

The **Messenger**

Washington Christian Academy
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From the desk of Larry Danner, Headmaster

The Fourth Question

It was the first day of school in 1989, and I waited outside for the bell to ring, watching the group of seniors who would spend a year in my honors English class. When the ringing had faded to silence, I opened the door, walked to the front of the classroom, and picked up a piece of clean, undefiled chalk. I wrote three questions on the board, one under the other:

What can you do?
What should you do?
What will you do?

I then returned the no longer new chalk to the tray and left the room, having not said a word. I walked to a point from where I could see the students, but from where they could not see me. I watched for forty-four minutes as the students looked at the questions and at one another, pondering what was going on and wondering what to do. With one minute left in class, I returned to the room, walked to the front, picked up the chalk and wrote a fourth question under the previous three:

What did you do?

I then turned to the class and said, "This is the way it works. You get to ask yourself the first three questions. God will ask the last one. Your assignment for this year and for the rest of your life is to answer the first three questions in a way that prepares you to answer the fourth one. Live this year, live every day of this year, live every class of this year with a purpose."

Unfortunately, a sense of purpose is not characteristic of our day. Our children are growing up amid people who gaze at life through listless eyes and amble from day to day in the pursuit of they know not what. Intellectual and moral vagabonds, they live life as an endless, dreary, inane conversation. They are ambivalent in their values and aimless in their intent.

How different from the apostle Paul. In corresponding with his young protégé, Timothy, he wrote, "I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher." (2 Tim. 1:11). Paul had a clear sense of purpose: he had been

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Teaching through Athletics

Every year it seems questions arise about the value of extracurricular activities in schools. Much of the time those questions are budget-related: can we, and should we, provide these activities that can be very costly?

Athletics is one of those areas because of the great need for equipment, uniforms, and officials. However, great benefits for those athletes who participate make the financial investment worthwhile.

We need only to glance at Scripture to see that the Christian walk is often compared to athletics. Paul writes it in Corinthians about "running the race" and "jumping the incorruptible jump." Athletes learn about the discipline needed for the Christian walk through the discipline needed to compete in the athletic arena. Paul also writes in Colossians that "whatever we do we should work at it with all our hearts." We are to pursue excellence in everything,

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Tobi Aladesuru, second grader, with the "caterpillar" he prepared in art class to accompany his studies on the subject in science.

The Board at Work

Every Fall, the Board of Directors orients the new Board members, and determines the goals and committee assignments for the year. The Board members are very impressed by and thankful for our new Headmaster, Larry Danner. They are finding it very easy to develop a productive working relationship with him.

The most active committees at this time are:

The **Fine Arts Committee**, continuing to develop its recommendations for a school-wide Fine Arts policy and program; you'll hear more later.

The **Site Search Committee**, waiting on pins and needles to get all the necessary signatures to our contract on the Gandel property. You'll hear more later about that too, when we have real news.

The **Constitution Committee** recently finished revising the Constitution and creating Bylaws. Society members are encouraged to come to the Fall meeting of Oct. 29, where the Board will seek approval of these documents, and will present the committee reports.

—Howard Bushouse
President of WCA Board of Directors



Mr. Danner spreading goodwill at the start of a school day.

—*Question, continued from page 1*

appointed. That sense of purpose enabled him to persevere in suffering and to keep his passion aflame when circumstances would have otherwise snuffed it out (2 Tim. 1:12).

We must have that same sense of purpose at Washington Christian Academy. We must believe we have been *appointed* to fulfill God's purposes here and now. We must be convinced that we have been brought into the kingdom for such an hour as this, that what we have been called to do ought to be done, can be done, must be done, and will be done.

What is the purpose? We are building the future of the body of Christ. We are building a place that grows the mind, fortifies the character, strengthens the will, enlivens the imagination, and enlarges the heart, a place that will enable young men and women to enrich the world because they have been enriched by an extraordinary educational and spiritual experience.

Will we be tempted to waver in our purpose? Assuredly. We will be tempted to focus only on our immediate family and forget our obligation to our covenant community. We will get tired and be tempted to settle for having just a "pretty good" school. We will be tempted to flinch in the face of opposition, and to be intimidated by obstacles that seem insurmountable. But if we believe God has ordained us for this task, if we are driven by that purpose, then our dreams will never be too big, only too little. If we are convinced that we are not

merely building a school, but we are being used to build His kingdom, then we will follow our Savior with unshakeable resolve, "He set His face like a flint toward Jerusalem," and we, too, will see our task to its end, regardless of the labor, regardless of the pain, regardless of the cost.

Paul wrote to Timothy in another passage and said, "Join with me in suffering for the Gospel." But he then added an all-important follow-up: do it "by the power of God." This God has "saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of anything we have done, but because of His own purpose and grace." When Stephen Ambrose wrote his book about the expedition of Lewis and Clark, he entitled it *Undaunted Courage*. That is the quality we need in this place and at this time. It is a quality that comes from a divine purpose and a powerful grace.

Only if we carry this purpose in our hearts can we pass it on to our children. Only then can we invest them with a sense of destiny that will empower them in every area of their lives. Only then can they know that they, too, are here for a purpose, that they, too, have been appointed.

What can we do? What should we do? What will we do? May God help us and our children, may God help Washington Christian Academy to answer those three questions well, and may He grant to each of us the grace to live each day in preparation for that fourth one: What did we do?

Washington Christian Academy Friends of the School Banquet

*Join us for an evening of celebration and
commitment.*

*Saturday, October 19, at 6:00 p.m.
Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church
801 University Boulevard West*

*Address by Dr. Glen Knecht
Pastor of Congregational Care
Fourth Presbyterian Church*

*R.S.V.P. in the school office or by calling
301-649-1070 by Oct. 15.
The cost is \$15 per person.*

Dr. Glen Charles Knecht, known to many in our school community, studied at Fuller Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the Conwell School of Theology. He has served as a Presbyterian missionary in Iran, and as a pastor at several churches, including Wallace Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church of Columbia, South Carolina, and, currently, Fourth Presbyterian Church. Dr. Knecht and his wife Betty Jane have six grown children, and seventeen grandchildren.

Directions to Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church from WCA: Turn right onto Arcola; turn left onto University Boulevard. After a short distance, you will see the church on your left. Entrance is on the side.

The Stephen T.M. Tam Award

This Fall, and for the final year of a three-year grant, a special tuition assistance award has been funded by Mrs. Florence Moeson, sister of the deceased Stephen T. M. Tam. Mrs. Moeson and her brother came to the United States from China as children, and their lives were changed by generous gifts that enabled them both to be educated in a Christian school. The \$2,000 award has been granted for the 2002-2003 school year to a high school student at WCA on the basis of need, academic strength, and Christian character.



To paraphrase Elizabeth Barrett Browning (“How do I love thee? Let me count the ways . . .”), we would like to ask:

How do you love the children of God’s covenant? Let us count the ways...

♥ **One: You include WCA in your regular charitable giving.**

We are a nonprofit, a 501(c)3, just like the churches, missions, and soup kitchens you support. We, too, have a mission you believe is important; preparing the next generation of Christians to take up the mantle of leadership and service. We accept most forms of charitable giving—cash, securities, insurance policies, bequests, etc. The annual fund starts every year at the banquet, and you will hear from us occasionally by letter and telephone. We reserve all undesignated contributions for advances in facility and programming—not for basic operations, which are covered by tuition.

♥ **Two: Same as one.**

Remember also that when you help the school in this way, two good things happen: 100% of your money benefits our mission, and you get a tax deduction.

♥ **Three: Same as one and two.**

Best of all, when you include the school in your charitable giving, teachers and students are encouraged by knowing your heart is in our mission.

♥ **Four: You register for Giant and Safeway contribution programs.**

Giant shoppers can register at giantfood.com or in any Giant store, and your purchases will generate a bonus for WCA that arrives annually in the form of a nice check. Safeway shoppers can register at www.escrip.com for a similar program.

♥ **Five: You shop online at www.iGive.com.**

Hundreds of stores (Land’s End, L.L. Bean, Best Buy, amazon.com, Old Navy, J.C. Penney, Toys R Us, Gap . . .) are available at this site and donate up to 25% of their profit from your purchases to the charity you name—WCA. Prices are the same as in stores or catalogs.

♥ **Six: You bring in your Campbell’s labels and General Mills boxtops.**

See the boxes in the front entryway. These programs generate funds for art and athletics.

If you can only help us in one way, we suggest #1.

Editor's Note: We like to introduce new teachers in the first Messenger each Fall, and this year we found this article in our student newspaper, The Paw Print Press. It is more fun than anything grown-ups could have done. Excerpts of it are printed here.

From Whom We Learn

Perhaps you've seen them sauntering the hallway or experienced their teaching expertise. Or possibly you don't even know of their existence. But you know whom we're talking about: the new teachers!

After growing up in an active theatrical family, **Mrs. Amanda Westly** still embraces her love for the theatrical arts as a drama teacher. Mrs. Westly, who also teaches ancient history, describes "imparting her love for the theatre to kids" as her dream job. Her goal this year is to build our theatre program and "entertain people with high-quality productions." It is no wonder when asked whom she would love to have dinner with, dead or alive, she naturally answered, William Shakespeare.

"Someone who can explain to those who don't understand very well, and understand those who don't explain very well" is **Mr. Dave McElroy's** definition of a teacher, found in *Peter's Principle*. He has taught chemistry for 35 years in Montgomery County Public Schools. He also says he is "a chemist who teaches, as opposed to a teacher who teaches chemistry." He also teaches pre-calculus and physics. He would most like to have dinner with the famous chemist Gilbert Lewis.

WCA's new geometry teacher, **Mrs. Erica McGlone**, describes herself as a woman who "loves the Lord, and desires to be obedient, prudent, and a cheerful giver." Wife of coach McGlone, Mrs. McGlone would like to pursue only one other career: Law. But she believes that "God wanted me here to assist especially with the young women, and to be a mentor for them." She would like to have dinner with the loyal biblical character Ruth. Of Ruth, Mrs. McGlone says, "She just displayed herself gracefully, and inspired me to be a teacher."

New teacher **Miss Sharon O'Donnell** worked formerly in marketing and public relations. And why has she taken up teaching? "I always wondered whether a teacher is what I should really be," she says. In her first year of teaching, Miss O'Donnell's expectations are to "have a great time and learn as much as the students are learning." She is determined to arouse in her students "a love of learning that is based on the solid foundations provided by the biblical stance of WCA." Of her students, she says, "I think they like me, and I like them too!"

Mr. Mark Reagan, formerly a teacher at Grace Brethren School in Clinton, MD, and at The Black Forest Academy in Germany, is the new instrumental music

teacher. He also teaches Bible. He feels called to pass on his musical and biblical knowledge to the students here, and to have a positive influence on them as a Christian teacher. His favorite composer is Johann Sebastian Bach "because he was a thoughtful composer and teacher." He would also like to meet the Apostle Paul for dinner. Of his students, Mr. Reagan says he does not "dislike any of [his] students so far."

Miss Janel Kragt began teaching high school literature and history classes at WCA in January 2002. She finds us to be "inquisitive and hard working!" She also likes the supportive staff and administrators. She attended both Dordt College and Oxford University. "I hope to encourage students to be able to live God-glorifying lives," she says. If Miss Kragt could have dinner with anyone, it would be Daniel Szabo, the leader of a Hungarian Reformed Church. She met him when she went to Hungary for a summer missions trip, and admires him for helping his church to survive the communist era.

—Kristina Soriano, 11th grade
& Karen Hoobler, 9th grade



We welcome our new teachers.

Sitting, from left: Janel Kragt, Rachel Steen, Sharon O'Donnell. Standing, from left: Mark Reagan, David McElroy, Amanda Westly. Not pictured: Erica McGlone.

The Sound of Music

A Call for Pianos

Our concern is about the precise sound, or the quality of the sound, of music. A few of our pianos are making a long overdue trip to their final resting place (the dump). We are aware that even music lovers sometimes find a piano a burden, especially when they are moving. If any of our friends have a piano less than 15 years old that they no longer want, and wouldn't mind allowing us to have it assessed for our needs, please call the school.





WCA Student Chosen for National Youth Leadership Forum

Laszlo Korossy, 11th grade, was invited to participate in the National Youth Leadership Forum on Defense, Intelligence, and Diplomacy this Fall in Washington, D.C.

Students will learn how to lead and protect our country in seminars with current leaders in international relations. They also engage in a national security simulation exercise. Based on actual world events, the forum is designed to foster in students a perspective and resolve unique to upcoming generations of leaders.

Approximately 400 outstanding students from across the nation will travel to this week-long event.





You Can't Take It With You

By George F. Kaufman & Moss Hart

A WCA Theatre Production

Friday and Saturday evening
December 6 and 7



—Athletics, *continued from page 1*

and that lesson is taught every day in practices and in the games. When you pursue excellence, you succeed.

Many valuable life lessons are learned through the pursuits of athletics. Young people learn about teamwork and working with others to pursue a common goal. They learn about servanthood, having a servant's heart, like Christ's, and putting others ahead of themselves. Athletes learn about winning and losing not only on the basis of the scoreboard, but also on the basis of the attitude of their hearts—as God sees things. There is a proper attitude for accepting victory, and it is not always seen in our esteemed professional athletes. There is also a proper attitude for accepting defeat: teams and athletes are not losers; they are simply defeated by a superior opponent that day.

Lenny Wilkins, Hall of Fame, and NBA coach, has said about athletics, “Young athletes, like all young people, must realize that the future holds extraordinary challenges for everyone, and they must accept these challenges as a part of life.” Athletics at WCA is no different. Every game, and every practice is a new challenge. If we learn to deal with them in athletics, we can better deal with them in life.

Athletics is a vital part of the whole educational experience. Many of our students will find success there when they can't find it anywhere else. Is it for everyone? Maybe not, but those who benefit would not trade the experience for anything.

—Paul Tarry
Athletic director

Character Development

The *American Dictionary of the English Language* defines character as “the stable and distinctive qualities built into an individual's life, which determine his response regardless of circumstances.” Good character is the inward motivation to say and do what is right.

Our mission at WCA is to prepare students to occupy their places worthily in society, church, and state. The development of good Christian character doesn't happen by chance, but it requires a systematic plan.

Our Chapel theme for this school year is *Developing Godly Character*, based on Psalm 119: 9-11, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

Chapel alternates between the Lower and Upper School every other week. In the Lower School, each grade will be responsible for sharing with others insights about a particular character trait, chosen by that class's teachers. Interspersed with the class presentations, pastors from several of our constituent churches will also speak to the students on godly character traits. During this year, we plan to cover attentiveness, obedience, trustworthiness, sincerity, truthfulness, forgiveness, gratefulness, etc.

After a character trait is introduced in Chapel, the teachers reinforce and extend learning these traits in the classroom. We recommend parents emphasize and illustrate these character qualities at home as well.

Good character is the foundation of making right choices in life. Please pray that God will enable us by His Holy Spirit to facilitate the development of godly character in our students.

—Carol Parent
Lower School Principal



Painting by Heather Marsh, 10th grade, one of the many creative 3-D pictures exhibited in the hallway, along with special 3-D glasses to view them. Wow!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

WCA Events for All Our Friends

Friends of the School Banquet, Sat., Oct. 19, at 6 p.m., at Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church. This yearly event is a festive occasion to celebrate God's blessings on WCA, to strengthen the fellowship among school families, and allow each of us to consider how we can further this work of God's kingdom.

Reformation Day Service, Sun., Oct. 27, at 6 p.m., at Wallace Presbyterian Church. In this tradition of many years, more than a dozen congregations worship together in remembrance of October 31, 1517, and the Reformation of the Church that followed. The reception after the service is hosted by WCA, also according to a long-standing tradition.

WCA Society Meeting, Tue., Oct 29, at 7:30 p.m., on campus. While only active members vote, meetings of the governing society of WCA always welcome visitors.

WCA Christmas Bazaar, Sat., Nov. 23, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on campus. A long tradition of wonderful fellowship with old friends and new. Lots of activities for school-aged children and younger ones. Great gifts for all occasions. Proceeds benefit the school.



WCA Theatre presents You Can't Take It With You, Fri., Dec. 6, and Sat., Dec. 7, on campus. A famous American comedy you won't want to miss.

PARENT-TEACHER FELLOWSHIP

Many new parents and "old" have enjoyed goodies and fellowship at the Welcome Tea, and at our Friday Coffees. The attendance at our Coffees is growing, and it is a pleasure to meet a lot of our new families. I hope you will be able to stop by from time to time in the Library at 8:30 a.m., after you have delivered your children to their classrooms.

Our annual Christmas Bazaar is on Saturday, November 23, and guarantees to be a day of fun, food, and fellowship with the WCA community. Mark your calendars. Parents, bring the entire family for this special day. Friends of the school, come and meet current parents and students and see old friends. Parents will be receiving more information later about ways you can help make this day a success.

I look forward to working with many parents this year and, if you are new to WCA, please call me if you have any questions or would like to get involved with the PTF.

—Pam Garren
PTF Coordinator

To Ponder

"For [Abraham] Kuyper and his students, all thought must be brought into subjection to the sovereignty of God. All culture, all science, and all knowledge must be understood in light of God. Fields of inquiry must be distinguished from theology, but never separated from it. Kuyper had no place for a truncated worldview in which theology was relegated to a tiny compartment of spirituality."

Dr. R.C. Sproul, A Free and Lasting Legacy, Tabletalk, October, 2002

Abraham Kuyper—a pastor, church reformer, journalist, writer, educator, and statesmen (eventually Prime Minister of Holland)—was truly a man of all spheres. He embodied what WCA strives for in the lives of its students: a comprehensive worldview that "brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5). You may borrow Kuyper's most beloved book, Lectures on Calvinism (in many ways a treatise on Christian education), from the WCA Heritage Library in the front office.

Coram Deo

What is your only comfort in life, and in death?

That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself, but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of His own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil;

that He protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit His purpose for my salvation.

Therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

Heidelberg Catechism, First Question and Answer

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