



Scenes from the Science Fair Challenges in the Moomaw Center on March 10.



THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

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THE LEAFY AND ROOTED TREE

by Dr. Erin H. Uminn, Principal of the School of Rhetoric

When our youngest students enter the halls of New Covenant Schools, parents put great thought into what their young children will encounter during the K-12 years. At that time it is hard to imagine our six-year-olds as high school graduates entering adulthood. We know as parents that graduation will arrive more quickly than we would like, but hopes center largely on our child(ren) making friends at school, connecting with a wonderful teacher, learning to write their letters beautifully, sounding out phonograms, skip-counting with

pleasure, and being mesmerized by stories and tales that fill their imaginations. We hope they also learn how to love their neighbor, learn what God requires through his Word, and how to have gratitude for life's blessings. This is the heart of New Covenant Schools' mission to raise children in virtue through historic Christianity and the Western tradition through the canon of languages and literature. They are tiny, sprouted seeds responding to water and light, still in need of shelter and guidance.

As students progress through the Grammar,

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WHAT'S NEW?

Gentle Folk Podcast



The winter season at New Covenant has all of us watching our inbox for that "Gentle Folk" message from our headmaster giving updates on the opening or closing of school. We all enjoy the various stories that are shared from his childhood and other life experiences or the way he gently educates us on classical education. Have you ever thought, "He should write a book"? Well maybe he will, but for now New Covenant is launching a podcast.

The Gentle Folk Podcast will be released on the first Monday of each month beginning **April 7**. The podcast will be 20 minutes in length consisting of discussions between **Headmaster Heaton** and guests. The first episode will feature Grammar School principal **Bridges Spiva**, Middle School principal **Kathryn Martin**, and School of Rhetoric lead teacher **Jessica Arango**. The Gentle Folk Podcast will live on our website for now but you will also receive a text each month with a link for a quick way to listen at your leisure. We hope you will take the time to listen each month and enjoy getting to know our school community through this venue.

THINK. LEARN. LOVE. LIVE.

H O N O R A R I A

2025 SENIOR THESIS TITLES

	THESIS TITLE
Ellie Bonebright	<i>The Differences Between Private and Foster Care Adoption: How Private Adoption Impacts Foster Care</i>
James Brophy	<i>The Solitude Solution: The Benefits of Spending Time Alone</i>
John Brophy	<i>Redefining Humanity: The Case for Full Human Status of all Members of the Genus Homo</i>
Lizzie Bryant	<i>One Myth to Rule Them All: How Christ is the Fulfillment of All Myths and Stories</i>
Abby Burton	<i>Toxic Dependence: The Undeniable Consequences of the War on Drugs on Black Americans</i>
Lizzy Deneen	<i>Wired for Worry: How the Effects of Social Media and Parental Coddling Have Caused Gen Z to Become Known as the Anxious Generation</i>
Jack Duncan	<i>Recreational Hunting: An Ethical and Effective Strategy for Balancing Conservation and Wildlife Population Management</i>
Cameron Edwards	<i>Self-Driving Cars: Would You Be Willing to Let Go of the Wheel?</i>
Emma Fritz	<i>The Athlete's Journey: Navigating the Struggle to Build and Maintain a Healthy Athletic Identity Within Sports and Beyond, Through Effective Mentorship, Personal Reflection, and Player Development Programs</i>
Lucas Gorman	<i>What Is NIL? The Transformation of Collegiate Sports</i>
Corey Hackenbracht	<i>Saladin: A Christian's Vindication of a Muslim Conqueror</i>
Cora Helm	<i>Beyond Mimesis: How Stories Are Writing You</i>
Grace Hendricksen	<i>The Reevaluation of Custody Laws and their Dangers: The Case for Federal Mandates to Protect Children and Families from Inconsistent Legal Practices</i>

	THESIS TITLE
Ellie Jacobs	<i>Shaping Reality: The Disinformation Problem in American Elections and How to Cure It</i>
Graham Kowalski	<i>The Origin of Matter: A Review of Baryogenesis Models</i>
Melia Leitner	<i>Super-Size Sons: The Causes and Solutions of Childhood Obesity in the United States</i>
Noah McCormick	<i>The Hidden Struggles of Professional Athletes: Navigating Role Model Pressure, Mental and Physical Challenges, and Performance Stress</i>
Jenna Ng	<i>Seeing Beyond Black and White: The Necessity for Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies in the United States Today</i>
Mary Place	<i>A New and Improved Journalism: How Joan Didion Helped to Transform a Genre</i>
Reese Richardson	<i>The Unrealized Effects of Social Media on the Brain</i>
John Scruggs	<i>The Cosmic Question: An Analysis of the Possibility of Extraterrestrial Life</i>
Declund Stevenson	<i>Justice Has Been Done: Providing a Just War Theory for Targeted Killing</i>
Carrington Thackston	<i>Music on the Brain: Neuroscience, Human Behavior, and Ethics</i>
Emily Trautman	<i>Shifting Minds: The Impact of the Pandemic on Adolescent Mental Health</i>
Jocelyn Walker	<i>Infant Baptism Versus Believer's Baptism: A Comparative Analysis of the Theological Debate and Practical Implications—An Argument for Paedobaptism and How It Is Not Necessary for Salvation</i>
Brey Welch	<i>Divine Design: An Exploration of Scripture's Vision of the Role of Women According to Traditional Biblical Womanhood and Its Enduring Influence on Gender in Society</i>

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

EVENSONG

All Saints will be hosting Evensong (sung Evening Prayer) every Wednesday in Lent beginning at 6:30pm in the Marie Macdonald Chapel. Each service will be followed by a soup and salad supper in the Grammar School Commons. **Lukas Stock, John Heaton, and Davidson Morse** will give in turn a Lenten meditation after the supper. All are invited!

REPORT CARDS

Parents will receive an email with a link to view student report cards **Wednesday, April 2**.

EASTER BREAK

Maundy Thursday is **April 17** and **students will have a noon dismissal**

that day. Easter Break will begin on **Friday, April 18** and continue through **Monday, April 21**. Students will return to school on Tuesday, April 22.

CAFETERIA VOLUNTEERS

The lunchroom needs additional volunteers to assist with the microwaves during lunchtime from 11:25-1:15. This is a great opportunity to serve our students and help keep lunch running smoothly. Dads and grandparents are welcome too. If you are available to help, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, please contact **Debbie Williamson** at dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

GUITAR LESSONS

Allegro Music School has additional guitar lesson spots available starting in April at New Covenant. If interested,

please contact **Julia Sansone** at julia@allegromusic.school.

MOMS' NIGHT OUT

Join us for our annual Moms' Night Out on **Friday, April 25**, from 5:30-10:00pm at the offices of **Dan and Rachel Vollmer** (221 Wiggington Road). **Leslie Moeller**, current board member and Head of School at Geneva School of Boerne in Texas, will share insights on the unique journey of being a mom in a classical school. Afterwards, there will be plenty of time to eat, relax, and fellowship. The event is free and open to all moms. Come and enjoy the evening with us! To sign up click the following link: bit.ly/moms_night2025

ART FAIR WINNERS

4TH / 5TH / 6TH

BEST IN SHOW—Naomi Johnson - *Illusions*

MIXED MEDIA

- 1st—Naomi Johnson - *Illusions*
- 2nd—Eliane Enlow - *En Bullin a Bakery Shop*
- 3rd—Ella Dunaway - *Geode*

PAINTING

- 1st—Berkley Coleman - *Horizons*
- 2nd—Isaac Kolegue - *Old Cabin*
- 3rd—Cameron Wertz - *What if?*

PHOTOGRAPHY

- 1st—Wills Gauger - *Winter Wonderland*
- 2nd—Molly Lovell - *Forgotten*
- 3rd—Isaac Phelps - *Peacock in Hawaii*

SCULPTURE

- 1st—Olivia Steed - *Chainsaw Carved Bear*
- 2nd—Mia Miller - *Butterfly Garden*
- 3rd—Bertie Seckman - *Horse Pot*

FILM

- 1st—William Marotta - *2025 Nascar Race of Champions*
- 2nd—Addy Trittipoe - *Wink*
- 3rd—Abram Van Wynsberg - *Stop Motion Story*

7TH / 8TH / 9TH

BEST IN SHOW—Elena Hodges - *The Realm Between Worlds*

MIXED MEDIA

- 1st—Mindy Morse - *Red Dragon*
- 2nd—Bethany Beavers - *Firestar Running in the Sun*
- 3rd—Mindy Morse - *Colored Sunset*

PAINTING

- 1st—Elena Hodges - *The Realm Between Worlds*
- 2nd—Shelton Speakes - *Flowers*
- 3rd—Charis Durand - *Look Up*

PHOTOGRAPHY

- 1st—Christian Henson - *Stairwell*
- 2nd—Geno Kolegue - *Ice Block*
- 3rd—Emilia Andrade - *Twirly Mushroom*

SCULPTURE

- 1st—Morgan Eggleston - *Witch's Gift*
- 2nd—Gwen Kesler - *Giraffes*
- 3rd—Morgan Eggleston - *Virgil*

10TH / 11TH / 12TH

BEST IN SHOW—Ruby Helm - *Girl in Thought*

MIXED MEDIA

- 1st—Ruby Helm - *Mary Cassatt: Mother & Child*
- 2nd—Jenna Ng - *Corporate Worship*
- 3rd—Ashe Smith - *Blood, Sweat, & Tearing*

PAINTING

- 1st—Ruby Helm - *Girl in Thought*
- 2nd—Mary Place - *Room!*
- 3rd—Graden Bolton - *Van Gogh's Mountains*

PHOTOGRAPHY

- 1st—Emma Haupricht - *Treviso*
- 2nd—Ruby Helm - *Subway*
- 3rd—John Paul Gauger - *Log Cabin*

SCULPTURE

- 1st—Ruby Helm - *Titanic + Harry Potter*
- 2nd—Cora Helm - *Shark Museum*
- 3rd—Sam Miller - *Watermelon With Snake for a Rind*

SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

5TH GRADE (TALL TOWERS)

Team: *The Fungi's*

- Emmy Roberts, Elisabeth Andrade, Naomi Johnson, Eliane Enlow

6TH GRADE (BRIDGE BUILDING)

Team: *M.E.A.M.S.*

- Macy Vollmer, Maisie Christian, Sterling Moody, Eve Hilton, Molly Lovell

7TH GRADE (TOWER OF PASTA)

Team: *Science is Purrfect*

- Mason Bryars, Annalise Gutenkauf, Bethany Beavers

8TH GRADE (STRAW ROCKETS)

Team: *Wet Bananas*

- Aydin Gezen, Zack Winters, Luke Ancona, Wyatt Gill

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

1st Place—Lizzy Deneen, Cora Helm, Melia Leitner, Mary Place

2nd Place—Emma Christian, Christian Henson, Sol Knapton, Josiah Thornhill

3rd Place—Lizzie Bryant, Ruby Helm, Jenna Ng, Brey Welch

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Dialectic, and Rhetoric schools, these same lessons are taught repeatedly, in age-appropriate ways, challenging them to develop their understanding of what it means to love Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. At each stage, they are encouraged to become eloquent in the written and spoken word, vigorously seeking to know God, self, and the world. They are instructed and shepherded in prudent speech and action, becoming benevolent and rich in good works. They are encouraged to strengthen their own faith and participate in their faith communities as well as the life of the school. Throughout this learning process that blends days into years, students learn to encounter their success with humility and failure with confidence. This is not a process of perfection, but one in which, like seeds, is planted and watered. Its roots grow deeper and stronger over time. The weathered tree begins to branch out.

This week, 26 senior class students will participate in the culminating project of their K-12 careers: the senior thesis defense. In truth, they have been preparing for this moment from the time they were in Grammar School, as they grew in their reading fluidity, comprehension, and imitation. In the middle school years, they began formal logic and composition study, playing around with argumentation both orally

and in written form. As they entered the School of Rhetoric, they began a study of rhetorical devices and analysis that spread to all disciplines of study over four years. They have developed a large store of authors, texts, and events that feed into big ideas and enduring questions—Who is God? What does it mean to be just? How does one live ethically?

Last summer, the seniors gained approval for thesis topics and began reading source material. They constructed numerous source reports, pulling the pivotal information and citations needed for their argument, synthesizing their research. The thesis paper requires a student to pinpoint an issue or a problem that they link to a great question, becoming part of the Great Conversation that has continued throughout history as human beings consider their place in the world.

On Thursday and Friday of this week, regular classes in the SOR are suspended for two days, and thesis defenses run on the model of an academic conference in three ‘breakout’ sessions. These happen simultaneously, each with a different senior ‘defending’ his or her thesis. Seniors are tasked with taking their 15 – 20-page paper and distilling it down to a 15-minute oral presentation with slides. This is followed by Q&A for 45 minutes conducted by the student’s thesis advisor and the secondary reader (see thesis

topic titles on pg. 2). On Friday evening, we close out Defense 2025 at Senior Night. Seniors and their parents attend a commemorative evening filled with celebratory encomiums, written and read by teachers.

Seniors are encouraged to know that they have spent a considerable amount of time studying and researching a topic of interest in their sphere of influence. It is a great accomplishment for them to stand in front of their family, friends, and teachers as a living testament to the spiritual and academic investment and commitment of their growing up years. It is always a great joy for parents and teachers to honor them and to let them know that this is only the beginning of what they are capable of accomplishing, if they continue to seek virtue and lifelong learning. Like tall, leafy trees with strong roots, they are slowly moving into their place as soon-to-be graduates of New Covenant Schools. We could not be prouder of their success.



HANDS & HEARTS

Thank you to those who have returned sponsorship packets. Tickets will come home with the youngest student in each family on **April 14** and tickets will be collected at lunch from **April 15 & 16** with prize drawings to be held on **April 22**. If you have not returned your packet and would like to participate, please bring it to the office completed as soon as possible.

QUID NOVI

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CLASS OF 2025 — Neil Bohnert, Leslie Moeller, Bob Price, Leland Seckman, Dan Vollmer

CLASS OF 2026 — John Gauger, Nancy Hall, Chris Misiano, Sam Mizener, Tom Rogers,

Anne Umbarger | CLASS OF 2027 — Dusty Miller, Court Shipman, Davidson Morse, Warden

EX OFFICIO

John Heaton—Headmaster

OUR MISSION

New Covenant Schools is an educational community serving families of Central Virginia, providing an exceptional education in a classical curriculum within the framework of historic Christianity, furnishing the student with the tools of education and the inspiration to be a lifelong learner.

new covenant schools