



From the Vice-Principal - Mr. Josh Van Doesburg

This coming month we will be having an all-school chapel based around the theme of being an Idolatry-Discerner. This can be a tricky concept for kids to understand and connect to but with modelling from parents, teachers, and other adults in their lives this can be absorbed rather than just taught.

In a world filled with distractions and competing loyalties, being an idolatry discerner is crucial for every believer. Idolatry is more than just bowing to statues; it is anything that takes the place of God in our hearts. This can range from power, money, sports, games, or our own desires. Throughout the bible we are warned to remain vigilant against idolatry and to seek discernment in recognizing and turning away from it.

Deuteronomy 11:16 warns us too, “Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them.” The world can entice us with things that can seem harmless and often idolatry is subtle. Whether it is career ambitions, social approval, or material success, these things if not prioritized correctly can quickly overcome us and become our idols. In order for us to discern these things we need to stop, reflect, and ask: What do I prioritize most? What consumes my thoughts and energy?

In 1 John 4:1 the Apostle John provides us a key strategy for discernment. “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” In our society today we have many false teachings and deceptive influences that are constantly trying to lead believers away from Christ. As we are tested from every angle we must be reminded to test all teaching against the scripture. Does it align with God’s truth, or does it subtly promote self-worship, greed, or compromise?

Thankfully, going back into the word of God we are given a solution. Romans 12:2 says, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.” Proper discernment requires a mind continually renewed by the Bible. The more we read, understand, reflect, and live out his word; the more we will be able to recognize idolatry and reject it in favour of God’s perfect will.

So my challenge this month, to not only to the students of Ponoka Christian School, but to you the society at large, continue being Idolatry-Discerners. Continue testing everything against the scripture and continually seek out Christ in all we do. In doing so, we remain faithful to the one true God, guarding our hearts against anything that would draw us away from Him.

From the Board - Mrs. Carien Dominicus

As this is the first newsletter of the New Year, the Board would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Blessed 2025! We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas break, and we pray that this coming year may be a year of blessings and serving our Lord and Saviour in every area of our lives.

We would like to welcome Mrs. Micayla Nanninga back after her maternity leave. She will be teaching the grade 2 class, and we're blessed to have her a part of our teaching staff again.

The Facilities Committee has recently updated the Facility Rental Policy including the Rental form. You can contact Aaron Horne for more information on renting the school facilities.

January is generally a quiet month for the Board, so as of yet there is nothing new to report to Society; however, we would like to send out a couple of reminders.

- **Society Membership:** If there is anyone who is not currently a member, but would like to be, this would be a great time to fill out the Membership forms so interviews can be set up and new members can be approved at our Spring Society meeting. This is also a great way for grandparents to show their support of PCS. If you're interested, just ask the office for the forms!
- Our school mission statement is "Educating our children together with home and church to know the Lordship of Christ". As a friendly reminder, communication back and forth between parents and staff/administrators/Board is a crucial part of fulfilling this mission statement. If you ever have any concerns, comments or encouragement to share...please do so!

We will be having our first meeting of the year on Wednesday, February 5, 2025. Please mark the following dates on your calendars: PCS Annual auction will be held Saturday April 12, 2025 and Grandparents Day will be held April 24. More details to follow closer to the dates.

On Behalf of the PCS Board,
Carien Dominicus

"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." Romans 15:13

Sports News - Mr. Josh Van Doesburg

The basketball season is well underway. We are thankful this year to have 2 boys teams and a girls team. Thank you to Josh Van Doesburg, Candace Slomp, Bob Morris, Brady and Val Teeling for the extra time and effort you are putting into this basketball season. Please remain diligent with watching the calendar for schedules updates and changes.

Important Dates

January 30	Nakiska Ski Trip – Gr 8/9
January 31	No School – Teacher Work Day
February 1-28	I Love to Read Month
February 6	All School Chapel – Idolatry Discerning
February 7	Extra Kindergarten Day
February 10	Parent Teacher Interviews By request.
February 13	Gr 4-9 Canyon Ski Day. The west bus (John) will not run in the afternoon.
February 14	No School – AISCA Teacher's Convention
February 17	No School – Family Day
February 20	Hot Lunch – Pizza (for those who ordered)
February 26	All School Skating Afternoon

Ski Day at Canyon for Grades 4-9: Important Reminders

- **Please remember to hand in your ski trip forms if you haven't done so already!** If you have lost yours, forms are available at the office and online under Families > Forms.
- **Parents who are planning to ski with their child must fill out a Participant Form, forms and payment for parents must be received prior to Feb 3.** The cost for parents is \$35 for lift pass only and \$61 for pass and rentals.
- Younger siblings (not in gr 4-9) who may be skiing will have to purchase lift tickets at Canyon and are not considered part of the school rate.
- **The school must be notified prior to ski day of all transportation arrangements.** There will be no changes made on the day of the trip. (ie. If your child is riding the bus to the hill but will not be taking the bus back, the school must be notified before the ski day)
- Lift tickets cannot be handed out to students until the whole group arrives with the bus and not until the Canyon staff have gone over the safety talk.
- The bus will leave the school for Canyon at **8:50am** and leave Canyon at **3pm** to return students to the school. Students will need to be picked up from the school at approx. 3:45pm. **Ponoka Christian School is not responsible for students who remain at the hill after 3pm.**

From the Development Committee

The development committee has some exciting events and fundraisers in store for the rest of the year. Please note the following:

- **Grade 1 Bird House Building:**

Date TBD- Grade 1 students and their dads or Grandpas or other special guy in their life are invited to attend 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:**

Thank you for all those who have submitted receipts to the office already. This is an easy way to support 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 Sept 2024 until June 2025. The school can then receive 5% of the total (before tax) of all receipts submitted!

- **Gift Card Fundraiser:**

This fundraiser is ongoing. Please find attached a form to fill out if you are interested in ordering gift cards for the upcoming month. **Forms need to be returned to the school by Feb 4.** Thank you for your continued support.

Now Accepting Applications - Ponoka Christian School is now accepting **Applications for Pre-School and Kindergarten** for the 2025-26 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.

Ponoka Christian School is Hiring! – Please pass on the following message to anyone you know who may be interested and pray that the Lord may provide the school suitable candidates to carry out His Kingdom work here at PCS.

Ponoka Christian School is now accepting teacher applications for early years and junior high school. We are hoping to hire two teachers for the 2025-26 school year. Candidates need to be eligible for an Alberta teaching certificate. Please forward a cover letter, resume, statement of faith and pastoral reference to office@ponokachristianschool.com, attention Robert Morris, Principal.

February is **I Love to Read Month** at Ponoka Christian School and this year our theme is **Reading Around the World.** We are hoping to inspire students to read more and to discover





more about God's world and the people in it. As part of this challenge, students are asked to read each day for the month of February and keep track of the minutes they read. More details will be sent home with students on Feb 3rd! Get ready for a journey of books and explore stories from around the world!

Community News and Information:

Charitable status of churches and religious charities threatened

BY: MARK PENNINGA - PUBLISHED JANUARY 13, 2025

While the country's attention was focussed on the conflict within the Liberal Party and the threat of new tariffs from south of the border, the Finance Committee tabled a report in the House of Commons with their recommendations for the next budget. Among 462 recommendations, one called on the government to drop "advancement of religion" as a basis for charitable status.

If adopted in the next federal budget, this would threaten over 30,000 charities, making up over 40 percent of all Canadian charities. This includes an estimated 23,000 congregations, as well as many Christian non-profits. Losing charitable status will mean that churches and religious charities won't be able to give charitable tax receipts for donations or accept donations from foundations and other charities.

In a call to action for its members, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) noted that this is also significant because, "it indicates that members of the committee, from all the major political parties, supported the idea." They explained that although the Conservative Party wrote a dissenting opinion on the report, they didn't specifically mention opposition to this recommendation.

In their own letter to the Minister of Finance, the EFC made a passionate case for retaining charitable status based on the advancement of religion. "Religious charities foster vibrant social networks, mobilize outreach, spark local volunteerism, and foster community resiliency," they explained.

"More and more Canadians are grappling with loneliness and social isolation. Polarization and lack of social cohesion are increasing concerns. This is a time to encourage the presence and

participation of religious charities, which foster hope, mutual support and belonging, rather than taking steps to destabilize them.”

ARPA Canada noted that: “In some ways, the favorable tax treatment of religious organizations is also a recognition of sphere sovereignty. It represents respect and appreciation by the civil government for the mission and work of the church and other institutions, to disciple people in the way of God and to minister to the poor and needy.”

The EFC explained that “committee recommendations can function as a trial balloon. If a recommendation seems widely supported, or at least not opposed, it may encourage the government to move ahead with it.”

While it looks likely we’re heading for an election, Christians still need to contact their MPs on this now, in case the Liberal government should survive long enough to present a budget this spring.

And regardless of whether this recommendation is adopted this spring, it should serve as a wake-up call to Christians that we live in a political climate that has shifted from supportive towards faith-based organizations, to lukewarm, and now even hostile at times. This underscores the importance of churches taking the time to build a relationship of mutual trust and respect with their government officials, regardless of which party they are from.

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Links that clarify what work is done to counter this and to suggest what needs doing:

https://www.cccc.org/news_blogs/legal/2024/12/20/cccc-responds-to-troubling-recommendations-on-charitable-status/

<https://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/Resources/Government/2024/Changes-to-charitable-status.aspx>

<https://www.todayville.com/canadian-govt-budget-report-targets-charitable-status-of-pro-life-groups-churches/>



Rimbey Christian School Fundraising Banquet

An Evening of Classic Hits & Comedy with
Richard & Deborah Popovich

Friday FEBRUARY 7th, 2025



PETER LOUGHEED COMMUNITY CENTRE RIMBEY

DOORS OPEN @ 5:45 P.M.

SUPPER @ 6:30 P.M.

CATERED BY

STARKIST CATERING

TICKETS \$70 EACH OR

TABLE OF 8 FOR \$520

**TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
RIMBEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AND
STATIONERY, STORIES & SOUNDS
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
KARI KLOSS 403-506-8549**