



Scenes from the celebration of St. Nicholas Day on Friday as St. Nick and his elves leave candy in shoes.

THE NEWSLETTER OF  
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

# QUID NOVI

DECEMBER 9, 2024  
VOL. 27 NO. 15 MAJORIS

## IN SAECULA SAECULORUM, OR, WORLD WITHOUT END

by John Heaton, Headmaster

Unless you were raised in a certain religious tradition you might not be familiar with the “Gloria Patri.” It’s the sentence you hear in some religious settings, which, in English goes like this: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world with end. Amen.” Sound familiar? I hope so.

I am certain, however, that you are unfamiliar with the original Latin formulation. Stay with me because I know I’m likely to lose most of you here. I’ll just cite the last phrase and get to my point.

It ends this way, “*in saecula saeculorum*,” which being interpreted is, “world without end.” Even if you didn’t study Latin, you should be able to see the

English word we derive from those last two. It’s the word *secular*, not the word for *world*. The force of the phrase has nothing to do with a place; it has rather to do with time. “World without end” just sounds better than, say, “to the ages of ages.” Those “w’s” roll off our lips more poetically.

So what’s my point? Words change meaning over time, often for good reasons and sometimes bad. In our experience we tend to think of secular as the realm of the non-religious. We unconsciously divide reality into two stories, the religious and the secular, discrete spaces in which one refers implicitly to spiritual matters and the other to material concerns. One space is informed by religious commitments and the other is pretty much left to science. When

*continued on p.4*

### WHAT’S NEW?

#### Annual Fund Update



Several weeks ago, we published our need to acquire a new activity bus, in addition to significant equipment for our band, choir and orchestra. Many of you have responded, and as of today, we have exceeded \$90,000 of our goal of \$120,000. That has enabled us to acquire a new bus that was held in reserve for us

and put us on our way to concluding our Annual Fund appeal for the fine arts. If you contributed to our effort, we thank you! Perhaps you are still considering a gift. If that is the case, I invite you to consider helping us with the purchase of choral risers and an acoustic shell for enhancing performances in the Moomaw Center. We can

receive gifts of cash or check, stock transfers, and even IRA roll-over transactions from senior citizens who qualify for those donations. Contact **Dayna Renalds** at [drenalds@newcovenantschools.org](mailto:drenalds@newcovenantschools.org) in the development office for any help with your gift. Thank you for your generosity.

# H O N O R A R I A



## LADY GRYPHONS WIN TIP-OFF TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP

The Varsity Women's Basketball Team participated in the Tip-Off Tournament in Staunton on Friday and Saturday and brought home the tournament championship. Way to go, Gryphons!



## SPORTS RESULTS

### MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

#### 7/8 GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Timberlake Christian .....L  
New Covenant..... W

#### 7/8 BOYS' BASKETBALL

Timberlake Christian .....W  
New Covenant..... L

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

#### 7/8 GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Covenant School..... 11  
New Covenant..... 15

#### VARSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Covenant School..... 50  
New Covenant.....8

#### JV BOYS' BASKETBALL

New Covenant..... 14  
SML Christian .....40

#### VARSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL

New Covenant..... 56  
SML Christian ..... 34

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

#### 7/8 GIRLS' BASKETBALL

New Covenant.....9  
SML Christian ..... 17

#### 7/8 BOYS' BASKETBALL

New Covenant.....8  
SML Christian ..... 58

#### VARSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Temple Christian ..... 26  
New Covenant..... 53

#### VARSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL

Temple Christian ..... 37  
New Covenant..... 61

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

#### 7/8 BOYS' BASKETBALL

Southwest VA Homeschool..... 33  
New Covenant..... 45

#### VARSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL

Southwest VA Homeschool..... 40  
New Covenant..... 63

### FRIDAY/SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6-7

#### VARSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

##### Tip Off Tournament—Champions

New Covenant..... 42  
Roanoke Catholic..... 29

New Covenant..... 38  
Grace Christian ..... 18



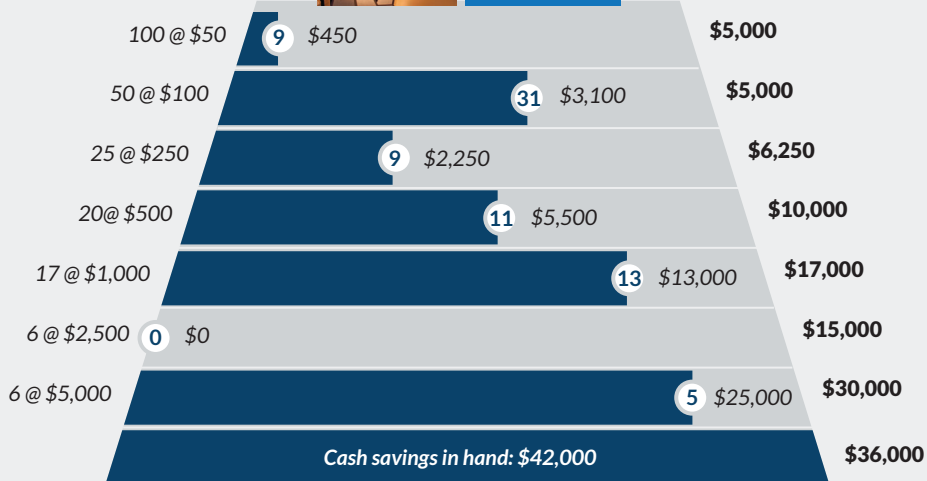
## ANNUAL FUND 2024-25

Fundraising goal: \$120,000

Received as of 12/5/24: **\$91,300**



CHOIR RISERS AND GRYPHON BUS



## FUNDRAISING REPORT

	GOAL	RECEIVED
Annual Fund	\$120,000	\$91,300
General Scholarship	\$10,000	\$3,500
Scholarship Foundation	\$300,000	Pledged \$392,800 Received \$157,489

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

## GRAMMAR SCHOOL

### GRAMMAR SCHOOL PJ DAY

On **Wednesday, December 18**, students in PreK – 4th grades may wear pajamas and tennis shoes to school. No leggings, sweatpants, or slippers. Girls may wear a long gown with shorts underneath. Christmas pajamas are preferred but not required. Students not participating should wear the regular school uniform.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### MIDDLE SCHOOL DRAMA TRYOUTS

Middle School students wishing to try out for the spring play, *Around the World in Eighty Days*, should plan on staying after school this **Wednesday, December 11**.

Tryouts will be held from **3:30 until 4:30pm** in the library. Students who are cast in a role will be enrolled in the Drama Exploratory beginning in January. For any questions, contact **Ethan Roberts**, [eroberts@newcovenantschools.org](mailto:eroberts@newcovenantschools.org).

## EVERYONE

### LESSONS & CAROLS

Join us for our annual service of Lessons & Carols on **Monday, December 16 at 7:00pm** at Waymaker Church (1650 Hooper Road, Forest, VA). A combined School of Rhetoric band, orchestra and choir will be performing with participation from 7th & 8th grade students. Childcare is available for children birth to four years old. Cookies and coffee will be served before the service. All are welcome!

### DELAYED START TIME

New Covenant Schools will open on **Tuesday, December 17 at 9:00am**.

*Students should arrive no earlier than 8:30am.*

### HEAVENLY HATS

Next **Tuesday, December 17**, the middle school student council has planned an event to support Heavenly Hats. Your students are invited to come to school with \$1 and their favorite hat—especially Christmas themed if they have them! They can wear them all day on Tuesday. The proceeds will go to the Heavenly Hats organization. This organization provides hats to cancer patients all over the U.S. If you would like more information about the organization, go to [www.heavenlyhats.org](http://www.heavenlyhats.org).

### MUSIC LESSONS

Allegro Music School has partnered with New Covenant to provide on-site music lessons to our students. There are a few spots available for piano, voice, flute, cello, and guitar in the new year. Call or text **Julia Sansone** at 434-841-7374 for more info.

### CHRISTMAS DRESS DAY

Next **Thursday, December 19**, all students may wear a Christmas-themed shirt or a red and/or green shirt and jeans or uniform bottoms with closed-toe shoes. Grammar School girls may choose to wear a Christmas dress.

### LOST AND FOUND

All items left unclaimed in the Lost and Found will be purged and donated on **December 19**. When visiting our campus during any of our events, please take the time to check for any of your family's personal items.

### CHRISTMAS BREAK

The beginning of Christmas Break is on **Friday, December 20**. We will have an **11:00am dismissal on Thursday, December 19** and school will break for Christmas through **Friday, January 3** with students returning on **Monday, January 6**.

### LUNCH ORDERING

Lunch ordering for January is open through **Thursday, December 19**. As a reminder, J Term will run from **Monday, January 6 - Tuesday, January 14**, and SOR students may be off campus during that time, so please keep that in mind when ordering lunches. Corn dog nuggets, pancake and sausage sandwiches, and hamburgers are just a few of the featured menu items in January. Please contact **Debbie Williamson** with any questions at [dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org](mailto:dwilliamson@newcovenantschools.org).

### TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for the 2025-26 school year is accepting applications through **January 15, 2025**. There is high demand for assistance, and it is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so apply early! Go to <https://online.factsmgmt.com/aid> apply. See email sent on **October 28** for details and instructions.

### TEACHERS' FAVORITES

Each year faculty and staff fill out a favorites sheet listing interests, hobbies, favorite foods, etc. If you would like a copy of a teacher's favorites list, please check the resource documents section of the app, or stop by the lobby desk and ask to see the Favorites Book.



you step into church you expect to hear conversations about redemption or grace. Once in the real world—the secular world—you must have a permit to conduct such conversations.

This has been our reality for some time, but it's a rather recent development in the history of the West. Until a few hundred years ago the word *secular* never was the opposite of *sacred*, nor was it non-religious. It was not a qualitative term; rather it was a temporal term, meaning "pertaining to an age." You wouldn't know that because it changed meaning before you were born. It never meant some space that was neutral or devoid of God, but the change in meaning suggests that "secularism" reset the stages upon which politics, education, athletics, and nearly every other major concern of life is carried out, and are purported to be a neutral zone where there is nothing but bias-free "reality," and most certainly free from religious bias.

Here's an example. I can disassemble and work on my truck with no concern about any deeper meaning attached to a four-wheel drive assembly. I can acknowledge that it has been engineered, but to understand and work on my truck I never need to consult the engineer who designed it. At most I might watch a YouTube video, but the engineer who designed it doesn't engage with me. Moreover, my truck is not reflective of any deeper meaning or significance. Theoretically, it is possible to investigate the world in the same way, to learn about it and leave open the question of whether the whole order has a deeper significance. This posture is the studied and official position of public education, as well as local, state, and federal governments. In that space, everybody's equal. This is the direct outcome of what we call the *secular*.

There are secularized public spaces; there are secularized beliefs and practices; and now, there is a new development, which is the notion of completely secular conditions for belief itself. In this new belief it is held that all that is necessary for human flourishing

is available to us without reference or appeal to any transcendent authority (read "engineer") or being. Now when we look at nature—the nature of anything—we can do so without any preconceived notion as to its order or meaning. If this sounds like a new form of atheism, it is; it's a "functional atheism." The new secular, however, goes even further. In this framework we can actually define nature ourselves and impute our own meaning. And, if that were not far enough, we get to do this in complete separation from one another. If I say I am a boy or a girl, for example, even if my apparent "nature" suggests otherwise, I am most certainly correct in my assertion, and therefore entitled to total equality and protection under the law with no regard to how you might be affected.

Guess what? In this scenario it turns out that the new secular is not neutral at all. This is precisely why we don't trust our politicians anymore. If political authority is no longer about securing God-given rights, what rights are being protected or advanced? They are protecting by force the private "rights" essentially claimed by every individual who, in the new secular, is empowered to determine reality for himself/herself. This is not limited to sexual orientation or gender identity issues. Rather, this is an interpretive grid, a worldview framework that informs athletics, foreign policy, justice, individual wealth and communal responsibilities, education, scientific pursuit, and on and on. Not only is this unworkable, the grinding friction it entails is threatening the stability of our body politic.

This brings us to the Christmas story, the real historical account of how God has from age to age engaged the human race. It's a story that never saw itself as belonging to a space with boundaries. Our claim is that God spanned both spaces in the person of his Son, who being fully God was also fully human. The Latin word "incarnate" means "in flesh." Jesus participates in both realms, material and immaterial. His intrusion into space and time as a man extends his claim from

heaven to earth with comprehensive implications for both spheres. It's a story that purports to explain all of reality in one integrated space over one integrated history. In the secular way of thinking, Jesus is reducible to an imaginary friend that children eventually outgrow. In the Christian way of thinking, Jesus was and is a real man who still retains his humanity as certainly as any living president, the Son of God who became man, and as the historical heir of the Davidic throne claims to be the king of the world. He is not merely the king of your heart. He is to be acknowledged by all human authorities, including Joe Biden or Donald Trump, both of whom operate in pre-defined spaces which they are not free to neutralize for their own purposes.

There is no difference between the secular and the sacred. Everything is sacred because it has been created by him and for him. His claim over all worlds is total for all time, in *saecula saeculorum*, or world without end. This is the operating presupposition for our educational endeavors, including fixing my truck, and is that which lies at the heart of a classical, Christian education.

## 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

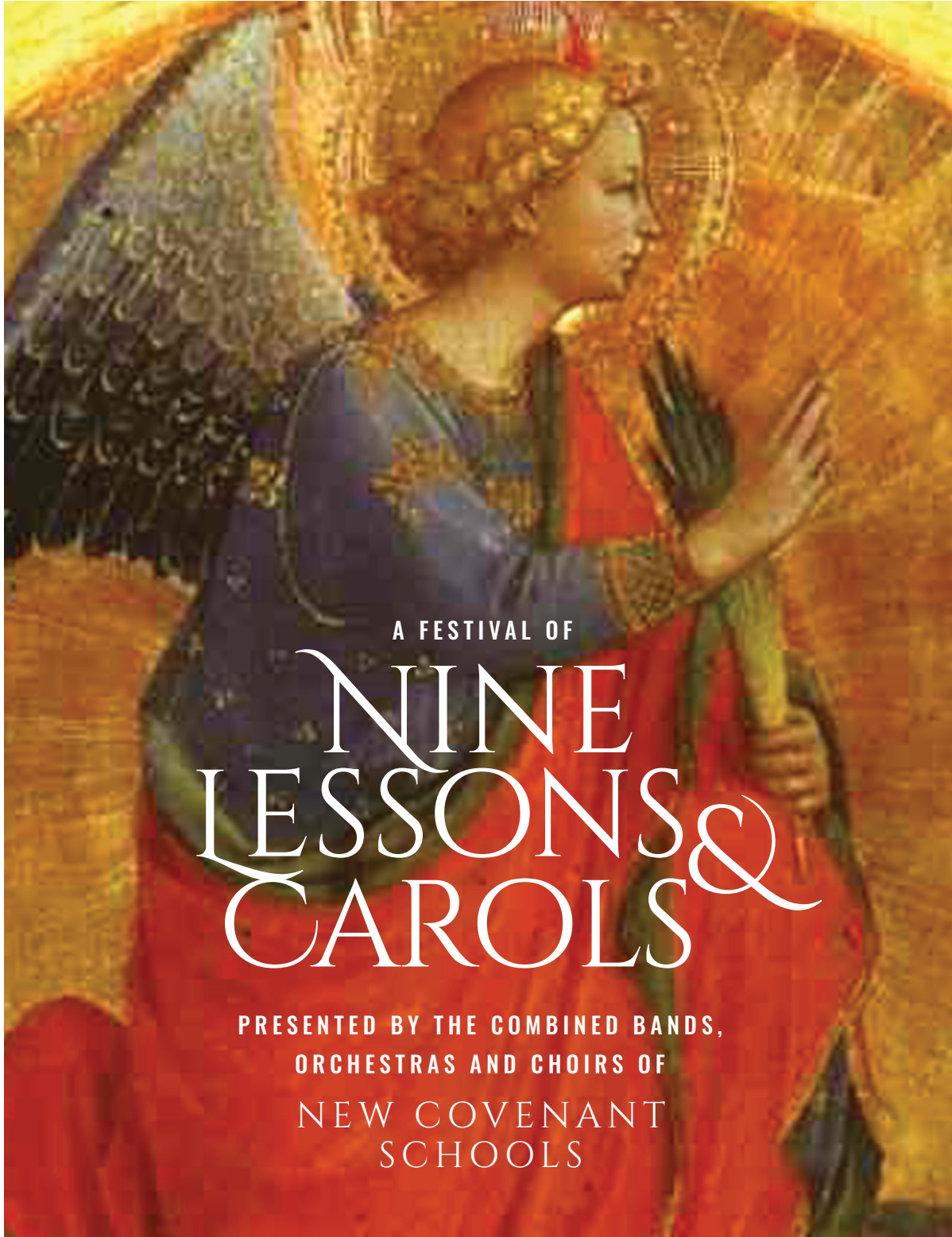
### EX OFFICIO

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



A FESTIVAL OF

# NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

PRESENTED BY THE COMBINED BANDS,  
ORCHESTRAS AND CHOIRS OF  
NEW COVENANT  
SCHOOLS

DECEMBER 16, 2024 | 7:00 PM

WAYMAKER.CHURCH