

God - Our Hope

I tend to be an optimist and believe that together - with the strength of God and others - we can work through many of life's challenges. One of our staff recently reminded me that it's also important to recognize our losses and why we are feeling sad and disoriented in times of life change. For many of us in the current COVID-19 situation, we are missing and aching for 'normal' and for others and - our families, our colleagues, our sports teams, our friends. We want stability and security. We acknowledge the weight of our pain and suffering before God, and in the midst of it all, acknowledge the God above it all. When it feels like the world is unreliable, we can remember God never leaves us. He is our salvation in every moment.

Our angst is real. So, also, is God's strength, the refuge He offers us, and the salvation we have in Him. We will encounter trials. Jesus tells his disciples to expect them. When we face difficult times, how do we hold on to hope? King David knew a few things about suffering. As we read David's Psalms, we see him fighting for hope. He struggled through threats to his life, country and his leadership, family brokenness, betrayal, the death of a child, and much more over the course of his life. In his writing in the Psalms, we see his incredible strength and an example of how to cling to hope in hard times. Psalms offer an example of fighting through emotional and spiritual difficulty and will help you look to God for hope in hard times.

Even in our greatest struggles, we can know that God is walking through it with us. (adapted from crosswalk.com)

Bible reading this week: Psalm 71

If anyone is interested in this Bible study about hope through hard times, here is a link: <https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/encouraging-psalms-hope-through-hard-times.html>)



Tuesday: Aron Neutel- Gr. 4
Lauren Sikma- Gr. 4
Friday: Emmett Wessleson- Gr. 4
Sunday: Mr. Schaafsma- Gr. 8 Teacher

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Working from home: One of the leadership coaches that I follow - he has also worked with us at Edvance workshops - is Trevor Throness. Here are some excellent suggestions from Trevor for how students and 'work from home' employees can be most effective:

1. Set up a dedicated work area where you can have some privacy: Working at the kitchen table doesn't work. Sitting in bed with your laptop doesn't work. This is your job. Set up a dedicated area, separate from the rest of your life
2. Get your technology sorted: Get a reliable computer with a camera and a mic and a fast internet connection
3. Have a family meeting, explaining rules for the new normal. Mine include (says Trevor), not coming to chat if my door is closed; turning down the volume of life if there's a tie hanging on my door, which means I'm on a zoom call, or making a recording.
4. Follow a routine: Get up at the same time. Make your coffee/juice/smoothie, do your workout or whatever routine is normal for you, and then report to work. Come out for a coffee or activity break. Then back to work. Take lunch, then back to the office.
5. Embrace the perks that this new way of being brings: (No packing lunches!)

Prayer Corner: What a beautiful warm day we experienced Sunday. We continue to thank God for his overflowing blessings and love, for the gift of God's grace and salvation, for new growth we see in the signs of spring, for technology, for the love and care of others. Pray for all those who are struggling with health and with new realities in our community and around the world. Many families are feeling the impact of layoffs and work disruptions. Pray for them as they face uncertainty. If you have specific prayer requests, be sure to pass those along to our prayer team through j.mulder@woodstockchristian.ca. Please pray for our students and families and staff as we face new issues, establish new routines, and work through new challenges.

WCS building is closed: The school remains off-limits for parents. That includes pickup of math books, headphones, shoes etc. Best practices dictate that we must keep people out of our schools as per the Emergency Measures (Ontario) closures. Many of you have made arrangements with Mr Hiemstra re picking up a disinfected chromebook. Connect with him if that is something you want to access. We will wait to hear what Premier Ford and health officials have to say about extended emergency measures and then re-evaluate the situation. Teachers have made suggestions re submitting documents - by taking a photo or scanning. One of the recommended best free apps for scanning is *Microsoft Office Lens*. You can use your phone to scan. Simply take a picture of the document you wish to share. The app will clean up, brighten, and frame the document. If you've discovered other effective tools, please share.

Employment changes: A parent letter from the WCS Board of Directors has been sent that explains more... but to bring you up to speed, at WCS, in order to streamline operations and costs, we have decided to temporarily lay off or reduce hours for quite a number of our staff - bus drivers, EAs, librarian, Sonbeams teacher, and a few others. With the cancellation of fundraisers and a new financial picture, this is a sad, but necessary, decision. When you can, please reach out to your bus driver, EA and others to let them know you are thinking about them.

Parent survey is coming: Hoping you and your family are well. I hope you are also faring well through this strange new time of remote everything. Look for a survey that will go out to parents this week. We want to check in with you and for you to have an opportunity to let us know what you need, how the school-at-home connected learning is going for your children and your family. Some of you, due to schedules and circumstances have expressed the challenges you are facing. If that is the case, please check in with me or your teacher to discuss and include those matters in the survey.

Connected learning @ WCS: We have assembled what we hope will be a “one-stop” location in which you can find your child(ren)’s assignments, find links to connect with classes for MEET times, reading sites, and other information that your teacher posts. Check it out at <https://sites.google.com/woodstockchristian.ca/connectedlearning/home>
This google site is still in the development stages and there will be changes and adaptations as we move through the next few weeks.

How to reach us at WCS: Your children’s teachers have provided ways to get in touch with them, and don’t hesitate to do so. You can email at any time, and any of us would be happy to reply. The office email is up and running and Mrs Mulder is on standby to assist you at office@woodstockchristian.ca. If you have questions about finances you should go to finance@woodstockchristian.ca and connect with Ms VanGeest. Mrs. Verbeek can be reached at principal@woodstockchristian.ca , tech questions can be directed to your classroom teacher or to Mr. Hiemstra g.hiemstra@woodstockchristian.ca.

Our World Belongs to God. (Preamble Part 5)

God holds this world with fierce love.

Keeping his promise,

he sends Jesus into the world, pours out the Holy Spirit,
and announces the good news:

sinner who repent and believe in Jesus

live anew as members of the family of God— the firstfruits of a new creation.

See Hosea 11. John 3:1-21, Acts 2:36-39, Romans 10:7-11, Ephesians 2:1-10. James 1:18.

God holds this world with fierce love. (your thought for the week - reflect on this!)

Student Support - Mrs. Bulthuis: The Student Support Services program will be launching online intervention sessions today! This will take some time for Mrs. DeVries and me to work through all the glitches and challenges of teaching and learning via Zoom. We are praying that everyone will have patience and good sense of humour! Have a great week.

JK- Mrs. Westerveld- Welcome to a new week JK. I hear that many of you enjoyed some great family time outside. I have been seeing many of your ladybug activities. I also enjoyed seeing your hand art. Your responses have come to me in many different ways. I will continue to give feedback whenever possible. If I’m missing anyone please let me know. This week we will continue to focus on letters and on symmetry. Your job before tomorrow is to find a smooth rock about the size of your hand. Can you guess what we will do with it? Watch for an email with a new zoom link for our class meeting tomorrow. I’m praying for you all. Have a great week! See you tomorrow!

SK- Mrs. Poort- Great work everyone. You have set up zoom, seesaw, and raz kids all in one week. I will continue to send announcements in seesaw and emails. Feel free to check out the school website and this link <https://sites.google.com/woodstockchristian.ca/connectedlearning/primary-jksk-gr-1-2?authuser=0> for more online activities. This week’s focus is continue with our literacy and add in mathematics. We will be starting our unit on 3D shapes. Show and share on Wednesday Zoom is a 3D cylinder object found in your house.

SK- Miss Body- Welcome to a new week. 3 days of fun and learning. I am excited to introduce to the new classroom. Thank you for making my birthday so special in many different ways.

Tuesday: letter "th", Sight word: where
Wednesday: letter review of group 6 Sight word: funny
Friday: letter review of group 6 Sight word: here

Gr. 1- Mrs. VanderPloeg- Welcome to a new week! Check your emails daily for suggestions for a plan for each day. Here's a peek at some new things coming up this week!

Monday – Read Aloud with Mrs. VanderPloeg
Tuesday – Math Drills practice
Wednesday – Bible lesson & activity
Thursday – Listen for announcements with Mrs. VanderPloeg
Friday – PJ day on Zoom! :) Bring a stuffy!

Gr. 2- Mrs. Horinga- It was so good to see you last week on our video chats! I have loved seeing the work you are doing at home - keep up the good work. This week I have sent home a spelling list that focuses on consonant + le word patterns. We will also begin some math lessons that focus on telling time. Thank you parents for all the work you are doing with your child. Have a great week of learning!

Gr. 3- Mr. Hiemstra- Another week planned for learning! Check out the letters and contents in the teacher folder and we will make adjustments along this new path of learning. Check out the announcement videos as well from other teachers. (You can find that on the right link of the web portal). Have a great week!

Gr. 4- Mrs. VanAndel- Welcome to our first full week of learning after March Break. I hope you are all adjusting well to our new way of "school".
Happy birthday to Aron on Tuesday.
Wednesday is April Fools Day - who will you prank this year?

Keep praying to God and trusting in Him! Remember our world belongs to God!!

Gr. 4- Mrs. Hickey- Welcome to a new week of learning at home. Thank you for submitting your pet pictures for pet day. We will continue meeting every day on Zoom. Be sure to complete your activities every day and send it to me on one google document, not multiple ones. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me.

Gr. 5- Mr. H- Welcome back to remote learning! We have had a good start (from my point of view)! A lot of tech learning happening in the first couple of weeks, but the class is doing well. Thank you for your patience with all of this. I'm still trying to come up with solid systems and routines. Continue to send your questions/concerns my way.

This week's focus is Math and Language Arts.

See Google classroom for assignments and due dates. Go to the "Cass Work" tab, then look at the assignments. If you click on an assignment, it shows you the due date.

Typically, students will be given a couple of days to complete their math and language arts assignments with most assignments due on Wednesdays and Fridays. Please keep in mind that students do not have to complete all the assigned work in one day, the due date is there so that students know they can spread it out over the course of the week. Blessings as you navigate this drastically different routine!

Gr. 6- Mrs. Bigham- Please go to Google Classroom for information

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

Gr. 8- Mr. Schaafsma- It has been good to connect with all of you via Google Meet. Please keep checking in with Google classroom to keep pace with assignments/tasks/announcements. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me at t.schaafsma@woodstockchristian.ca, my office hours are from 9am-3pm daily.