



# 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  
**KINDERGARTEN** 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.**



#### Attendance

Please call the school office or email [fmcs.absences@fm-psd.ab.ca](mailto:fmcs.absences@fm-psd.ab.ca)

780-743-1079

107 Brett Drive, Fort McMurray  
<https://christian.fm-psd.schools.ca>

#### Follow Us

- @FMChristianRoyals
- fm\_christian\_school
- @ChristianFMPSD

# 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 Breitreuz. Mrs. Breitreuz 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?



## NO SCHOOL!

Friday, Sept 1st

Labour day, Monday, Sept 4th

Friday, Sept 15th

\*In Lieu\* National Truth and Reconciliation Day,

Friday, Sept 29th

Friday, Oct 6th

Thanksgiving day, Monday, Oct 9th

Thursday & Friday, Oct 19th-20th

Friday, Oct 27th

Friday, Nov 3rd

\*In Lieu\* Remembrance Day, Friday, Nov 10th

Friday, Nov 24th

Made with PosterMyWall.com



## ECDP ORIENTATION

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29 8:30-10:00  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30 8:30 - 10:00



\*\*\*PLEASE CHECK VOICEMAIL AND EMAILS FOR DETAILS ON WHICH DAY YOUR CHILD IS INVITED TO ATTEND

### 2023 - 2024 School Staff

#### In The Office:

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 Breitreuz

Educational Assistants: Tara Atalifo, Oksana Bodnarchuk,

Cathy Kirschner, Chantal Lehman, Melissa Russell

PEAK Coach: Carrie Fedun

Join Us  
For Our

Back to school

# BBQ

& meet the teacher

Food, Fun & Fellowship!

Sept 14 | 5pm-7:30pm

FMCS



## Celebrate Christian Education

Wednesday, Oct 4th  
6:30-8:00 @ FMCS



Come out and learn more  
about our amazing school!



# What's Happening at FMCS?

## Upcoming Fun Days

**Sept 8th**  
School Spirit Day



**Sept 22nd**  
Decade Day

**60's 70's**

**80's 90's**

**Sept 28th**  
Orange Shirt Day



**Oct 13th**  
School Spirit Day



**Nov 17th**  
Superhero Day



# Hot Lunch will start in OCTOBER

More details will follow closer to October



## BOOK FAIR

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

📅 October 4th & 5th

🕒 5:00pm-8:00pm  
both days

📍 107 Brett Drive  
Fort McMurray  
Christian School Library

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

🌐 <https://christian.fmpsdschools.ca/>  
📘 Fort McMurray Christian School



Sept 19th, 2022

## Terry Fox Walk

To donate to the Terry Fox Foundation, please fill out the paper donation form sent home with students, and have your student return it to school along with the donation by Sept 19th



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 Go!

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

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 Commission. 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 regularly!

**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.**



- Mrs Breitkreuz  
Christian Curriculum Coordinator



# FMCS Society

## School Family,

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 : [publicrelations@fmcssociety.com](mailto:publicrelations@fmcssociety.com)

**Melissa Walker**, Director of Media Creation with Public Relations : [media@fmcssociety.com](mailto:media@fmcssociety.com)

**Clementina Okoro**, Co-Director of Stakeholder Relations : [director@fmcssociety.com](mailto:director@fmcssociety.com)

**Tony Williams**, Vice-Chair and Treasurer : [vicechair@fmcssociety.com](mailto:vicechair@fmcssociety.com) / [treasurer@fmcssociety.com](mailto:treasurer@fmcssociety.com)

**Christine Gogolinski**, Chair and Fundraising Coordinator : [chair@fmcssociety.com](mailto:chair@fmcssociety.com) / [fundraising@fmcssociety.com](mailto:fundraising@fmcssociety.com)

**Jennifer Goodrick**, Director of Secondary Education Advancement : [seda@fmcssociety.com](mailto:seda@fmcssociety.com)

**Carolina Bolivar**, Society Administrative Assistant : [admin@fmcssociety.com](mailto:admin@fmcssociety.com)

**Colleen Dorchak**, Secretary : [secretary@fmcssociety.com](mailto:secretary@fmcssociety.com)

**Eric Benner**, Co-Director of Stakeholder Relations : [stakeholderrelations@fmcssociety.com](mailto:stakeholderrelations@fmcssociety.com)

MISSING: **Dennis Vroom**, Director with MPA focus : [dvroom@fmcssociety.com](mailto: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 REGISTRATION FORM 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!

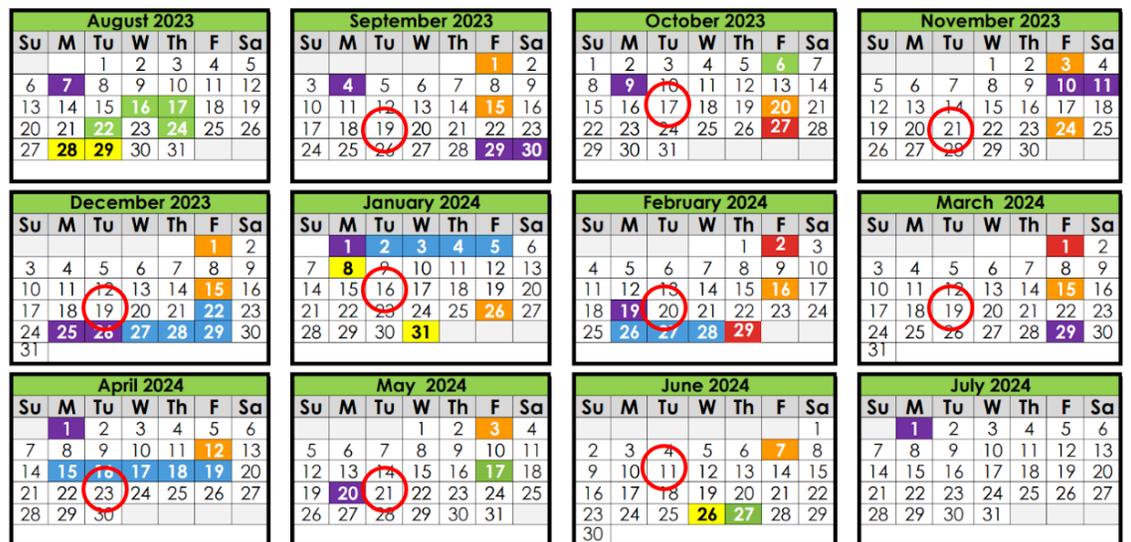
THIS YEAR FOR THE SCHOOL COUNCIL, WE'RE INTRODUCING A NEW APPROACH: WE'LL ALTERNATE BETWEEN PLANNING MEETINGS AND WORKING MEETINGS. THIS ENSURES WE SET CLEAR GOALS AND SUBSEQUENTLY DEDICATE TIME TO ACHIEVE THEM.

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



# From the Office

Vol. 2, Issue 1 - September 2023



## Get Reading Gazette

a newsletter of information and inspiration for kids!



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!

**WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!**

### Activity Books

Activity Books are a great way to fill time between learning, or for students who complete their work early. We have a great assortment in stock, for ages 2 all the way up to 12! See catalogue p. 6 for a complete list of titles available!



catalogue p. 6

**INTRODUCING YOUNG WHIT**

Learn Whit's childhood backstory!

**YOUNG WHIT** Ages 8-12, 5x7" Hardcover

catalogue p. 10

by DAVE ARNOLD & PHIL LOLLAR

Young Whit & the Traitor's Treasure  
Young Whit & the Shroud of Secrecy  
Young Whit & the Thieves of Barrymore  
Young Whit & the Phantasmic Confabulator  
Young Whit & the Cloth of Contention  
\$2.95 each

**Adventures in ODYSSEY**

**I Can Read!**

Teach Biblical values and faith-based lessons with leveled readers for beginning readers. Ages 5-7.

See catalogue p. 7 for a complete list of titles available!



catalogue p. 7

### Author Spotlight



**Kathryn Butler** is a trauma surgeon turned writer and homeschooling mom who has exchanged the scalpel for caterpillar terrariums, peanut butter and jelly, and plenty of moments when the Lord lays bare her insufficiencies. As well as two books she's written to steward the insights about faith and illness that God entrusted to her during her years in medicine, she's also the author of the *Dream Keeper Saga*, a series of middle-grade fantasy novels with Christian themes, intended to point families to the Gospel through vivid storytelling.

**Dream Keeper Saga**

KATHRYN BUTLER

12-year-old Lily is transported to a fantasy realm. Ages 8-12.

*Dragon & the Stone Prince & the Blight*  
Lost in the Caverns  
\$5.95-\$7.95 Softcovers  
\$20.95-\$21.95 each

catalogue p. 10

visit [uploads.crossway.org/extra/dream-keeper-saga-discussion-guide-2023.pdf](http://uploads.crossway.org/extra/dream-keeper-saga-discussion-guide-2023.pdf) to download a free discussion guide!



### Q U Z Corner

If you got one of each puzzle in our catalogue, how many puzzle pieces would you get?

Submit your answer to be entered into a monthly draw for \$10 towards a book from our catalogue!

Your Living Books Rep is:

Box 142  
Borden St. SOK GING  
(306) 497-2226  
livingbooks@sasktel.net  
[www.LivingBooks.ca](http://www.LivingBooks.ca)

Order now from [www.LivingBooks.ca/shop-now](http://www.LivingBooks.ca/shop-now) & enter coupon code FMCSBOOKFAIR at checkout to earn free books for your school!

## SCHOOL ABSENCES

SPORTS TOURNAMENT COMING UP?  
GOING ON VACATION?  
YOUR CHILD WOKE UP SICK?

For absences of ANY reason please let our office know before 8am of the upcoming school day

To report an absence, please call or email:  
780-743-1079  
[fmcs.absences@fmcsd.ab.ca](mailto:fmcs.absences@fmcsd.ab.ca)

## IS YOUR EMAIL UP TO DATE?

“ We have sent out a lot of emails lately! If you have not received anything, please check your junk box or contact our school office ”



## 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***

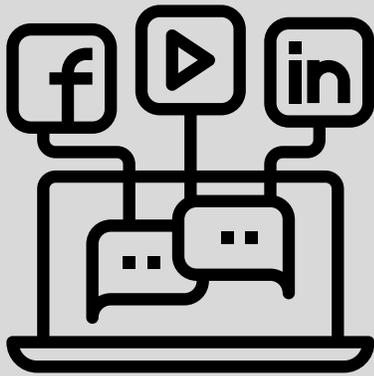
Volunteers are an important part of school. We are excited to be working with our School Council to recruit and provide volunteering opportunities.

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



## ***Stay Informed***

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 - <https://www.facebook.com/FMChristianRoyals/>

Instagram - [https://www.instagram.com/fm\\_christian\\_school/](https://www.instagram.com/fm_christian_school/)

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ChristianFMPSD>

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

