



*Pastor Hanke's Blog*

*March 3, 2019*

## CCLS - Bravery

Bible Reference: Isaiah 41:10

There are plenty of things to be afraid of in our world today. Even our kids have numerous fears over and above the basic ones, such as darkness or death, which we all experience to some degree. This year I was shocked to see that my 8-year-old, Gavin, has a fear of public speaking. I guess I thought he was too young for that, but I got to see it first hand at our Christmas Eve Family Service. Gavin had one line in the service, which he practiced over and over again. He knew that line so well, but when it came time to say it, he struggled to get it out. I was shocked because of all his preparation. Then I put the pieces together—the many conversations he and I have had about how I preach, the questions like, “Dad, would you rather clean or preach?” and now this attempt in the Christmas program—it showed me that he struggles with a fear of speaking in front of people even in his young life.

A few months ago when we experienced the funerals of a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grader connected to our church, my wife helped me process what fears those kids might have faced, and what fears their friends might be facing now that they are gone. As a teacher, Mindy is gifted in understanding young people, and she helps me be more empathetic everyday. I am so blessed to have her helping me grow as a person and in ministry. A funeral director shared with me that he would not have thought about the fears of the kids, or the confusion they might have experienced. It just wouldn't have occurred to him. All too often I, too, am quick to gloss over the fears of children rather than putting myself in their place. But with Mindy's help, I intentionally work on thinking through the fears of my kids and others. Moments like I had with Gavin remind me to ask my kids about their fears and help them process through them. With Gavin I was able to share that speaking in front of others is a fear that many people struggle with, some so much that they fear public speaking even more than dying.

No matter what age you are, we all have fears. They come in all sorts of packages. Isaiah, the writer of the Old Testament reading this week, spoke about the peace we can have to calm our fears because we have a God who understands them, and who will be with us and uphold us. What a great lesson for kids—for all of us! We thank God for teachers, trained to understand children at different ages and the fears they face, who speak to them on a level they understand about the peace that Jesus gives! This weekend we spend time celebrating our association school, CCLS, and grasping how Jesus has made us brave because of what He has done.

*God's Peace,*

*Pastor Will*