



From the Principal - Mr. Bob Morris

Justice Seeking - Isaiah 61:1,8: *"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,"*

"For I, the Lord, love justice; I hate robbery and iniquity. In my faithfulness I will reward them and make an everlasting covenant with them."

Our Teaching for Transformation theme for our upcoming March chapel is called "Justice Seeking". Sometimes we look at past transgressions and wonder, *Why did people do that?* We don't have to go far in history to see injustices that were done to people. Some of those injustices include the Holocaust, slavery, residential schools, wars, oppression, etc. The list is long. We often look back, but we are unaware of the present.

I was given a Christmas gift this year from my daughter that has really made me ponder. I do a lot of walking with my dog where I listen to a lot of podcasts. The gift was an Audible app that allows me to download a book once a month. My first download was a book by Siddarth Kara called Cobalt Red. Siddarth Kara has written other books that have drawn attention to modern slavery and sex trafficking. I had previously listened to him give a presentation on a podcast.

Cobalt Red brings an awareness to an exploitation currently occurring in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of all cobalt is mined by heavy machinery. The other $\frac{1}{3}$ is mined by a process called "artisanal" mining. This artisanal mining is where people use small hand tools or bare hands to scrape cobalt from the ground. These miners don't wear protective clothing and are exposed to toxic metals. The author interviewed those disabled for life and witnessed a corpse of a teenage boy from a collapsed tunnel.

Much of the work is forced labour and includes men, children, and even moms digging cobalt while having babies strapped to their backs. Most have to work 7 days a week, 12 hours a day and receive somewhere between \$8.00-\$12.00 a day for all their efforts. Cobalt is toxic to touch, and there are medical conditions like cancer, birth defects, dermatitis, and respiratory ailments as a result of mining this mineral.

How does what is happening in Congo affect myself? We all use items that come from Congo. I got tired of charging my Iphone 3X a day in October and decided that it was time to update to the new Iphone. My wife's tablet was not working any longer and we decided to upgrade to a new one for her. I tend to get cold outside, so I ordered a new replacement battery for a heated vest. I also purchased gloves that have battery packs that keep my hands warm. Colleen also

found heated socks for me for those cold days on the football field. All those devices have lithium-ion batteries which requires cobalt to make them work. I have a friend that decided that he wanted to go “green” and purchase an electric vehicle (EV) which he thought would be good for the environment. A smartphone requires a few grams of cobalt, a tablet requires 30 grams, and battery packs for EV’s can require 10 kilograms or more to make their battery work.

There is much demand these days for the minerals needed to produce things we need or want. We are all dependent on our cell phones and don’t have too many options when they wear out. Our government is pushing electric vehicle sales on us in hope that we all go buy an EV. The government mandates to reduce fossil fuel consumption by targeted days will only require us to use more of the cobalt found in the Congo. Our government is so focussed on “climate change” that it is willing to look the other way on what is happening in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I’d love to say that there is a solution to what is happening in Congo, but in reality, our government targets for climate change will only enslave more humans (who have value and are made in the likeness of God) in the Congo. Maybe the first step is just awareness but is it enough?

From the Board - Mrs. Jessica Stolk

As a Board we would like to express our thanks to all those who contributed to the Fall Drive. It is amazing to see our Society come through and reach its goals. We entered the Christmas break being approximately \$20000 short of our \$80000 goal, however entered the New Year with a final total of \$75900 raised!

Planning has begun for our biggest fundraiser of the year, the Annual Spring Auction! The auction will be taking place on Saturday, April 13th. Please watch for further announcements and details from the Auction Committee.

The Board has also started the process of coming up with nominees to fill upcoming Board positions. We will be looking for willing nominees to join the Board as both Michelle Stolk (Education) and Jessica Stolk (Secretary) will be completing their terms this Spring. Please pray for us as a Board as we go through this process and pray that there will be willing members of Society who will allow their names to stand to serve our school community in this way.

We would also like to give everyone a bit of a heads up, that we will be having a School Review done this coming May. The Board has scheduled for the Prairie Centre for Christian Education to come in once every three years to conduct either a Principal Review or a School Review, and this year will be the School Review. When the time comes, some of you may be asked to complete surveys or come into the school for a short interview. Please prayerfully consider

participating in this process, as reviews like this greatly aid the Board in seeing how the school is doing as a whole and determining plans for the future.

Be sure to mark, Thursday May 23, on your calendars for our Spring Society Meeting. As a reminder, if you have not yet paid your Society Dues (\$25/person or \$50/couple), you must do so before this meeting in order to have voting privileges on any agenda items, including the voting in of new Board members.

Our next Board meeting is Wednesday March 6th. Please feel free to contact one of us if you have any comments/concerns.

On Behalf of the PCS Board,
Jessica Stolk

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

Sports News - Mr. Josh Van Doesburg

As the basketball season comes to an end, we are thankful for all the coaches, parents, and other family members who came out to support the athletes. A big thank you to the coaches who put in extra hours to build and develop the basketball skills of all the kids.

The B Boys will be playing a few final playoff games. The first being on Wednesday, Feb. 28, in Eckville. The last game will be played on Wednesday, Mar 6, with the location dependant on how teams play in the first game.

We will be starting badminton in the second week of March. Please discuss with your children if this is something they will be interested in. A sign-up will be going up early next week. As well, we will be having badminton drop in on Monday evenings from 7-830 PM starting on March 4.

All School Skating Afternoon – Feb. 28

- Bus will transport Gr 1-9 student to and from the school and arena.
- Kindergarten students are invited to attend with their parents.
- Parents and younger siblings are also invited to attend.
- Backpacks will not be permitted on the bus.
- Helmets are mandatory for all students. (Full face shield is required for hockey players)
- Students may play hockey if they would like. Bring your own stick.

Now Accepting Applications - Ponoka Christian School is now accepting **Applications for Pre-School and Kindergarten** for the 2024-25 school year. Information and registration packages can be found on the school website at www.ponokachristianschool.com or may be picked up from the school office.

From the Development Committee

- **Little Caesars Fundraiser:**

Thank you to all those who participated in this fundraiser, almost \$1300 was raised for the school. The money will be used for upgrades/enhancements to the hallways around school. Order pickup day is scheduled for the week of Mar 4. The exact date and time are yet to be determined by Little Caesars, we will let you know asap.

- **Grade 1 Bird House Building:**

On **Thursday March 14 at 7:00pm**, we would like to invite all **Grade 1 students** and their dads or Grandpas or other special guy in their life for an evening of building birdhouses at the school. This annual event will be a FUN evening with your child building more than just memories! More details and invitation to follow.

- **Boston Pizza Operation Education:**

Do you or people you know eat at Boston Pizza? If so, you could be making money for the school! We are asking all families and supporters to turn in their original receipts from any Edmonton and surrounding area Boston Pizza locations including, Ponoka, Lacombe and Red Deer to the school office, dating from Jan until June 2024. The school can then receive 5% of the total (before tax) of all receipts submitted!

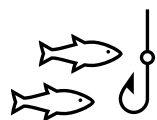
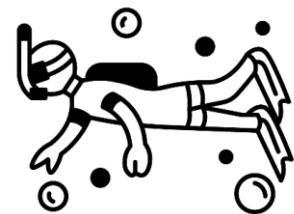
- **PCS Merch:** The deadline for getting your PCS apparel order in is fast approaching! There is a great selection of new items and designs, be sure to check it out and order before the online store closes on Feb 29!

- Click the link at the top of the website: PCS Eagles Merch,
- then click: Order Your PCS Merch to be brought to the online store.

Important: AB Education Surveys - AB Education has mailed out parent satisfaction surveys to parents and guardians. Please look for these in your mailboxes. We strongly encourage you to fill them out and let Alberta Education know how you feel Ponoka Christian School is doing as a school in teaching your child(ren).

For more information please visit: www.alberta.ca/education-provincial-satisfaction-surveys.

February is **I Love to Read Month**
and this year our theme is:
Underwater - Dive into reading!



There is still time left to read and get your tickets in to win a fantastic prize! Last day to hand in sheets is next week Wednesday! Keep **diving** into a good book and **get hooked on** reading!

Notice to Society: Irene Fraser has made the decision to move on from her position as Business Administrator at Ponoka Christian School at the end of this school year. We value and appreciate all the time and effort she has put into PCS and would like to thank her for all her hard work over the last 4 years.

PCS is now hiring for the position of Business Administrator. Interested applicants can send in a cover letter, resume with references, and a statement of faith to: office@ponokachristianschool.com. For more information, please contact the school via the email above or by calling 403-783-6563.

Save
the Date

PONOKA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AUCTION
APRIL 13, 2024 MORE DETAILS TO COME!

ON BEHALF OF THE AUCTION COMMITTEE: BRANDI PIEPER
403-704-6779

