



PATHWAYS NEWSLETTER

Honoring God through creative learning & strong academics in a caring, fun-filled school.



Picture of the Month:

A big shout out and thank you to Holden's Officer Holly & Cruiser, her K-9 comfort dog who paid HCA a visit recently. We pawsitively love having these visits from the Holden Police Department.

Upcoming Events

- * **Scholastic Book Fair**
May 18-22
- * **Art Show & Godspell Jr.**
May 21, 6pm (Art Show)
7pm (Godspell Jr.)
- * **Memorial Day, NO SCHOOL**
May 25
- * **Deadline for Summer
Vacation Program Sign Up**
June 1
- * **HCA goes to the WooSox**
June 5
- * **Southwick Zoo Field Trip**
June 8
- * **Preschool Graduation**
June 11, 9:30am
- * **Last Day of School - ½ day**
June 12, 11:30am dismissal
- * **Uniform Swap & Med pickup**
June 12, 11:00am



A message from our Principal

Mrs. Cleveland's Spotlight:

Celebrating Milestones with Meaning

As we approach the end of the school year, our calendar begins to fill with special events—concerts, presentations, field days, graduations, and classroom celebrations. These moments mark important milestones in the lives of our students, and they give us a chance to pause and recognize how much growth has taken place over the past year.

Milestones matter. They help us remember that growth is happening, even when it feels slow or unseen in the day-to-day routine. A preschooler or kindergartener finishing their

**"SHOW ME YOUR WAYS, LORD, TEACH ME YOUR PATHS. GUIDE ME IN YOUR TRUTH AND TEACH ME, FOR YOU ARE GOD MY SAVIOR, AND MY HOPE IS IN YOU ALL DAY LONG.
PSALM 25:4-5**



“Mrs. Cleveland’s Spotlight” continued...

first year of school, a fifth grader stepping into the new responsibilities of middle school, or an eighth grader preparing for what comes next—each of these moments represents more than academic progress. They reflect growth in character, confidence, relationships, and faith.

Throughout Scripture, we see the importance of remembering and marking what God has done. In Joshua 4, after God led the Israelites across the Jordan River, He instructed them to set up twelve stones as a memorial. These stones were meant to prompt future generations to ask, “What do these stones mean?”—creating an opportunity to remember God’s faithfulness and tell the story of His work.

In the same way, the milestones we celebrate at the end of the school year can serve as “stones of remembrance.” They are not just about marking time, but about recognizing God’s provision, growth, and faithfulness in the lives of our students.

At the same time, it can be easy for milestones to become focused primarily on the event itself—the ceremony, the photos, the celebration. While those things are meaningful, we can provide even deeper value through opportunities to reflect, to give thanks, and to look ahead with purpose.

As a school, we want to be intentional about celebrating not just what students have accomplished, but who they are becoming. This includes the habits they’ve developed, the perseverance they’ve shown, the kindness they’ve extended, and the ways they are learning to live out their faith in everyday situations.

Families play an important role in shaping how these milestones are experienced. Here are a few simple ways to help make these moments more meaningful at home:

- Pause and reflect. Take time to talk together about the year. What was challenging? What brought joy? Where did you see growth?
- Name what matters most. Affirm qualities like effort, integrity, courage, and compassion—not just outcomes.
- Give thanks. Consider how God has been at work this year—in big ways and small ones.
- Look ahead with purpose. Help your child think about what comes next and how they can continue to grow.

When we approach milestones in this way, they become more than celebrations—they become markers of formation. They remind us that each child is on a journey, and that every step forward is worth noticing.

Thank you for partnering with us in guiding your children through these important seasons. It is a joy to celebrate these milestones together—not just for what has been accomplished, but for the continued growth that is still ahead.

“Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” – Philippians 1:6

By His Grace,

Mrs. Nikki Cleveland

**INSPIRING STUDENTS TO LEARN JOYFULLY, THINK
BIBLICALLY, AND SERVE FAITHFULLY.**

From the School Committee

School Committee Says...

Some remarks from a beloved & faithful School Committee member, Jim Bollivar:

Hello HCA Family,

After 11 years of serving on the School Committee, and after much prayer, I will be taking a sabbatical year for the 26/27 school year. As I look forward to this, it has brought up many memories. I have had the privilege of serving with 2 Principals, 3 chairpersons, and dozens of committee members. During this time, I have seen the Lord walk with us through great times and hard times. Shortly after I joined, we had a major flood during the construction of the school entry way. But God was with us. When Principal Hayward said it was time to retire and she believed Mrs. Cleveland was being called to be the next Principal, God was with us. When Covid came and we were told we had to shut down the school, God was with us. During Covid when we ended the year with less than \$100, God was with us.

Even recently when we were meeting with the ASCI accreditation team they told us they could clearly see that God was working in mighty ways here at HCA. Sometimes you need to get through the tough times and the good times to be able to look back and see where God has shown up over and over again! Seeing this over time, I know that God's favor is on His school and He will continue to bless this ministry for years to come!

For His Glory,
Jim Bollivar

Beginning in the 26-27 academic year, the Holden Chapel Elder serving on the SC will be Pastor Sam Bogan.

Enrollment Reminders

It's not too late! Re-enroll for the 26-27 school year before fees go up June 1.

Have you been meaning to re-enroll your child for next year? Now is the time to update and submit your student's enrollment packet for the price of \$11/packet. Starting June 1, fees will increase by a \$25 late fee each month through the summer. We hope your children will be back, and we look forward to hearing from you! Any questions? Feel free to email Ms. Graham in the Admissions office.

REFERRAL PROGRAM REMINDER:

Our amazing School Committee has brought back the HCA Family Referral Program for the 26-27 school year. Word of mouth is one of our most effective tools for growing enrollment, so we hope our current families will help us for the upcoming school year.

Here are the details: If a new family names a current family on their application, once the new family has been accepted and pays their first 3 months of tuition, & the referring family is up-to-date on tuition payments, they will receive \$250 per new student!

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From the PTC

HCA Goes to the WooSox!



The Parent-Teacher Council would like to invite your family to a night at Polar Park for a Worcester Red Sox vs. Buffalo Bisons game, complete with a fireworks display! This has become a beloved family outing for HCA, and this year the game will be on Friday, June 5th (the 2nd to last Friday of school). More detailed Information & tickets can be purchased using [THIS LINK](#). The HCA group will be seated in Section 2 along the 3rd baseline! Tickets are \$21.42 and can be purchased at the link above. Go Woo Sox!

Space is limited; make plans to join us now!

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT..... FALL ELECTIVES, RIGHT?

Mrs. Randall is looking for volunteers who may be interested in leading an elective this Fall. Do you have a talent, hobby, or expertise you'd be willing to share with a small group of HCA students? You can set the ages and # of students for your group, and it's an excellent way to get service hours in!

If you have interest in serving in this way, please contact Mrs. Randall directly: mrandall@holdenchristianacademy.org

Vacation Program Reminder

Summer Vacation Program: Registration open until June 1!

Calling all current HCA families! Now is the time to sign up for our Summer Vacation Program. You can register by clicking [THIS LINK](#).

More information, including a calendar of theme days, can be found on our [website](#).

Please note: this program is only for current HCA students & we do offer a sibling discount!

A Note from the Theater Department:

Breaking News: Fine Arts Night at HCA May 21

All K-7 students are featured in the upcoming Art Show and musical, Godspell Jr. The Art Show is free to enter at 6:00pm, followed by the performance of Godspell Jr. at 7:00pm. Tickets are required for the show, and a freewill offering (suggested donation \$5 per ticket for age 7+) can be made when you [reserve your tickets](#). Please come celebrate the hard work of our students in visual & performing arts.



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From the classroom

What's Happening in Preschool with Ms. Michelle

It's hard to believe that the school year is almost over! It has been such a joy to watch the children grow, not only academically, but also spiritually and emotionally. Throughout the year, they have built meaningful friendships, developed confidence, and begun to understand just how special they are as children of God.

We had an amazing time "traveling" around the world as we explored different cultures in March. Thank you to all the families who came in to share your traditions and what makes your culture so special. The children loved trying new foods, learning dances, and even hearing new languages! Being part of the school's Big Day was such a highlight, and they were especially excited to see their tree frogs featured in the Middle School rainforest.

During the Easter season, the children were deeply engaged in learning about Jesus' resurrection. They especially loved participating in Mrs. Cleveland's scavenger hunt, which helped them experience and retell the story in a hands-on and meaningful way.

Lately, we have been exploring the weather, learning about rain, clouds, and evaporation and reflecting on how God created our world with such care and purpose. We also discovered how trees and flowers grow, and how they need sunlight, water, and soil to thrive, just as we need love and guidance to grow.

This week, we are beginning one of our favorite units: bugs! The children are excited to explore the important role insects play, especially how they help with pollination and support our environment.

We'll be diving into hands-on learning in Nature Explore, all while having fun dressing up as our favorite little bugs!

As the weather warms up, remember to apply sunscreen and bug spray to your children before school to protect them outside. Sunhats and shirts can be brought to school, we will put them on before we go outside.



IMPORTANT PRESCHOOL DATES!

- Water Week—dates and details coming soon in email
- Parent Zoo Trip—June 8th more details to come!!
- Preschool End of Year Celebration Thursday, June 11, 9:30-11. Details coming in email

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From the classroom

Kindergarten News

With love from Mrs. Coombs

As we enter these final, meaningful weeks of the school year, I find myself reflecting with gratitude on the growth, joy, and wonder that have filled our classroom. It has truly been a blessing to walk alongside your children this year and witness the many ways they have learned and flourished.

In this last term, our class has been exploring the beautiful country of Brazil. The children are delighted in learning about its rich culture—tasting and discussing traditional foods, discovering colorful clothing, and exploring important landmarks. A special highlight for Team A was the opportunity to welcome parents into our classroom to share about their home country of Brazil. This was such a meaningful experience for the students, and we are deeply thankful for the time and heart that was shared with us.

We are also wrapping up our study of biomes by diving into the vibrant and fascinating rainforest. The students have been captivated by the incredible plants and animals that call this biome home, and their curiosity continues to inspire our learning each day. As a special bonus to conclude our biome studies, we are planning a field trip to Southwick's Zoo, where students will have the opportunity to see many of the animals they have learned about throughout the year. Please be on the lookout for more information to come regarding this exciting trip.

In Math, we are finishing the year by exploring 2D and 3D shapes. The children are building strong foundations as they identify, describe, and compare shapes in the world around them—skills that will serve them well as they continue their learning journey.

This week, we are beginning one of our most exciting units: butterflies. The class will learn about the butterfly life cycle and have the unique opportunity to observe this transformation happening right before their eyes in our classroom. As we watch caterpillars grow, form chrysalises, and eventually emerge as butterflies, we will reflect on a beautiful truth found in nature—that transformation takes time, care, and patience.

In many ways, this mirrors the journey your children have taken this year. From the very first days of Kindergarten to now, they have grown in knowledge, confidence, kindness, and independence. It has been such a joy to watch them blossom into the individuals they are becoming. Each child has made incredible progress, and I am so proud of all they have accomplished.

As a reminder Godspell Jr. and the Art Show are right around the corner, Thursday May 21st. Please refer to the flyer that was sent home with the QR code to get tickets or you can go right to our website. Families will have the opportunity to walk around and view the student's art work starting at 6pm, and then proceed to the play after. Thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and partnership throughout this year. It has been a true gift to teach your children.



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From the classroom

First Grade News: Mrs. Plourde's Perspective

Hello families,

Welcome to term four! We had a really fun and informational Africa Day. First graders had a great time decorating our classroom to look a little bit like Kenya. They especially enjoyed creating an indoor campfire. We've now moved on to learn about Brazil and rainforests! In FUNdations we have been working hard on new trick words and spelling rules. In Math we're working hard on place value, and using base ten blocks. We'll be looking forward to adding and subtracting two digit numbers.

We have some fun events to look forward to as we close out the school year. On Thursday May 21st is the Art Show and the K-7 production of Godspell Jr. Coming up in June, we'll have a school wide field trip to Southwick's Zoo. Stay tuned for more details and permission slips. Finally, look for more details about an end of year party.

This has been such a wonderful year, it has been a privilege to watch the students grow.

Mrs. Plourde



From the classroom

Second Grade News: Miss Theodoss' Tales

Hello parents,

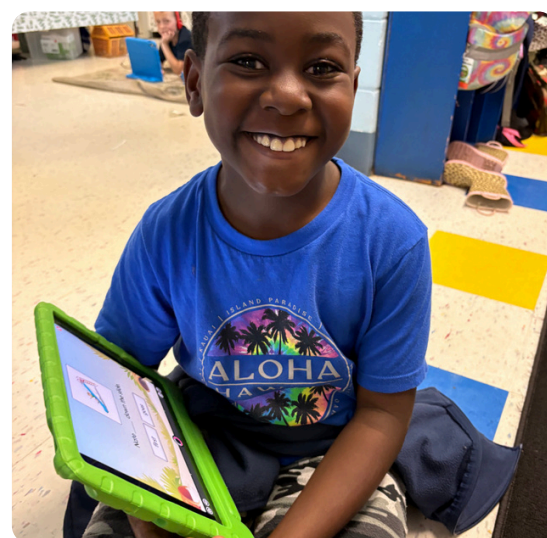
Can you believe we are about halfway through Term 4? This year has flown by! We started the term with IOWA testing. Your students did a great job trying their best on every test and working silently on them. I am very proud of them.

Since then, we have been diving into Brazil and the rainforest. Team A has been working on a rainforest bulletin board in art class and they are looking forward to showing it to you all during the Art Show.

We have some exciting events coming up in the second half of the term. On Thursday May 21st, is the Art Show and K-7 production of Godspell, Jr. Also coming up in June we have a zoo field trip to wrap up our year long study of animals and their biomes. More information and a permission slip will be coming soon. Finally to finish off the school year, there will be an end of year party. An email will be sent out closer to the end of the year.

It has been an absolute blessing to teach your students this year. I have loved seeing all the many ways they have grown throughout the year.

Blessings,
Miss. Theodoss



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From the classroom

Third Grade News: from the Desk of Ms. Rennie

Happy Spring!! Thank you for taking the time to chat with me during parent/teacher conferences. I am extremely grateful to partner with you!! Third grade has been working so hard diving into learning about the beautiful culture of Ecuador: the people, the Galapagos Islands, the Andes Mountains, and the rainforest, just to name a few. I am amazed at their creativity as we read some Ecuadorian folktales, our classroom bulletin board is looking beautiful!

We have had a break from multiplication and have been focusing on telling time, measurements, geometry, and graphs. We will spend the last few weeks doing a lot of multiplication and division review, when we finish the text book. I am so proud of how well they are doing with Shurley Grammar and FUNdations. Thank you for all your support with all the skills they are learning.

Their last, non-fiction book report for April/May is due Friday, May 29th . All of the information has been in their binders.

We have been talking about God's character, his unconditionally love for us and how can we can live this out and share his love with others. The discussions have been so amazing. Thank you for raising such awesome kids!!

Blessings,
Ms. Rennie



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From the classroom

Fourth & Fifth Grade News: A few notes from Mrs. Velarde

Since our last installment, we have successfully completed a big celebration of learning, Africa Day. It was a wonderful day spent sharing in the knowledge that we gained of Ethiopia and learning about other African countries from other grades! For Social Studies this term, we are focusing on Peru and in Science we are studying the rainforest. I am very excited for the final Science project "What's Wrong with This Biome?" where students will get to scramble up the animals, plants, and biomes we have learned about this year and dive deeper into the reasons and ways God ordered nature. In Language Arts, we are editing our NaNoWriMo novels. After a long break from writing these stories, it is good to bring them to the forefront of our focus and practice editing skills. Both grades are wrapping up the year with geometry, which has been daunting for some and exciting for others. In Bible, we are focusing on missionaries and how we can be on mission for Christ among our peers, friends and family members. It is beautiful to see their hearts for the Lord shine through in our discussions! Be on the lookout for communication about end of year details including our zoo field trip, class parties and more!

Finally, I want to send a personal invitation for you, your family and friends to come see all of the hard work that has been put into HCA's production of Godspell, Jr. The performance will be Thursday May 21 at 7:00 in the Holden Chapel Sanctuary. It is going to be a wonderful night of laughter, beautiful music, hope and the sharing of the Gospel. Tickets are on sale now through the school website!

It has been a fantastic year with this group of students and I am very grateful for the opportunity to share in learning alongside them. It has been such a blessing for me to see their growth and curiosity shine!



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From the classroom

Mr. Shea's Shenanigans: Middle School Language Arts 6th Grade Homeroom

Hello Middle School Families!

We are already almost halfway through Term 4, and the energy in our classrooms is high as students dive into their final hands-on projects for the school year. In Language Arts, we have been exploring the power of life stories by focusing on biographies, autobiographies, and the inspiring accounts of various missionaries. As a culmination of this study, students are currently hard at work drafting their own personal narratives or faith testimonies, reflecting on how God has been moving in their own lives and learning how to share that story with others.

Our Grade 6 students are also deeply immersed in their study of Mexican culture through a unique, collaborative project where they are planning a mock short-term mission trip to Mexico City. While the class is working together to handle the logistical planning of the trip on paper, each student is also individually preparing to train their peers on how to effectively connect the Gospel to various specific aspects of Mexican culture.

Meanwhile, in Computer Science, we have moved into a Computer Assisted Design (CAD) unit. Each student is currently designing and 3D modeling an original creation, which they will then have the opportunity to 3D print as their final project for the unit.

As we look toward the finish line of the school year, please be on the lookout over the next few weeks for more information regarding our end-of-the-year parties. We are so excited to celebrate all the growth and hard work the students have displayed this term. Thank you so much for your continued partnership and support!

In Christ,
Jeremiah Shea
Middle School Language Arts



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From the classroom

Mr. Curtis' Corner: Middle School Bible & History 7th Grade Homeroom

Welcome back, readers! It's hard to believe we're already in the final stretch of the school year. These past months have been full of meaningful learning, steady growth, and memorable experiences. As the weather warms up here in New England, it's a great time to enjoy being outdoors—but it's also important that students stay focused and finish the year strong. This is a great opportunity to show perseverance and take pride in all the work that has been accomplished before heading into a well-earned summer break.

In World Geography, our focus has shifted to the vibrant and diverse region of Latin America. Seventh grade has been taking a closer look at Argentina, while sixth grade has been exploring the culture, history, and geography of Mexico. Students have engaged thoughtfully with the traditions, landscapes, and people that make each country unique. As we move toward the end of the year, students will also begin an exciting term project in which they will choose a Latin American country to study more deeply. Each student will create a travel brochure for a weekend trip, highlighting details such as hotel accommodations, activities and attractions, historical sites to visit, restaurants and local dishes to try, and unique experiences that make their destination special.

This project will allow students to bring together what they've learned in a creative and practical way.

Bible class has also been a meaningful part of our term. This term, we have been studying Christian missionaries, grounded in the Great Commission and the example set by Paul's missionary journeys. Students have examined the historical and cultural contexts of these missions while also considering their relevance for our lives today. Through this study, students are being encouraged to reflect on service, purpose, and how they can thoughtfully live out their faith in their daily lives.

As we wrap up the year, we still have a couple of things to look forward to. In addition to our end-of-year party, we're also excited about an upcoming zoo field trip, which will be both fun and experiential opportunity. Be sure to stay tuned for more details about these events as we celebrate all that has been accomplished this year.

Thanks for your continued support throughout the school year. Let's finish strong and look forward to a well-deserved summer break!

Maranatha,
-Mr. Curtis



Middle Schoolers recently helped with a service project to spread mulch in our Nature Explore Playspace.

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From the classroom

Mrs. Jorritsma's Jam: Middle School Math

Grade 6: The Language of Algebra

Our sixth graders have officially transitioned from arithmetic to the foundational language of Algebra. This term, the focus has been on moving beyond simple calculations to understanding the relationships between values. Students are learning to translate verbal phrases into mathematical symbols, mastering the art of turning a sentence like "five less than a number" into the expression $x - 5$.

Beyond just writing expressions, the class has been busy solving equations. We have spent significant time using the "balance scale" analogy to visualize how equations work; students are learning that to maintain equality, any operation performed on one side must be mirrored on the other. This transition from concrete numbers to abstract variables like x and y represents a major milestone in their mathematical journey, providing them with the tools to solve increasingly complex puzzles.

Grade 7: Percentages and Geometric Solids

In seventh grade, the curriculum has taken a dual approach by blending the math of finance with the exploration of spatial reasoning. Students have become savvy consumers through our unit on percents, where they have practiced calculating sales tax, tips, and discounts. These lessons bring math to life, as students learn to navigate real-world scenarios like finding the final price of a discounted item or

understanding how simple interest allows a bank account to grow over time. Alongside these financial skills, the class has stepped into the third dimension to study geometric solids. We have been investigating the properties of prisms, pyramids, and cylinders to understand how they occupy space. Students build geometric solids and nets with Magnatiles to better understand volume which measures the capacity inside a solid, and surface area, which accounts for the total area of a solid's faces. Whether they are calculating the space inside a shipping container or the amount of material needed to cover a pyramid, our seventh graders are developing a sophisticated understanding of the world around them.



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From the classroom

Mrs. Gordon's Musings: Middle School Health, Science, and Outdoor Ed

Does anyone else feel like they come alive all over again each spring? I love this time of year and greatly enjoy sharing the excitement with my students as our biome bursts back into vibrant life and anticipation builds toward summer.

Outdoor Education: During testing week, students cared for our beautiful nature trail system through maintenance work. This week brought Nature Journaling about insects (did you know something is only an insect if it has 6 legs?). Before school ends, a little more outdoor exploration awaits us!

6th Grade Science: Tropical rainforests mark the final stop in our biome studies. A mini unit on extreme weather follows, and then students will conclude the year considering their part in conservation and how that connects to stewardship and worshipping God.

7th Grade Science: The incredible nervous system is our focus now as students finish their final body systems for the year. The reproductive system will follow to conclude our studies. Parents will receive a letter with more information about this unit, which has consistently provided opportunities for meaningful conversations. So many hopeful and helpful things can be said about the reproductive system and sexuality—things that honor our bodies, reduce shame, and bring clarity.

Health: Students are concluding the year with lessons on maintaining healthy lifestyles throughout the changing seasons of life.

Their term project involves evaluating a cultural system they belong to and its messages around health and bodies. This should be a meaningful experience—please ask your students to share what they discover! Reminder: The final exam covering everything learned in Health this year is Tuesday, June 2nd.



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