



MS fifth and sixth graders explore challenges at their yearly retreat at Watermarks Camp, held September 13.



THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

SEPTEMBER 23, 2024
VOL. 27 NO. 06 MAJORIS

THE INVITATION OF POETRY

by Dr. Erin Uminn, High School Principal

Autumn is upon us: burning leaves, cool mornings, blazing color against azure skies, the plop of acorns, warm and spiced comfort food. It means rainy, drizzly days cozied up in a coffee shop with a book, stadium lights bathing the field in a glow of glory, and plucking the harvest before eventually putting our gardens to bed. At New Covenant Schools, autumn means poetry season has arrived once again.

At New Covenant we teach students how to position themselves to respond well to the invitation of poetry, the language of pictures and

music. In short, we must practice reading and writing poetry.

Take the first stanza from John Keats' 1820 poem, "To Autumn":

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells*

continued on p.4

WHAT'S NEW?

Spending Your Tax Dollars

Wouldn't it be nice if you could choose exactly where your state tax dollars would be spent each year? You can! And you do have a voice! We all pay taxes to the Commonwealth, and those funds are distributed between programs which the state deems necessary. However, through the New Covenant Schools Scholarship Foundation, those funds can come here. Donations to our foundation go directly towards scholarships for students and you receive a tax credit or "coupon" against your yearly liabilities to the state. The result is that you have, in fact, redirected your taxes to private education and made your voice known. Tax bills are dramatically reduced or even eliminated and you have helped a student receive a classical, Christian education. A gift by December 31 will allow for a tax credit on your 2024 taxes. Contact **Dayna Renalds** at drenalds@newcovenantschools.org for more information or to begin the donation process.



ORDER YOUR YEARBOOK TODAY

IT'S TIME TO ORDER
YEARBOOKS FOR 2024-25.

Your groceries may be more expensive, but our yearbook price will remain the same as last year! The first yearbook will be \$45 and additional yearbooks will be only \$35! **Our experience proves that the majority of parents appreciate when we automatically order one yearbook per family.**

However, you may opt out of ordering a yearbook. Please email **April Andrade** at aandrade@newcovenantschools.org if you

DO NOT want to receive a yearbook this year.

If we do not hear from you before **October 18**, your FACTS account will be charged \$45 for your family yearbook.

If you want additional yearbooks, we will do the ordering for you through the end of October. Please check your email for a Signup Genius where you can request to purchase additional yearbooks. After **October 31st**, additional books will be \$50 and must be ordered directly from Varsity Yearbook (formerly Herff Jones).



SPORTS SCORES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

5/6 BOYS' SOCCER

James River Day	4
New Covenant.....	1

5/6 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant.....	2
James River Day	0

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant.....	0
Timberlake Christian	2

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant.....	1
James River Day	2

7/8 BOYS' SOCCER

James River Day	0
New Covenant.....	8

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

New Covenant.....	6
Fork Union Military Academy	0

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Miller School	0
New Covenant.....	2

VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Miller School	0
New Covenant.....	3

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Onward Christian.....	0
New Covenant.....	2

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

Carlisle School.....	1
New Covenant.....	8

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Onward Christian.....	0
New Covenant.....	2

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

7/8 BOYS' SOCCER

New Covenant.....	1
South West VA Homeschool	8

VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Temple Christian	0
New Covenant.....	3

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

New Covenant.....	3
South West VA Homeschool	2



IN STEP

In Step offers ancient wisdom and up-to-date research for parenting and community life. More advice from Keith McCurdy:

Before you try medications for ADHD, consider baselining your child with a three-month behavioral regimen.

First, eliminate all use of video games, tablets, and phone exposure. There is plenty of research that points to the negative effects of backlit devices, video graphics, and sustained use of social media platforms on brain development and function. These exposures disturb everything from attention spans to sleep patterns.

Second, put your child to bed at a regular bedtime every night including weekends. The bedtimes should be set

such that child gets at least nine hours of sleep every day for three months.

Third, ensure that the child gets three solid meals per day, the most important of which is a nutritious breakfast that does not include sugary morning snacks. Eliminate soft drinks and, to the extent possible, processed sugar from the diet. Enforce this rigidly.

Fourth, establish an after-school routine for the child which includes finishing homework when arriving home from school, doing all expected chores, and only then enjoying free time. At a minimum, a half hour of outdoor play should be expected daily.

Try it rigidly for three months and re-evaluate. There may be better pathways than medical treatment.

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Parents of students in K-8 grade are invited to bring household pets for a blessing on **Friday, October 4**. More details to come.

ILLNESS POLICIES

During cold and flu season help New Covenant stop the spread of illness by adhering to the following policies. Keep your student at home for:

- A fever greater than 100 degrees. The student may return to school when they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. The student may return to school when they have gone 24 hours without these symptoms.
- Wet, congested or croupy cough.

Consider keeping your child home if they have a mild sore throat, headache, stomachache, or a very runny or stuffy nose and/or cough that could disrupt class. Thank you for your help with this.

TEXT NOTIFICATION

New Covenant Schools tested the Remind texting service on **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! Applying 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.

NONFAMILY AND ALUMNI LUNCH VISITOR POLICY

If an alumni or nonfamily member wishes to eat lunch with a current student, please notify the office at NCsoffice@newcovenantschools.org 24 hours in advance to have it approved by department heads.

SCHOOL PICTURE DAY

HJ Photo will be on campus **Thursday, September 26** to take individual and class 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.

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 for 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 play, 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. All are welcome to attend.

SOR PARENT COFFEE

The next SOR Parent Coffee will be **Friday, October 11 at 8:00am** in the Grammar School Commons. The topic will be *Financial Fit and Affording College*. **Lauren Helm** will discuss trends in college costs, deciphering cost of attendance, scholarships, and the distinction between need and merit-based aid. All SOR parents are welcome and will benefit from gaining familiarity and awareness on this important topic.



*With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their
clammy cells.*

Students learn to slow down and read through the poem silently, dipping their toes into the rhythm and tone before we read the poem aloud together—a critical step. Reading poetry silently is not the same as reading a poem aloud, just as reading song lyrics is not the same as singing them or hearing them sung. Musical notes on a page do not move us until they are played aloud, and a poem must be audible to be experienced. We encounter the lilt and pace. We pick up the alliteration, characterization, mood, imagery, and metaphor. The poets' words flow over and through us, rather than just pinging our dull, armored, and task-addled brains!

So, we read the poem aloud together. The hazy details come into sharper focus. I ask, "Can you sense the rhythm of the poem? Does it have a patterned cadence to it that is recognizable? Is there rhyme? Where is it?" We mark out the rhyme scheme, labeling each ending sound: ABAB, CDED, CFE. This one is a bit trickier to decipher than the typical couplet or ABAB quad, but the rhyme is distinguishable, nevertheless. It works

like a flowing wave that forces us to listen more intently, precisely *because* it isn't exactly predictable. It is not entirely formulaic.

Next, we pull out unfamiliar vocabulary. I explain the construction of a "thatch-eve" and that a "bosom-friend" means a best friend, understood as a "heart-friend." We look for other literary devices, and immediately my students would point out the poet's use of personification. I ask, "Can you define personification?" Here, the season of Autumn is described as the dear friend of the Sun. Together, these heart friends "conspire" to make the most of the coming weeks and months, richly revealing splendor and opulence. The word *conspire* makes us think of good-hearted mischief, to bring about a welcome surprise. They are "personified" as beings who fatten and ripen the fruit. The vine runs, and the bees think. We begin to think of Autumn and the Sun as feeling creatures just like ourselves.

My students also rightfully point out that the poem is dripping with imagery—concrete details that appeal to the senses. We talk about the smells or sounds the poem evokes: the buzzing of bees, the fragrance of the budding flowers, the taste of apples. They share their own memories of Autumn and how Keats'

poem causes them to think fondly of their own seasonal traditions. We call this recognition in classical composition—a connection between human experience and poetry or prose.

We begin to grasp the task set before us—that poetry is much more accessible than we might think. Ask Mrs. Baker's British literature students! Reading the epic Anglo-Saxon poem "Beowulf" is a seemingly daunting task for even the most motivated, but our juniors sink into the heroism of the main character, the evilness of Grendel, and the values of the Geats and the Danes. The students' experience is also tangible when they bring bracelets and rings, they shudder at the beast's destruction of Hrothgar's warriors or the magnificent hall, Heorot, and of course, they read the lines aloud.

John Keats' poem, "To Autumn," is worth reading aloud in its entirety. I invite you to take it a step further—write your own 2-4 lines. You may fall in love with a new art form!

FUNDRAISING REPORT			
	GOAL	RECEIVED	
Annual Fund	\$80,000	\$6,195	
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$1,000	
Scholarship Foundation	\$300,000	<i>Pledged</i>	\$70,800
		<i>Received</i>	\$20,421

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.

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