COVENANT
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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Principal's Report

October Focus: Rooted in Love and Compassion

Our 2026-2027 school theme is Rooted Together: Cultivating Belonging, rooted in Ephesians 3:17-19. October has been an exciting next step in our *Rooted Together* theme as we have moved from staff setting the stage in September to students actively embracing and sharing the theme. With our focus on *Rooted in Love* and compassion, Grade 9 students and both Grade 8 homerooms have led interactive, engaging presentations that encourage students to consider how we can reflect Christ's love through everyday acts of kindness and inclusion.

We have also enjoyed worship teams from Grades 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, and Grade 9 leading us in worship. Seeing our youngest learners lead action worship and the entire school, staff, and parents join in has been a highlight. It brought me so much joy to see our Grade 1/2 students given the opportunity to do something small with big love. These moments remind us that every student has something meaningful to contribute to our community.

Enrollment and Staffing

Current enrollment is 430 students, with two more joining us next week, bringing us to 432!

We are excited to be preparing to hire for two important opportunities at CCS: a 1.0 FTE teaching position and an additional 0.5 FTE Junior High Learning Support position. While teacher recruitment continues to be a challenge, we are grateful for the opportunity to grow our team and strengthen the support we provide to students.

Please join us in praying for the right people to join our community and share in the work God has entrusted to us. We look forward to continuing to build opportunities for our students to flourish in their learning and grow in their faith.

Three Habits for Cultivating Belonging

Alongside our monthly themes, we are building three habits for cultivating belonging into the life of our school: Be Curious, Be Present, and Reimagine. These are habits we want to develop as a community among students, staff, and families.

Be Curious: *Listen to others' stories and see the world through their eyes.*
We launched this habit in September, encouraging students to slow down, look a little closer, and ask questions rather than making quick assumptions. This connects to the truth in Genesis 1 that every person is made in God's image.

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Be Present: *Encounter others with authenticity and confidence.*
Launching in January, this habit will encourage students to give others their full attention, step into relationships with courage, and remain present even when things are difficult.

Reimagine: *Find hope and opportunity in places where we long to see change.*
Launching in April, students will be encouraged to ask, *What could be different? What could help? What might God be inviting us to do?*

These habits are being explored through Wednesday Celebrations, Monday Rooted Sessions for Grades 1-6, and Junior High Chapel, which will take place every four to six weeks.

Rooted Sessions, Bible & Faith Formation

This year, we have introduced Monday afternoon Rooted Sessions for Grades 1-6. Students meet in three grade-level groups with Mrs. Lozeau and me to explore our theme and consider what it means to cultivate belonging.

While students are in Rooted Sessions, teachers have collaborative planning time with Nicole Hennink to work through our Bible curriculum, connect it to our K-9 Bible Scope and Sequence, and consider how we can more intentionally connect knowing the story with Teaching for Transformation's focus on Seeing the Story and Living the Story.

This builds on the K-9 Bible Scope and Sequence developed last year by Leanne Briggs, Jennifer Lozeau, and Colin Ward, alongside Jeremy Horlings from PCCE. This work has been an important step in strengthening Bible instruction and faith formation across the school.

Our Junior High students are also engaging with the theme through Junior High Chapel and began the year with a Junior High Retreat.

Bible Scope and Sequence

Last month, we introduced the CCS Bible Plan Parent Communication Guide, which outlines our K-9 approach to Bible Studies and the learning we hope students will experience by the time they leave CCS. For those who missed the presentation, here is a quick review of the key ideas.

Our Deep Hope: We want our learners to **know, delight in, and respond to God's story**.

Our Bible curriculum is designed to form the whole person: heart, mind, and actions. We want students to develop a strong understanding of Scripture, grow in their relationship with God, and learn what it means to live out their faith.

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How Bible Studies Connect with TfT

While Teaching for Transformation helps students see God's story and live out their part in it, Bible Studies provides the foundation for **knowing the story**.

Our learning follows three key stages:

- **Invite: Seeing the Story.** Students discover how the Bible fits into God's bigger story and consider how they are part of it.
- **Nurture: Building the Capacity.** Students develop biblical knowledge, deepen their understanding, and grow in Christ-like character.
- **Empower: Practicing the Kingdom.** Students put their learning into practice through meaningful experiences that allow them to serve others and model Christ.

Our Bible curriculum grows with students as they move from Kindergarten to Grade 9. Guiding questions, biblical content, and learning experiences become increasingly complex as students mature. Our goal is that students leave CCS with a strong understanding of Scripture and an understanding of how to live out their faith in the world.

As we continue our work, the Bible Plan gives us a shared direction and helps ensure that our students are building a connected understanding of God's story throughout their years at CCS.

Faith Formation for Staff

Staff Devotions: We are investing in staff faith formation as well. Tuesday morning devotions are built around PCCE's *Teaching FROM Transformation: God's Big Picture*; Led by Jenna Haugan and Nicole Hennink, we are excited to continue to explore scripture together and consider how the larger story of Scripture shapes the way we teach and lead.

Christian Teachers' Convention: Christian Teachers' Convention took place October 21–23 at Calgary Christian School. This year, we also invited our support staff to participate, and four support staff members joined us. We are grateful for the opportunities for professional learning, spiritual renewal, and time together as a staff community by participating in sessions, hearing from the keynote speaker, Mark Buchanan, and exploring the focus of 're-centre' together, also participating in team building activities and connection time.

PCCE Executive Director Visit

On October 27, we will welcomed Matthew Bekkering, the new Executive Director of PCCE, to Covenant.

Matthew joined us in the classrooms for a school tour, connection with students and staff, we had the opportunity to go for dinner with him and the board, and then presented to guests about the work of PCCE, ways we can promote a

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positive vision for Christian education within an alternative Christian program, and opportunities to facilitate intentional togetherness within the broader Christian education community.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Are being held next week, November 4th and 5th. This year, schools have been directed to share provincial screener results with parents, in addition to an overview of student progress up until this point. Here is some information about this:

Understanding Literacy and Numeracy Screeners

Strong reading and math skills start early. In Alberta, Kindergarten to grade 5 students complete brief literacy and numeracy assessments (called screeners) to help teachers identify who might need additional support during these critical early years of learning.

What parents need to know:

- **They monitor progress:** Screeners are quick check-ins that help teachers track your child's growth over time.
- **They use trusted tools:** Our schools use government-provided tools to complete the screenings.
- **They are part of a bigger picture:** A screener doesn't replace regular grading or daily classroom activities. It simply gives teachers one more helpful piece of information to combine with their own everyday observations.
- **They guide our conversations:** Your child's teacher is available to discuss the results of the screeners with you should you have questions or concerns.

Ultimately, these screening tools help guide teachers' instruction to support students' literacy and numeracy needs.

Parking Lot Update

Progress continues on our parking lot project. The light pole bases have been poured, and additional gravel has been spread. The concrete company is expected to remove the forms and clean up this week.

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We are hopeful that we will be able to move the fence farther west and use pylons to mark parking spaces, allowing us to reopen the lot for student drop-off and pick-up, as well as visitor parking. The light posts are scheduled to be installed over fall break and should be operational when we return.

Thank you for your continued patience throughout this project. We know that having the parking lot available again will be a welcome relief for both staff and families!

School Council Partnership

As we continue to cultivate belonging at Covenant, we are also thinking about what belonging looks like for our families. We would love to hear from School Council about what you are noticing, what families may need, and what opportunities you see for strengthening connection within our school community. Your perspective is an important part of helping us understand how we can continue to grow together.

I am really encouraged by the start to this school year. There is a lot happening at Covenant, but underneath it all is a simple desire: to help our students flourish as learners who delight in God and are inspired to serve, while growing deeply rooted in Christ.

I am grateful for the staff, students, and families God has brought together at Covenant, and I am looking forward to seeing how we continue to grow Rooted Together throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted, Mrs. Jenna Haugan