THE ROYAL HERALD

Fort McMurray Christian School

THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH
PSALM 119:105 (KJV)





Fall 2023

BELL TIMES First Bell - 8:00 School Start - 8:05 Lunch - 11:55 School Ends - 2:40 ECDP AM: 8:00 - 10:50 PM: 11:54-2:40

Fall 2023

Principal's Letter - Fall 2023

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As we step into the 2023-24 school year, we are thrilled to embark on our **30th year** of providing Christian Education in Fort McMurray. With great enthusiasm we extend a warm welcome to all anticipating an awesome year ahead. FMCS stands proudly as an interdenominational public alternative school within the Fort McMurray Public School Division, while also being a member of the Prairie Centre for Christian Education.

Currently we are seeing growth of about 18% year over year from last year. I believe this is because of the unwavering commitment to a quality Christian education, where the Christian worldview forms the bedrock of both our academic and extracurricular pursuits. We take immense pride in fostering an environment where students can authentically live out their faith, while also promoting the ideals of inclusivity, diversity, and personal excellence... (con't on next page)

To ensure the safety of all, students should not arrive at school before 7:45 and should leave school grounds after dismissal unless involved in an after-school activity.



Follow Us







fm_christian_school @ChristianFMPSD

Attendance

Please call the school office or email fmcs.absences@fmpsd.ab.ca

780-743-1079

107 Brett Drive, Fort McMurray https://christian.fmpsdschools.ca

Principal's Letter - Fall 2023 (con't)

At FMCS, our Christian programming is woven into the fabric of the Teaching for Transformation (TfT) framework. With the help of our Parent Society, our aim is to guide students in comprehending their integral role within God's grand narrative. The profound Biblical through-lines that we champion—such as being God worshippers, image bearers, community builders, servant workers, justice seekers, idolatry discerners, earth keepers, order discoverers, beauty creators, and creation enjoyers—illuminate a Christian worldview lens that intersects within the Alberta Education curriculum.

Our dedicated educators, who themselves embody their Christian faith, infuse authenticity and relevance into the classroom discussions. Their real-life perspectives offer students relatable role models who inspire and uplift. This year we welcome a new TfT Coordinator, Mrs. Thania Breitkreuz. Mrs. Breitkreuz brings a strong passion for both Christian Education and our school as a whole.

As previously shared, my own journey, which encompasses mission work across North America, Africa, and Europe, resonates deeply with the essence of our school. I encourage all stakeholders to embrace the teachings of Matthew 5:13-16 and Mark 16:15, to be the salt and light in Fort McMurray and beyond, as we collectively contribute to the broader church community.

This year our theme is We Will Go! Awakening our hearts to His Kingdom and His call on our lives will be apparent as we continue our support of the Legacy Water Foundation and in the sending of students out on local and international missions trips, just to name a few.

A cornerstone of our FMCS Mission Statement is to provide a holistic education that empowers children to realize their potential across academic, spiritual, emotional, social, and physical dimensions. Our staff is humbled to accompany your children on their journey, irrespective of where they stand in their faith journey. We are resolute in our belief that FMCS is the nurturing ground for students to embrace their faith and discern their role within God's narrative.

On behalf of our entire staff, we hold in prayer the anticipation of a year characterized by growth, learning, and joyful experiences. It is with immense pleasure that we extend a heartfelt invitation to our families to participate in these upcoming events:

- Wednesday, August 30th Welcome Back Assembly (8:10-8:35) in the gym.
- Thursday, August 31st Start Up Fun with Loyal, Music, and Balloons! (8:00-8:45). This is a new event that we are introducing. Parents and Caregivers can come into the building when they drop their students off to take pictures in their classroom with classmates and teachers, take a walk around the halls, and meet Loyal the Lion in a festive atmosphere!
- Thursday, September 14th Welcome Back BBQ and Meet the Teacher (5-7:30 PM).
- Monday, September 25th Creation Ministries International Presentation (8:30-9:30). Creation Ministries
 International seeks to equip Christians with Biblically and scientifically accurate responses to questions
 about the events in Genesis. All parents and caregivers are welcome! There will also be many resources at
 discounted prices to purchase.

For more information about Back to School Entry Dates, School Supplies, News and School Calendar please check out our website at https://christian.fmpsdschools.ca.

Looking forward to a wonderful year ahead!

In Him, Mr. Geoffrey Bishop **Principal**





What's Happening at FMCS?







Principal: Geoffrey Bishop Head Secretary: Kitty Roberts Secretary/Librarian: Kayla Dalley Day Custodian: Helena MacDonald

In Our Classrooms:

ECDP: Jennifer Dunham

Kindergarten AM/PM: Heather-Joy Freake

Grade One: Stephanie O'Keefe Grade Two: Jillian Jackman Grade Three: Rebekah Hiltz Grade Four: Erica McIntyre Grade Five: Katie Lemon Grade Six: Gayle Neil

Junior High: Kim Huygen, Jonathan MacIntosh

Ellen Polegato, Geoffrey Bishop Physical Education: Ellen Polegato

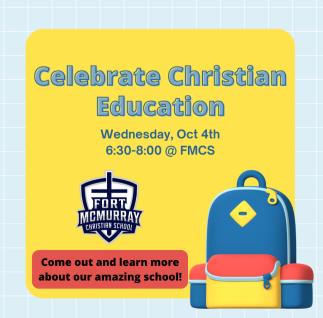
LAC: Stephanie Merrick Counselor: Samantha Patey

Teaching for Transformation: Thania Breitkreuz

Educational Assistants: Tara Atalifo, Oksana Bodnarchuk,

Cathy Kirschner, Chantal Lehman, Melissa Russell

PEAK Coach: Carrie Fedun



What's Happening at FMCS?







Sept 22nd Decade Day









Sept 28th

Orange Shirt Day





School Spirit Day



Nov 17th Superhero Day





OK FAIR

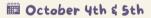
Living Books will be back again this year as we host our Fall book fair!

Hot Lunch

will start in

OCTOBER

More details will follow closer to October



5:00pm-8:00pm both days

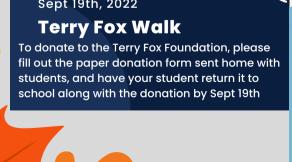
9 107 Brett Drive Fort McMurray Christian School Library

Bibles, devotions, fiction, and nonfiction for all ages! And much more!











Want to see more of what's taking place in our school?

Check out:

https://christian.fmpsdschools.ca/home/news

Teaching For Transformation!



We Will Gol

This year, the Fort McMurray Christian School's yearlong school theme is: We Will Gol

In Mark 15:16 (NIV) Jesus says this to His disciples: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation."

As a school, we will join together with students, staff, and families to look for ways we can **GO** into the world and share the Gospel: The Great Commision. Our desire is to awaken our hearts to hear the call of God and open our eyes to see His Kingdom; while we look for ways we can be the hands and feet of Jesus so the whole world will see His glory. We will do this though:

Worship Assemblies - We want students to connect with God every week in Worship as they discover the call He has on their lives. Most Wednesdays we will meet together as a school and spend time worshipping God through song and studying His Word. These Worship Assemblies are open to everyone to attend, and we are excited to have families join us. We hope to see you there regularily!

Homegroups - We also want students to connect with one another as they find their place in the body of Christ. As in previous school years, on some Wednesdays, we will divide classes and have students from all grade levels learning together in classrooms participating in activities that will shine light on our year's theme: "We Will Go".

Sharing Examples - We will also spend time during some of our assemblies discussing people from the Bible and examples of people in our own community to help students see and learn from those who have gone and are going into the world to share the Gospel.

I am very excited to step into the role as Christian Curriculum Coordinator this year. As a mom of two young boys, I can relate to the desire of parents for their children to know God in an intimate way. I look forward to watching students grow in their relationship with God this year as we focus on shining His light to our world; telling the story of His love. **We will go - for His glory.**



- Mr. Breitkreuz Christian Curriculum Coordinator





FMCS Society





We are thankful that you value Christian Education and have chosen FMCS for your child(ren) this year! We also want to extend a warm welcome to new families who are joining us! As a Society Executive, we are excited for the year to come and what God has in store. This year marks the 30th anniversary of Fort McMurray Christian School and thus the ability to provide Christian Education with academic excellence within our city. Great is HIS faithfulness!

I'd like to take a moment to introduce you to your elected 2023/24 Society Executive, as well as answer a few questions we are often asked. If you have additional questions, PLEASE reach out to one of us by email, on the playground, or stop by the Society office (to the right of the main school office) as we would love to connect with you!



From left to right:

Kelly Ralph, Co-Director of Public Relations: public-relations@fmcssociety.com
Melissa Walker, Director of Media Creation with Public Relations: media@fmcssociety.com
Clementina Okoro, Co-Director of Stakeholder Relations: director@fmcssociety.com
Tony Williams, Vice-Chair and Treasurer: vicechair@fmcssociety.com / treasurer@fmcssociety.com
Christine Gogolinski, Chair and Fundraising Coordinator: chair@fmcssociety.com / fmcssociety.com / fmcssociety.com
Carolina Bolivar, Society Administrative Assistant: admin@fmcssociety.com
Colleen Dorchak, Secretary: secretary@fmcssociety.com
Eric Benner, Co-Director of Stakeholder Relations: stakeholderrelations@fmcssociety.com

MISSING: Dennis Vroom, Director with MPA focus: dvroom@fmcssociety.com xt

What is Society and why do we have it?

The short answer is the Society is in place because we are a Christian school. We are a non-profit organization, made up of parent volunteers, who are passionate about students receiving a Christian education and expanding the Kingdom of God. We work with the Fort McMurray Public School Division to ensure the integrity of our programming, as well as with the school staff to facilitate, guard and enhance the Christian education our children receive. In summary, Society business is Christian business as it pertains to our school.

(con't on next page)...

FMCS Society con't

Why do we have Christian Programming Fees, and why do I need to pay them?

Your Christian Programming Fees are different from - and in addition to - the school fees from FMPSD and are in place to finance the components that make our school a Christian school. This includes having a Christian Education Coordinator on staff; providing Christian resources and teaching materials for classrooms; providing Christian professional development for staff; enabling Christian experiences for our students such as the Walk with Jesus event last year at Easter, and ServeYMM, which was organized by our school and society for the students in our school and greater community.

These fees are a part of attending our school and pertain to students in Kindergarten through to Grade 9. Your attention and faithfulness to this matter is greatly appreciated. If you are experiencing financial hardship and unable to pay, we are here to help and financial assistance is available. Please contact our Admin or Treasurer (emails are above) or visit the school website for the required form.

How can I be involved and have a say in Society business?

All parents and caregivers are welcome to be Society members. This provides you with the opportunity to receive updates as to what Society has been working on, attend our General Meetings, vote on important matters and be involved in other volunteer opportunities. There is an annual Society <u>REGISTRATION FORM</u> that needs to be completed. If you've completed one in the past, we have a condensed version to expedite the process for you.

What is the Society Executive focusing on this fall?

At this time we have 3 main areas of focus:

- 1. Master Partnership Agreement: We have a legal document between the FMCS Society and FMPSD regarding our school, which has been under review and revision this past year. This is still ongoing and we will be meeting with our members in the coming months to discuss and review.
- 2. Church Connections: We are so thankful for the churches in our community and have at least 14 of them represented in our school community. We want to take time and be intentional to build relationships, increase pastoral involvement in our school and help grow awareness of our school within the church congregations.
- 3. Development of Grades 10-12: As the founders did 30 years ago, we are daring to dream bigger dreams and trust in God to expand our grade offerings in the near future. This will not be done by one, or even a handful of individuals, but will be the result of many coming together to make this possible!

In closing, if I may, I'd like to ask for you to keep the Executive and staff in prayer for this coming year. That we may lean in, and lean on Him, and be faithful and obedient as we desire and discern God's Will for His school.

On behalf of the Society Executive and humbly in Him, Christine Gogolinski Fort McMurray Christian School Society Chair



FMCS Society Fundraising



LABELS FUNDRAISER!

Visit http://www.fortmcmurraycs.lovablelabels.ca/ for all of your label needs for school, camp, daycare, etc. Please feel free to share with friends and family. Labels are shipped directly to you and come in a variety of designs and sizes.

FMCS School Council

HELLO FMCS FAMILY AND WELCOME TO ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR!

This year for the School Council, we're introducing a new approach: we'll alternate between planning meetings and working meetings. This ensures we set clear goals and subsequently dedicate time to achieve them.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE FIRST SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 19TH! WE'LL BE WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS, REVIEWING OUR ACTION PLAN, AND DISCUSSING THE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION IN ASCA'S SCHOOL COUNCIL WORKSHOPS. THE PRINCIPAL WILL SHARE VITAL UPDATES ABOUT THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR, AND WE'LL ALSO BE EXPLORING ROLES AND INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SCHOOL COUNCIL. WE INTEND TO HOLD ELECTIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE ROLES DURING OUR SECOND MEETING. THIS APPROACH ALLOWS THE FIRST MEETING TO SERVE AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSENCE AND OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL.

*MEETINGS WILL START AT 7:30, UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. MORE DETAILS WILL FOLLOW CLOSER TO MEETING DATES



Dates:

1) September 19, 2023	6) February 20, 2024
2) October 17, 2023	7) March 19, 2024
3) November 21, 2023	8) April 23, 2024
4) December 19, 2023	9) May 21, 2024
5) January 16, 2024	10) June 11, 2024

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From the Office



Looking for books for your child to read? Please check out Living Books for vetted, Christian material.

The complete children's flyer can be found here.

Don't forget to use FMCSBOOKFAIR on your order to help our school earn free books!





Paying Fees

The following **fees** can be paid through **Parent Portal**:

*Bus fees, *ECDP Fees, Field Trip Fees, Hot Lunch Program, and other yearly fees as they arise



*Bus & ECDP fees can be paid through pre-authorized payment with a credit card. Please see the office to for more details.

All pre-authorized payments will be complete by March 2024

The Society **School Fee** can be paid through our **Society Admin, Carolina Boyer**. If you have any questions, please contact our office at 780-743-1079.

Volunteer Information

Volunteers are an important part of school. We are excited to be working with our School Council to recruit and provide volunteering opportunities.

In preparation, we have prepared volunteer packages that are available in the office or can be sent home with your child. Included in the package is information about volunteering, the purpose and responsibilities of volunteers, a volunteer registration form and a Criminal Record Check form. Also included is a sample RCMP letter and information to get a Criminal Record Check at no cost to you.

Please contact the office if you would like a volunteer package sent home or if you have any questions.

We look forward to you joining us and volunteering,

FMCS Staff





There are many ways to communicate with each other and schools are no exception. We thought it might be a good idea to share all of the ways you can stay informed about things that are happening at the school in case you weren't following us already.

Website - https://christian.fmpsdschools.ca/

Our Website is a great place to find out when major school events are and important links.

 $Facebook - \underline{https://www.facebook.com/FMChristianRoyals/}$

Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/fm_christian_school/

Twitter - https://twitter.com/ChristianFMPSD

Our Social Media Pages are regularly updated with pictures and upcoming events.





2023-2024 **DIVISION CALENDAR**

231 Hardin Street, Fort McMurray, AB T9H 2G2 PH: 780-799-7900

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KEY
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Semester 1

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Semester 1
Operational Days: 100
Instructional Days: 87
Semester 2
Operational Days: 94
Instructional Days: 85
Total Operational: 194
Total Instructional: 172

August

- Heritage Day Stat Holiday
- Schools open for registration
- First day for Administrators
- First day for Teachers
- First day, School-Based CUPE
- 28 First day for Students

- PLF #1 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Labour Day Stat Holiday (No school)
- PLF #2 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Day in Lieu of National Day of Truth and Reconciliation
 - itat Holiday National Day of Truth & Reconciliation

- Day in Lieu (No school)
- Thanksgiving Stat Holiday (No school)
- PLF #3 Staff Only (No school for students) Institute Day (No school for students)
- - PLF #4 Staff Only (No school for students)
 - Day in Lieu of Remembrance Day (No school)
- Remembrance Day Stat Holiday
- PLF #5 Staff Only (No school for students)

December

- PLF #6 Staff Only (No school for students)
- PLF #7 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Non-operational (No school)
- Christmas Stat Holiday (No school) Day in Lieu Stat Holiday (No school)
- Christmas Break (No school)

- New Years Day Stat Holiday
- Christmas Break (No school)

PTI Day in Lieu (No school)

PLF #8 Staff Only (No school for students)

PLF #12 Staff Only (No school for students)

Victoria Day Stat Holiday (No school)

Semester 2 Begins

- PD Day (No school)
- PLF #9 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Family Day Stat Holiday
- [eachers' Convention (No school)
- eachers' Convention (ATA Staff Only)

- Teachers' Convention (No school for students)
 - PLF #10 Staff Only (No school for students)
- 29 Good Friday Stat Holiday (No school)

- Easter Monday Day in Lieu (No school) PLF #11 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Spring Break (No school)

- PLF #13 Staff Only (No school for students)
- Last Day Students
- 27 Last Day Staff

Canada Day Stat Holiday



