



Students honor the 210th anniversary of the Star-Spangled Banner at the all-school assembly last Tuesday.

THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024
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THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

by John Heaton, Headmaster

What is this strange custom, the Blessing of the Animals? If you're new to our community, you may have no idea what this is all about. I'll share it with you. It's part show-and-tell, part Medieval history, and part theology.

Here is the show-and-tell part. The Blessing of the Animals is a fun tradition that provides an afternoon for every child in Grammar through Middle School to bring their pets of all types to share with their friends. Actually, mom or dad have to bring them, because we don't start the circus until the last period of the day at 2:00 pm. What can I bring, you

ask? Anything! As long as the critter is one for whom your child is responsible to give care. We've had everything from dogs and cats, to ducks, chickens, goats, ponies, and geckos. If you've got it, we welcome it.

Where did the idea come from? Our tradition of the Blessing of the Animals descends from the legends surrounding the life of St. Francis of Assisi. Francis (b. 1181) was a real person, of course, and the founder of the Franciscan order of monks. Francis preached the teaching of the Church, that the world was created good and beautiful by God but suffers



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WHAT'S NEW?

Zipcast Update

We hope you have been receiving your weekly Zipcast link each Monday morning. This is a new way to stay in touch with announcements and happenings at New Covenant and learn more about classical education. Zipcast is produced by **Davies Owens**, from BaseCamp Live podcast, and he is a leading proponent for classical education. Each week you will hear short segments of valuable information from credible voices explaining more about the education you chose for your child and suggestions for how to guide them through life.

The Zipcast is about ten minutes in length and is a good listen while traveling to school or with a quick cup of coffee. We encourage you to click on the link and listen to our weekly announcements from Mr. Roberts as well as to the joke of the day, parenting questions and answers, and scripture readings. If you are not receiving the Zipcast link, please contact **Eliza Olson** at eolson@newcovenantschools.org.

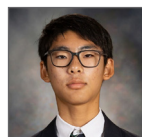
THINK. LEARN. LOVE. LIVE.

H O N O R A R I A

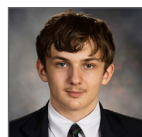
TAN AND GILL ARE CLT-10 SCHOLARS FOR 2023-24



The CLT10 is an online college prep exam for 9th and 10th graders.



Enoch Tan—*Distinguished scholar*: highest score at New Covenant. *Regional scholar*: Top 5% of students taking the test in the southeast region.



Walt Gill—*Regional scholar*: Top 5% of students taking the test in the southeast region.



SPORTS SCORES

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

7/8 BOYS' SOCCER

New Covenant.....	3
Westover Christian Academy.....	2

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

VARSITY MEN'S SOCCER

North Cross.....	2
New Covenant.....	1

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Temple Christian	2
New Covenant.....	1

VARSITY BOYS' XC

New Covenant.....	1st place
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VARSITY GIRLS' XC

New Covenant.....	2nd place
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MS BOYS' XC

New Covenant.....	2nd place
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MS GIRLS' XC

New Covenant.....	1st place
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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

5/6 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Timberlake Christian	2
New Covenant.....	1

7/8 GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

New Covenant.....	2
Covenant School.....	0

7/8 BOYS' SOCCER

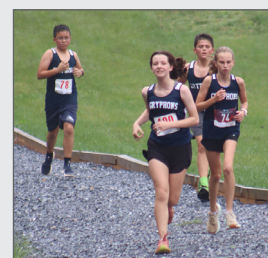
North Cross.....	0
New Covenant.....	1

JV GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Westover Christian	2
New Covenant.....	0

VARSITY WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Westover Christian	3
New Covenant.....	2



MS Cross Country team on the final stretch at home meet last Tuesday.

BRYANT EARNS TOP 10 IN ESSAY CONTEST

Senior **Lizzie Bryant** recently participated in the Worship Lifestyle contest at Liberty University for a chance to earn a \$10,000 scholarship. She wrote an essay describing how actions reflect a lifestyle of worship and then presented it to a panel of judges. Lizzie earned a top-ten placement in a pool of over 150 applicants. Congratulations on a job well done!



GRYPHONS OPEN WATER CERTIFIED

On Sunday, September 22, NCS students, faculty, and parents from the School of Rhetoric completed training to become PADI Open Water Certified scuba divers through instructors Larry Antonacci and Shushawn Schmal from Fluvanna Dive Center.

The training involves 10-12 hours of online coursework; a weekend of confined water diving (15-foot-deep pool); and a weekend of open water diving (Lake Phoenix Scuba Park in Rawlings, VA).

With regular diving, this certification will last a lifetime and opens the door to explore the beauty and creativity of God

hidden below the surface of the water. Many will also travel with NCS to the Bahamas in January with Blackbeard's Liveaboard 65-foot boat to spend a week scuba diving the coral reefs along the Exuma Cays.



Certified students (L-R): Ian Gill, Walt Gill, Stone Haibach, Joseph Robert, Michael Seckman, Charlotte McCarty, Emma Haupricht, Leila Kenny, Alicia Kenny, Emma Christian. Not Pictured: Amy McCarty, Brian Haibach, Pat Kenny.

EVERYONE

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Parents of students in grades K-8 are invited to bring household pets for a blessing on **Friday, October 4**. Please bring **Grammar School** student's caged or leashed pets to the Bell Tower area at **2:00pm**. **Middle School** will follow at **2:40pm**. If you plan to take your student directly from the area, please make sure to sign out the student with their teacher. See today's article for more details.

END OF QUARTER

Mark your calendars for the end of the first quarter. School of Rhetoric's is **Wednesday, October 9**. Grammar and Middle School's will follow on **Friday, October 11**. Report cards will be emailed to parents on **Wednesday, October 23**.

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found bins are purged at the end of each quarter. Be sure to check for any lost items before **Friday, October 11**.


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.

LUNCH ORDERING

November lunch ordering opens on **Friday, October 4** and closes on **Friday, October 18**. Fall Break occurs during that time, so plan accordingly. Items featured include a new Greek Spinach Salad, spaghetti & meatballs, chicken pot pie, hot dogs, tacos, the Gryphon Griddler pancake and sausage sandwich, plus a Thanksgiving turkey lunch with dressing, gravy, and green beans. Please direct

FALL BREAK



There will be no school and the office will be closed for our Fall Break **Monday, October 14 - Wednesday, October 16**. Students return on **Thursday, October 17**.

any questions to **Debbie Williamson** at dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org.

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.

Thank you for your help with this.

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.

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**. Check your email from Dr. Uminn on **September 16**.

SOR POETRY RECITAL

Come enjoy hot chocolate and poetry at the SOR poetry recital, **tonight at 7:00pm** in the Moomaw Center. 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**, our guidance counselor, 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.

a need for redemption because of human sin. He preached to man and beast the universal ability and duty of all creatures to praise God (a common theme in the Psalms) and the duty of men to protect and enjoy nature as both the stewards of God’s creation and as creatures ourselves.

Not surprisingly, on November 29, 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis the Patron Saint of Ecology. Many of the stories that surround the life of St. Francis say that he had a great love for animals and the environment.

Perhaps the most famous incident that illustrates the Saint’s humility towards nature is recounted in the “Fioretti” (“Little Flowers”), a collection of legends and folklore that sprang up after Francis’s death. It is said that, one day, while he was traveling with some companions, they happened upon a place in the road where birds filled the trees on either side. Francis told his companions to “wait for me while I go to preach to my sisters the birds.” The birds surrounded him, intrigued by the power of his voice, and not one of them flew away. He is often portrayed with a bird, typically in his hand.

What are we teaching our children in this tradition? The first thing we affirm is that the world around us has been created by God. It didn’t just happen. Not only did God create the world, but he pronounced it “good,” and made it a

dwelling place for man and beast alike. In the first chapter of Genesis, God blessed the world, the animals and mankind, which is to say, he imparted life and wellness to them. Moreover, he gave charge to our first parents, Adam and Eve, to cultivate and guard the garden where he had placed them. In other words humans have a duty to make the world productive and to prevent harm to it. Properly understood, the Christian faith entails environmental concern.

The challenge that Francis brought, following in the way of Paul and ultimately Jesus, was that it is the world that has things upside down and that they were able to see things correctly. Paul proclaimed that Jesus had overthrown the kingdoms of this world. Jesus preferred the cross and resurrection to the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil. Instead of loving the things of this world as an end in themselves (money, power, fame), Francis loved things because he knew that they were expressions of the overwhelming God who had made them and continued to care for them. So Francis could say, “Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he can enjoy everything.”

So at New Covenant Schools, we do something that may seem a little funny: we bring our pets to school on St. Francis’ Day, the first Friday in October, so that we can bless them. We take the time to say

with Francis that our brother creatures speak sacramentally to us about the love that God bears for us

The whole creation barks, chirps, quacks and howls about the glory of God. Perhaps we should listen to them, at least once a year.

IF YOU’RE COMING TO BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS THIS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4:

- **Grammar School** parents bring pets at **2:00pm**
- **Middle School** parents bring pets at **2:40pm**

All pets should be leashed or caged. No loose animals, please. If you have a large farm animal, please notify the office. Enter the outdoor commons from the front parking lot through the bell tower; do not bring animals indoors. Be prepared to clean up after your pet in the receptacles provided.

FUNDRAISING REPORT			
	GOAL	RECEIVED	
Annual Fund	\$80,000	\$8,670	
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$1,000	
Scholarship Foundation	\$300,000	<i>Pledged</i>	\$73,800
		<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

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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