

THE COMMUNICATOR

2023-2024 ISSUE #1

YOU ARE *not* alone

BY ALANA SIEBRING

The last of the beautiful leaves fall and we enter into a chillier, darker time of year. Our fields and yards turn frosty, and quickly stark white with snow. The sun hides its radiant face from us, and some of us struggle to find the happiness and motivation for life that we usually have in the warmer months.

I'd like us to take a moment to recognize the people who drudge through the darkness, winter after winter. Seasonal depression is hard, especially in Canada. Those going through a difficult, draining season of life... I see you too. Life can really get to us sometimes! I want you to know that you're not alone. Many struggle, even in the Bible. The prophet Jeremiah said, *"I am weary with my groaning and have found no rest."* (Jeremiah 45:3 NIV)

Thankfully, for those struggling, our world is taking a turn towards being more accepting and nurturing towards those who suffer with mental health issues. But what about the church and our Christian community? One would hope that it would be trending the same way, however some of us may have felt the sting of being cast aside or ashamed of their struggles. Often, the Church sees depression and anxiety as a lack of faith. I say this, not to be negative, but to invite you to open your mind and heart to see those around you in a new light.

If you are grappling with the claws of depression and mental health issues, you are not alone. Taking a look into God's Word and we see that Moses, who was a powerful leader and had seen many miracles, also got to a point of despair. *"I cannot carry all these people by myself, the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now - if I have found no favor in your eyes - and do not let me face my own ruin."* (Numbers 11:14-15 NIV) Moses certainly had the choice to pull away and be alone, but he instead surrounded himself with people who could help carry the burden! This is what God intended in

his design of community. Being isolated is the worst thing for a person dealing with depression, anxiety or other mental health struggles. The devil wants you to be alone in your pain and despair, so that his voice is the only one you can hear.

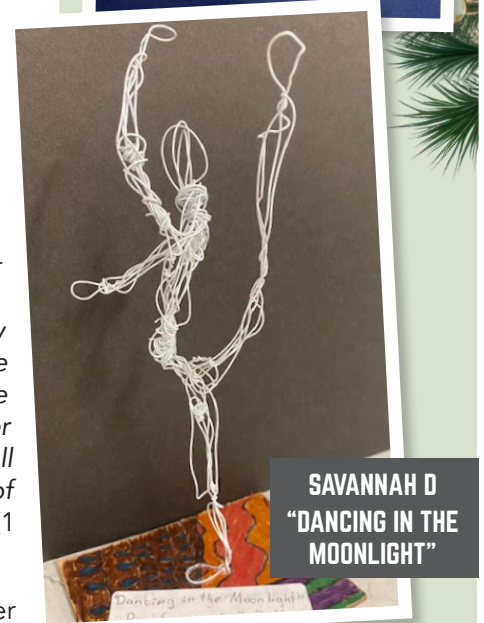
If your thought is to withdraw to be with just Jesus, my response would be to consider this. Being alone with God is amazing, but He is always nudging us towards community with people for many reasons. For wisdom, guidance, and counsel from those who can help us. *"Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."* (Proverbs 11:14 ESV) Remaining surrounded by people who care for you is key for God's love being fully known. A community of people with God in their hearts, and your best interest as their intention is something to be thankful for. We need each other! *"That there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it"* (1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

What about the stigma attached to other forms of help - therapy and medication. What does the Bible say about these forms of help?

For medication... who do you think inspired the chemist's to create a solution to this problem? Jesus did. He created a miracle through chemistry. When you pray to God for help and He sends it in the form of a doctor and medication, who are you to negotiate how the help appears? Medicine is **one** of the ways God can help our pain - physical, emotional or mental.

There is no shame in receiving the help needed to be the happy, healthy and life driven person God intended you to be!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



The artwork featured in this issue has been submitted by the Senior Kindergarten & Grade 5/6 Classes


Listowel
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

THE principal's POST



TOP: The Grade 7 & 8's have been learning how to play band instruments.

MIDDLE: Reading buddies is always a special time.

BOTTOM: Inspired by Pete the Cat, the SK class made a tasty treat.

TEACHING WITH PURPOSE

Once we get snow on the ground, the days of September seem like a long time ago. Just three months ago we were introducing ourselves to our new class, setting schedules and routines, and investing in our classroom culture. Along with planning our daily lessons, we were also looking at our year long plans. Setting the stage for a good year is worth the time spent in September.

Ideally, everything we do at LCS fits within our purpose statement. First of all, we are educating children. Since September, many of us have completed our first, and maybe our second, units in most subject areas. We challenged students to participate in assignments, activities, and various sorts of assessments. They worked individually, in small groups, and in large group settings. We taught them math and language, science and art, Bible and French, along with gym and our curriculum on health and healthy lifestyles – treating our peers with respect. The academic term culminated with parent teacher conferences and then report cards. Working in partnership with our parents, we strive to educate the whole child to the best of our ability.

Secondly, but not less important, we strive to nurture their faith in Christ. We open and close our day with devotions and reflections on Christian living. We host assemblies related to our theme on the Beatitudes – understanding that

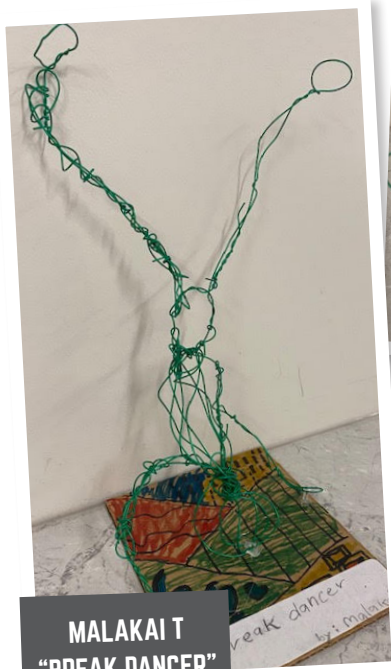
we are very blessed and therefore called to be a blessing to others. We are learning that the beatitudes call us to be very different than the world expects us to be. We also integrate our faith into our daily interactions and curriculum.

Lastly, and equally important, we teach so that students are equipped to interpret and impact God's world. Our goal is to empower our students to be influential in their own worlds, standing out as Christians and being a light to their peers. Whether that is at soccer, ballet, piano, or hockey, we work to instill a feeling of confidence in our students to understand where they are placed and comfortable to stand up for Jesus.

As we work through our year, and we evaluate the relevance or importance of any assignment, event, or proposal, we can use our purpose statement as a basis for decision making. Will it help educate our students? Will it nurture their faith in Christ? Will it help prepare them to be a witness to others? If yes, then it fits with the purpose of LCS and it is worth doing.

We are teaching with the purpose of educating children, while nurturing faith in Christ, to interpret and impact God's world. I love that our purpose statement directs our daily activities.

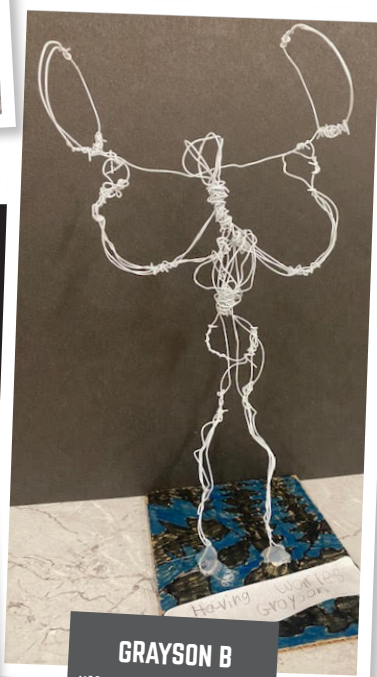




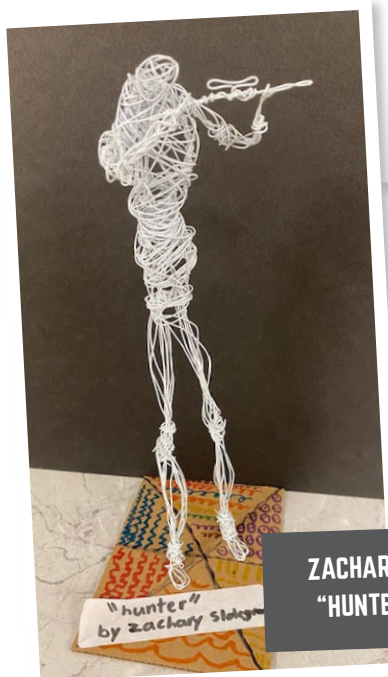
MALAKAI T
"BREAK DANCER"



KENZIE T
"FLEXIBILITY"



GRAYSON B
"HAVING WORRIES"



ZACHARY S
"HUNTER"



JAELYN S
"I LOVE GYM"

The Grade 5/6
Artworks are wire
sculptures inspired by
Alexander Calder



INTRODUCING *Ashley* *Van den Hoven* **(EA)**

My name is Ashley Van den Hoven. Paul and I have four children; Taylor (15), Rilyn (14), Megan (11) and Hudson (10). We attend LEMC and I serve in Junior youth. We've lived in Listowel the past ten years.

I'm an Educational Assistant in Grades 5/6 as well as Grades 7/8.

I've enjoyed this new role. It's been exciting getting to know each student and support them in class.

I am excited to see how God works in each of us this year as we learn and grow at school!

BOARD *report*

It is hard to believe it is already November- it feels like the first day of school was just yesterday. The board was involved in hiring new staff during the summer and we are so thankful for the new teachers and EA's that have joined the team- Heather DenHartog (grade 1), Danielle Kuipers (grade 2), Brittany O'Boyle (grade 5/6), Brittany Heikamp (EA) and Ashley VandenHoven (EA). Our school has been growing in numbers over the past 2 years- this is a huge blessing! With this growth comes the need to diligently ensure we are serving our students and our school families well.

As a board we have been working our way through LCS's policies and procedures to ensure they are current. We will continue this task this year.

The strategic plan also has a number of items assigned to the Board. This year's items include a security and student access policy, planning LCS's 50th anniversary celebration and reviewing our guiding principles.

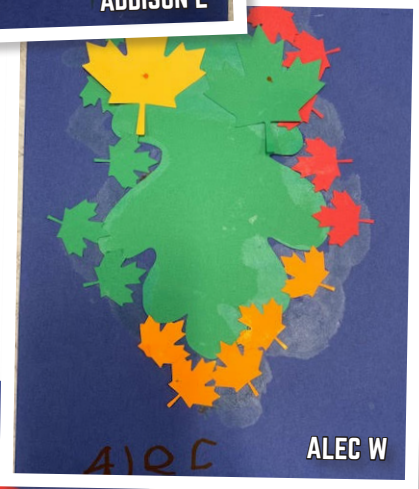
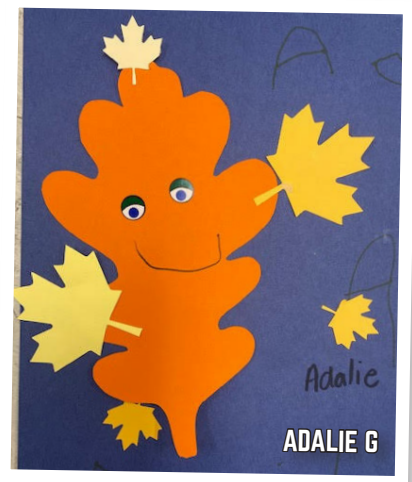
Board training was held on October 28th and led by Ian Timmerman. Edvance has put out a document for its affiliate schools entitled "Articulating Core Beliefs and Student Care

Commitments: A framework for affiliate schools regarding sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. This document was discussed at the training day and an ad hoc committee has been created to address this topic within LCS. We encourage and welcome any questions, comments, and concerns regarding this topic and we hope to be able to walk this path together as a Christ-centered community.

The board has also put together an ad hoc committee with the purpose of planning a renovation of the staff room and repurposing of the foyer. This will be completed with the remainder of the funds from the capital campaign.

All in all, this school year has gotten off to a great start with lots of work going on both upfront and behind the scenes. The board would like to thank each and every volunteer that gives of their time, talents, and/or treasures in order for LCS to continue fulfilling its purpose: To educate children, while nurturing faith in Christ, to interpret and impact God's world.

RIENEKE GREIDANUS
BOARD SECRETARY





CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I encourage you to read more information about the Bible's stance on mental health medication by following the link at the end of this editorial.

Therapy is another form of community, and seeking the help and counsel of a God-gifted person in that field of expertise. *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* (Proverbs 27:17 NIV) God is always there for us in our hardships, and wants us to lean on Him and to not be alone. However, He also wants us to continue to seek knowledge and to be there for each other in times of trials. Seeking fellowship and knowledge from others in the form of therapy is certainly favorable in God's eyes! *"The human spirit can endure in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear? The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge for the ears of the wise to seek it out."* (Proverbs 18:14-15)

As the winter draws nearer every day, and those around us may be silently struggling or growing weary at the thought of another dark winter... let us be a bright light and shining example of God's love and community. May we be there for one another, with friendship, support and encouragement! May we see those who struggle in a new way, and offer our understanding and listening ear. We have the power of God breathing into our school and church communities, and for this we are so blessed!

As for those struggling... you can stand strong knowing that our hope and strength comes from the Lord. He will make all things new! He will give you the strength, people, and tools you need to get through to the other side of your pain. ***"I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in Him."*** (Psalm 40:1-3)

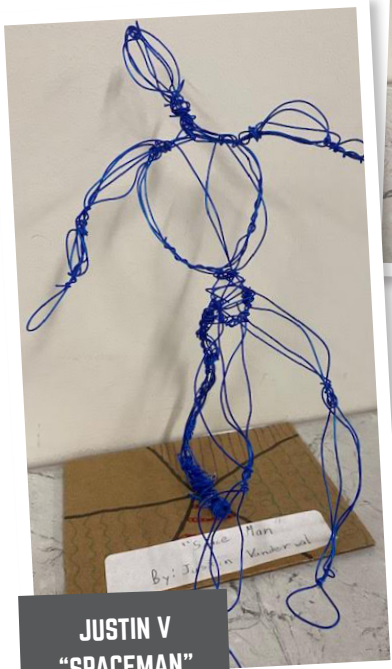
HELP AND RESOURCES:

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9293-seasonal-depression>

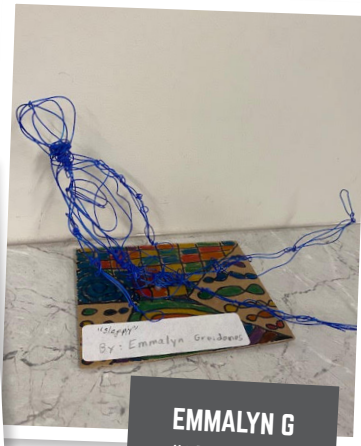
<https://mentalhealthgracealliance.org/christian-mental-health-and-mental-illness/is-it-ok-for-a-christian-to-take-antidepressants>

<https://christianmentalhealthinitiative.org/should-christians-go-to-therapy/>





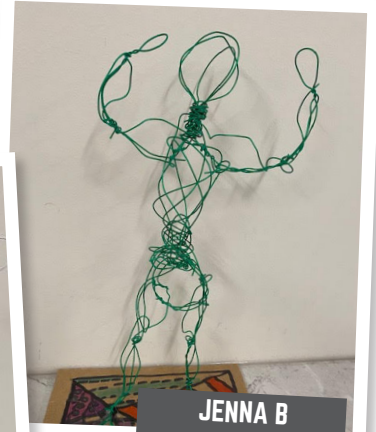
JUSTIN V
"SPACEMAN"



EMMALYN G
"SLEEPING"



LOGAN S
"STRONG LIKE
A BULL"



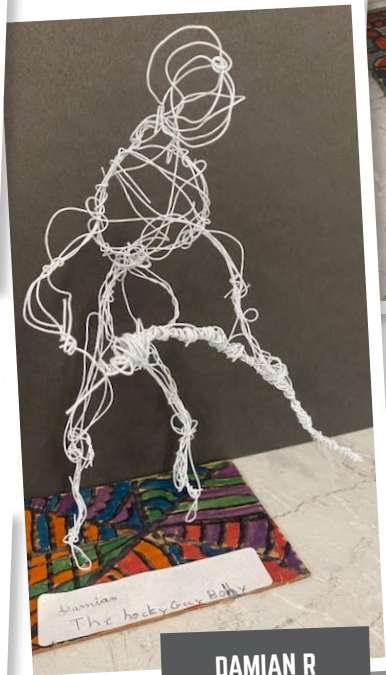
JENNA B
"STRONGER THAN
YOU THINK"



CARSON W
"STRONG BOB"



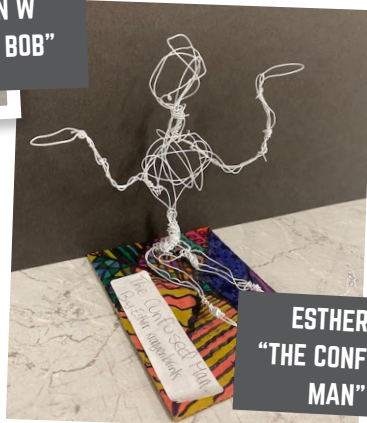
CALEB M
"SPORTIVE"



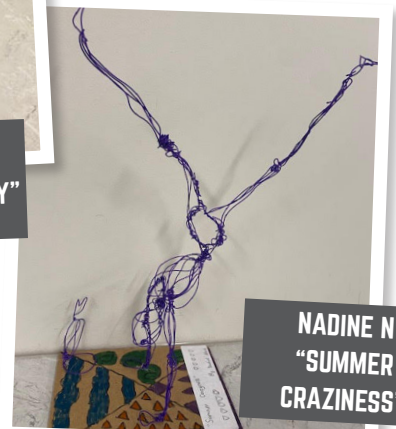
DAMIAN R
"THE HOCKEY GUY"



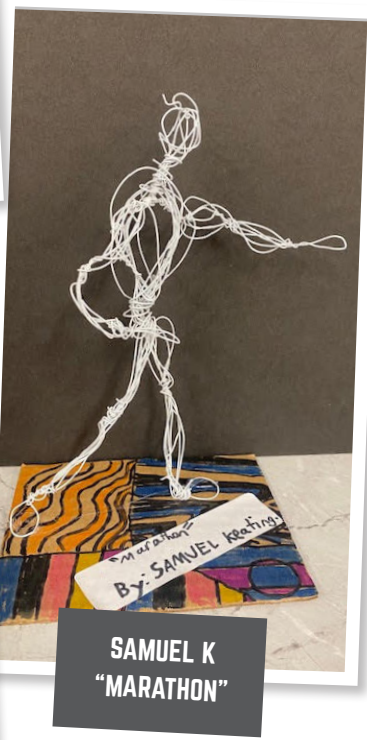
BRONWYN S
"THE PRAYER"



ESTHER K
"THE CONFUSED
MAN"



NADINE N
"SUMMER
CRAINESS"



INTRODUCING *Brittany Heikamp* (EA)

My name is Brittany Heikamp, and I work as an EA at LCS. I live in Palmerston with my husband, Braedon, and our three children: Theo, Rayah, and Jameson. We embrace the charm of small-town life here in Palmerston, including various town events, the farmers' market, our lovely parks, and scenic walking paths.

I have a strong passion for sharing the message of Jesus' love and enjoy volunteering in our community. My husband and I are actively involved at Palmerston CRC, where we coordinate and lead the church's Youth Group program. Additionally, I regularly teach Sunday school and participate in worship, singing, and delivering children's messages.

I'm also a member of All Aboard Palmerston's Event Planning Committee, where I contribute to organizing events like Light Up the Park, Kris Kringle Market, and the Raleway Festival, with a particular focus on the children's sections.

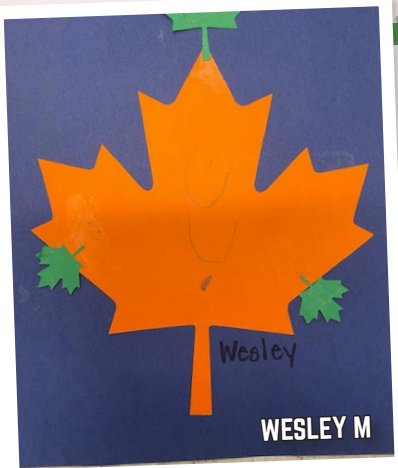
I'm thoroughly enjoying my time working at LCS. The sense of community here, including the staff, families, and students, is truly welcoming, supportive, and caring. I can't wait to see what the rest of the year holds!



Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who came out to our most recent Bazaar! It was a wonderful day and so nice to see people of all different ages in community with one another. This event wouldn't have happened without the countless volunteers and people who donated items, spent time making crafts, food etc. Many hands are needed and we are thankful to all of you! That being said, the Bazaar was able to raise **\$17,346.59** towards LCS! Thanks again!





INTRODUCING *Heather Denhartog* GRADE 1

Hi! My name is Heather Denhartog and I am so thrilled to be part of the amazing staff at LCS. I have the pleasure of teaching Grade One and it is a joy to experience learning and excitement with my students each and every day.

Growing up I attended Christian schools and I followed in my mom's footsteps and became a teacher as well. I attended Laurier Brantford for my undergrad and Redeemer to complete my education degree. After graduating I got a job teaching at Plattsville Christian school. There I taught grade 3/4 for four years and then I taught grade 1/2 for a year. I am thankful to be teaching closer to home.

In my spare time I enjoy playing with my puppy Korra and cat Lucky. I love snuggling up with a good book or watching a movie, hanging out with friends and I also enjoy baking. I love to travel and enjoy visiting the beautiful places that God has created. I can't wait to plan my next adventure!

I attend Palmerston Christian Reformed Church and I am a part of the Worship Committee, VBS planning and decorating team, I sing on the praise team and sometimes at Christmas play my flute in church as well. I also help out in the nursery and teach Sunday school.

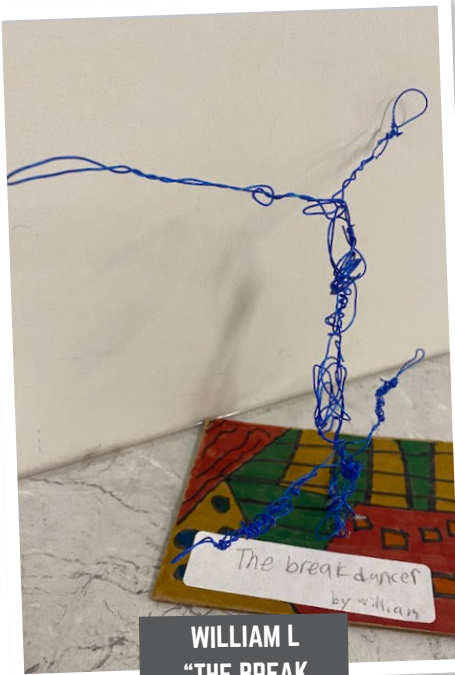
Apart from school and church I am also teaching dance at The Dance Academy of Mount Forest. I have done dance since I was four years old and it has always been such a huge part of my life. This year I am teaching Ballet and Tap classes and it brings me joy to see young girls and boys enjoying dance as much as I did as a child.

I am excited to see where God will lead me on this new journey at Listowel Christian School.



This fall has been full of various assemblies led by different classes, sporting opportunities like soccer and cross country, fun team events like Mario Kart races, and a special thanksgiving meal at school.





WILLIAM L
"THE BREAK DANCER"



WESLEY D
"THE SOCCER BOY"



CASSY V
"UPSIDE DOWN"



INTRODUCING *Danielle Kuipers* GRADE 2

Hi LCS family! My name is Danielle Kuipers and I am one of the grade two teachers for this year. I have been teaching for eight years, a few of those years being at a Christian school in Windsor and the remaining in the Bluewater District School Board. I was on maternity leave this past year and did not have intentions of returning to work this September, but God had other plans for me. Teaching at LCS was always in the back of my head as a plan for the future, so with the encouragement of many people at our church, I applied to the job opening and I am so glad I did. God opened many doors for me to be here; he had a plan for getting around every obstacle in my path to keep me from saying no. I have been so blessed to be here and I am grateful for the role I now have teaching at LCS. I have especially loved coaching girls volleyball this past month or so and getting to know the incredible 19 students in my class this year.

My family and I have been attending Bethel CRC in town since last January. We live in Mildmay, as my husband, Dave, is a doctor working in Hanover, but we felt a calling to begin getting connected into a new community and chose to make the switch. Our son Theo turns 3 this month and our daughter, Elliana, is a year and a half. Besides running after my two little munchkins, I keep busy by playing in a competitive women's volleyball league once a week, being a member of the Hanover Hospital Foundation, and drawing large kids colouring banners for a hobby business I started while on maternity. I wear many hats in a week, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

3 Fun Facts about Me :)

- I have traveled to over 25 countries and would love to keep exploring God's world to add to this number.
- I never used to drink coffee, but in the last year I've jumped on the fun latte train.
- In 2015 I climbed the active volcano, Fuego, in Guatemala, camped over night near the top, then summited at sunrise before hiking back down.

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

EDUCATING CHILDREN
WHILE NURTURING
FAITH IN CHRIST TO INTERPRET
AND IMPACT GOD'S WORLD

UPCOMING EVENTS:

DEC 7 - Poinsettia & Almond Order Pickup

DEC 7 - Grade 8 Day at
Woodland Christian High School

DEC 21 - Christmas Concert
1pm & 7pm

DEC 22 - LCS Skating at Steve Kerr Arena

DEC 22 - Last Day of School
before Christmas Break

DECEMBER 25 - JANUARY 5
- Christmas Break

JAN 8 - First Day of School in 2024

JAN 12, 19 & 26 - LCS Skating at Steve Kerr Arena

JAN 27 - LCS Information morning 9am - Noon

Merry
Christmas!



Listowel
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

305 Binning St. W
519.291.3086

office@listowelchristianschool.ca
www.listowelchristianschool.ca



MAY THE BLESSING OF *joy*
ABIDE WITHIN YOU;

MAY THE BLESSING OF *peace*
REST UPON YOU;

MAY THE BLESSING OF *love*
FLOW OUT THROUGH YOU;

MAY ALL THE BLESSINGS
of the Lord
BE YOURS AT CHRISTMAS
AND IN THE
NEW YEAR.

