



COVENANT  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Sunday, March 29, 2020

Dear Covenant Friends,

As we prepare to enter our third week of at-home learning, let me first thank you for the good work you are doing. We recognize that our partnership is more important than ever and we are humbled by your patience, cooperation, and grace. As each week passes, we remain committed to improving the *Covenant@Home* product, listening to your feedback and maintaining an open and malleable growth mindset.

As week two came to a close, I, like Christians all around the world, was drawn to rereading Exodus, particularly the 16th chapter. Never have I identified with those Israelites more! It feels shameful to liken our experience to wandering in the desert, for our comfort and security is a far cry from the uncertainty God's people were experiencing. However, there is one thing we will always have in common with our spiritual ancestors: Grumbling. The enslaved people had been delivered out of Egypt in miraculous fashion, and yet their trust was as fickle as ever. Grumbling, and wishing for the "security" of enslavement, God provided their daily bread in the form of meat in the evening and manna by morning. Just enough for the day. For forty years, day by day, God provided.

*So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the Lord who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" Moses also said, "You will know that it was the Lord when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord...The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan.*

I'm a planner by nature. I pride myself on being prepared, looking ahead, and anticipating what's around the corner. My fault is identified in the second word of that sentence! Pride. Pride will be my downfall in a season like this. For several years now, we, Covenant, have celebrated how God delivered us from a time of uncertainty and into hopeful abundance. It would be easy to shake my head and question how this present crisis fits into God's plan. But now is a time for trust not questioning. At this moment, God is asking each of us to wake up in the morning, receive our daily bread, ask how we can serve one another, and trust in his perfect plan. James 4 continually comes to my mind:

*" Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."*

God's wandering people had to trust and live one day at a time, and so will we. They did not know when they would arrive in the promised land. God did not provide the date and time of arrival for them, and no one can tell us when this present crisis will abate. I'm not comfortable with this and it's teaching me a lot about my pride, my faith, and my need for control. God will provide exactly what we need to walk through each day. God had a covenant with His people and a promise is a promise. Our school was named *Covenant Christian Academy* in recognition of this covenant, and in recognition of the promises we make to you, our community. We serve a God who provides our daily bread and will bring us to his promised land.

This past week, Governor Baker announced that all schools in the Commonwealth would remain closed through May 4th. Though this news was disappointing, we recognize the importance of embracing all guidance provided by the state and remain committed to making this period of time as productive and robust as possible. *Covenant@Home*, our remote learning solution during this time, will continue to provide our best possible learning program. We are grateful for your feedback and will continue to review and consider how our approach can best meet the needs of our students. We do, however, recognize that no matter how hard we try, we cannot provide a one-size-fits all product. Students and families are different and your experiences will vary.

Our teachers and administrators have been working tirelessly to embrace technology and online platforms not previously a part of our repertoire. We commit to continual progress, while recognizing that we could never replicate our classroom experience. We hear your frustrations and recognize that this crisis is impacting our students (and parents) in a myriad of ways. Our students' motivation and perseverance are critically tested, and we know that you may not feel confident or capable of teaching (even with our assistance) our youngest learners. We are listening, but keep in mind that every parent may have a different perspective based on all of our very different learners. We are trying our best to strike an elusive balance that addresses the unique needs of 325 different students.

Please continue to provide your personal feedback. We promise to listen, communicate concerns with our faculty, and adjust expectations and implementation of learning to address common needs. In addition, we continue to give you as parents, the permission to make decisions for your family and your children that are in the best interest of health and well-being. Our school counselor, Jillian Isabella, is available to be a voice of support. Please feel free to contact her at [jillian.isabella@ccamail.org](mailto:jillian.isabella@ccamail.org) to arrange for a phone consultation. Sometimes we just need the opportunity to feel supported and understood. Jill is a wise and creative counselor, who may also be able to help you think differently and offer solutions to your present challenges.

As we look ahead, we have had to make important decisions regarding events that typically take place in the spring. *At this point, we are operating under the premise that we may return to school on May 4th, while also holding this loosely, recognizing that this could easily change. As of today, with the information we currently have, the following events are being considered in three categories:*

**Proceeding as regularly scheduled:**

- Virtual School continues, uninterrupted. USLR launches full Google Classroom April 6th.

- Spring Break remains as a week off from remote learning, as originally scheduled.
- AP Exams proceed in a shortened format, tests will take place online at home - dates for exams will be published April 3rd.
- USLR Course Requests and Prefect Application for Fall 2020 will proceed as normal, but will all be done online.

**Events that will remain top priorities moving forward: (We recognize that events may need to be rescheduled from original dates. We also recognize that if school does not resume this Spring we will have to think creatively!)**

- Graduation / Baccalaureate
- Senior Thesis
- Eighth Grade Threshold Speeches
- USLR Musical - Les Miserables
- USLR Prom
- Grammar School Field Day
- Grammar School Awards Ceremony
- Kindergarten Year End Celebration
- Pre-K Year End Celebration

**Events that are now cancelled:**

- USLR Academic Trip week
- Fine Arts Spring Concerts
- SpringFest Art Show
- Grammar School Science Fair
- Spring Athletics Season

We are as disappointed as our students and families to have had to cancel events that have become important anticipated annual celebrations. We will do all we can to think creatively and flexibly to be sure that we are providing a rich and enjoyable student experience, should school resume this spring. For example, while the official spring season for athletics has been cancelled, we will be looking for ways for these cherished spring sports, including softball and ultimate frisbee, to engage in some recreational opportunities to uphold their traditions upon our return to school. In addition, we hope to have our Honors musical groups (Select Choir and Jazz Band) perform at end of year events if at all possible.

May god's grace and goodness be evident in your homes this coming week. May he provide the daily bread that nourishes your heart, your mind, and your soul in just the way you need it most. May you find peace in the promise of a God who brings beauty out of ashes.

*"And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."*

*~Ephesians 3:17-19*

Blessings for the week ahead,

**Andrea Bergstrom**

*Head of School*