

June 8, 2020

From a distance...

It seems this has been an ongoing theme over the past weeks and months. Everything we are doing, it seems is from a distance. As we enter the month of June, I know for the students in grade 8, our minds go to graduation and the end of elementary school celebrations and events. We at Woodstock Christian School are excited about our Class of 2020 Graduation Celebration plans and of course we are also very proud of our graduates. Over the past little while, I have been thinking about my elementary school graduation and trying to recall my experience as a graduate. As distant in my memory as it may be, around 30 years ago, there are a few details that still stand out for me. It took place in the gymnasium at Pineview Public School, in Athens, Ontario. The ceremony took place in the afternoon, the gymnasium was packed full of people and I wore a silver suit, with pleated pants and had a 'mullet' haircut. I do not remember any specifics of the ceremony, I do not remember who the valedictorian was, but I do remember they shared with us a song that still comes to mind often. I believe we also sang this song together as a graduating class choir. The song was called 'From A Distance' by Bette Midler, I encourage you to take some time to listen to this song on Youtube or Spotify. It speaks about how our world looks 'from a distance'. Even today, in the midst of this pandemic it raises some questions for me about the state of our world and if things have really changed all that much over the past 30 years. The one line that stands out for me in this song has always been "God is watching us, God is watching us, God is watching us...from a distance." I have always had a hard time with this one line in the song, because I believe God is always right here with us, living our lives right alongside us. This concept of God being present in my life has often been an encouragement to me, but especially now as we continue to navigate through this pandemic together. Though it may seem like God is far from us at times, it is comforting to know that He is right here with us, our God will not abandon us. Even in this time of living life 'from a distance', God is still with us. His word is full of examples of His faithfulness and we need to hold onto His promises. It is my prayer that we can all take comfort in the fact that God is with us even though it may seem like it is at times...from a distance, even through this uncertain time.

Tony Schaafsma



Monday: Mrs. Westerveld., JK Teacher

Wednesday: Lillyanna H., Gr. 2

Thursday: Daniel P., Gr. 1

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Looking Ahead: With all the uncertainties swirling around us, know this Woodstock Christian School community: We are planning for next year and are excited about a return to school and about exploring many different possibilities. We love our families and we love our students and can't wait to be back together! What exactly will this look like? Well...we don't quite know and are waiting for updates from the various ministries and health authorities. We will let you know more when we know more. We can dwell on the things we don't know ... or we can wait to find out and then get creative about how to keep doing school as best we can with what we have and what we know. What do we know? Well, we know many things. We know that God is good and He is the same yesterday, today, and in the future. We know that we have a great community at WCS and that they have been supportive, prayerful, and committed in the past and continue to be so today. We have a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, committees and Board. We have imagination and ideas and creative problem-solving abilities. We are about faith, learning and community and we are committed to provide Christian education at WCS in the best way possible! Stay tuned.

Staff Changes: Each year there are a few staff changes at WCS and the year ahead is no exception. As mentioned in last week's parent link, Mrs. Koopman, who has been with JKCS/WCS since 1980, will be retiring this school year. We would like to thank her for decades of dedication and hard work in the front office of our school! We are excited to welcome Mrs. Schuster back from her maternity/parental leave. Prior to the Covid situation, the Board of Directors reviewed projections for the number of families/students registered for the 2020-2021 school year, determined that it was necessary to make some staff reductions, and to declare a staff redundancy. As a result, we are saying good-bye for now to Miss Victoria Body and Mrs. Karen Poort who will not be with us for the upcoming year, and Mrs. Kristen VanderPloeg's position will be reduced from full- to part-time. We are sad to have to make these changes and hope that you will join us in thanking our staff affected by this redundancy for their good work at WCS in the past few years and offer encouragement to them. We thank God for the work that our staff have been able to do at WCS and for how they have blessed us!

Exchange Day will take place Thursday June 18th from 9am - 330pm. Parents will be able to choose an appointment (much like during parent-teacher conferences) during which they will be able to drop off WCS items that are currently at home, such as Chromebooks & cords, musical instruments, WCS sports jerseys, WCS library books and Learning Place book bags, as well as pick up student's shoes, binders/folders, and pencil cases, drawing/writing tools and water bottles. Public Health requires strict protocols in place for anyone in the building, and for the parent who will be picking up/dropping off items. Those will be shared as the date approaches. If the weather is good, we will do curbside exchanges in the bus parking area. If the weather is not favourable, we will filter one parent per family through the foyer, gym and out of the north gym exit door (to the bus parking area). A reminder that students are welcome but must stay in the family vehicle. Teachers are sooo excited to be able to see students and families - and will be waving vigorously to the occupants of the cars ... like our last day wave-out! Please click on this link <https://www.schoolinterviews.ca/book/step1?z=m9WKnB> and enter the code **bvhp7** to sign up for your family pick up time.

Class of 2020 Graduation: With the extension of Ontario's Emergency Measures and limits on gatherings, our usual June graduation dinner and ceremony celebrations will not be possible. The "live" ceremony and celebration has been postponed until September or when larger gatherings are permitted. 'Plan B' for the June Class of 2020 graduation includes the "Tribute to grade 8" video which will be released on Tuesday June 16. We are excited to share what our classes have done to honour our 8s and to show them that we love them and will miss them! An alternate unique and exciting celebration ceremony will take place with our grad and parents. WCS students will be having an early dismissal on June 16th (a Tuesday) as staff prepare for graduation.

Prayer corner: We thank God for His many blessings. I want to share this passage with you as I just keep coming across it. It's from Jeremiah 29 in which God speaks to his people who are in exile - away from loved ones and from what's familiar for an undetermined period of time - with these instructions: *"Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what you grow in them. Marry and have children... Work for the good of the cities where I have made you go as prisoners. Pray to me on their behalf."* We are all impacted by new realities. But live and live fully! Pray on behalf of others. Watch out for each other and connect with others with their wellbeing in mind.

The WCS **Prayer Team** meets regularly via Zoom (link: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71598270332> with password: prayer). If you have specific prayer requests, be sure to pass those along to our prayer team through j.mulder@woodstockchristian.ca.

Early dismissal: Students will be released from their learning time by 130pm on Wednesday afternoon. This week, June 10th, grades JK through to grade 8 will have Early Dismissal with teachers preparing for Exchange Day. Note that next week, Early Dismissal will be in effect on Tuesday, June 16th, as staff are involved in graduation plans, and on Wednesday June 17th to have all in readiness for Exchange Day.

The SING TOGETHER PROJECT: [Edvance: Sing Together](#) Edvance thanks families for their help and support! The uploaded videos are rolling in, and it's exciting to see participation from so many schools. Submissions are due on Wednesday, June 10th. A note that student names will not be used in the final video, but there will be a list of participating schools. Shortened recordings for younger students are possible. Check the added instructions on the website. Looking forward to seeing the finished product!

From the WCS Transportation Team and the Board: For the first two terms of this school year, a big thank you to all our families for getting your children to school, to bus stops, for communicating with drivers and bus captains, for all that you've done to make school happen for our students. Thank you to families who've assisted us this past year by driving to a bus stop and allowing us to save time. A big thank you to our bus drivers and transportation coordinator for the great work that they do! With the WCS Board and transportation team working to plan for a new year, please note that bus routes may change significantly for the 2020-2021 school year. The WCS transportation team strives to be accommodating to as many families as possible, but with time limits on route lengths, and our large geographical area, planning is challenging. If you have moved or will be moving, please inform the office and provide an updated address. We are waiting for information updates from health authorities and government ministries (Education, Health, Transport) and will share plans when we know more. Thank you for partnering with us this year.

Tuition Forms for 2020-2021: Parents, you will be receiving Tuition Forms this week from the school Finance office. It is essential to be mindful of the due dates on those forms so that the administration and Board of WCS can confirm numbers of students and families as we plan for September. A reminder that there are funds available to support families if it is anticipated that the financial commitment is going to be difficult next year. Check in with finance@woodstockchristian.ca to learn more about this program. Blessings and wisdom to our families as you work through this process.

WCS Spring Membership Meeting will take place on Thursday, June 18th at 730pm via Zoom. There will be updates from committees and the opportunity to vote for new board directors. The meeting information package will be sent out early this week. If you have questions about membership, please connect with our school office or with r.boersma@woodstockchristian.ca

Learning Place: We are on the home stretch! Be looking for an email coming home later this week with more details about next week and our end of year celebrations. If you would like to reduce the "summer slide" and help prevent learning loss over the break, please let me or the classroom teachers know, and we'll be happy to prepare summer learning resources for your child(ren). Have a great week!

Junior Kindergarten: Welcome to a new and summery week! Tomorrow is Canada Day. Wear red and white to our zoom at 9:00. Keep working on your activities! Have a great week!

SK- Miss Body: Welcome to a new week in June; our second last week. We were blessed with a beautiful weekend. I hope you were able to enjoy some time outside. Tuesday: Our 100th day of school! I hope everyone can join our zoom meeting at 9:15.
Oh Canada- wear your red and white or Canada clothing.
Wednesday: Today we are going to celebrate Emree's birthday (her birthday is July 10th).
Friday: PURPLE day: World day against child labour. Wear your purple.

SK: Mrs. Poort: Welcome to our second last week. This week we have 2 virtual field trips planned for Wednesday and Friday zoom. We are joining Gunn's Hill Cheese on Wednesday and Habitual Chocolate on Friday. Great work on your grade 8 Grad gifts, each picture displayed the unique characteristics of each students.

Grade 1: Welcome to a new week! We are celebrating June & August birthdays this week. On Tuesday, we will be singing to Josiah! On Wednesday, we will be singing to Dries! On Thursday we will be singing to Daniel as he celebrates his birthday on June 11! We wish you God's blessing on your special days, boys!! I will be packing up your child's belongings from our classroom throughout this week. I may be hosting a "Whose shoes are these?" Zoom call at some point if I get stuck with a few shoes or pencil cases that I'm not certain about. Stay tuned. We have some special days coming up:
Today is World Ocean Day.
Tomorrow, wear white & red to Celebrate Canada!
On Friday, wear your WCS gear for School Spirit day.

Grade 2: Welcome to our first full week of June! God sure has blessed us with fantastic weather. This week students will continue to read their Flat Stanley books. In writing we will be creating a journal documenting this time in history. Also watch for some fun activities to get you outdoors and being creative this week.
Tuesday - O Canada day - wear red and white
Friday - Spirit day - wear your purple and WCS spirit wear.

Grade 3: Welcome to our second last week, grade 3. Thanks for helping me with sorting those shoes and belongings last week. This week we have one test, a spelling test on Tuesday. We will have new words on Wednesday, but we won't be tested on them in the last week of school. Tomorrow we will celebrate Canada. Wear red and white to our meet. If anyone

participated in the Sing Together for Edvance which was in the Parent Link last week, the submissions are due on Wednesday. On Friday wear purple to our meet. Have a great week!

Tuesday: Spelling test

Wear red and white to our meet

Wednesday: Special guest to our meet

Friday: Wear your purple shirt to our meet

Grade 4A: Welcome back to the second last week of learning grade 4! Thank you so much for the surprise birthday parade this weekend! I loved it! Have a great week working on your creative part of your First Nations project. Have fun!

Monday First Nations slide show is due!

Tuesday O Canada Day - wear red and white or something Canadian

Morning Meeting - Scattegories

Wednesday Morning Meeting - Scavenger Hunt

Thursday Spelling work is due

Bible story during Morning Meeting

Friday Writing assignment due

Creative part of First Nations project due

Spelling test - we will do on Zoom after the Morning Meeting

Grade 4B: Welcome to a new week. Keep working and doing your best! The end is in sight. I am excited to see your projects this week. Keep checking google classroom to make sure you are on the right track.

Mon. - First Nations project is due

Tues - Oh Canada (wear red and white or Canada clothing)

Wed. - Early dismissal (1:30)

Fri. - Spelling Test - Lesson 35

- Share creative component of project at Zoom

- WCS spirit day (wear purple)

Grade 5: Welcome to the 2nd last week of school. Hang in there, we've almost made it! Students are a bit sad about the way this year is ending but excited for some of the events and assignments ahead. I'm trying to make each task fun and engaging, to end the year on a positive note. This Wednesday I'll be assigning a small hands-on project. Please read the email I sent out today for more details and supplies needed.

Please note that next week Thursday is exchange day, see note above (in whole school announcements).

Please see Google Classroom for more info or email me if you have any questions!

Grade 6: Two more weeks of the 2019-20 school year to go! Time is flying past. This week in grade 6 looks a bit different than previous distant learning. Be sure to check in with our google classroom for exciting assignments each day. We will continue with our 8:45am zoom meetings. Mrs. Martin will read aloud the devotional story on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Grade 7: Students are in the process of developing a "slide presentation" tribute to our graduates. They are showing thoughtfulness and excellence! Learning assignments continue with spelling/CommSkills and Nimbus math. An additional learning activity is offered daily, to reflect a specific theme or a unique learning opportunity. GMs have a social theme, as we are on the 'countdown' to our last day of school!

Grade 8: Welcome to our last full week of school! Good work on completing the History Research Essays, I have been enjoying reading through them. This week you will complete the End of Year Math Project. There will also be several Science Lessons posted in the Google Classroom. We are looking forward to our end of year graduation celebrations on Tuesday June 16th. Have a great week!