Lake** Outdoor Camp, a Christian educational center, in the Pocono Mts. of Pennsylvania.

They studied pond life and various animal habitats; they also had a three-hour hike, an exciting animal survival game, and they were challenged to work in teams to complete an adventure course. The guides prayed with the students, and showed them how the creation declares the greatness of the Creator. We thank God (and the chaperones) for this great opportunity.

The sixth graders are enjoying their **new mobile classrooms**. Mrs. Bratt's class thinks that the new classroom is too small (they moved from a bigger room), while Mrs. Bosscher's class thinks their new classroom is *sooo* big (they moved from a tiny room). They all like the air-conditioning, the deck, and the roof that does not leak.

Upper School.

Surfing the Web. On April 27, the ninth grade visited GDSS, the office of Mr. Lynott and Mr. McGoff, to learn about the use of the Internet. After a two-hour class, we broke up into four groups, and were assigned a country. With our newly learned technique, we had to find "our" country's technological advances, its economy, and general information. Then, each group chose a representative who gave an oral report. We also watched a movie on what computers and technology will be able to do in the near future. We would like to thank Mr. Lynott for his patience, helping us learn to surf the Web, and for treating us to lunch! Thanks Again!

—*The Ninth Graders*

Upper School Wing. The opening of the modular classrooms made a long-expected dream come true. The Upper School now has its own wing, complete with benches in the hallway. We praise God for His gracious provision. We also thank Mr. VanderHaak for his sacrificial work on our behalf. What does this new arrangement mean to our students? Here is one report:

"The upper school students were very excited and thankful when our hallway was improved with the new benches. Many were relieved to finally have a place to 'chill.' It has become one of the upper school's favorites, if not *the* favorite place to hang out. I too have found myself utilizing it as a temporarily quiet place to finish up a report. With the frequently changed long sheet of paper attached to the hallway wall, upper school students finally have a place to leave a message to a friend, display their artistic talents, or simply just leave their mark. Our bathroom stalls and classroom desks have never looked better.

Although there are a few high school students that resent the middle school students for ‘infesting’ their hall, most are just thankful to finally have an upper school ‘chill spot.’”
—Chris Paraliza, Junior

Macbeth. On May 27 the WCA Upper School ambled into DC to see Macbeth. It was the largest number of students ever to go on a field trip together in the history of WCA, and it was a success. With a strict briefing on Metro etiquette from Mrs. Adams, the throng ventured out. The Metro ride was anything but boring; some people chatted, with a brief intermission here and there to let their ears finish popping, and others were taken back in ecstasy at seeing a seeing-eye dog board the metro. After the metro ride, the students walked into DC’s complex enigma of broken traffic lights, speeding cars, and just city life. They safely arrived at the Folger Theatre, an Elizabethan style performance hail. There, the students saw the reenactment of Macbeth performed in euphonium and excellence. The actors were clear, persuasive, and thoroughly entertaining. The lights were left on during the performance to simulate shakespearean performance. The play was truly a culturally stimulating and historically enlightening performance. After the play, students went to Union Station for lunch. Afterwards they enjoyed another ear-popping ride back to school on the metro. It was a great experience. Thank you all who made it possible.

—Richard Dill, Junior

WCA Children’s Choir. What do the children think of it? Here are some samples:
“I like to sing to the Lord” (Keenan Rich, 3rd grade)
“I love to sing no matter what”(Becky Hanlon, 3rd grade)
“I like singing in front of others and going up on the stage” (Paige Prestipino, 2nd grade).
“I liked singing at Atonement, Knox, and First Baptist” (Chris Vander Haak, 2nd grade).
“I like singing at places. I had a great year” (Susie Branson, 2nd grade).
“I liked choir because of the parties” (Joseph Moussa, 2nd grade).
“I love singing. . . my favorite song was Salt and Light” — agreed almost all.

Student Council. Thanks to the joint efforts of WCA students, parents, and faculty volunteers, our ‘98-’99 Student Council (SC) was able to serve our school community.
In its new location the SC Store offered a wider variety of snacks and treats for the entire school year.

The SC sponsored the annual “See You at the Pole” prayer and praise meeting around the flagpole in early September. A major undertaking this year was the first annual WCA Valentine Banquet, a formal event exclusively for our high school students.

The SC also met with faculty to give suggestions toward organizing our new Upper School wing and modular classrooms.

This year’s senior graduation dinner is planned and sponsored in part by SC members and funds, continuing the yearly tradition. As the ‘98-’99 school year concludes, the SC looks forward to next year’s opportunities to serve, and asks parents and students to prayerfully consider volunteering to support our future work. Thank you Agur, Christina, Ashley, Mercy, Leah, Lamara, Bekah, and Alex!

—Christina Mason, Junior

SCHOOL FAMILY NEWS

WCA Society Meeting. The 1999 spring meeting of the WCA Society took place at the school on Monday evening, May 17. Approximately 50 members were in attendance. The primary business of the meeting was the election of new members to the Board of Directors. With four current Board members due to retire this year, and several existing vacancies, there was a total of eight available slots to fill. Of these eight positions, four were for 3-year terms, two for 2-year terms, and two for one-year terms. The Board presented a slate of nominees, consisting of four people who are finishing their terms on the Board, but were willing to stand again as nominees, and three new individuals. In addition, there were two nominees from the floor. After three rounds of voting—each to fill different term lengths—the newly elected Board members are:

3-year term: Paul DiPiazza, Patti Llewellyn, Steve Lynott and Al Minite

2-year term: Zoltan Korossy and Sid Menkis

1-year term: Julie Linden and Mike Parent.

The Society members also heard reports from the Headmaster, Jim Koan, and our Director of Advancement, Robin Gropp. Jim Koan reported on the status of the enrollment, which is on par with the last year figures. Robin was happy to report that the WCA Academy Fund has already reached \$140,000 since August 1998, which is more than \$10,000 ahead of last years gifts. She also reminded everyone that because tuition will cover the full cost of education starting with the next

school year, all donations will be used for development—real improvements to the curriculum, and/or facility.

—Howard Bushouse Chair
Membership Committee

Service Connections. In order to help each other to carry the financial burden of tuition, we desire to keep a roster of businesses and services run by school families. By patronizing the entrepreneurs within the school community we help one another, and also promote the interconnectedness of school families—which provides a more nurturing environment for the children. So far we have only three business cards on file:

At Home Caregivers (Korte family) Creative Memories (Keegan family) OSM Travel (Momoh family)

Please, leave your business card or info in the office for a more extensive and valuable resource listing. Eventually, we plan to have these business cards posted near the office for easy availability.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL: THE HOPE OF AMERICA

—Continued from page 1

One word more needs to be spoken. What has Christianity to do with education: What is there about Christianity which makes it necessary that there should be Christian schools?

Very little, some people say. Christianity, they say, is a life, a temper of soul, not a doctrine or a system of truth; it can provide its sweet aroma, therefore, for any system which secular education may provide; its function is merely to evaluate whatever may be presented to it by the school of thought dominant at any particular time.

This view of the Christian religion, I need not point out in this company, is radically false. Christianity is, indeed, a way of life; but it is a way of life founded upon a system of truth. That system of truth is of the most comprehensive kind; it clashes with opposing systems at a thousand points. The Christian life cannot be lived on the basis of anti-Christian thought. Hence the necessity of the Christian school.

In a book written by two radically skeptical writers, John Herman Randall and John Herman Randall, Jr., there is an interesting passage. “Evangelical orthodoxy,” say these skeptical writers, “thrives on ignorance and is undermined by education; Catholic orthodoxy is based on

conviction, and has an imposing educational system of its own.” Is that dictum of these brilliant skeptical writers true? I am bound to say that it may seem to have certain sting of truth about it. When we contemplate a type of Protestant orthodoxy that is content to take forlorn little shreds of Christian truth and tag them here and there upon a fundamentally anti-Christian or non-Christian education, and when we contrast such a procedure with the great system of Roman Catholic schools and the serious, comprehensive effort which the Roman Catholic Church makes to inform and mould human life, we can well understand the contrast so humiliating to Protestantism, which the Randalls have so forcibly drawn. Yet the dictum is not true; and in proof of the fact that it is not true I point tonight, as I would point in any company, to your Christian schools. You at least are seeking to oppose a Christian system to the system of this world; you at least are not making the huge mistake of trying to found the gold and silver and brass and iron of Christian theological seminaries or Christian colleges upon the clay feet of non-Christian schools; you at least are not appealing to ignorance, but you believe that real Christianity should have an educational system of its own. God grant that other Christian people may follow your example! You are the torch-bearers of real advance for the whole Protestant Church. You have pointed out the way God grant to others the grace to follow you! Thus and thus only will the darkness of ignorance be dispelled and the light of Christian truth be spread abroad in the land.

TO PONDER. How is it that one person comes up with a new idea in philosophy or sociology, and in a couple of decades the whole society is influenced by it? R. C. Sproul points out in his series of *Christian Worldview* that these ideas trickle down to the public through visual arts and literature. The stories of struggles, failures, victories, ideals, and thoughts one hears or reads about will influence his worldview and character. Good books affect individuals and society for decades to come. As we encourage our children to read, we must watch what they read. If we desire to build strong godly character in them, we must have them read good-quality books.

Keep your child on track this summer with the WCA reading list!