

Kindergarten classes celebrated 100 Days of School last week by donning the attire of centenarians and learning about the aging process.



THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

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AND NOW FOR SOME COMPLAINTS

by John Heaton, Headmaster

Every parent and teacher has heard them. The frustrated student who complains about school, usually because he encounters it in a way that is not ordered to his liking or expectation. Such complaints fall into several categories, and it's helpful to identify them.

Complaints About Meaning and Purpose.

These are the most common and are usually captured in pointed soundbites: "Why do I have to learn this?" or "When am I ever going to use this?" In the age of Google and AI, we can add a new one, "Why do I need to know this if I can just look it up?" These are actually good questions because the underlying

issue pertains to knowledge as intrinsically valuable or merely utilitarian. If it is the latter, the student might have an arguable point. The truth is that we learn things we might never "use," because they are aspects of the world God made. There are no neutral facts; all discoverable facts are connected to the infinite mind of God and are *prima facie* worthy of our attention, reflection, and even mastery. It is the mark of ignorance and immaturity that fails to understand this—which is precisely where young students are situated. They are not mature enough to make a judgment on the value of the material before them and will only realize much later the wisdom of

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WHAT'S NEW?

Basketball Tournaments Begin This Week

It's tournament time again at New Covenant. Our varsity men's and women's basketball teams will be represented in the Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association's (VISAA) end-of-season play this week. Our varsity men finished the regular season ranked #8 in VISAA Division III. They will host

#9 Walsingham Academy from Williamsburg, VA in first round play on **Tuesday, February 24 at 5:30pm** in the Workman Field House.

Our varsity women finished the regular season ranked #4 in VISAA Division III. They have a first-round bye and will host a quarterfinal game on **Wednesday, February 25 at 5:00pm**.

VISAA mandates that we charge \$5 admission for everyone over the age of 12 for both games. As always, New Covenant will cover the charges for all NCS students and faculty. Let's fill the stands on Tuesday and Wednesday this week and support our teams. Go Gryphons!

H O N O R A R I A

HAIBACH SELECTED TO PERFORM AT CARNEGIE HALL

Senior **Stone Haibach** was recently selected out of 10,000 applicants for the High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall. Stone performed the string bass earlier this month with the Honors Symphony Orchestra. Participation in the Honors Ensembles is limited to the highest-rated young performers from across the world.



Stone Haibach playing at Carnegie Hall.

Stone joined performers from across the United States and abroad for a special performance at the world-famous Carnegie Hall, a venue that marks the pinnacle of musical achievement. The finalists came together in New York City where they had the opportunity to learn from world-renowned conductors, work with other performers, and get a taste of New York.

Stone has studied music for 10 years and, in addition to his participation in the New Covenant program, is a member of the Lynchburg Symphony Youth Orchestra and the University of Lynchburg Chamber Orchestra. Stone commented that he was "honored to play at Carnegie Hall and this marks a great milestone in my musical journey." Congratulations on a job well done!

CHORAL STUDENTS NAMED TO ALL-DISTRICT CHOIR

Eight School of Rhetoric students from New Covenant were selected from a field of 447 for All-District Choir at Radford University. After two full days of rehearsals and a



(L-R) Xander Arbaugh-Turner, Enoch Tan, Emma Haupricht, Gia Barlow, Ruby Helm, Charlotte McCarty. (Not pictured: Ian Gill, Elora Williams)

special concert experience, they performed for family and friends. Many guest conductors were brought in to help guide participants. Our students were under the direction of Dr. Chris Hansen, Director of Choral Activities at Virginia Commonwealth University. Congratulations to our high school students.

ATHLETE REGIONAL HONORS



- Tristan IsenhourBRAC 1st Team All-Conference—Basketball
- Alicia KennyBRAC 1st Team All-Conference—Basketball
- Charlotte LibbeyBRAC 2nd Team All-Conference—Basketball



FUNDRAISING REPORT

	GOAL	RECEIVED
Annual Fund	\$300,000	\$312,700
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$53,070
Scholarship Foundation	\$300,000	Pledged Received \$463,700 \$440,511

Please consider New Covenant Schools in your giving. All gifts are tax-deductible to the extent that the law provides. Donations may be given through cash, check, stock transfers, or IRA distributions. Contact **Dayna Renalds** in the Development Office for more information.

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

PANACHE PRESENTS

The School of Rhetoric is proud to present *Cinderella*. Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased online at <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/nsc-tickets> or on the App under Forms. See insert for show dates and times and a special invitation for students to dress in their best royal attire to meet Cinderella, Prince Charming and other cast members at select shows!

SAVE THE DATE FOR HANDS & HEARTS

Our schoolwide service day will be **Wednesday, April 22**. Parents are welcome to work alongside students completing tasks for area nonprofit groups. Watch for more information in the next few weeks.

GENERATIONS DAY

Generations Day will be held on **Friday, March 13**. Grandparents and other special guests are invited to join students in class for the morning. **There will be an 11:00am dismissal on this day.**

SPRING BREAK

Spring Break will begin on **Monday, March 16** and continue through **Friday, March 20**. Students will return to school on **Monday, March 23**.

SPRING ATHLETIC REGISTRATION

If your Middle School or SOR student plans to participate in a spring sport, please complete the registration form using the following link: <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/athletic-sign-up-form/>. Students must be registered to participate. For more details, including practice start dates, please see the email sent from Tiffany Fulcher on **February 9**.

ART & SCIENCE FAIR

Plan to join us **Monday, March 9** for the Art & Science Fair. Come out and view the artistic endeavors of our students and enjoy watching them compete in various science challenges. Art viewing will begin at 5:30pm, and science challenges will start around 6:00pm. Hot dog combo meals will be available to purchase. This is an enjoyable event for the whole family and not one to miss.

CHILDCARE TAX DOCUMENTS

Need payment details for Pre-K or Aftercare for tax purposes? Access them easily through your FACTS Family Portal (District Code: NCS-VA):

- Go to **Financial > Financial Home**
- Under **Payment Plans & Billing**, select **View Details**
- Click **View Payment Summary** and choose the tax year

Your payment summary and New Covenant's Federal Tax ID will be displayed. For assistance, contact **April Andrade** at aandrade@newcovenantschools.org.

WINTER SPORTS AWARDS

The award ceremonies for our JV/Varsity winter sports teams and athletes will be held on **Wednesday, March 11** at **12:40pm**.

WORKOUT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

New Covenant alum **Janna Renalds** ('21) is offering a workout & training program for moms at New Covenant on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. Sessions include strength training, cardio, and flexibility. For details and pricing, contact Janna at renaldj828@lynchburg.edu.

MOMS IN PRAYER

All moms are invited to this weekly meeting for a time of prayer. Come join us in this new year as we pray for our children and our school community. We meet **Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00pm** in the Marie Macdonald Chapel.

FREE COFFEE

Our school will be sponsoring two hours of coffee at The Mingo in Forest (14805 Forest Rd.). Stop by with your friends to visit with our staff from **8:00 to 10:00am** on **Friday, February 27**.

BREAKFAST WITH THE HEADMASTER

You are cordially invited to join Headmaster **John Heaton** for breakfast along with other parents from New Covenant at the home of **Naomi and JoeDee Hostetler** on **Wednesday, March 11** at 8:45am. Please check your schedule and let us know you are coming here: bit.ly/HHbreakfast26. Headmaster Heaton looks forward to visiting with each of you, answering questions, and sharing ways to support your child and participate in our school community.



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their teachers.

The heavy burden of the school and its faculty is to present material properly, avoiding a creeping instrumentalism, “This will help you get into college,” or “This will improve your résumé.” Such statements are not false, but they are secondary. In the classical, Christian curriculum, we study a thing because it is true; we apply ourselves to learning because a thing is beautiful; we wrestle with hard things because they form the soul. It takes time for a child to grow into this awareness.

Engagement and Interest

Complaints. A student gets in the car, and when asked about the day, replies, “School is soooo boring,” or “Can’t we do something more interesting?” Parents are tempted to locate this sentiment in their perception of the child’s intellectual ability, quietly believing that ‘yes, my child is very bright and is under-challenged in school.’ Sometimes that may be the case, but it might also be overlooking the tendency in children—even capable ones—to succumb to the vice of *acedia*, otherwise known as sloth. This condition should not be understood as laziness.

Slothful students and adults are sometimes the busiest of all. Sloth is not busyness vs. idleness; rather, sloth is a posture of the heart that is bored with the world as being unworthy of attention, coupled with an unwillingness to engage actively. In its most mature (and deadly) form, sloth is boredom with God himself. In its nascent form sloth is the affliction that sets in over long summer breaks when parents hear the “I’m bored” complaint far too much! It’s not that there’s nothing to do; there’s plenty with which to occupy oneself, but engagement takes interest coupled with effort. Parents should address this forthrightly for what it is. The underlying question at stake is this: Is learning meant to delight the mind, or merely occupy time? Good

teachers counter this when they are able continually to experience wonder in what they teach and convey that to students in their care.

Social and Identity Complaints. A third category of frustration is found in the way students belong and compare themselves to one another. By middle

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school students are very aware of which students make the highest grades, which students are the best athletes, and which students come from affluent families, meaning they have more gadgets and better vacations. We call this the “Brains-Body-Bank” syndrome and we teach into it. It manifests itself, in part, when a student says, “Everyone gets it but me;” or “I’m just bad at math.” Maybe they don’t say anything at all but carry a quiet shame, embarrassed by their perceived deficit. The antidote to this is to identify it as a self-labeling reflex, and to recognize the underlying question which is this: Is learning a performance or is it a process

of becoming? Of all places, school should be a safe place to fail and to try again. Our vision for students is that they learn to meet failure with confidence and success with humility. Struggle—academic, social, athletic—is a means of growth, and as such is not something to be avoided. Healthy struggle, however, is co-opted by too easily allowing a self-defined label to stick, even as we account for students with diagnosed impediments that make learning difficult.

Student complaints should be seen for what they are, even though children do not fully understand what they are saying. Their complaints are actually not objections but unarticulated questions. They pertain to the very grown-up issues of meaning, agency, identity, affections, and delight. Put this way, we can welcome the student complaint, confident that a classical, Christian education is uniquely designed to entertain the inquiry, and that the classical, Christian teacher is striving to meet students with the support they need to grow in wisdom and virtue.

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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