



Eighth-grade boys work on their lifting technique with Mr. Renalds before hitting the weights.

THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

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WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT ACCREDITATION

by Kathryn Martin, Middle School Principal

I remember the first time I was introduced to memes. It was 2019 and a friend texted me a photo of a woman pointing and yelling angrily alongside a photo of a smug white cat. Apparently this was an internet sensation at the time. Having a complete lack of presence on social media and being generally low-tech, I didn't get the joke or the reference and told her so. She patiently explained that it was supposed to be funny, and, in this case, it was making sport of the public's mixed reaction to a local college advancing to the status of a university.

Recently, I got to thinking about what a meme about school accreditation might look like.

Perhaps a sparkling school building alongside a patient getting a root canal? Or truckloads of documentation alongside runners collapsing at the end of a marathon? Yes, I'm mostly kidding, but as you may know the average accreditation process leaves many schools like ours less than inspired. It can require heavy make-work to be interpreted by organizations who may not know who we are or what we, as a Classical Christian school, are attempting to do. In those circumstances, competence and excellence in accomplishing the aims of Classical Christian education may exist, but if they do, who can see it? While physical appearance, financial

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WHAT'S NEW?

**Save the Date—
Men's Retreat,
November 15**

You will want to reserve the evening of **Friday, November 15**. It's the night of the annual Men's Retreat at Bold Branch Farm in Bedford County. This event is usually met with great anticipation as dads from our school head to the country for a night of food from the grill (and it's good food too!), a bonfire, and other outdoor activities. Some even stay the night in their own tent, camper, or even car. This year, we have scheduled our friend, **Keith McCurdy**, to come and speak to our group. McCurdy has been with us a couple of times already and is glad to come speak to just the men of New Covenant. Plan now to join us and watch for more detailed information to come in a few weeks.



Keith McCurdy

H O N O R A R I A

JENNA NG NAMED NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR SEMIFINALIST

Senior Jenna Ng has been named as a National Merit Scholar Semifinalist. The National Merit Scholarship Program recognizes the highest-achieving students across the country. More than 1.3 million students from over 21,000 U.S. high schools participated in the program by taking the 2023 PSAT. Semifinalists like Jenna represent the top scores in their respective states and are now eligible for National Merit Scholarships, which will be announced in the spring. This prestigious honor is awarded to less than 1% of high school students who took the PSAT during their junior year. Jenna is one of fewer than 17,000 students nationwide to receive this recognition and one of only two in our area.



SPORTS SCORES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

5/6 BOYS' SOCCER

Lynchburg Homeschool	1
New Covenant	7

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

VARSITY WOMEN'S TENNIS

New Covenant	9
Eastern Mennonite	0

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Covenant School	0
New Covenant	2

7/8 BOYS' SOCCER

Covenant School	1
New Covenant	2

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

New Covenant	7
Dayspring Christian	1

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

VARSITY WOMEN'S TENNIS

New Covenant	4
Chatham Hall	5

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

5/6 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant	0
Lynchburg Homeschool	2

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Eastern Mennonite	2
New Covenant	1

VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Eastern Mennonite	0
New Covenant	3

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant	0
Lynchburg Homeschool	2

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant	1
Lynchburg Homeschool	2

VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant	1
Lynchburg Homeschool	3

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

New Covenant	1
Eastern Mennonite	0



IN STEP

In Step is a new feature in QUID NOVI offering ancient wisdom and up-to-date research for parenting and community life.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might . . . —Ecclesiastes

Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men. —St. Paul

“Life is a long series of “whatever’s.” I set out after high school with an eye toward the ministry of the Church, but I had little real idea of what that entailed, much less how to get there. Without much guidance, what was I to do? I did the next thing, whatever it was. I took a step in the right direction, and then another; and then another. Each time, I picked up more counsel from friends, professors, and elders. Then I did the next thing.”

“When the road ahead is unclear, be

content to take the next step, then the next. You can make a plan, but whatever it is that comes into life, embrace it, and take advantage of the opportunity. Don’t overthink it. Engage the next thing to the fullest, whatever it is, and when that has been accomplished, do the next thing, whatever it is, and do it to the fullest. Keep doing that over and over, whatever after whatever. After a short period of years you’ll be able to look back and see how each thread in the tapestry of your life contributed to the formation of the whole. Do the next thing, and the next thing. Avoid moral mistakes and sins that will beset you. Walk faithfully. Commit your way unto the Lord and he will bring your life to fruitfulness.”

Taken from John Heaton's 2024 Commencement address, and many other occasions around campus.

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

LUNCH ORDERING

October lunch ordering is open now through **Friday, September 20**. Please log in to your FACTS app or desktop account to place your orders. Pizza **does not** have to be preordered unless you require a gluten-free or dairy-free pizza. Items featured in October are potatoes and chili, baked pasta, spaghetti & meatballs, soft beef tacos, chicken pot pie, breakfast burritos, and more. Questions? Contact **Debbie Williamson** at dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

TEXT NOTIFICATION

New Covenant Schools tested the Remind texting service this past **Tuesday, September 10**. If you did not receive the notification, please reach out to **Eliza Olson** at eolson@newcovenantschools.org.

PRE-K/KINDERGARTEN 2025-26

Now is the time to submit a new student application if you intend for your child to begin Pre-K or Kindergarten for the 2025-26 school year. We offer early enrollment to our current families, and sibling applications for all other grades are also being accepted. **Please note, if your child is currently enrolled in our Pre-K program you do not need to re-apply.**

Your application for a new sibling will receive priority in our admissions process until **Friday, October 11, 2024**, but we encourage you to apply today! Application is easy. Simply use this link to our website to begin: <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/admissions/apply-here/>. School tours are also open. If you would like to learn more about our Pre-K-12 program or know another family

who is interested in our school, please use this link to schedule a tour <https://www.newcovenantschools.org/admissions/schedule-a-tour/> or contact **Linda Simon** in the admissions office by emailing lsimon@newcovenantschools.org.

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

HJ Photo will be on campus **Thursday, September 26** to take individual and classroom photos. Please make every effort to **have your student on time and do not plan any appointments on this day, if possible**. All photo ordering will be done online, and nothing is needed from you in advance. Senior class, individual, formal and casual portraits will also be taken on this day, so please make sure to have a casual outfit in accordance with dress code guidelines, Thursday's school uniform, and your cap and gown.

FINANCIAL STRATEGIES FOR FUNDING EDUCATION

Would you like to know more about the VA 529 Savings Plan and the VA Educational Improvement Tax Credits Scholarship Program? These programs offer ways for you to pay school tuition with tax-free savings or make a bigger impact with your charitable gift. Join us for breakfast in the library **Wednesday, September 18 at 7:45am** to hear from our Director of Development on how these programs work. Let us know you are attending by clicking here: bit.ly/FundingEd2024.

MUSIC LESSONS

Allegro Music School has partnered with New Covenant to provide on-site music lessons to our students. There are a few spots still available for this school year on piano, guitar and voice. More information at www.allegromusic.school/ncs.

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

PANACHE AUDITIONS

Auditions for *Little Women*, the School of Rhetoric's winter performance, will take place on **Wednesday, October 9 at 3:30pm** in the New Covenant Library. All interested students are encouraged to attend.

DC TRIP

The School of Rhetoric will be going on their annual trip to Washington DC on **Thursday, October 3 - Friday, October 4**. More details to follow.

SOR POETRY RECITAL

Come enjoy hot chocolate, poetry, and a warm fire at the SOR poetry recital, **Monday, September 30 at 7:00pm** in the courtyard. SOR students and parents, check your email for more information.




Follow us on social media!

NCS ATHLETICS

 New Covenant Schools Athletics

 @ncs_athletics

#GoGryphons



On Tuesday, our Cross Country teams hosted 12 other schools for Middle School and Varsity races with over 200 runners. It was a great day for New Covenant:

1. VARSITY MEN - 1ST PLACE
2. VARSITY WOMEN - 1ST PLACE
3. MS BOYS - 1ST PLACE
4. MS GIRLS - 2ND PLACE

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stability, and even student achievement can be observed and supported by data provided to typical accrediting agencies, much of what happens in schools like ours cannot be easily seen from the outside. How are we doing, for example, in orienting students to the givenness of reality and helping them to conform their loves, beliefs, and habits to that reality? And do we prioritize sustainable faculty workloads that facilitate restful learning? Most accrediting agencies do not explore areas like these in their processes.

It turns out we are not alone in our desire to evaluate ourselves on how we are embodying the distinctives of Classical Christian education in every facet of our school's mission. Out of this need, the Society for Classical Learning (SCL), an organization that has been providing support, resources, and mentoring to Classical Christian schools since the mid-nineties, responded to the call, and designed a thoughtful reflective, mission-focused accreditation program with hospitality as one of its core values.

Recently, New Covenant's board of directors overwhelmingly affirmed the pursuit of accreditation with the SCL in the 2024-25 cycle. This opportunity emerged after the formation of the school's Strategic Plan, which calls for continuing accreditation in 2026 with the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS). New Covenant regularly receives high marks and positive feedback from VAIS and will continue to pursue accreditation through them but will add that of the SCL.

Work on this meaningful project begins immediately. We were approved in August as a candidate school and

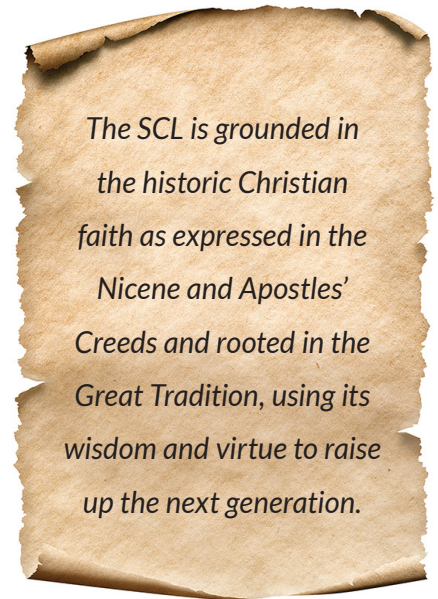
our work over the next several months will culminate in a visit from the SCL accreditation team in April of 2025 and a 20-page report from the SCL providing us with warm and cool feedback and a definite roadmap affirming our future.

In the meantime, New Covenant Schools' board members, faculty and staff will begin meeting and reflecting on many facets of our school to include our Christian commitment, our Classical commitment, school culture, student experience, governance, and advancement. Feedback we will solicit from parents, faculty, and students in our school community will aid us in our discussions which we expect to be invigorating and generative.

Imagine getting to discuss the many aspects of the following mission statement of the SCL as it relates to what we do at New Covenant every day:

"Classical Christian Education aims to cultivate virtue and wisdom in students so they will live for the glory of God, flourishing as human beings loving both God and neighbor. It pursues these goals through an ordered exploration of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful that is grounded in the liberal arts tradition and that forms students' affections and the habits of lifelong learning."

Talk about inspiring! Under this model, we get to discuss the ideals of Classical Christian education within our own context and consider ways to foster improvement. I think accreditation of this kind could inspire an altogether different meme. Perhaps people enjoying a meal together while having spirited discussion alongside a photo of our alumni



returning to New Covenant years after graduation with hearts full of gratitude, telling stories of how their education shaped them well. "Where's the humor in that?" you might ask. (And I would remind you that I'm still bad at memes.) But I do think that kind of result is possible, and I look forward to engaging with our entire community to that end.

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