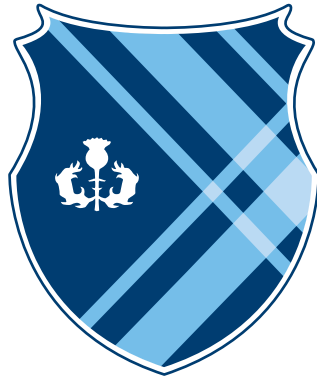




COVENANT COLLEGE

IN ALL THINGS CHRIST PREEMINENT

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE CALL AND WORK OF

THE PRESIDENTS OF COVENANT COLLEGE

1955 — 2023



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foreword

This work was prepared for the benefit of all alumni, present and future students, friends of the college, and the thousands who have attended, given, taught, and worked to present God's Word for salvation in the Lord Jesus for Christian living, service, and eternity.

Under God's providence, I was born 89 years ago on a farm in Iowa, spent seven grades in a one-room country school, moved to town, and, at age 15 being a recipient of God's grace in knowing my sinful nature, was enabled to repent and trust Jesus as Savior and Lord. I later graduated from Iowa State University and was commissioned as an officer in the Army. This brought me under the ministry of Chaplain John MacGregor.

I committed my life to the Christian ministry and enrolled at Covenant Seminary in 1957. There I met and later married a Covenant College student, Julie Belz. Our son, Stephen, graduated from Covenant in 1981, our daughter Mary Lutz Smallman in 1985, and later five of our grandchildren.

I was blessed to know and work with the first president of Covenant College and Seminary. I then served in the pastoral ministry, which made it possible for me to know and work somewhat with all six presidents. This prompted me to prepare this brief, but personal, history of those six presidents. It is very interesting to know what God did in and through each president in the history of the college that seeks to see that Christ would have preeminence in all things.

Ephesians 1:11 and Ephesians 3:20-21

AL LUTZ

COVENANT SEMINARY '60

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DR. ROBERT G. RAYBURN



BORN & RAISED

Robert "Bob" Gibson Rayburn was born in Newton, Kansas, in 1915 and raised there.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

Bob Rayburn was one of four boys born to the Rev. James Quesnal Rayburn (1876-1952), a prominent Presbyterian evangelist in the first half of the 20th century. Bob's oldest brother, James "Jim", was the founder of Young Life. As a teenager, Bob won both a piano competition in the state of Kansas and the National Oratorical Contest.

While working on his doctorate at Dallas Seminary, Bob met his wife Laverne. He had gone to Seattle to help his brother Jim with an evangelistic crusade and met her through mutual friends. Bob and Laverne had four children, with all but one graduating from Covenant College.

1955 – 1965

DEGREES HELD

- ThD, Dallas Theological Seminary
- BD and MTh, Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Omaha
- BA, Wheaton College

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Like many, if not most, covenant children, Bob trusted in the Lord from his mother's breast (Psalm 22), if he had not already rejoiced in the Lord while in his mother's womb (Luke 1:44). Like Timothy, he grew up in the faith of his parents and grandparents.

EDUCATION

Bob's first year of college was at Bethel College in Newton, Kansas. Then he transferred to Wheaton College. He then earned two degrees (BD and MTh) from the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Omaha, Nebraska, where his father was a trustee. He had hoped to study at Westminster Theological Seminary, but his father, concerned over theological and spiritual drift at Omaha, wanted him to serve as his eyes and ears. Following his studies in Omaha, during which he held two temporary pastorates in PCUSA churches, he went to Dallas Theological Seminary for doctoral studies. While a student at Dallas he became the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) in Gainesville, Texas.

DR. ROBERT G. RAYBURN

1955 – 1965

WORK EXPERIENCE

During the war, a large army camp was established near Gainesville, and Bob had a fruitful ministry there among the soldiers. That ministry led him to enter the army as a chaplain. He arrived in Europe in 1944 and served to the end of the war with an artillery unit. After the war he remained in the army reserves, having been assured that he would never again see active service. Bob was called to pastor the College Church in Wheaton; however, in 1950 he was called up to serve in the Korean War. He volunteered for a vacant chaplaincy in the Army Airborne and, though having been assured that he would receive jump training, a few days later made his first ever parachute jump, at night and into combat. These events are described in his book, *Fight the Good Fight*, one of several books he authored.

PRESIDENCY

After Bob returned from the service, he became president of Highland College, from which Covenant College was born in 1955.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Founder and first president of Covenant College, 1955
- Founder and first president of Covenant Seminary, 1956
- It was he who settled on the name, Covenant College, the school's motto from Colossians 1:18 "In all things... Christ preeminent," and the College hymn, "All for Jesus"
- He oversaw the move to St. Louis and the addition, that year, of a graduate school, Covenant Theological Seminary, 1956
- He established the connection between Francis Schaeffer (a personal friend) and the College
- He oversaw the College's move to Lookout Mountain, GA in 1964

STATISTICS

- **Size of student body:** at its beginning 22 (Pasadena, CA), at the end of his presidency (St. Louis) 172 students in Covenant College and 48 students in Covenant Seminary
- **Number of faculty:** beginning, six (Pasadena); ending, nineteen at the college (Lookout Mountain) and seven at the seminary (St. Louis)
- **Campus additions:**
 - The purchase of roughly 20 acres in St. Louis, which included Edwards Hall and the Log Cabin

DR. ROBERT G. RAYBURN

1955 – 1965

- The Administration Building (a large home down the street from the property to which was added a large addition housing a men's dorm in the basement, the college and seminary library on the main floor, and the administrative and some faculty offices in the upper floor)

CHALLENGES

Starting a small denominational college had its challenges, including funding. Despite being told that the constituency was too small to support a college, through God's provision, President Rayburn was able to grow the college from an initial 22 students to 172 students by the end of his presidency.



DR. MARION D. BARNES



BORN & RAISED

Marion David Barnes was born in 1913 and raised in Junction City, Arkansas, before moving to Louisiana and later New York.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

While in NYC, he was involved with leading the youth group at Broadway Presbyterian Church where he met and married his wife, Vera Oltz. Marion and Vera welcomed their first child, John, in New York City. Their second son, David, was born while they were in Wheaton, Illinois. Lois, Deborah, and Philip were born in El Dorado, Arkansas.

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Marion was raised in a Christian home and came to the Lord at a young age. He was brought up in the Scotland Presbyterian Church in Scotland, Arkansas.

DEGREES HELD

- PhD and MA, Colombia University
- BS, University of Arkansas
- LLD, Wheaton College

EDUCATION

Marion went to Magnolia A&M College in Magnolia, LA, and transferred to University of Arkansas for his undergraduate work. He enrolled in Columbia University, New York City, where he received his PhD in chemistry.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marion taught at Columbia University and Wheaton College before transitioning to research work in sulfur chemistry for Lion Oil Company and later Monsanto Chemical Company. He then became director of the Sulfur Institute in Washington D.C.

PRESIDENCY

Marion served on the board of Covenant College and Seminary in St. Louis for several years. Marion was chairman of the board when it became evident that the St. Louis campus was not large enough for both the seminary and the college. Covenant College acquired an abandoned hotel in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, and moved to Lookout Mountain in 1964. At this time, the board asked Marion to be president.

1965 –
1978

DR. MARION D. BARNES

1965 – 1978

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Received accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 1971
- Curriculum offering was expanded to 24 majors and pre-professional programs including both traditional liberal arts and practical arts, such as a BS in Education
- Percentage of faculty with earned doctorates increased from 2% to 64%
- Library holdings increased to 90,000
- Paid off mortgage on Carter Hall
- Assets increased from \$290,774 to over \$6,600,000
- The annual budget grew from \$425,475 to \$2,875,000
- Annual gifts and grants grew from \$112,183 to \$556,724
- Endowment of \$300,000 was created
- Marion served as chairman of the Hamilton County and Chattanooga Air Pollution Control Board and made efforts to improve air quality without driving out industry and jobs; this brought wide respect in the Chattanooga community
- Following his presidency, Marion became chancellor before going to work with Mission to the World and Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, where he was a consultant to a fledgling college

STATISTICS

- Size of student body** (*Covenant College only*): beginning, 211; ending, 550 students
- Number of faculty**: beginning, 18 full-time and four part-time; ending, 38
- Campus additions:**
 - Land holdings increased from 24 acres to over 1000
 - Completion of men's residence hall, later dedicated as Belz Hall, 1972 (part of what became Founders)
 - Completion of the physical education complex, later dedicated as Barnes, 1972
 - Completion of the Anna Emma Kresge Memorial Library, 1972
 - Completion of the Dora Maclellan Brown Chapel/Fine Arts Building, 1979

**DR. MARION
D. BARNES**
1965 – 1978

CHALLENGES

During the '60s and '70s, there were many cultural movements that affected how the administration guided and shaped the student experience and educational learning. As president, Marion Barnes learned to navigate those challenges trusting in both the guidance of the board of trustees as a whole and spending time getting to know the students and their hearts for Christ.

Contemplating this in his book, *Reflections on the History of Covenant College, 1965-1978*, Barnes wrote, "... College is a time for growing and maturing. A student's growth is more likely to occur when he is given opportunity to make decisions in a free atmosphere rather than under a structure of rules and regulations... We felt that we should not engage in excessive rule-making, but insist on morality, modesty, sanitation, and good judgment in matters of appearance, dress, and dormitory hours."



DR. MARTIN ESSENBURG



BORN & RAISED

Martin Essenburg was born in Chicago, IL, in 1935 and lived on the West Side until age 11, when the family moved to Cicero, IL, the first suburb west of Chicago.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

In his formative years, Martin was surrounded by grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins, which added great stability and happiness. Martin met his wife Barbara in high school and they married in 1957. Martin and Barbara were blessed by the birth of four children while living in Japan, and three of those children graduated from Covenant College.

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Martin knew the Lord as Savior at a young age and made a public profession of faith at the age of 17. Godly parents, grandparents, and relatives, as well as a supportive church and Christian school were strong influences in his spiritual development, as was his love of music. Martin did a lot of singing and learned a lot of scripture through music at school and church.

EDUCATION

Martin attended the Ebenezer Christian School from first grade through the first half of sixth grade then Timothy Christian School through eighth grade. He attended Chicago Christian High School, graduating in January 1953. Martin enrolled in Calvin College, where he majored in math and economics and minored in French. Martin pursued graduate study at the University of Michigan over a long period of time involving several summers and evening courses, as well as two years of full-time study in Ann Arbor. He received an MA in 1964 and a PhD in 1969. He concentrated on education and took several graduate courses in Asian history and economics.

1978 –
1987

DEGREES HELD

- PhD and MA, University of Michigan
- AB, Calvin College

DR. MARTIN ESSENBURG

1978 – 1987

WORK EXPERIENCE

Martin's calling in education began during college years and continued in the years he devoted to teaching and administration in Grand Rapids, Japan, and Holland. Martin and Barbara taught in Christian schools in Grand Rapids for two years before going to Japan.

PRESIDENCY

Early in his fifth year in Holland, Martin received a call from Addison Soltau, whom he had known in Japan. Addison explained that Covenant College was looking for a new president to follow Marion Barnes.

Following his interview, the board asked Martin to take the position. After much prayer, he took the position, and he and his family moved to Lookout Mountain in the summer of 1978.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- ♥ Covenant established the external degree completion program, Quest, which attracted hundreds of students to Covenant, 1985
- ♥ Computer science added as a major
- ♥ Generous giving to the college increased from many individuals, churches, foundations, and other organizations

STATISTICS

- ♥ **Size of student body:** beginning, 533; ending, 546 students
- ♥ **Number of faculty:** beginning, 37; ending, 45
- ♥ **Campus additions:**
 - ♥ A \$1.8 million academic building was completed in 1984 as part of an overall \$6 million capital campaign launched in 1983. The building was renamed and dedicated as Sanderson Hall on March 23, 1990 in honor of former beloved and influential dean of the faculty, John Sanderson
 - ♥ Carter Hall was renovated at a cost of over \$3.5 million
 - ♥ Student apartments (\$700,000) were completed in 1984
 - ♥ The H. Harrison Hughes Academic Computer Center was completed and dedicated, 1982

CHALLENGES

C.G. Mills, who later gave a large gift for the science building that bears his name, was becoming a friend of Covenant and had given gifts for a few years, none larger than \$40,000. In 1983,

**DR. MARTIN
ESSENBURG**
1978 – 1987

Martin brought a written request for a much larger gift of \$800,000. Martin was careful to assure him that any help he could give the college would be appreciated. Martin knew that he would probably want to consult with his wife and brother who was also his business partner. C.G. reviewed the proposal briefly, and he said quietly, "Yes, that will be fine." Martin recounts that he wanted to get up on the table and dance, and told C.G., "The words of an old spiritual were in my mind and heart. 'Sit down, servant! I can't sit down. Sit down, servant! I can't sit down. My soul is so happy that I can't sit down.'"



DR. FRANK A. BROCK



BORN & RAISED

Frank was born in Lookout Mountain, TN, in 1942 and grew up there.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

Frank was one of three sons of Bill and Myra Kruesi (Peggy) Brock. Frank's mother and two of her three sisters all lived near each other and all had boys, eleven in all, who grew up playing in one another's homes. From the age of nine, Frank was profoundly influenced by a summer camp that had no electricity or running water. Spending all his time living in a tent, hiking, horseback riding, swimming, or trailblazing, Frank learned you don't need a lot of stuff to be happy. In 1965, he married Dottie Goree, who also grew up in Lookout Mountain. They had three children, Krue, Peg, and Marshall, nearly all of whom attended Covenant College and married a Covenant alum.

1987 – 2002

DEGREES HELD

- DHL, Lee University
- LhD, Geneva College
- MBA, Harvard University
- BA, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Both Frank and his wife, Dottie, became members of Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church as teenagers. Frank and Dottie returned to Lookout Mountain in 1969. In the early '70s they joined a small group started by an associate pastor, Roger Gulick, at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church. Roger encouraged them to read the Bible "to see if it was true." After a few years of being in a small group, Frank and Dottie responded and both made a public profession to a call in a Friday evening service.

EDUCATION

Frank attended Lookout Mountain Elementary School until enrolling in the seventh grade at McCallie School in Chattanooga. He graduated with honors from the University of North Carolina in 1964 with a BA in political science. While at UNC he spent a semester in Aix-en-Provence, France, with a Vanderbilt study abroad program. In 1966 he graduated from Harvard Business School with concentrations in management, marketing, and finance. His research project was on his family's business, Brock Candy Company. Frank also received honorary degrees from Lee University and Geneva College.

DR. FRANK A. BROCK

1987 – 2002

WORK EXPERIENCE

Among Frank's summer jobs were working in his brother's congressional campaign, being an elevator operator in the Senate office building, and working in the cost accounting department of Brock Candy Company. Frank entered the Army artillery reserves as an enlisted man while in graduate school. Upon receiving his MBA, he was granted a direct commission as 2nd lieutenant in the Air Force and served as hospital administrator until his discharge as a captain in 1969. He began working at Brock Candy Company in cost accounting. One year later, he became plant manager and spent the rest of his manufacturing career in operations, becoming executive VP with responsibility for engineering, quality control, purchasing, and manufacturing for two plants. In 1985, Frank left the family business and became a management consultant.

PRESIDENCY

Hugh Maclellan, a member of the college board and a well-known local businessman, provided a grant for Covenant College to hire Frank as a management consultant. In the spring of 1987, Martin Essenburg announced that he had accepted a position as head of missions for the Christian Reformed Church denomination in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Covenant board asked Frank to serve as interim president while it conducted a search. In the fall of 1987, the board asked Frank to serve as president, and he was inaugurated in 1988. Based on his experience at Covenant, Frank wrote *An Educated Choice* to try to help students and parents know how to better choose a college. Frank became president of the Covenant College Foundation after serving as president.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Built a strong board composed of four ruling elders and three teaching elders
- Forged an administration team that exemplified unity, being of "one mind and one spirit"
- Changed the college's purpose statement from "Christian" to "Christ-centered"
- Chose Microsoft as an underlying infrastructure for campus network accounts and office suite
- Signed initial contract with Ellucian to use "Banner" as the campus-wide administrative system; at almost a million dollars, it was the largest software contract Covenant had signed and signaled a new era of technology on campus, 1999
- Made significant strides to raise faculty and staff compensation to comparable benchmarks

DR. FRANK A. BROCK

1987 – 2002

- ♥ Voted to allow dancing
- ♥ Emphasized retention as the best indicator of academic excellence and student satisfaction
- ♥ Held vibrant faculty forums stressing the Kuyperian idea of being a reforming influence in the culture rather than being conformed by the culture
- ♥ Making resource's available for Dottie's landscaping committee; landscaping the campus
- ♥ Added five new majors
- ♥ Created the Maclellan Scholars program and scholarships with a Maclellan Foundation grant
- ♥ Launched first masters level program, a Master of Education, 1990
- ♥ Emphasized student involvement in co-curricular clubs and activities
- ♥ Grew Covenant's endowment from less than \$1 million to \$13.5 million
- ♥ Founded the Chalmers Center for Economic Development, 1999
- ♥ Created the Covenant College Foundation as a vehicle to build the endowment
- ♥ Added women's soccer and volleyball and men and women's cross country as intercollegiate sports

STATISTICS

- ♥ **Size of student body:** beginning, 498; ending, 1254 (*including Quest*)
- ♥ **Number of faculty:** beginning, 43; ending, 68
- ♥ **Campus additions:**
 - ♥ Schmidt Hall: dedicated March 22, 1991 as part of Founders Complex
 - ♥ Rayburn Hall: dedicated March 18, 1993 as part of Founders Complex
 - ♥ Mills Hall: dedicated October 25, 1996
 - ♥ Probasco Visitor Center: dedicated May 5, 1998
 - ♥ Maclellan Hall: dedicated September 15, 1998 as part of Maclellan-Rymer Complex
 - ♥ Ashe Activity Center: dedicated January 24, 2000
 - ♥ Rymer Hall: dedicated October 14, 2000 as part of Maclellan-Rymer Complex

- Jackson Hall: completed 2002
- Scotland Yard Soccer field completed
- Acquisition of former Air Force base property and construction of maintenance buildings

CHALLENGES

Coming from the business world, Frank's number one goal was to build a team of like-minded individuals. He did not expect the many challenges of the highly competitive higher education world. Learning to empower and trust others even when he was always the one who would receive blame deepened his understanding of what it meant to be a servant leader.

He also found that it required great faith to believe that empowering others to pour themselves into the lives of young men and women would someday yield hundredfold returns. Being involved in denominational politics strengthened his belief that there is an invisible church that transcends the visible church in impact.



DR. NIEL B. NIELSON



BORN & RAISED

Niel Byron Nielson was born in 1954 and raised in Dallas, Texas.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

Niel married Kathleen Buswell and they had three sons, Jonathan, Daniel, and David. As of January 2023, the Nielson's have nine grandchildren. He served on several boards including Crossway Books, Covenant Transport, Maclellan Foundation, Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, and Allied Arts of Chattanooga. Niel and Kathleen were thrilled to serve at Covenant, especially because Kathleen's grandfather, J. Oliver Buswell, had helped found Covenant College.

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Niel's father was pastor of the Church of the Nazarene where as a young boy Niel heard and responded to the gospel.

EDUCATION

Niel received his Bachelor of Arts from Wheaton College and his Master of Arts and PhD in Philosophy from Vanderbilt University.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Niel served as professor of philosophy at Bethel College (now University) in St. Paul, MN. He left to be an options trader and portfolio manager for Chicago Research and Trading, Inc. Following that, he became managing director for JV Dialogue (a Russian-American joint venture). Next, he became senior VP of mergers and acquisitions as service master. He then served as associate pastor of outreach at College Church in Wheaton, IL.

PRESIDENCY

Niel had conversations with the search consultant but did not take it seriously at first. A conversation with Joel Belz encouraged Niel to continue in the process. A visit to the campus and further conversations with board members ensued. At the final interview with the board, Niel and Kathleen decided that, if invited, they

2002 – 2012

DEGREES HELD

- PhD and MA, Vanderbilt University
- BA, Wheaton College

would agree to serve. It was a slow growth of a sense of calling over several months with confirmations along the way.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- ♥ Celebrated its 50th anniversary, 2005
- ♥ Became a member of NCAA Division III, September 1, 2013
- ♥ Introduced baseball, track and field, tennis, and golf as intercollegiate sports
- ♥ Completed a \$33 million capital campaign and raised the goal to \$50 million
- ♥ Re-accredited by SACS successfully
- ♥ Terminated the Quest degree completion program in order to focus more intensively on Covenant's core mission and strengthen its traditional undergraduate program

STATISTICS

- ♥ **Size of student body:** beginning, 1226 (*including Quest students*); ending, 1064 (*no Quest students*)
- ♥ **Number of faculty:** beginning, 71; ending, 71
- ♥ **Campus additions:**
 - ♥ Andreas Residence Hall completed in 2007
 - ♥ Brock Hall dedicated August 28, 2008
 - ♥ Baseball field and tennis courts completed

CHALLENGES

With the rise of societal challenges pertaining to gender and sexuality, Nielsen added the Statement of Community Beliefs to Covenant's foundational documents in order to clearly communicate the shared biblical convictions on important contemporary issues.

One challenge was responding graciously to the Equality Ride group of LGBT activists that desired to come on campus. Nielsen encouraged Covenant students to share the gospel with this group while remaining firm in their biblical stance on sexuality and even fed them box lunches off-campus.

Nielsen's leadership spurred growth of unity and purpose among senior leaders and the board, creating strong and enduring relationships. God also blessed the college despite budget challenges and led leadership to respond effectively to accreditation warnings.



DR. J. DEREK HALVORSON



BORN & RAISED

Derek Halvorson was born in Atlanta, Georgia, spent his early childhood years in Los Altos, California, and grew up the remainder of his youth in Charlotte, North Carolina.

FAMILY & PERSONAL LIFE

Derek is the oldest of four boys born to Steve and Marni Halvorson. All four attended Covenant College. Steve was a bond and commodities trader. Marni was a K-12 teacher and administrator. Derek married Wendy, a Wheaton College graduate, and they had two children: a son, Banks (CC '24), and a daughter, Whitman (CC '27). He turned down North Carolina, Duke, and the Naval Academy to attend Covenant. Additionally, he played semi-professional soccer after Covenant.

2012 – 2023

DEGREES HELD

- PhD, Loyola University
- MA, University of Arizona
- BA, Covenant College

CONVERSION TO CHRIST

Having grown up as a covenant child in a Christian home, Derek stated he could not point to a day when he did not know the gospel or to a specific point of conversion. Derek recalled that he has experienced fallow seasons and seasons of real spiritual growth over the course of his entire life.

EDUCATION

Derek attended Canterbury Christian School in Los Altos, CA, and then Charlotte Christian School in Charlotte, NC. He then attended Covenant College where he completed his BA in history. After Covenant, he pursued graduate studies in the form of a Master of Arts in history at the University of Arizona and then his PhD in the same discipline at Loyola University of Chicago.

WORK EXPERIENCE

After graduating from Covenant College, Derek worked in foreign exchange trading for NationsBank (now Bank of America), first in the back office in Charlotte and then as a trader in Chicago. While completing his doctoral work, Derek returned to Covenant College and worked in the advancement office, first as director of constituent relations and then as a regional director of development. In 2009, Derek was appointed the second president of Providence Christian College in California.

DR. J. DEREK HALVORSON

2012 – 2023

PRESIDENCY

With a PhD in history and a successful track record in fundraising, Derek was invited by Covenant's board chair to apply for the presidency. He submitted the materials for application, not thinking that it would go very far. However, in 2012 Derek returned to Covenant to serve as the college's sixth president.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- Moved into the US News "National Liberal Arts College" category—one of only five CCCU schools to be ranked as a national liberal arts college
- Increased four-year graduation rate from 48% to 66%
- Achieved reaffirmation of accreditation with SACS-COC with no recommendations
- Completed largest endowment campaign in the college's history (\$32 million)
- Increased endowment to nearly double in size

STATISTICS

- **Size of student body:** beginning, 1135; ending, 889
- **Number of faculty:** beginning, 76; ending, 67
- **Campus additions:**
 - Historic renovation of the exterior of Carter Hall (the largest capital project in the college's history at \$19.4 million)
 - Construction of the new Lucas Art Workshop dedicated March 16, 2016

CHALLENGES

As the culture changed, American views on sexuality and gender shifted dramatically and racial tensions as well as disagreement within the PCA increased. Because of its faithfulness to biblical standards on issues like marriage, sexuality, gender identity, and sanctity of life, the college often found itself out of step with mainstream culture. Additionally, social media had come to play an increasingly large role in culture, often intensifying controversies.

The COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown were incredibly challenging for residential higher educational institutions, affecting student learning and living experiences. Protocols were expensive and draining for faculty and staff and impacted enrollment.

Throughout unforeseen challenges and cultural shifts, Covenant remained uncompromising in biblical beliefs, navigating pressures from without and within.