

The Messenger

Washington Christian Academy

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REFLECTIONS Larry Danner, Headmaster

An Enduring Faith

Faith is one of the great pillars on which the community life of the church rests. Our age of hyper-individualism stresses the idea of personal faith, a concept that is little more than a faded watermark compared to the vibrant and vivid image of faith found in the Scripture. The personal faith described in the Bible is always set in the context of a community faith that transcends space and time. It is corporate faith that gives potency and renewal to personal faith.

Think of Hebrews 11 and its catalogue of faithful men and women. Their faith is recorded to bolster that of succeeding generations, including our own. Our faith is not separate from or of a different kind than theirs. When we recite the Nicene or the Apostle's Creed, we are not merely expressing our personal faith. We are joining our voices with the voices of believers across the globe who in a thousand tongues and from a thousand places declare their belief in the Christian message. We are joining our voices with the voices of a line of believers that stretches back across time and shouts its faith from beyond the grave. Consider the words "Oh God *our* help in ages past" found in our hymnals. Why did the hymnist not write, "Oh God *their* help in ages past"? After all, we were not there, were we? He wrote "our help" because he understood the eternal and corporate nature of the body of Christ better than we do. He knew that a gift given to any believer in any generation is a gift that blesses every believer in every generation. The fact that the Apostle Paul exercised his faith in the first century blesses you and me today.

Mark 2:1-5 contains a poignant account of the impact that the faith of friends can have on one another. It is the story of the four friends who took their paralyzed companion to Jesus. They had to lift him up and rip a hole in the roof to do it, but they got him to Jesus. The scripture makes no comment on the faith of the paralyzed man as an individual, but it does record that when Jesus saw *their* faith, the faith of his friends, He responded by forgiving and healing the paralytic.

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News from the Board

As teachers and students settle into a daily routine of discussions, assignments, and projects, the Board is busy working to advance plans for WCA's new campus.

Currently, there is a committee of people who are working with architect Grimm and Parker, general contractor Forester Construction, and civil engineer Rodgers Associates. The team has developed a long-range plan for the site that allows for the continuing development of the campus over the span of many years. The initial building phase will include much of the site development, a three-story academic building, a separate gymnasium and athletic fields.

After the concept work was completed, the team focused on evaluating a multitude of options to arrive at the best campus possible for a reasonable cost. "Forester has been very helpful [assisting] us to sort through the trade-offs, resulting in a plan that we are all very excited about." Mr. Warren, President of the Board, said. WCA has essentially completed the conceptual phase of the project, and is moving on to the next step of creating more detailed drawings of the academic building and the gymnasium. These drawings will be used by the trade contractors that will ultimately be constructing the facilities.

Another area the Board is involved in is the Capital Campaign. The Board "completed a feasibility study that

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Daniel Steimer and Mark Creppy in the 6th grade elective keyboarding class, benefiting from our technological upgrade.

Christmas Bazaar

—*Not to Be Missed*

We love our new school locations, but for the Christmas Bazaar, we are returning to the Franwall neighborhood. This feels especially appropriate since the Bazaar is one of the longest running traditions of the school. The Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church will host the event, allowing us to fill most of the nooks and crannies of the church. Of all our annual events, the Bazaar attracts the greatest age range of visitors. Every school family and all friends of the school will enjoy a little shopping, meeting new friends, and talking with old friends just before the Christmas season gets too busy for anything fun.

The very young and the moderately young take pleasure in pony rides, cotton candy, games, gingerbread houses, crafts for little hands to make, and many other delights. Perhaps a warning is in order: once your children have been to the Christmas Bazaar, they will not let you miss it in future years. Adults and seniors enjoy handmade crafts, the sale of homemade baked goods (just in time for your Thanksgiving guests), Attic Treasures, and the traditional Dutch pastries available nowhere else in the area, blanket and oliebollen. Everyone enjoys hot cider, other drinks, and a delicious lunch.

We use many volunteers at this event. Sign up now if you can give an hour or a couple of hours. Volunteers help set up, run the various activities during the event, and clean up afterwards—you choose when to help. To volunteer, contact Pat Bushouse.

No reservations are necessary for attending the Bazaar. Just come on Saturday, November 19, 10:00–2:00. The church is located at 1501 Arcola Avenue, at the corner of Kemp Mill Road.

Tracking God's footprints

You may have noticed some strange pairings in Washington Christian Academy's brochures and pamphlets of late: Plato...and Augustine. Sartre...and Chesterton. Darwin...and Genesis. It has been said, "he who supps with the devil needs a long spoon." Should we be getting out the long spoons?

Actually, these dichotomies capture an essential quality of Reformed Christian education. Reformed education begins with recognition and acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God and the Lordship of Christ over the entire creation. It is perfectly fitting, then, for the Christian to take all of creation as the proper object for study. For in seeking out and examining the many ways the divine sovereignty and lordship is displayed throughout the creation and in the works of man, we give glory to God.

Attending this approach is the belief that "all truth is God's truth." Truth, wherever it is encountered, can have only one source: the living God of Scripture. Consequently, to pursue truth in this world is to track the footprints of the Creator throughout His creation. And as we do this, we find that God, by His grace and in accordance with His nature, has scattered truth throughout His creation, sometimes in the most unlikely places.

Can Plato's view of The Good help us understand the nature of God more fully? Yes. Can Sartre give us a view of the human condition without Christ that allows us to better speak to the lost? Yes. Does Darwin's work show us the limitations of science and the necessity of revelation? Yes. In sum, can God minister truth to us through the study of such disparate writers as these? He can, and He does.

To play devil's advocate, isn't there danger in exposing our students to these authors and their ideas? The concern is reasonable only if the errors are not exposed as erroneous. However, if they are, the benefits are enormous. If we are to advance the kingdom, we must confront the culture. And if our students are to do that successfully, they must be conversant with that culture, with its errors as well as its strengths.

Yes, he who supps with the devil needs a long spoon. But it might also be added, "and a discriminating palate." It is just that "discriminating palate" that Reformed education—the approach of "both/and"—seeks to give its students. They must know the answers culture gives to the perennial questions of existence and meaning, and be able to point out lovingly and intelligently the ultimate shortcomings of the world's responses. By doing so, not only do our students oppose error, they are also confirmed in the knowledge that these questions are only answered fully in Christ. Thanks be to God!

—Bill Zimmerman, Principal



Mrs. Opeka's AP biology class. Not only our school buildings, but our students also look different. The new dress code allows ample variety for the students to choose from, with enough common elements to express the unity we desire.

Washington Christian Academy's annual Friends of the School Banquet is just around the corner, and with it brings much excitement for the school and its families. Diane Bratt, one of the Middle School teachers at WCA, says, "you always walk out of [the banquet] thinking 'this is a great school.'" She considers it a great time to dress up, see friends, meet new parents, and "let the kids take care of you!" One of the traditions of the banquet is to have the students of WCA serve as waiters and waitresses. Diane said they look great in their black and white shirts.

The banquet tradition was started by our High School, SSCA, before it merged with the Lower School, WCS. The purpose was to treat supporters to a gourmet meal and give them a chance to hear about the progress of the school from students and faculty. "It is a time to reaffirm our commitment to the mission and vision of WCA and to celebrate what has been accomplished over the years, by God's grace!" says Jan Adams. "My favorite part is hearing from an alum who is occupying his or her place in society, church, and state in a God-glorifying way."

Washington Christian Academy Friends of the School Banquet

Address by Mr. Larry Danner
Join us for an evening of celebration and
commitment

Friday, October 14, at 6:30 p.m.
Women's Club of Chevy Chase
7931 Connecticut Avenue

ENDURING FAITH

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If you are like me, there will be times when your personal faith is so anemic that you wonder if you truly believe anything. If personal faith is all we have in those moments, we are likely to be undone. But if in those moments of weakness, we can lean on the faith of our brothers and sisters, those living now and here and those living now and beyond the grave, then we can gain the strength to go on.

We were never meant to live as solitary individuals or isolated families. We were made to live in community, as a part of a body. As members of that body, there will be times we will need to bolster the faith of others and carry the mat on which our hurting brother lies. There will also be times when we will be the ones on the mat. Whether we are carrying or being carried, our hope rests in this one thing: that we can help one another get to Jesus, "the author and perfecter of our faith."



Eleventh graders (from left to right) Kristin Musy, Brooke Morgereth, and Mary Troxel spend their lunch period supporting Katrina relief through managing a bake sale.

Upcoming Events

Promise Tree Auction – Saturday, March 25, will be held at Faith Presbyterian Church in Olney. Each year, hundreds of services, class creations, and other goods are auctioned. *Contact Jean Visy if you would like to contribute a service or item.*

Alumni Game – Tuesday, January 3, from 5 – 7pm at Silver Spring International Middle School. All WCA, SSCA, and WCS alumni are invited to play. Paul Tarry will be coordinating the game. If interested, contact Mr. Tarry at ptarry@washingtonchristian.org. After the game, the DiPiazas are hosting an alumni pizza party!

Society Membership Meetings – October 24, January 30, and May 22. All meetings begin at 7:30 at Global Mission Church.

Spring Play - March 17 and 18, details to follow.

Note: Our PTF, Parent Teacher Fellowship group, plays an important role in making WCA such a unique school. They serve God through WCA in many ways: organizing the annual Christmas Bazaar and the Promise Tree; serving as room parents; hosting Moms-in-Touch, a prayer group, which regularly prays for our school; providing "morning coffees"; welcoming new families; etc.

All parents are automatically a part of the PTF, so we welcome your involvement whether you can help often or only at times, in big or small ways.



Owl, by Megan Kull, 3rd grade, drawn with Fine-tip Sharpie and color pencils.

Washington Christian Moves its Home

Washington Christian Academy enjoyed many years at the Franwall Avenue location in Wheaton, MD. This past summer, WCA, founded in 1960, relocated to two interim sites where it will reside while we move forward to complete the purchase of our permanent site near Batchelor's Forest Road in Olney. We are thankful to the Board, to the interim site committee, and to others who were instrumental in securing these locations. And, we thank our Lord and Savior for His provisions.

Our Lower School (grades K through 5) is located in Silver Spring off New Hampshire Avenue at 13100 Andrew Drive (Colesville Baptist church.) This location provides offices for the lower school secretary as well as our business manager. The site also includes a library, playground, and all-purpose room. Our classrooms have been freshly painted and carpeted, with upgraded lighting installed throughout.

The High School, which includes middle and upper grades (6-12), is located at 13421 Georgia Avenue. At the Global Mission facility, our students enjoy the gym and outdoor practice fields for sports, a music room, science lab, art room, and administrative offices.

Both locations allow WCA to offer a full program, including art, middle school band, and a variety of sports.

A bus shuttle program is provided to accommodate families who have students at both locations.

We are most grateful for how smoothly the moves have taken place, and for all of those dedicated to the process. We ask for your continued prayers as we go forward as a community with the mission God has set before us.

Please refer to the heading of this newsletter for new addresses, phone numbers, and the updated website for WCA.

—Clair McGoff, Parent

BOARD

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interviewed a cross section of the school community to gauge the level of support for the school.” says Mr. Warren. The study showed an overwhelming support for the faculty, the leadership of the school, and the advancement of the school.

“Now we are working on the ‘quiet phase’ of the campaign” Mr. Warren explained. He says that it is called “quiet” because the Board and other volunteers are working with key donors and foundations to line-up support and momentum for the Campaign. This phase will last several months. WCA anticipates transitioning to a public phase by the end of the year. We pray and trust that God will provide through people who believe that we need a school that provides excellent education in all spheres, developing body, mind, and soul.

—Callie Feyen, Messenger Liaison

WCA Sports News

WCA fall sports are well underway for the 2005 season. The school is again fielding varsity teams in girls’ and boys’ soccer, volleyball, and middle school soccer. The varsity teams are once again competing in the Maryland Independent Schools Athletic League (MISAL) and all have a very good shot at the championships. The boys’ soccer team and the volleyball team are currently undefeated in league play, while the girls’ soccer team has just one league loss to the defending champions, Riverdale, by a 3-2 score. While having just eleven players the boys’ team is holding their own against usual strong opponents like Sandy Spring. The Lady Wildcats soccer team for the first time in five years is all high school girls, welcoming several new players. The volleyball team looks very strong once more, despite losing four of last year’s starters. They have swept all their league opponents so far. Follow the Wildcats and look for them all to be in the championship games on Tuesday, November 1.

—Paul Tarry, Athletic



Sasha Hoyt, Bianca Beatty, and Mykela DeVille (from left to right), try on Japanese kimono and shoes as part of their 2nd grade social studies on Japan.



From left to right: Sydnae Cleveland, Chelsea Schmucker, Karina Osborne, and Laurie Van Dyke, members of the winning team on the High School Retreat, show their strength in a bocce ball group shot.

From Here and There

I wasn't sure I wanted to be a teacher until I met Liz. She was a fifth grade student, and I was replacing a beloved teacher who had moved away. It was clear that Liz wanted nothing to do with me, but we were stuck with each other for the next six months.

One day, she had a question about long division, and as I went through the steps again, I saw how furiously she was concentrating on understanding. I realized then that regardless of her feelings towards me, I wanted to be a part of her education.

In the last month at Washington Christian Academy, teachers and students have been furiously working as they share in the journey of the 2005-2006 school year. Each teacher at WCA has a passion for teaching just as Liz had a passion for learning. Despite any anxious feelings from the changes Washington Christian Academy has gone through, the teachers and students dove into their curriculum together. Here is what's going on in some of the classrooms in the Upper and Lower Schools.

In Peppy Brown's 4th grade class, the students are studying fungi and why they are a separate category of living things. They can't make their own food, so they depend on dead and decaying matter. Mrs. Brown is preparing her students for Mrs. Opeka's AP biology class, where her students are learning about cell energy. "We are studying ATP (cell energy) production via the cell's mitochondria and/or chloroplast membrane mechanism of chemiosmosis (hydrogen ions moving down their electrochemical concentration gradient.)"

Donna Troxel's 2nd grade students get a lesson in faith

as well as science as they study plants. "We have two plants—one is being watered and the other is not. We have made predictions about how long it might take before the one without water will start to show signs of dying. We talked about how Christians need nourishment to live, too. We might not show signs of not growing right away, but over time we won't grow into mature Christians without spending time with Him."

Winnie Langelaar is reading *The Secret World of Og* by Pierre Berton out loud to her 5th grade students. This story is about "five kids who discover an underground world where all the characters are green, with large floppy ears. They have an adventure in this world."

Speaking of adventures, Lisa McGovern's 11th grade humanities class is getting ready for an adventure of their own. "We're planning a trip to the birthplace of Western Civilization during Easter break to make our 11th grade humanities curriculum really come alive! We'll go to Dante's Florence; see the Athens of Plato and Aristotle; wander through the ruins of Pompeii; and see Michelangelo's masterpiece Sistine Chapel in Rome," just to name a few things!

Of course, school isn't complete without a little party now and then, and the first graders in Krystal Nola's class know this well. They prepared a Mother's Tea for the last Friday in September. The children were "very excited about having their mothers join us that day for a couple of hours for food and fun!"

It's also hard not to want to be a part of all the exciting things that are going on in the classrooms at WCA. I think of Liz every year around this time because I remember her passion for learning, as well as of those that teach her. While there have been big changes that both teachers and students need to adjust to, the goal of teaching and learning about God's world has not been lost.

—Callie Feyen
Messenger Liaison

To Ponder

"Christians in modernity thought their task was to make the Gospel intelligible to the world rather than to help the world understand why it could not be intelligible without the Gospel."

—Stanley Hauerwas

Coram Deo

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

That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ; who, with his precious blood, has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto him.

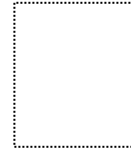
Heidelberg Catechism, First Question and Answer

The Messenger

Washington Christian Academy

PO Box 9847

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WASHINGTON

reverent, adventurous

CHRISTIAN

academically serious

ACADEMY

in the historic Reformed tradition