



SOR students dance the night away at their Cotillion on Saturday night at the University of Lynchburg.

THE NEWSLETTER OF
NEW COVENANT SCHOOLS

QUID NOVI

JANUARY 27, 2025
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THE LEAF-MOLD OF THE MIND

by Dr. Erin H. Uminn, Principal of the School of Rhetoric

J.R.R. Tolkien once described the creative process as a seed germinating in the “leaf-mould of the mind,” formed from all that has been seen, thought, read, or even forgotten. (Tolkien uses the British spelling.) This imagery serves as a profound metaphor as we consider the cultivation of the mind and heart. Much like a compost pile, the habits we form and the content we consume over time create the fertile soil from which our character and intellect grow. Aristotle aptly observed, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” Our intellectual and spiritual diet shapes us, for better or worse, reinforcing the adage, “Garbage in, garbage out”—and its inverse: “Quality in, quality out.”

The content we engage with can be likened to “intellectual nourishment.” Just as the quality of physical food impacts our health and vitality, the

books we read, the media we consume, and the conversations we participate in profoundly shape our thoughts, beliefs, and values. This “mental diet” becomes the raw material for our ideas and decisions, influencing who we and our children become over time. Proverbs 22:6 reminds us, “Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.” Like a farmer who tills and prunes to ensure a harvest, we are called to cultivate the soil of the heart and mind with care and intentionality. This is not an easy task in our day!

We know that over the years, this daily cultivation forms the “leaf-mould of the mind,” enabling intellectual and spiritual growth. Through deliberate choices, the compost of good habits and knowledge produces a fertile environment where ideas and virtues can thrive. Without this care, the soil may become barren, incapable of sustaining

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WHAT'S NEW?

Choral Risers, Acoustic Shell, and New Shed

The choral risers and acoustic shell for the Moomaw Center have arrived. Your generous gifts to this year’s annual fund allowed us to make these purchases towards our fine arts department and the performances of our students. The items arrived unassembled but thanks to our former band instructor, **Monty Musgrave**, they were quickly put together for our students to enjoy. Additionally, we were able to purchase a large outdoor shed to be used by the drama department for storage and set production. Your gifts this fall were abundant and magnanimous. We appreciate your thoughtfulness towards our giving campaign.



HONORS FOR 2ND QUARTER 2024-2025

SCHOOLS OF RHETORIC AND DIALECTIC

THE HEADMASTER'S LIST

Summa cum laude

John Scruggs, 12	James Brophy, 12	Ellie Jacobs, 12	Melia Leitner, 12
Jenna Ng, 12	John Brophy, 12	Brey Welch, 12	Corey Hackenbracht, 12
Ashe Smith, 11	Enoch Tan, 11	Ella Dudley, 11	Andre Frenchik, 11
Rusty Hooks, 11	Alicia Kenny, 11	Ryleigh Taylor, 11	Ian Gill, 10
Emma Haupricht, 10	Ruby Helm, 10	Charlotte Libbey, 10	Charlotte McCarty, 10
Joel Ng, 10	Ellia Ramsey, 10	Joseph Robert, 10	Caden Smith, 10
Elora Williams, 10	Elena Andrade, 9	Xander Arbaugh-Turner, 9	Ava Boettger, 9
Peter Brophy, 9	Charis Durand, 9	Claire Hansen, 9	Sol Knapton, 9
Kendall Morrell, 9	Naomi Rigg, 9		

THE DEAN'S LIST

Magna cum laude

Noah McCormick, 12	Cora Helm, 12	Declund Stevenson, 12	Mary Kate Place, 12
Lizzy Deneen, 12	Lucas Gorman, 12	Graham Kowalski, 12	Lizzie Bryant, 12
Jack Duncan, 12	Grace Brady, 11	Micah Xayavong, 11	Eva Andrade, 11
Emma Kate Lovell, 11	Gia Barlow, 11	Sarah McCurley, 11	Alara Gezen, 11
Luke Cordes, 11	Hannah Edwards, 10	Michael Seckman, 10	Journey Lancaster, 10
Judah Weber, 10	Embry Carlton, 10	Lucy Kirshberger, 9	Christian Henson, 9
Mindy Morse, 9	Lizzie Miller, 9	Wyatt Copenhagen, 9	Josiah Thornhill, 9
Britton Basten, 9	Elle Shesko, 9	Leila Kenny, 9	

Cum laude

Jocelyn Walker, 12	Ellie Bonebright, 12	Abby Burton, 12	Emma Fritz, 12
Emily Trautman, 12	Walt Gill, 11	Ayla Gezen, 11	Olivia Hostetler, 11
Stone Haibach, 11	Graden Bolton, 11	Wyatt Renalds, 11	Rosa East, 11
Avery Harrison, 10	Emma Compton, 10	John-Paul Gauger, 10	Nicholas Richmond, 10
Kylie Garnett, 10	Alex Fuhr, 10	Emma Christian, 9	Elle Vollmer, 9
Reese Mahle, 9	Alex Pemberton, 9	Gabriel Leitner, 9	Colton Buckner, 9
Wyatt Cole, 9	Alina Gieszczykiewicz, 9		

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Summa cum laude

Idella Olmsted, 8	Claire Reynolds, 8	Judah Durand, 8	Bryce Hampton, 8
Chloe Brophy, 7	Kalisteth Burrows, 7	Landis Hoskins, 7	Emilia Andrade, 7
Tinley Tucker, 7	Eleanor Bebko Lane, 7		

Magna cum laude

Eleanore Seckman, 8	Micah Harrison, 8	Gwen Kesler, 8	Luke Ancona, 8
Lillian Richmond, 8	Jack Gauger, 8	Isaiah Tan, 7	Annalise Gutenkauf, 7
Tye Boettger, 7	Nora Misiano, 7	Arden Shesko, 7	Elise Williams, 7

Cum laude

Max Fuhr, 8	Meg Maslow, 8	Morgan Eggleston, 8	Wyatt Gill, 8
Ada Dudley, 8	Mitchell Rogers, 8	Laila Howell, 7	Alexander Quaranta, 7
Harper McClure, 7			

E T C E T E R A

EVERYONE

HOMECOMING

Mark your calendars for this **Friday, January 31** and join us for Homecoming as we cheer on the basketball teams and reconnect with alumni and faculty.

Evening Schedule:

- **4:30-6:00pm** – Alumni Reception in the Epic Hallway: Reunite with old friends and enjoy a special gift.
- **5:00pm** – Women's Varsity Basketball Game
- **6:30pm** – Men's Varsity Basketball Game

WINTER BREAK

School will be closed for Winter Break from **Thursday, February 13** through **Monday, February 17**. Students return on **Tuesday, February 18**.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Third quarter progress reports will be emailed to parents on **Wednesday, February 12**.

ART FAIR

New Covenant's annual Art Fair will be held on **Monday, March 10**. See flyer for details.

HEAVENLY HATS

Thanks to the generosity and support of our New Covenant Schools community, the Middle School raised a total of \$334.84 for Heavenly Hats. Thank you to everyone who participated and donated.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

In order to simplify reenrollment, New Covenant uses a Continuous Enrollment Contract for students, allowing them to automatically be enrolled each year until graduation without having to resign a contract. **PARENTS WILL NOT BE ASKED TO REENROLL FOR NEXT YEAR. The opt-out deadline for enrollment for the 2025-26 school year is February 1, 2025.** The Continuous Enrollment Fee of \$150 will be charged to your account in February if you do not opt out.

Please contact **Linda Hackenbracht** at lhackenbracht@newcovenantschools.org if your plans for next school year have changed.

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 2-3pm in the Marie Macdonald Chapel.

LADIES' BOOK STUDY

Join us in the Marion A. Patterson Library at **7pm on Jan 30, Feb 6, Feb 20, Mar 6, Apr 3, and May 1** for an engaging exploration of Saint Augustine's *Confessions*, led by **Davidson Morse**. This study is open to all ladies connected with New Covenant (past or present) or All Saints Church.

Purchase your copy via this link: <https://amzn.to/40a3Hav>. Join us on **January 30** for an introduction and reading schedule. Whether you can attend all sessions or just a few, your presence is welcome. Please reach out to **Davidson Morse** or **Jessica Simpkins** with any questions.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

FOOD DRIVE

The Middle School will hold its annual Food Drive to benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank from **February 3-7**. Students are encouraged to donate nonperishable food items. Additional details to come.



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meaningful growth. In a world that often encourages distraction and superficial engagement, this deliberate cultivation is more important than ever. Not to be confused with protecting against any adversity, disagreement, or healthy struggle, developing the leaf-mold of the mind and heart prepares our students to thoughtfully and humbly engage with various peoples, ideas, and circumstances.

The Western canon plays a central role in this foundation, offering an intellectual and moral framework for a classical Christian education. Works by authors such as Homer, Plato, Augustine, and Shakespeare address timeless questions: What is good? What is true? What is just?

By engaging with these texts, students enter a millennia-spanning dialogue, wrestling with ideas that have shaped civilizations. These works also serve as a unifying thread, connecting disciplines like literature, history, philosophy, and theology. This coherence reflects the unified truths the curriculum seeks to convey. To abandon the canon risks severing students from the cultural heritage that underpins critical thinking and moral reasoning.

The traditions and culture of New Covenant Schools further reinforce this unity. Weekly chapel services, daily matins, assemblies, house events, fine arts, uniforms, and more create a sense of community and shared purpose.

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They symbolize belonging and pride in a community of grace, service, and virtue. We want students to speak with gratitude and humility about their school experience, recognizing that they are part of something wonderful and meaningful, long after they move on from our hallways.

Further, the integration of faith and learning ensures that students are not only well-educated but also well-formed as human beings. Prayer, scripture, and a Christ-centered worldview provide the moral framework within which academic subjects are taught. This intentional design creates an environment where students can wonder and investigate, with each subject and semester building upon the last in a coherent and cumulative educational journey. Education should not be a fragmented checklist of tasks but a purposeful endeavor leading to intellectual and personal growth.

For instance, the study of history encompasses the breadth of human

civilization, from ancient Mesopotamia to medieval Christendom and modern Europe and the Americas, and human flourishing in the East, fostering an appreciation for the interconnectedness of cultures and ideas. Literature introduces students to enduring themes of love, courage, and redemption, while mathematics and science cultivate precision and inquiry. This comprehensive approach equips students with knowledge and the ability to understand its purpose and relevance. Teachers invite your children into this community each day, engaging them over a range of topics and activities to ignite their souls.

The result? Our students become graduates who are thoughtful, virtuous, and prepared to engage with the world. In a fragmented and distracted age, true education should provide clarity, coherence, and purpose. We are forming whole persons, capable of thinking critically, leading humbly, and living virtuously. By cultivating the “compost of the mind and heart,” students are well-

equipped to lead and engage with the world around them, in whatever path they take in the future.

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

ART FAIR

PAINTING | MIXED MEDIA | SCULPTURE | PHOTOGRAPHY | FILM



Monday,
March 10

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR ART FAIR SUBMISSIONS:

- Students in K-12th grade may submit TWO PIECES of art in each of the five named categories.
- Student work grades 4-12 will be in the JUDGED art show.
- All submissions should be given directly to Miss Eshleman or Mr. Dunaway.
- Flat (2D) submissions should NOT be folded or on lined paper.
- Submissions MUST be unframed.
- All photography should be printed on photo quality paper (preferably 8 ½ x 11 or larger).
- Sculpture (3D) submissions should stand upright OR student should provide a base on which to stand the piece.
- Lego submissions will NOT be accepted.
- ALL pieces should be the CREATION of the student(s).
- Multiple students may collaborate on a single submission.

← Claire Copenhaver (12th Grade), 2024 Submission

ALL submissions due Wednesday, February 12th

Parents who would like to volunteer to mat/hang work, please contact Hattie Eshleman at heshleman@newcovenantschools.org or Michael Dunaway at mdunaway@newcovenantschools.org.



Louisa May Alcott's

Tickets
go on
sale
Feb. 3

Little Women



Feb 21 — 7:00pm
Feb 22 — 2:00pm
Feb 22 — 7:00pm

Feb 28 — 7:00pm
Mar 1 — 2:00pm
Mar 1 — 7:00pm



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