

ROOTED



Principal Address

On June 15, we gathered to celebrate a significant milestone in the lives of some remarkable young individuals. Graduation is a big deal!

Class Verse - Psalm 139:13-14 *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

I love this whole psalm — it describes the pervasive presence of God and his intimate knowledge of us. Another word for pervasive is inescapable; He is all around us, everywhere. He knows us so well and loves us so deeply, so much so that he wants to be all around you always — there is nothing you can do to separate you from God's love, and these verses you chose tell us why; because he made you, he knit you together, you are his dearly loved child.

As a school and as parents, we want you to know first and foremost, that you were made by the Creator, that your Creator is awesome and that he loves you. Your choice of this particular verse tells us that you have learned that, and that's reassuring. You've learned that God has created you for his purpose, with gifts to praise him, and with intricate details that make you the individual you are.

I have a special place for this class in my heart having taught many of you early on in my career at JKCS, and I can attest to the fact that each one of you is blessed with many gifts and abilities. This class has a lot of big personalities in it and although that was sometimes challenging, we

pray that you will never forget that you are special, and that God knows and loves you dearly just as you are.

I hope that you take this message with you to the next stage of your school career. When things get tough, or, when you are finding great joy in life - in the good and the bad - this knowledge will help you keep your focus on God, your maker, not on your own abilities or faults.

Just as you had people walking alongside you during your time at John Knox, God will continue to place people in your lives to give you strength, to lift you up when you need it, and to offer encouragement. Look for and lean on those people in your life!

You are a child of God — fearfully and wonderfully made, and on behalf of the school, we want to congratulate you on a job well done. May you always feel a part of something bigger, and may you stay strong in the journey of faith and learning. Blessings from all of us at JKCS! 🌿

 **CHRISTINE SOULTANIDIS**
PRINCIPAL

Saying Goodbye

We would like to acknowledge several families who graduate from JKCS along with their youngest child this year. Thank you for your many years of dedication to providing your children with a Christian Education. We pray John Knox will always hold a special place in your hearts!

- **Imo and Abby Atafo:** Jonathan, Olivia, Daniel
- **Olushola and Omotope Awoleye:** Juwon
- **Niyi and Toni Ayodele:** Nicole, Nathan
- **Paul Thomas and Judith Jones-Thomas:** Sean, Sheldon, Sydney, Jemuel
- **John and Cheryl Lewis:** Ben, Brandon, Daniel, Rebecca
- **Mark and Sandra Lobinowich:** Noah, Corbin, Landon
- **Stephane and Amanda Lubin:** Joshua, Preston, Simonne
- **Mark and Jael Richardson:** Eden
- **James and Linda Swinnerton:** Olivia
- **Sean and Sharon VanEerden:** Anya, Finley

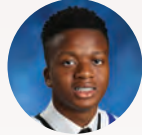
Graduates of 2023



Daniel
Atafo



Juwon
Awoleye



Nathan
Ayodele



Jordan
Bennett



Adriana
Cevada



Joshua
Dutt



Harrison
Fernhout



Zachary
Gordon



Elijah
Harriott



Carter
Hayashi



Gabriella
Inniss



Jemuel
Jones Scott



Abigail
Levis



Rebecca
Lewis



Landon
Lobinowich



Simonne
Lubin



Evangeline
Luimes



Liana
Muñoz



Abigail
Obalade



Edan
Richardson



Izabella
Saa



Abigail
Sahney



Olivia
Swinerton



Sasha
Tulloch



Finley
VanEerden

Valedictorian Speech Highlights

Evangeline Luimes

I am so honoured to be selected as the Valedictorian for the class of 2023. Thank you to my classmates for this selection, to the parents of the graduating class for sending us to this great school, and of course to all of our teachers over the years. We would not be here today without all of you.

Our class verse, Psalm 139:13-14, started off as a memory verse for our class but has become much more. I can guarantee you that many of us know this verse by heart. We talk about it a lot in our class and it represents us perfectly. We were all knit together by God, and He knew exactly what we were going to be like before we were even born. He knew what we were going to look like, our personalities, who we were going to be friends with, and He knows what we are going

to be when we grow up, even if we don't. He has our whole lives planned out for us and he will guide us every step of the way, through the ups and downs. He will comfort us through our struggles and never, ever leave us.



We praise God every day because he made us as we are. We should never say we don't like how we look, or we don't like ourselves because God made every part of us the way it is for a reason. This class has grown so much over the years and every person in it is important; if you have been here since kindergarten or if you joined us this year; each of you is special and a great addition to our class.

There are so many memories we take with us from our years here. Good and bad, funny and sad, but each one

is important. Valedictorians often mention highlights from the trips they went on as a class, but sadly, we missed our traditional school trips due to Covid. We do still have fascinating stories though, and a few fun memories come to mind. While on a grade 4 field trip to Limehouse Conservation Area, we were divided into two groups and although we started off together, we were separated at some point with each group heading in a different direction. My group had taken the wrong trail and were lost. We never figured out what happened, but the hike ended safely with both groups reconnecting eventually. My group found its way back to the other group who were happily eating their lunch, waiting for us. In grade 8, many of us will recall the day the ice pack broke, and blue jelly was everywhere!

There are also a couple of things that people have said in our class that make me laugh and will stick with me, like when Abby L was convinced volcanoes weren't real or when Adriana said her shoes

don't get wet in puddles because she was less dense than the water. We will never forget the *Chaos in Fairy Tale Forest* play. We were prepared and ready... until the performance came!

Our class has shared so many fun experiences together and it will be sad to let them go. Sometimes we take school for granted. It's just a habit, a pattern really. We wake up, go to school, come home, go to bed, and repeat. We never really think about the amazing opportunity it is to be able to go to school when so many around the world do not. It's hard to say goodbye – we are going to miss so much about JKCS. Each part of our journey here, and each person in it, was important and helped us prepare for the future.

As you move on to high school, always keep God in your lives – He will help you through all of your troubles. We've experienced so much here together, but it's just the beginning. There are so many new adventures waiting for us! 🌱



Graduation Parental Address Highlights

Jael Richardson

All of my life I have been told that God has a plan. I had heard that the Bible has all of the answers. But I didn't know what job I was supposed to take or whether to give up on my hopes. I went searching the Bible for an answer to the question "What is God's will for my life?" **Part of me thought that I wouldn't find an answer. But I did.**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

REJOICE ALWAYS

Everywhere you look someone is selling something that is designed to remind you of what you don't have. You are meant to dislike who you are so you can buy something that will fix it. You are meant to look in the mirror and

long to be taller, fitter, younger, older, richer. REJOICE ALWAYS, means remembering that in Christ alone we find true joy; that you were stitched together according to His plan. Joy is not the same as happiness. You will be unhappy or lonely sometimes, but joy comes in remembering that no matter what, you are fearfully and wonderfully made.

PRAY CONTINUOUSLY

I love that this follows 'rejoice always.' As you find joy, you will also experience worry and anxiety. Praying continuously is the only answer to the worries that are ahead. Graduates, as you head off to highschool, you are likely worried about the first day, making new friends, starting new schools, and parents, you may be anxious about your child going away, and all of the new things they will encounter – PRAY CONTINUOUSLY.

GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

You can see how this statement connects. As you pray, you can also see reasons to be thankful. Maybe your parents are annoying, but boy, does your dad make a great ackee and sailfish, maybe your brother is bothering you, but isn't he funny sometimes? Doesn't he keep you company? GIVE THANKS is a practical action that helps us appreciate the good, even in the bad.

Graduates, as you pursue new goals in new places, as you face new worries and new challenges, parents and family, as you set them off on this next adventure... Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 🌱

AWARDS

GLENN VAN ZEUMEREN VALEDICTORIAN AWARD

Glenn Van Zeumeren Valedictorian Award

Awarded to the student who has demonstrated mature Christian attitude, academic achievement, leadership, participation in extracurricular activities and is respected by their peers.

Evangeline Luimes

JKCS LEADERSHIP AWARD

For demonstrating a mature Christian attitude, academic achievement and a concern for others

Abigail Levis

JKCS DISCIPLESHIP AWARD

For faithful and dependable service, offered willingly and consistently

Elijah Harriott

JKCS ACADEMIC AWARD

For academic achievement and participation

Olivia Swinnerton

JKCS STAFF AWARD

For perseverance and determination in overcoming obstacles to their learning

Landon Lobinowich

MUSIC AWARD

For musical ability, attitude and participation

Adriana Cevada

ART AWARD

For outstanding achievement in the Visual Arts

Abigail Sahney

ATHLETIC AWARD

For athletic ability, participation and sportsmanship

Male Athlete — Harrison Fernhout

Female Athlete — Gabriella Inniss

FRENCH AWARD

For excellence in learning French as a foreign language

Abigail Levis



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