

Parent link April 14, 2020

Hope or Despair?: On the Road to Emmaus

Bible reading: [Luke 24:13-35 NIV - On the Road to Emmaus](#)

I love the glory and the surprise and emotion of the Resurrection story. The drama of the stone being rolled away, the angels, the guards fainting away, the empty tomb! The wonderful and tremendously evident power that God displays. Hallelujah! Christ is risen!

And I also love the Emmaus story. It's simple and humble, with so much to which we can relate. Any one of us could imagine ourselves a traveller, leaving Jerusalem on the road to Emmaus. Jesus shows up, inserts himself into the conversation of two locals who are talking about what's going on in their world. Can you just imagine Jesus asking, "Whatch'all talking about?" The travellers are astonished that he does not seem to know and proceed to tell him about Jesus of Nazareth and the events of the past days.

There are a lot of pieces of this story that resonate with me. Read and listen:

"We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel".

Do you hear their disappointment? Their despair? "We had hoped..." Were their eyes full of tears? Were they so focused on their circumstances that they couldn't see Jesus?

How many times have we thought or cried ... "we had hoped. . . ."

The fact is, Jesus had answered their hoped-for request. But not in the way they expected. He had redeemed Israel, indeed all of humanity! He had done immeasurably more than all they (or we) could have asked or imagined (Eph. 3:20)! But they were slow of heart to understand. They needed God's perspective, and so do we! We are Easter people, but living consciously and intentionally in Jesus' presence is a daily challenge. We so readily miss the reality of Christ with us. Yet this is our hope: Christ is with us whether we recognize him or not. Don't ignore him. Look for him. Immanuel, "God with us," walks with us.

Carol Verbeek

(Sources: various. Stay tuned for more Emmaus lessons.)



Thursday: Braiden V., - SK
Saturday: Matthew S.,- Gr. 6

For your Information:

Guidelines for Learning-at-Home: We are all in this together! I keep seeing this slogan, and while it is repetitive, it is also true. You are learning to juggle all of your various roles and responsibilities at home. We are learning how to be teachers and leaders without having bodies physically present in our workspaces. We are learning how to create instructional videos, how to use our computers for many many more hours per day than we like or are accustomed to doing. This past weekend, the Ontario College of Teachers reminded us of our professional responsibilities in this new world of emergency remote learning. Though we aren't within our physical classrooms, we continue to conduct ourselves by those professional standards - ethical standards and standards of practice which have as priorities: care, trust, respect and integrity. Good practices for families learning-at-home include having rules and guidelines around computer/device use. We encourage you to be alert. Be present by walking by frequently or being within earshot. Is your child working in common

spaces, eg, the kitchen, the family room? When our teachers want to conference with a student, they will be asking you to be present. Set up a flexible routine, but a routine with consistent bedtimes, eating times, and exercise! Know that learning happens everywhere - folding the laundry, raking leaves, adding fractions, making pizza, reading a novel. You don't have to be the expert - reach out and ask. We are happy to help!

Prayer Corner: We thank God for Easter celebrations and communion this week with our church families. We thank God for his providential love. Continue to pray for all those who are not well. This morning in staff devotions we prayed for Janet VanderSpek's 3 year-old grandson who is in ICU in London with serious respiratory issues, for Carol Cole (former WCS teacher) who is starting chemotherapy treatments for cancer, for comfort and condolences to Elizabeth Martin and her family with the loss of her father-in-law. We prayed for residents of nursing homes where there are viral outbreaks, and we are praying for our students and families. If you have specific prayer requests, be sure to pass those along to our prayer team through j.mulder@woodstockchristian.ca. Please continue to pray for one another. Pray for our school and for the Board and committees as they lead and as they plan for the next school year.

Employment changes: Welcome to Mrs Sikma and Mrs Martin who are team teachers in grade 6! I am excited about what they bring to the classroom! Mrs Bigham has decided to step away from classroom teaching. She worked for many more weeks than we first imagined and also capably guided the class in the transition to Connected Learning. A shoutout to you, and thanks for your work, Mrs Bigham!

WCS building is closed: Again this weekend, there was an extension of Ontario's Emergency order until April 23rd. We anticipate a longer closure, at minimum until early May. In addition, the local Board of Health has posted a notice on our front door indicating that the building is closed, and in response to my inquiries, emphasized that the school remains off-limits for parents, students and community until further notice. That includes pickup of desk contents and personal items, access to the public for rentals, or as a workplace. Stay well. Stay home.

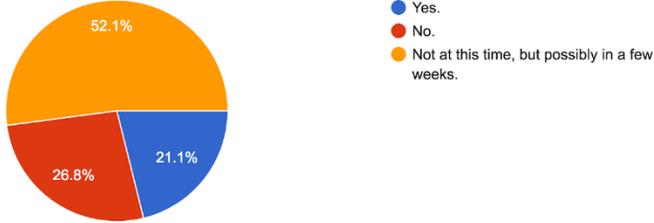
Ontario government helps parents: An Ontario government initiative that you as parents may want to investigate is at the following website: [Support for Families](#) . Ontario is helping families pay for the extra costs associated with school and daycare closures during the COVID-19 outbreak by providing a payment of \$200 per child up to 12 years of age, and \$250 for those with special needs, including children enrolled in private schools. This is a one-time payment to parents to help keep children engaged by purchasing educational apps, devices, school supplies and other educational tools. The application process is now open.

Jump Rope for Heart: In the month of April, we would have been preparing for our Jump Rope event at WCS. Had we been at school, that is. We will not be participating in the fundraiser this year, but I encourage you to get outside and practice your skipping! Skipping is a great brain break as well as a body break. Revive those old skipping games and learn some new ones. Use a single rope for high knees, criss-cross, side swing. Or play a family jump rope game - banana split, snake, double dutch. Check this out: [Double the Fun with Jump Rope Games](#)

Parent Survey Follow-Up

Thank you, parents, for your honest and encouraging responses.

<i>WE ASKED...</i>	<i>YOU TOLD US...</i>
<i>What are your wishes and expectations for your child(ren)'s learning at this time?</i>	55% indicated that it was very important that we maintain, solidify and build on core literacy and math skills, so as to ensure students were not losing ground, and that they would be ready to take on the challenges of the next grade in September

<p><i>Is there interest in adding more subject area content?</i></p>	<p>If WCS stays within the learning time guidelines above, is there interest in additional subjects being included beyond literacy and numeracy? 71 responses</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Yes.</td> <td>21.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No.</td> <td>26.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not at this time, but possibly in a few weeks.</td> <td>52.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Response	Percentage	Yes.	21.1%	No.	26.8%	Not at this time, but possibly in a few weeks.	52.1%
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<p><i>What is the highlight of your child's day with "learning at home"?</i></p>	<p>64% replied Zoom/Meets & meeting classmates Other highlights: Independent work, Devotions, Learning games, Being home, Flexibility & choice</p>								
<p><i>What kind of additional support do you require for your child(ren) to continue to learn effectively at home?</i></p>	<p>34% No help needed. We're good. 11% Help with tech issues/google docs 11% Direct teacher support/instruction 9% More offline/less screen time 9% Time to adjust More patience A coffee break!</p>								
<p><i>Do you have questions for us?</i></p>	<p>Does it look like students will go back to school this year? I am hopeful, but I think it is unlikely. Therefore we need a thoughtful Connected Learning plan for the longer term. Will teachers contact us if they do not see anything for a few days? Yes! Teachers will be reaching out if they do not see or hear from students, as well as sharing that information with Mrs Verbeek and the office. We are taking informal attendance and trying to support families as best we can. Let us know what you need. How can I effectively teach math to my child? Great question! That depends on many things... Teachers are new at teaching math from a distance and are finding this is very different than being in the classroom. We can typically 'read' a child's face or body language and can reach out to coach or affirm as necessary. That is not the case now, so communicate with your child's teacher - or encourage your child to advocate - if there is a concern. If you want to conference with the teacher, let her/him know. Teachers will continue to provide the math lessons. What are the expectations of the students? If they can't complete their work, are they going to be penalized next year? I'm curious how the grading will go for the kids and the work they are doing at home. Concerning evaluation, I would like to know how are we going to evaluate our children to see if we are doing the right thing as parents. Assessment is a common theme here. Great questions! and ones that we are wrestling with - actually educators around the world are discussing this right now! No, students will not be penalized, but we do expect them to do their best. Parents, you are doing the right things! You have a lot on your plates and you are doing the best you can, given the circumstances for your family. We are so blessed to have two solid terms of work complete for this school year.</p>								

Teachers know your children, what their strengths and challenges are, what motivates them, and how they learn best. Remote learning is not optimal for many students. Report cards will look quite different for term 3. We are still working through the details.

Next Steps in the Learning Plan

Phase Two: Connected Learning @ WCS: While we developed an initial Learning Plan (phase one) for the first weeks of closures, it now looks like we will be doing this style of education for a time. We are building an intentional plan (phase two) moving forward, so we will be using Wednesday afternoons to review our practices, integrate feedback from the parent survey, share our collective knowledge, and to plan for the longer term. We are defining the essential skills (the 'need to know's) in our math program, skills that students will need to prepare them to be effective now and in the next grade level. We will be examining our math plan in next weeks to ensure that it transitions well across grades, is easy for parents to support, uses common resources and ensures concepts are being taught clearly. A large percentage of parents (55%) in the survey indicated that it was very important that we maintain, solidify and build on core literacy and math skills, so as to ensure students were not losing ground, and that they would be ready to take on the challenges of the next grade in September. Thank you for so many encouragements for our teachers during this transition to (emergency) Connected Learning! We are blessed to have such a great group of parents at WCS!

Early dismissal: Please note that there will be classes for students on Friday April 24th as our Bluewater PD activities are cancelled. Also note that beginning this week, we will be having EARLY DISMISSAL days for our teaching team (or parts of the team) on Wednesday afternoons. On those days, the classes affected will be dismissed at 130pm. This week: Wednesday April 15th, grades 1, 2, 3, & 4 will have Early Dismissal while their teachers are in training. Next week: Wednesday April 22nd, grades 5, 6, 7, & 8 will have Early Dismissal.

Student Support - Mrs. Bulthuis: Praying you all had a wonderful Easter weekend praising our risen Savior! Hope you also enjoyed a break from school and are ready to begin a new week of learning. It has been wonderful to see all of the students active on Raz-Kids over the past few weeks. Reading "good-fit" books for a few minutes every day has the potential to make a big difference in your child's reading ability. I look forward to meeting with students again this week. Thanks for helping them connect with me at their scheduled times. Have a great week!

JK- Mrs. Westerveld- Welcome to a new week! I It was great go see so many of you on zoom! This week we begin learning about birds and nests. God takes care of His whole Creation!! Have a great week!

SK- Mrs. Poort- This week we I will be reading you stories about spring. Show and share on Wed zoom is a sign that spring is here. Keep practicing your sound books and sight words. You are all doing awesome with this connected learning! It's so good to see videos and your picture responses.

SK- Miss Body- He is risen! He is risen indeed! I hope you had a wonderful Easter weekend. Although it may have looked/felt different; we can rest in our unchanging Lord. Letters: qu, ou, oi

Sight words: down, jump, little

Thursday: Happy birthday Braiden.

Gr. 1- Mrs. VanderPloeg- Welcome to a new week! I hope you had a blessed Easter weekend. As we begin another four-day week, I pray that you feel encouraged and ready to take on the tasks that are ahead of you. We have some special guests for our Zoom meetings again this week – I look forward to seeing you! Have a great week!

Gr. 2- Mrs. Horinga- Welcome to another week of learning. I am excited to see the work that is being handed in to me. I pray that you all enjoyed your Easter weekend and were able to reflect on the sacrifice Jesus gave on the cross. Keep up the great work!

Wednesday - NO zoom meeting

Gr. 3- Mr. Hiemstra- Welcome back! Another week planned for learning! I hope everyone had a blessed Easter weekend with family and reflected on the meaning of this weekend. Christ has risen! Check out the contents in the teacher folder. This week we are continuing the book, Charlotte's Web. On Thursday we will be beginning a unit on money in math. Have a great week!

Friday: Spelling Test: List 24

Gr. 4- Mrs. VanAndel- Welcome to a new week of learning grade 4! I hope you were all able to enjoy the long weekend. I am so grateful for all Jesus did for us! Oh, how He loves you and me!

Wednesday - school is out early at 1:30.

Friday - spelling test

Gr. 4- Mrs. Hickey- Welcome to a new week. We will continue reading the Lion, Witch, and Wardrobe and learning about decimals and fractions in Math. There are suggested DPA activities each day to help you stay active. I will always be available online from 10am - 1pm for questions and help. Always remember to share your daily work with me. Spelling Test is on Friday.

Gr. 5- Mr. H- HAPPY EASTER and welcome to another week of remote learning! I hope you and your children are feeling a little more settled or into some sort of routine as remote learning continues. Please let me know if you have any questions/concerns.

A reminder to please check your child's Google Classroom for assignments and due dates and keep tabs on your child to see if they are completing assignments. I will email you if I see assignments missing.

Here's my plan for the week (all due dates are 8:30AM).

Tuesday:

- Easter Family Choice Board Responses due
- Math: Khan Academy, up to Decimals Quiz 4 due
- Math Drills, level 1 or 2 due.
- Narnia (LWW) Chapter 3-4 questions due.
- Spelling: L. 28 parts 1&2 due.

Wednesday:

- Apr. 14 devotions due.
- Math: Khan Academy: "Decimal Place Value Unit Test" and all previous lessons, due.
- Math Drills D, E, & F, (level 1 or 2) due.

Thursday:

- Apr. 15 devotional due
- Spelling L. 29 Part 1 due.
- Math: Khan Academy: "Estimating Decimal Addition" and all previous lessons, due.

Friday:

- Apr. 16 devotional due
- Math: Khan Academy: "Add Decimals Visually" and all previous lessons, due.

Spelling: L. 29 Part 2 due.

Language Arts: Figure of Speech, Alliteration worksheets (3 of them) due.

Narnia (LWW) Chapter 5-6 Questions due (if you need until Monday, that's alright).

Gr. 6- Mrs. Sikma/Mrs. Martin- Please go to Google Classroom for information.

Gr. 7- Mrs. Racicot- Please go to Google Classroom for information.

Gr. 8- Mr. Schaafsma- Welcome to a new week of Remote Learning! I hope you were all able to celebrate Easter in a special way at home this year. This week we will continue our work on The Hobbit, we are starting Algebra in math using Nimbus and a choice board for French has been posted in the Google Classroom, please complete one choice per day.