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THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

FEAR IS NOT THE COMPANION OF CAUTION

by John Heaton, Headmaster

The military flyover at a football game makes us stand tall, and leaves us awestruck as kickoff approaches.

Not so when I was a kid. Growing up in the early sixties, I was younger than ten when the Vietnam War began. I lived a few miles from Michael McCoy Air Force Base, now re-named Orlando International Airport - the last stop before Disney World! It's a happier place now, but back then it was the home of a bomber squadron of B-52's, the largest bombers in the Air Force.

MAFB had runways 12,000 feet long - some of the longest in the country - because a fully loaded B-52 required every bit of that for take off and landing.

As the war progressed there was more activity at the base and the bombers would often scramble in the middle of the night. We didn't have air conditioning, so we left the windows open at night, and I could hear the whine of the engines, revving up for take off.

Then they would come - one after the other, every few minutes, screaming over the house,

see Fear, continued p. 2

WHAT'S NEW?

Tuition Anxieties

During this difficult time we know that some parents in our community have lost employment temporarily. Tuition payments may be a hardship at the moment. We are absolutely committed to helping you. If you need to make new payment arrangements or defer a tuition payment, and we have not already spoken with you, please email Linda Hackenbracht at lhackenbracht@newcovenantschools.org. Please do this immediately before you miss payments. We want to work with parents but we won't know how to do that if we don't have a conversation. Please remember that during this stressful time, we are also continuing to pay bills and meet the obligations we have to our teachers and staff. We want to care for all members of our community, and we want to alleviate your anxiety regarding finances.

THINK.

LEARN.

LOVE.

LIVE.

which was in the jet path, rattling the windows with a deafening roar that nearly shook me out of my bed.

I was terrified. I would bury my head under my pillow and pray that it would stop. In my mind the bombers were loaded and headed to Hanoi, which, in my limited understanding was only a short flight away. We were at war, and I was afraid - very afraid.

Not much has changed in 2,000 years. The Gospels of St. Mark and Luke rehearse the story of Jesus and his disciples, who embarked over the sea of Galilee after a long day of work. Jesus was exhausted and fell asleep on a pillow in the stern. The disciples sailed the boat until a vicious pop-up storm rose, sending huge waves crashing into the boat. They were experienced sailors, but even they panicked as the boat took on water and started to sink.

They scrambled to the back of the boat where Jesus was lying, and screamed at him with accusation, "Don't you care that we are about to die? How are you sleeping?" Jesus stood up and "rebuked the winds and the sea," and immediately they were still. Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?"

I note from this story that Jesus was not chiding them for taking precaution or for seeking to save themselves. He gently pointed out **that fear need not be the automatic companion of caution.**

I am sure that some of our students have anxiety about covid-19, as it seemingly stalks us relentlessly. The media is largely sensational, and there is a good bit of panic in the population. Leaders give us conflicting information, and the best medical minds we trust offer sobering possibilities, which we should not dismiss. We take precautions, we listen to experts and to government officials, and we do what we

are advised to do.

Fear, however, follows easily. The message of Christ is remarkable in that he asks us to answer the question, "Why are we afraid?" We would rather hear him say, "Peace, be still," and we wish that the germs would likewise obey, like the wind and the sea.

So we must learn to trust. Our circumstances require us to exercise faith so that we would ultimately dread nothing above the loss of Christ. This is hard. Parents do not always feel confident that they are good at comforting their children.

My own mother, born in 1934, was five years old when Hitler invaded Poland to begin World War II. My grandfather had a radio, and played it loudly during dinner time, anxious to hear Edward R. Murrow's live reports on CBS. She, too, was terrified.

Years later when I was a young adult we compared memories about my bombers and her radio, and realized that we had experienced common fears. It was a profound moment when I realized that my mother's comfort to me was born out of her own childhood. It was also born out of her faith, a faith she had come to possess as a young 28-year old mother, just before she brought me into the world.

I hope that you, too, will seek the way of faith. I am not advocating an easy recipe by which you escape or deny the real anxiety of the moment. Jesus didn't deny the ferocity of the storm to his disciples, or pretend that they were not in danger. Rather, he invited them to enter a new reality, a new understanding, that dangerous storms such as they experienced were not random events, but completely under his control. As such, they were not occasions for fear, but for faith.



Rembrandt's *Storm on the Sea of Galilee*, 1633, oil on canvas (stolen from a Boston museum, and missing since 1990)

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS' STAFF

was on duty at 8:00 am this morning handling dozens of your calls at the Help Desk. Kathy Mosher and Linda Simon will continue to be available to you 8:30 am to 2:30 pm all week. We will also monitor the Gryphons at Home Help Desk on Facebook.



HANDS & HEARTS Are you wondering about Hands & Hearts? Coronavirus cannot stop New Covenant. We will still complete our service day, but we will do so at a later date! There are plenty of areas in which our school community can help the local community in the upcoming weeks. The Salvation

Army is working overtime, the Arc is attempting to service the daily needs of those in their care, and the projects at Rush Homes remain undone until help arrives. So we will go and serve our community at the appropriate time, where we are needed more than ever!

Thank you for returning your sponsorship packets. The letters you completed will be mailed within the week to your friends and family. Be watching your email for communication regarding incentive prizes. We'll have virtual tickets issued and drawings for the give aways.

And what about the t-shirts? We have finalists for the art contest and will be choosing the winning design soon. The Hands & Hearts T-shirt will be produced and every student will receive the new shirt to proudly wear around campus.

Our project theme verse "For the love of Christ compels us (2 Cor. 5:14)" gives us the reason for continuing with

this event. Our community needs us and we will step up to fill the void. Be watching for further communications regarding Hands & Hearts in the upcoming weeks.



AS YOUR CHILDREN CONNECT to their virtual classroom space, whether they are in first grade or in eleventh, they will not be able to join the classroom until their teachers log into that space. It's great if you click the link early, but please don't fret if you don't immediately connect to your teacher. This is basic classroom management in the virtual world. We cannot "let students into the room" until we are there to supervise!"

Mrs. Haley's kindergarten class opened today on Zoom! Here is what morning prayer looked like!

