

September is an interesting month. It is a month of expectations:

- staff are expecting another busy year of events, programs, in addition to lesson planning, marking, and classroom management while caring for their own families;
- parents expect a return to routine and family life to settle down after summer months of entertaining children;
- and students dread the homework and academic expectations, knowing the end is near to their carefree summer days.

What I have come to learn is that September overturns our expectations. Typically, this is the month that also signals the beginning of autumn, with autumn temperatures. The last several years has proven that this is not necessarily the case. September can have temperatures as hot as those in July! This makes me think how God surprises us and often, overturns our expectations in life. How many of us spend time and energy worrying about a situation that often results in an outcome that is different from the one we feared?



Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, often gets asked the question of what he thinks will change in the next ten years. He feels the more appropriate question to ask is, what is **not** going to change in the next ten years? He says you can build a better strategy around the things that are stable in time. "When you have something that you know is true, even over the long term, you can afford to put a lot of energy into it." (Source: Jeff Bezos at *reinvent*, November 2012)

This year may see us in some turbulent political times, but this does not mean we have to stir our anxiety and get thrown off our game. What stays the same is that we are here, we are together, and we will keep going. Like Mary and her proclamation of the Magnificat, she trusts the Lord with her unknown future because of how God has proven true in the past. We can make it through because of what is stable in time. God, in Jesus, has promised to be with us always. That love is always there, nurturing, empowering, healing, reconciling. "Do you love me?" he asks. Yes, Lord, we do; let us show you.



(Photo courtesy of Kevin Martin, 2019)

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