

ROOTED



Rooted in Faith, Growing in Knowledge

Growing in Hope

The Bible verse our staff chose for our school theme this year is *Romans 15:13*. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Over the last several months, we have seen our students experience frustration and sadness and for some, even a sense of hopelessness as their world became a bit smaller and so many things were restricted. It is our prayer as staff that our students will deepen their understanding that our *ultimate* HOPE and JOY lie in the promises of God to His children. “I have said these things to you that you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” *John 16:33*. Our desire is that they may come to know more and more that God continues to be at work in their lives and trust that He has a greater purpose for them and for this wonderful world!

How do we inspire this hope in our students? As a school we have made an effort to create safe places for our students, giving them the freedom to be themselves, to celebrate their gifts while recognizing how God made each of them unique and special. And most of all, teaching students that as kingdom children we are learning about *HIS* world and how we can respond to His call in our lives.

It is so wonderful to see our students connecting with friends, laughing together — even arguing or working

through disagreements. Our students are going home to tell stories about their day around the dinner table and parents have shared the joy that comes from hearing their children excited about their day — this is HOPE! We are creating spaces of HOPE for each other — a belief that God is good and he blesses us with moments of JOY! Overflowing JOY!

We want to share this JOY and HOPE with all of you, our supporting community, past and present. The 60th Anniversary celebrations which took place last year reminded us that we are part of something bigger; that we are “*an educational community that recognizes its roots and celebrates its diversity. We are committed to Christ-centred learning and strive to teach discernment, nurturing and equipping students for a life of responsive discipleship.*” This mission solidifies the HOPE that we have in Christ. This same passion for Christian education that began 60 years ago continues today in the lives of our families and their children.

We are excited to see what God has in store for John Knox and we want to bring you along with us on the journey. We look forward to connecting with more of you — please drop us a line if you have something to share in our newsletter, or just want to say hello. We can’t wait to hear from you!

Blessings for a **HOPEful** year ahead!

 **CHRISTINE SOULTANIDIS**
PRINCIPAL





THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

Although John Knox has been a blessing for families for more than sixty years, the school has been richly blessed by the children and families who have been a part of its fabric, whether for a year or for generations.

Kyle Venema attended John Knox as a child and was blessed to have teachers like Mrs. Van Schepen for Grade 1 who provided a warm environment for him to grow up in, to learn and develop in his faith. His appreciation his only increased over the years as he has realized that the care and commitment that Mrs. Van Schepen exhibited in her classroom extended far beyond the hours of the school day and even beyond the school year. Just recently, Mrs. Van Schepen shared pictures of him when he was in school, thinking he might like to show

his own kids, who are now about the age he was when he was in Mrs. Van Schepen's class. The gesture was very much appreciated by everyone in the family.

Now married to Leah, with children of their own — Brianna, Ella, and Curtis — he finds the same attitude of caring infused into his family's life. On a recent family trip to Florida, he got a message from Mrs. Hayashi letting him know that she was praying for the family and each of their children by name. He says, "It was so powerful to hear, and so important for us to know that our children's teachers care for them and pray for them outside of school as well."

Kyle's grandparents, William and Tina, supported the school from its early days, helping to form the foundations of the

community that thrives within the walls of the school and continues to provide the warm and safe learning environment Kyle experienced growing up, and the one his children experience today.

All five of William and Tina's children attended John Knox,

It wasn't until we sent our children that we saw Christian education from a parents lens and how much it impacts and benefits our children educationally and spiritually.

including George, Kyle's father. George and his wife,

Mary, love coming in for Grandparents' Day where they have lunch with eight of their grandchildren who are currently attending the school. Three of George and Mary's children send their children to John Knox; Amy and Dan Boven, Kyle and Leah Venema and Rob and Lindsay Venema. From generation to generation, John Knox has been a part of the Venema family, each being blessed by the other.

Kyle says, "I didn't fully appreciate the blessing it was and the positive impact it was having on me. It wasn't until we sent our children that we saw Christian education from a parents lens and how much it impacts and benefits our children educationally and spiritually."



SEAN VANEERDEN

New Beginnings



The Quiroga-Aguilar family is a family of 6; Andres (Dad), Claudia (Mom), Marina (grandmother) and 3 amazing kids (Yolanda, Isaac and Esteban). They are small business owners of *CAQ Services Canada Inc.*, a Bookkeeping/Accounting firm that recently opened the doors of its new office located in Central Etobicoke.

For the past 8 years they have served at their local Ministry, CCA Maranatha Toronto, leading the Evangelistic Ministry, with a strong outreach focus under the signature

of “The Gospel Changes”. The Gospel Changes follows a program of social action and spiritual nature and is composed of volunteers who mobilize to the streets of Toronto and Mississauga, with the commitment to proclaim the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

They have had the privilege of having their children enrolled in a Christian educational setting from an early age. However, due to some unforeseen circumstances in August 2020 their children’s previous Christian school

closed its doors. Even though the news came as a surprise, they were deeply impacted by it and they realized that they needed to make a decision about their children’s education. They feel blessed to have met Mrs. Soultanidis and to have learned more about the vision and the mission of John Knox Christian School.

Following their visit to the school they felt very pleased to have found John Knox. They felt strongly that the school aligned with their prayers and their desire to see their children grow in all aspects of their lives. Most importantly, that their children will continue to have the opportunity to be cultivated in the values and principles we all share as disciples of Christ and children of God.

 REBECCA PETERSON

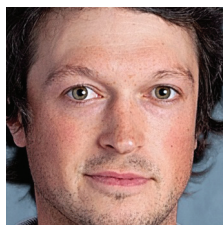
Did You Know ...

- The organizational meeting of members of the school association was held on April 7, 1954. Eighteen people attended.
- The first Board meeting on record occurred 14 months later, on June 28, 1955.
- May of 1957: 5-acre property on McLaughlin Road South was purchased from Mr. Harper Bull for \$9,300.
- On August 31, 1959, a membership meeting was held in the school for the first time. Mr. Evert DeRuiter reported that everyone was in a festive mood. The meeting began with a reading of Psalm 111: “Praise the Lord! I will extol the Lord with all my heart.”
- 28 new families joined us in September 2020.
- Our current school community represents more than 59 different church communities.
- Besides our currently enrolled students, more than 2700 students have passed through the school doors since the school was founded in 1959.
- Since 1959, JKCS has graduated 1622 eight grade students.
- Our largest graduating class was in 2006 with 50 students.

Meet our New Staff Members



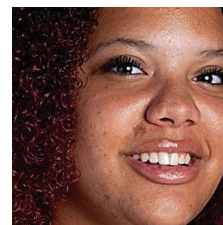
MS. SARAH
PANAMPUNNA
(MS. PANAM)



MR. ALEX
MCCALLION



MRS. ANN
VARDALOS



MS. SARAH
PEREIRA-
SWASEY

We are pleased to welcome four new staff members to the JKCS team. Ms. Sarah Panampunna (*Ms. Panam*) has been hired as our Remote Learning Instructor and is now taking on some of the teaching time in our grade ½ class. Mr. Alex McCallion joins us in a variety of roles; After School Care Supervisor, Classroom Assistant in grade 6 and grade 4, as well as being an invaluable extra set of hands in the building managing many of our new Health & Safety protocols. Mrs. Ann Vardalos joins us as the Teaching Assistant in our grade 3 classes, working as a team with Ms. Lutgendorff. Ms. Sarah Pereira-Swasey joins the team in the Kindergarten area working as an Educational Assistant in the Junior Kindergarten Classroom. We are blessed by all of these new team members who bring a wide range of skills and experience to JKCS. Welcome! 🌱



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For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations

PSALM 100:5