

COVENANT COLLEGE ■ SPRING 2011

THE VIEW

Alumni in Education

- President Nielson To Step Down
- Focusing on What We Do Best
- Theatre Is Incarnation

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As most of the *View's* readers will have heard by now, I will be stepping down from the presidency of Covenant College as of June 30, 2012, to become the president of a newly-formed organization, the Maclellan Center for Global Christian Education. A huge blessing is that this new calling will enable us to stay here – in our home on Lookout Mountain, near Covenant College, and among wonderful friends at the College and in the Chattanooga area.

The actual date of transition is more than a year away (!), providing sufficient time for the College board of trustees to conduct the presidential search and prompting me to devote myself fully to my work as Covenant's president so that I would, by God's grace, finish well. That work includes fund-raising toward the completion of our \$53 million BUILD campaign, steady progress toward the completion of a long-range campus plan, laying the groundwork for the next round of College-wide strategic planning, further strengthening of the College's financial health, and continuing oversight of transitioning to membership of our intercollegiate athletics affiliation with NCAA Division III – all of this by the mercies and providence of God.

A major source of inspiration for my new venture is the marvelous biblically grounded, scholastically rigorous, and globally minded academic program at Covenant, which continues to equip students for God's callings locally and around the world. This issue of the *View* focuses on several key elements of that program, including research and scholarship among faculty and students; alumni currently working, or preparing to work, in the field of education; an interesting insight into pedagogy at Covenant; and a fine piece from Dr. Jeff Hall, vice president for academic affairs, on Covenant's commitment to the distinctive value of traditional, residential education.

As you read these articles, as well as additional items from or about the people of Covenant, I trust that you will once again be encouraged to see God at work in enabling us by his grace faithfully to explore and express the preeminence of Jesus Christ in all things.

May Jesus Christ be praised!
Blessings to you in him –



Niel Nielson, Ph.D.
President

View President Nielson's blog at president.blogs.covenant.edu.



THE VIEW

SPRING 2011

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Editor

Jen Allen

Designer

Tad Evaritt '98

Contributing Writers

Brian Beise, Jeff Hall, Camille Hallstrom,
Maaika Joyce '11

Contributing Photographers

Naomi Belz '14, Juliet Cangelosi '14, Nate Carl '11,
Tad Evaritt '98, Annie Huntington '13,
Garrett Reid '10, Roberto Soler

Contact the editor at:

Editor, *The View*
Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750
Phone: 706.419.1119
E-mail: theview@covenant.edu

Letters to the editor are welcome.

Send alumni news & photos to:

Alumni Office
Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750
Phone: 706.419.1649
E-mail: alumni@covenant.edu

Website: covenant.edu

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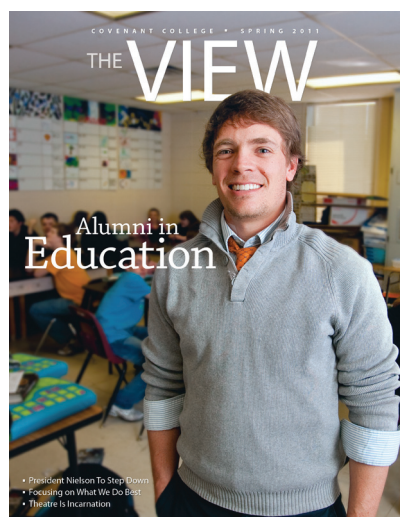
MISSION STATEMENT

The View's purpose is to:

- Encourage alumni, parents, and friends to keep Christ preeminent in all areas of their lives
- Give alumni, parents, and friends—our most important ambassadors—stories and information about the College, its students, alumni, faculty, and staff
- Provide alumni with an ongoing connection to the Covenant community
- Give God's people news about Covenant that will encourage them to praise, thank, and petition our Heavenly Father.

COVENANT
COLLEGE

IN ALL THINGS CHRIST PREEMINENT



ON THE COVER

Matt Jelley '03, an award-winning middle school teacher, is part of a rich tradition of Covenant alumni influencing education around the world. Read about Matt's work connecting his students' assignments to the outside world—and about a young graduate who has made Indonesia her new home. Meet two veteran educators and a student-teacher who is beginning the career she has wanted to pursue her whole life.

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A roundup of recent Covenant news and events, including President Nielson's upcoming resignation, new faculty books, and research presentations by a faculty-student team.

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Rebekah Schmidt '10, who grew up overseas, is back in her element, teaching language arts in Lippo Cikarang, Indonesia.

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Her lifelong dream has been to teach; now a student-teacher, Maaika Joyce '11 describes how her perspective on education has broadened.

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Convicted of a drug offense before his twenty-first birthday, Jonathan Carter '12 then received Christ's salvation and is now an enthusiastic student and catcher on the Scots baseball team.

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Theatre professor Camille Hallstrom on the importance of the dramatic arts in God's kingdom.

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President Niel Nielson To Step Down in June 2012 To Spearhead New Center for Global Christian Education

With immense gratitude for his service and leadership, the chairman of Covenant's Board of Trustees, Martin A. Moore, announced that President Niel Nielson will step down from his position at Covenant on June 30, 2012, to accept a new call. Dr. Nielson was inaugurated as Covenant's fifth president in 2002.

Dr. Nielson will be leaving to become president of the newly formed Maclellan Center for Global Christian Education, an initiative of the Maclellan Family Foundations, which has been created to strengthen and advance the Christian education enterprise in the United States and throughout the world. In pursuing this purpose, the Center will support the mission and ministry of the global church and will promote the gospel's impact on society and culture, for the glory of God.

"While I regret seeing Dr. Nielson leave Covenant's presidency, the Board of Trustees commends this new initiative and looks forward to potential opportunities for partnership," said Mr. Moore.

"Covenant has flourished under Dr. Nielson's leadership," he continued. "He brought with him a unique combination of gifts and experiences in the academy, the church, financial markets, human resources, and business, as well as a profound sense of the importance and distinctiveness

of the mission of this institution. In the nearly nine years of his tenure at Covenant to date, the College has seen the development of new and expanded academic programs, growth of the student body and the faculty and staff, increased partnerships with churches, a widening of Covenant's circle of friends and supporters, and significant campus development.

"Most importantly, under Dr. Nielson's leadership, the College has remained as committed as ever to its core beliefs and founding purpose and has furthered its mission of exploring and expressing the preeminence of Jesus Christ in all things.

"We are extremely grateful for the contributions of Niel and his wife, Kathleen, to the Covenant community and ultimately to God's kingdom work—and we are enthusiastic about the work still to come under his leadership through mid-2012."

The Board of Trustees is in the process of appointing a search committee in order to select the sixth president of Covenant College.



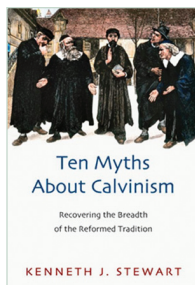
Dr. Niel Nielson

Professor Ken Stewart Authors Book About Calvinism

Ten Myths About Calvinism: Recovering the Breadth of the Reformed Tradition, by Professor of Theological Studies Ken Stewart, is now available from InterVarsity Press.

The book addresses ten untruths or misunderstandings surrounding the Reformed tradition: six for critics of Calvinism to re-examine, and four for Calvinists themselves.

"The book is an attempt at a kind of



'apologetics' rooted in historical and theological study of our tradition," says Stewart. "A clearer understanding of what our Reformed faith actually entails will enable us to communicate it in a less encumbered way both to unbelievers and to Christians of other persuasions."

The Broadway Project

The stage was alive with scenes from *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Rent*, *The Pajama Game*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Chorus Line*, *Wicked*, *Les Miserables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Lion King*, and *Into the Woods* this spring.

Sponsored by the Musical Theatre Club and members of the music fac-



Students performed selections from some of Broadway's best this spring.

ulty, the Broadway Project offered an evening of selected orchestral music, song and dance from many of Broadway's masterpieces.

"We were able to include a diversity of music never attempted in our past productions," says Dr. Jeanell Brown, chair of the music department.

Joining the cast was Covenant's chamber orchestra, directed by visiting instructor Lok Kim, and the company of Ballet Tennessee, directed by Barry VanCura.

Break on Impact

Members of the Covenant community spread out around the globe this spring break as part of our long-standing Break on Impact program, learning about cross-cultural ministry and participating in the expansion of God's kingdom.



The team that traveled to Haiti partnered with Mission to the World and assisted locals in the construction of housing as that nation continues to rebuild in the wake of the devastating earthquake of January 2010.

This year, 55 students, faculty, and staff members traveled to four destinations: Athens, Greece; Port-au-Prince, Haiti; Madrid, Spain; and the Yakama Indian Reservation. All teams partnered with ongoing ministries, by invitation from the host ministry, in a way that submitted to the leadership of the local workers and contributed to and encouraged their ongoing work.

History Professor Jay Green Co-Edits a Collection of Essays

Dr. Jay Green, professor of history, has edited *Confessing History: Explorations in Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation* with former classmates John Fea and Eric Miller. Notre Dame Press published the book, which includes a chapter written by Green.

Comprised of over a dozen essays, *Confessing History* seeks to explore and develop a deeper understanding of history as a vocation from a Christian point of view. The struggle to inte-



Dr. Jay Green



onCourse | Peer Instruction

Faculty:

Professors of Physics Phillip Broussard and Don Petcher

Method:

Through non-numerical questions and a voting system, Professors Broussard and Petcher force students to solve real-world physics problems in qualitative rather than quantitative terms. A situation is described, three or four possible outcomes are presented, and students vote electronically. The voting results and the various physics laws and equations involved are then discussed.

For Example:

You are driving your car and suddenly see a wall blocking your path. You cannot go around the wall. The only choices you can make are to try to A) hit the brakes and stop just before the wall, or B) make a turn and just miss the wall as you go through a 90° degree turn and end up driving parallel to the wall. Which do you choose? Or would you say C) it doesn't make any difference?

Says Professor Broussard:

"(Harvard Physics Professor) Eric Mazur found that exclusively using 'plug and chug' problems, where you solve for a numerical variable in an equation, does not indicate student understanding. He developed this new method, which really indicates how well students understand the physics involved. These questions require students to tie together several physics equations they have learned, but no numbers are given."

Method Used In:

General College Physics, Optics and Modern Physics, Physics for Scientists and Engineers

To listen to a podcast of Drs. Petcher and Broussard discussing this teaching technique further, visit covenant.edu/physicsvoting.

goFigure

4

Alumni awarded Fulbright grants in the past six years

335

High-school students who competed in a debate tournament at Covenant during spring break

35

Students who visited the Center for Calling & Career on the first day of the spring semester

100

Percentage of textbooks in the college bookstore, the Tuck Shoppe, that are available for both rent and purchase

6

Metro areas in which the Wilberforce Scholarship Program is active

8,014

Graduates of Covenant College to date

5,748

Miles traveled to Covenant by the chapel speaker who traveled the furthest this year

70

Student internship opportunities listed on the Center for Calling & Career website



Two days before the spring semester was scheduled to begin, it started snowing. A foot of snow later, the campus was blanketed in white, and classes were postponed for a few days. To see more pictures of the snowfall on campus, go to covenant.edu/snowphotos.

grate faith and vocation is foundational at Covenant, and Green sees *Confessing History* as an extension of that process.

"More than anything the audience of this book is made up of students and teachers looking to reconcile their faith with their work as historians" he says. Green goes on to clarify that the aim is not solely for faith to leave its mark on history as a vocation but also for history to leave its mark on faith. "It cuts both ways," he says.

Debate Society Successful in National Tournament

Covenant's Debate Society once again brought home an array of awards from the National Christian College Forensics Invitational (NCCFI).

The team's eleven awards from the spring 2011 tournament hosted by Azusa Pacific University (California) included second place in overall debate sweepstakes (Division II), second place in parliamentary debate speaker points (Sarah Swygard '13), and second (Swygard) and third place (Zach Robbins '11) in open extemporaneous speaking.

"There is great value in the Debate Society in practicing our communication skills as students and

Christians," said Robbins, president of the club. "Forensics competition with other schools allows us to hone our analytical and communication abilities as Christians. We are incredibly pleased with our performance at NCCFI, and these results speak to the great caliber of well-rounded students that are a part of Covenant's active community."

2011 Mountainfolk Tour

During spring break, four musical acts composed of Covenant students and alumni presented the 2011 Mountainfolk Tour.

The musicians performed original songs in a writers' circle format, showcasing one facet of Covenant's creative community as they held six concerts in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

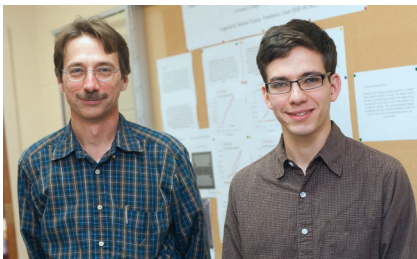


Stephen Bates '13 and Paul Smallman '13 were among the musicians who performed in the Mountainfolk Tour during spring break.

"Music and art build relationships, and relationships, in turn, strengthen artistic expression," says Matt Brown '09, one of the Mountainfolk artists. "It is my hope that audiences were able to see what we mean when we talk about pursuing our cultural calling as Christians. Several of the artists are music majors or alums, but we also had a history alumnus, a biblical studies major, and more. So this tour was a kind of multi-disciplinary window into Covenant, made possible by an acoustic folk concert."

Student and Professor Present Research at Physics Conference

In the fall of 2010, physics major David Myers '12 and Professor Phillip Broussard each presented research at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Section of the American Physical Society.



Dr. Phillip Broussard and David Myers '12 shared their research findings at a recent physics conference.

Professor Broussard says the conference allows students like David to hear more about the world of physics research and to develop their presentation skills. "It allows me the chance to discuss Covenant's efforts in physics," he says, "and for the school, it gives exposure to who we are."

"I had the opportunity to talk with people at many different levels, from other undergraduate students to physics professors," says David of the conference. "It taught me a lot about 'talking physics.' It gave me further insight into the field and confidence that this sort of work is what I want to continue to focus on now and in the future."



Directed by Professor Camille Hallstrom, performances of the Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Doubt: A Parable* examined the sensitive issue of suspected abuse. A faculty panel led a discussion following one performance.

Theatre Department Presents *Doubt: A Parable*

In late February, the Department of Theatre & Film Studies presented John Patrick Shanley's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Doubt: A Parable*, directed by Professor Camille Hallstrom. As part of her senior thesis, Kathryn Jenkins '11 played Sister Aloysius.

Professors Bill Davis (philosophy), Jeff Dryden (biblical studies), Richard Follett (history), and Camille Hallstrom (theatre) held a discussion following one of the performances.

"There's so much to discuss in this show," said Hallstrom. "It's a great study of broken hearts. It really is a discussion of certainty and doubt, and that's worth discussing in a place like Covenant College."

Trevor Potts Named Head Golf Coach

A former member of the Scots golf team and then an assistant coach, Trevor Potts '10 has been named head golf coach.

"Trevor is a great fit for our golf program, and we are excited to have the opportunity to develop him as a young



Trevor Potts '10

coach," said Director of Athletics Tami Smialek. "Our golf teams are ready to move to the next level and compete in the NCAA Division III, and I feel Trevor has the potential to lead them there."

Tom Schreiner, who served well as head coach for five years, continues in his role at Covenant as director of auxiliary enterprises.

Visit covenant.edu/athletics for schedules and game recaps for all our athletic programs.

Global Gospel Advancement Week

In November, the College hosted what has become an annual opportunity to focus our thoughts on God's work in the global community.



Dr. Michael Oh

Guests Dr. Michael Oh, Deborah Dortzbach, and a pastor from the Middle East spoke in chapel throughout the week, the Covenant community feasted on an international dinner in the Great Hall, and there was an opportunity to hear and learn from Covenant's Mu Kappa students who bring perspectives from their experiences in different parts of the world.

Focusing on What W

OUR LIVES HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY BUSY, possibly frenetic, over the past years. There never seems to be a lack of good things to do or of increasing expectations to meet. The challenge of setting boundaries and focusing our energies is one we face both personally and institutionally. There is a great temptation to take on more and more for the sake of “the Kingdom” and for “the Lord’s work,” but by extending our resources too thinly, we can do a disservice to primary callings. We need to be intentional about concentrating our attention and resources on what is essential and important. Covenant College faces those same challenges and is in a time of purposefully adjusting its programs and structures to fortify its primary mission of providing a Christ-centered education to traditional residential students.

We have taken steps in the last few years to focus on what Covenant does best. By optimizing operations, reorganizing our structure and strengthening the resources of our undergraduate residential program, we have been able to give full attention to our primary work.

The first step was an institutional inventory assuring that College resources were stewarded to best serve the College mission. Over the last three years, resources have been reduced in some areas and increased in others, as we designed a plan to live within our means for a sustainable future.

The two most notable changes have been our transferring of our adult degree-completion program Quest to Belhaven University and the separate incorporation of the Chalmers Center. Although the campuses we added and the students that were served over the years of the Quest program at Covenant College were an asset in many ways,

we came to believe that it would be best for the primary work of residential undergraduate education to transfer the program to Belhaven, and we are delighted that they can give it a home. This transfer has allowed us to focus on one campus rather than several and on a standard schedule of semesters rather than many overlapping registrations and distributions of financial aid as well as other institutional demands.

The incorporation of the Chalmers Center for Economic Development at Covenant College has allowed a

double benefit of a strong organizational structure for the Center and greater institutional clarity regarding resources and work. The College and the Center continue to be partners with a charter that links the two institutions. A separate incorporation and board allows the Center to

flourish. In the former structure, the Center reported through the academic administration to the board of the College. Although we love the Center, we could not give it the board-type of leadership support it needed. The new structure promotes a healthy partnership of the College and Center with appropriate freedoms and accountabilities.

With a renewed focus on its primary mission, Covenant can become stronger at what it does best, traditional undergraduate, residential education. To that end we have added programs according to a curricular plan. For 2010-2011, professors in marketing and design were added to the faculty. In the two subsequent years, we will add professors in political studies, engineering and film. All the while, we remain committed to offering a strong core of general education courses as foundation to well-developed majors.

With a renewed focus on its primary mission, Covenant can become stronger at what it does best, traditional undergraduate, residential education.

We Do Best

by Dr. Jeff Hall, vice president for academic affairs



A dear friend used to talk about God-serving education as giving students roots and wings – roots in the foundations that transcend the changes of time and wings that take Gospel-informed service to the ends of the earth. As we strengthen our primary focus, we will be reaching out beyond the campus. We continue to establish relationships through our Center for Calling & Career and through our experiential studies programs that connect us to study-abroad options for our students. We have grown our study-abroad programs and professor-led May terms to include venues in Thailand, Indonesia, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, France, Germany and New York City. In addition, we are making important connections to establish internships and create career paths for our graduates. With a strong foundation in what we do best, it is possible to support those initiatives that grow out of our mission and reach across cultures and careers. By God's grace we trust that our current course continues to provide deep roots in the foundations of our faith and wings that soar in loving service throughout all walks of life for the students of Covenant College. 🙏

Don't just leave an inheritance.

CREATE A HERITAGE.

By including Covenant in your estate planning, you can help ensure that future generations of students will be able to receive the thoughtfully Christian education that Covenant provides.

Your contribution to the endowment supports student scholarships, academic and co-curricular programs, faculty and staff salaries, campus development, and much more.

If you would like assistance with your estate planning, please contact Marc Erickson, executive director of the Covenant College Foundation, at marc.erickson@covenant.edu or 706.419.1645.

THE COVENANT COLLEGE FOUNDATION

COVENANT.EDU/FOUNDATION

by Brian Beise





"I think God
will have to push
me out of Indonesia
the same way He
pushed me into it."

– Rebekah Schmidt '10

all the great ideas and learning I received at Covenant," she says. Though she strives to integrate various subjects and thematic units into her lesson plans, she has found it difficult, as all her students speak English only as their second language, and at various levels of proficiency. "It's hard when some kids are fluent, and others in the same classroom really struggle to understand. After this first year of teaching, I'll have the summer to reflect and look back at my textbooks. I feel like I will be able to implement the things I learned at Covenant a lot better."

Back in the kind of international community in which she was raised, Rebekah feels no rush to return to America. "My contract is for another year, but if I am offered a continuation, I think I will stay for many more years. I think God will have to push me out of Indonesia the same way He pushed me into it." 🙏

Sekolah Pelita Harapan International Summer Program

This summer, four current Covenant students will serve as instructors in Jakarta, Indonesia. All four students have shown a passion for teaching and connecting to other cultures through grace and love.



"I pray that I will be able to show my students wisdom, grace, kindness, mercy, and love, that I will easily set aside my own culture and accept theirs." – Persie Bray '13



"I'm extremely excited to teach this summer. I'm confident the experience will be important in the future, as I explore my calling." – Garrison Dale '14



"Education has the power to present the Gospel and break the chains of poverty. I hope that my students see a glimpse of Christ's grace and joy in my teaching, and that we learn from each other." – HollyAnne Dobbins '14



"I hope to get a taste of what cross-cultural education is really like. I am interested in teaching internationally as a missionary, so I see this as a way to explore that calling." – Anna Clare Freel '13



Making the Classroom THE REAL WORLD

by Brian Beise

Named Dade County's teacher of the year in 2010, Matt Jelley '03 has worked with a fellow teacher to develop a curriculum for teaching writing that has his students ranked best in Georgia in the annual writing assessments two years running. Matt focuses on connecting the classroom to the rest of the world, creating assignments and conversations that matter.

Going home for the summer after his freshman year at Covenant, Matt Jelley '03 found himself relating to his family in a new way. "I was lording my newfound knowledge over my family," he says. Over the next three years at Covenant that "intellectual elitism" turned to a desire to approach others with humility—and to make connections where there might previously have been none. The potential chasm between the classroom and the outside world

has stayed with Matt and affected how he conducts his own classroom at Dade County Middle School, where he teaches eighth-grade English composition.

Matt believes much of teaching is done "for a trashcan. I teach it to you, you perform on a test or give an assignment, I grade it, and either I throw it away or I give it back to you and you throw it away," he explains. "What we try to do is reorient our entire writing program around making meaningful connections to life

outside the classroom." That goal is the driving force behind Project Synergy, the innovative curriculum for teaching writing that Matt developed with colleague Tom Randolph. The curriculum connects the classroom to the outside world, offering a new way to teach writing that has attracted attention well beyond Dade County, with both teachers winning Leavey Awards. Through Project Synergy, Matt's students have collaborated with Volkswagen, Home Depot, and Habitat for Humanity.



"What we try to do is reorient our entire writing program around making meaningful connections to life outside the classroom."

– Matt Jelley '03

On the last two annual state writing assessments, Dade County's middle school has ranked number one in Georgia. "That's an insane feat for these kids to accomplish," says Matt. "Part of it is that we practice like crazy. My kids wrote twenty-two essays from August to January this year. Their writing is meaningful; it's going out into the community, and it's getting read." In addition to creating writing assignments that matter to the students, and even to people beyond the classroom, Matt grades

the work on a system that eliminates much of the mystery of writing well. "This rubric we've developed takes a lot of the abstract out of writing. The switch is on or off; either you did something or you didn't. We've got a clear system for going through an essay, allowing kids to evaluate their peers and say whether the switch is on or off, and I think that concrete nature has allowed them to thrive."

As he develops and shares this curriculum, Matt seeks the right balance of love and instruction, of dis-

cipline and relationship. "Teaching has bolstered the things I got from Covenant," he says. "Christ's ministry was a great balance between being tough and being tender. That's something I take into the classroom every day. I'm always seeking to find that balance, and I think I got a lot of that at Covenant, from watching my professors and interacting with my peers. God has really worked on giving me the approach of humility, and of understanding what it is to be poor in spirit." 

Transformation

by Brian Beise

Not Transaction

Only the second head of school in the thirty-two year history of a Christian school in Hoboken, New Jersey, Christine Metzger M.Ed. '96 is devoted to fostering educational communities defined by faith and diversity.

It may be rare that a Christian school both seeks and attracts non-believing students, but Christine Metzger M.Ed. '96 believes such a school can become the center of a thriving and dynamic learning community. As head of Mustard Seed School (MSS), a model urban school in Hoboken, New Jersey, with Jewish, Muslim and Hindu children studying alongside Christians, Christine works to foster a place in which Christ's love is shared through relationships, exploration and understanding, not heavy-handed rhetoric.

After growing up in a public school system, Christine chose a Christian college for her bachelor's degree and came to Covenant for her master's in education. As she taught, and then moved into administration, her experiences at various schools shaped her passion for classrooms defined by diversity, hands-on experience and community. "I've learned that a big impact can be made by intentionally embracing our families in a Christian community of faith, whether they are Christian or not, with a specific sensitivity to not alienating anyone," says Christine. "Worship at MSS is eclectic in practice and has honored many different school families and cultures while remaining true to Christian faith practices."

Christine remembers watching through the window of the school as the World Trade Center fell. "We actually kept school in session," she says, "even though it happened first thing in the morning. We

worked really hard to keep the day normal for students." When parents rushed to gather their students, Christine and her faculty gave them the option of letting the students finish their day, allowing the parents to gather themselves for a few hours before working through the event as families. "The MSS community comes together every school day for worship and prayer. In a crisis like 9/11, worship time provided a routine and familiar place for students, parents, faculty and staff to come together to grieve and pray."

As she concludes her eleventh year at MSS, Christine plans to step down from her position and bring to other communities the philosophy of education she has learned and developed throughout her career. "What I took away from my time at Covenant is a strong understanding of a Reformed worldview and perspective, and seeing the world in a holistic way," she says. "I also became much more intentional about encouraging a grace-filled classroom approach." Christine believes the arts are different languages with which students can experience and reflect the world around them. Rather than firing facts and Christian doctrine at the student body, she contends that relationships and experience can communicate facts and truth. "Education can look different," she says. "Someone said to me the other day that he was a fan of transformational education, not transactional education. And I said, 'That's it; I'm with you there.'" 🌱





November of 2010 saw the release of *Shared Space: Learning from the Mustard Seed School*, a documentary from Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Brian Fuller. Since its release, Metzger and Fuller have brought the film to various universities and schools, exploring the methods, beliefs and people behind the school's unusual model and success. **Pictured above in black & white:** On March 21, 2011, they came to Covenant for a screening and discussion of the film. "*Shared Space* documents the innovations and success of Christian schooling with a strong commitment to the arts in an urban setting," says Dr. Jim Drexler, chair of Covenant's education department.

■ George Lawrence '65 has worked in education for more than forty years, and although he came into the profession as a cover story, he sees it now as a way to better understand God's creation and his people.

Spies, Worms &

George Lawrence '65 first took a teaching position to cover his spying for the U.S. Air Force in Peshawar, Pakistan. "The air base was large and impossible to miss," he says, "but all of us involved in spying were required to pretend to be in the country actually doing something else." Having met some of the missionaries at a school in the mountains north of Lahore, he chose teaching as his cover story. "To provide verisimilitude, I actually taught an English class there on rare occasions and enjoyed it." Soon after his return to the United States, his cover story became his career.

He remembers struggling to find a Christian school he felt he could support. "This was 1968, and Christian education was mostly characterized by a sad mess of schools that had started quickly to avoid integration. I probably wasn't that appealing a prospect either," he says, "because I had no real background in education. I wasn't certified." Eventually, he was offered a position at a good school and learned pedagogy from other teachers as he worked. Over the years George has seen great progress in the field of Christian education. "Now what I find is that there are schools that are thoroughly, deeply, consistently, consciously Christian, and that are also academically excellent."

Rather than finding one school with which he agrees and staying there for decades, George has made a career of going to schools in need, playing his part, and moving on. "My career has not been a carefully planned path," says George. "Rather, when the Lord has opened a door, I've walked through. I am not a good long-term maintainer and manager, but rather my passion is to revitalize schools and help schools connect with and implement their original mission and vision at a pivotal time in that school's life."

"You can't understand God's creation—you can't understand people—without learning."

— George Lawrence '65

Now, with more than forty years of experience, George is now superintendant of Annapolis Area Christian School. "I like to see the light bulb go on in kids' eyes," he says, recalling a moment when he and a few students were talking outside, and began wondering how the robins around the school found worms so easily. "It wasn't my field of course, but we got down and crawled around on the ground, about robin level, and it turns out you can actually see the worms down in their holes. It is always fun to see students get excited about learning, in my field or another. You can't understand God's creation — you can't understand people — without learning."

Among the first to graduate from Covenant's Lookout Mountain campus, George still feels a connection to the college. "Covenant taught me to think. Covenant taught me that the Lord doesn't want us all to be cookie-cutter replicas of each other. Oddly, since I have spent nearly my whole adult life serving in Christian schools, Covenant taught me that Christ can call us to serve him in all fields, and that we are called to do all we do for the glory of the Lord. Although it's been forty-five years since I graduated in the first class off the mountain, nascent ideas planted there have grown and developed. Some of that learning still surprises me." 🙏

& Robins

by Brian Beise



"As I began in the classroom, I realized that Covenant had prepared me not only in academics and management, but—more importantly—in the aspect that Christ must be my rock and my focus before I can do anything to serve 'my kids.'"

— Maaika Joyce '11

Building on a Solid Foundation by Maaika Joyce '11

I never imagined myself becoming anything other than a teacher. As a child growing up on an isolated mission station, I loved reading and devoured stories about Laura Ingalls Wilder teaching on the prairies and Anne of Green Gables tackling her one-room schoolhouse full of Canadian children. I loved playing teacher and began instructing my younger brother on all the “joys of learning” while he was still in diapers. As I grew older and realized I wanted to do a job that might be used on the mission field, I realized teaching definitely fit the bill and continued towards “being a teacher when I grow up.”

The fall of 2007 found me as a freshman at Covenant College, where I began to learn that teaching wasn't going to be about me, but about nurturing the unique individuals created in God's image that would

fill my classroom. Suddenly teaching began to seem very important, but also a bit harder to do than I had always dreamed. And now, spring of 2011 finds me in my first student-teaching position and . . . I truly love it. It is harder than anything I have ever done before, but far more rewarding than I imagined.

As I began in the classroom, I realized that Covenant had prepared me not only in academics and management, but—more importantly—in the aspect that Christ must be my rock and my focus before I can do anything to serve “my kids.” I see my students as gifted individuals who are each unique with different learning styles. It is my job (and joy) to be able to interact with these high-school students to prepare them not only for the SAT, but for life. At the moment, we are reading through the novel *Night*. It has revealed to me the

blessing of hope I have in Christ, and it is my goal to be able to help kids see not only the literature we read, but the life lessons we glean from all influences: books, people, relationships.

This burden for public-school kids who may not have many other Christ-like influences in their lives has developed since I have been at Covenant. I would love to teach internationally and am considering any options, but I have learned in my four years on Lookout Mountain that the first priority needs to be my heart (Is it fully Christ's?) and the hearts of my kids. We will cover the literature, but I believe God calls all of us Covenant students, who have been richly blessed to receive this faith-integrated worldview, to shine Christ's light in the places where others don't see the light: whether that ends up being Burkina Faso or Ringgold, Georgia. 🙌

Like a Chess Piece

by Brian Beise

A baseball player since the age of five, Jonathan Carter '12 was convicted of a drug offense before his twenty-first birthday. During the two years he worked through his sentence, he accepted Jesus Christ. He is now a junior at Covenant and is passionately pursuing excellence in his studies and as catcher for the Scots baseball team.

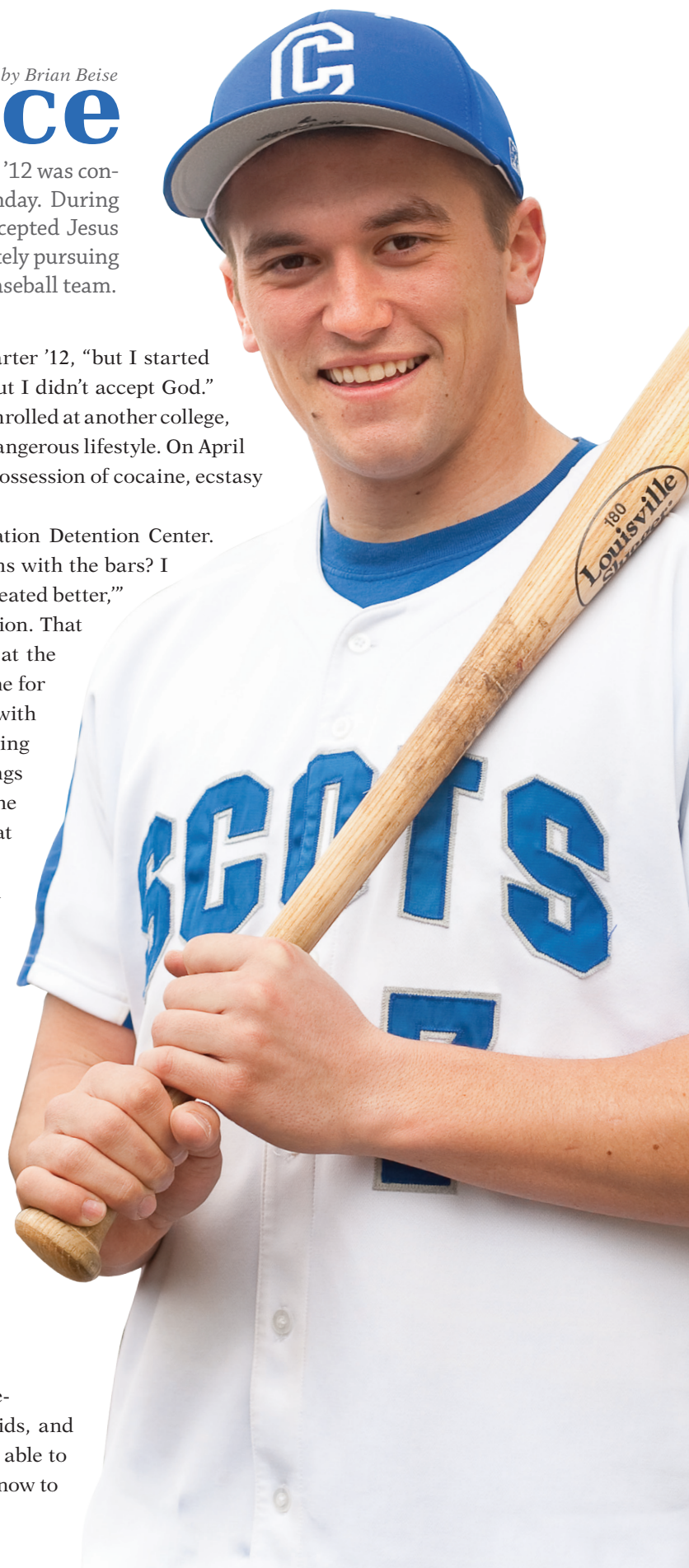
I'd been to church my whole life," says Jonathan Carter '12, "but I started using drugs when I was thirteen. I had felt God, but I didn't accept God." After high school he did not apply to Covenant, but enrolled at another college, where he continued to play baseball and develop a dangerous lifestyle. On April 18, 2006, still in his freshman year, he was arrested for possession of cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana with intent to distribute.

He was sentenced to 90-180 days in Caldwell Probation Detention Center. "You see guys picking up trash in jumpsuits and the vans with the bars? I was there for 118 days. I remember thinking, 'dogs are treated better,'" he says of the humiliation of being processed for detention. That period was followed by twelve months' minimum stay at the Paul Anderson Youth Home, a Christian residential home for troubled youth. Today, Jonathan speaks of his sentence with a measure of joy. "That's when the Lord started weeding out all the deceit and mischief, constantly tearing things away from myself. I don't have a problem telling it," he says, "because this is my story. This is the best thing that ever happened to me."

Two years after his arrest, Jonathan was released from the youth home. He decided to return to college, and when he visited Covenant, he felt God grab him "like a chess piece," moving him across campus, into one providential encounter after another, until he was convinced he had found his college. "It's great to see how the Lord has worked in his heart over the years," says head baseball coach Doug Simons. "It's also great to see how God is using Covenant College and our baseball program in his sanctification process."

Jonathan is now pursuing excellence as a catcher for the Scots baseball team and studying hard to earn a degree in elementary education, with concentrations in math and science. "What's fun about teaching Jonathan is that he's just really, really interested and enthusiastic about learning," says biology professor Dr. Richard Nelson.

After graduation, Jonathan hopes to be a middle-school teacher. "I like teaching," he says, "and I like kids, and middle school is where I started to act foolish, so I'll be able to relate. The Lord has worked with me this whole time. I know to whom much is given much is required." 🙏



"We have been made a theatre (θέατρον) to the whole universe." – 1 Corinthians 4:9

Theatre Is Incarnation

IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE in today's media-saturated, postmodern, narrative-focused culture, that one can consider himself or herself adequately educated without having developed an understanding of how dramatic art works and impacts its audiences and practitioners. It is our prayer that Covenant students are prepared to become "missionaries" to the dramatic professions. That is, we seek to help them become skilled in dramatic craft and also mature in discipleship, so they might one day enter the professional stage and film worlds to produce fine art to the glory of God, but also to reach out to a lost "people group" (dramatic professionals) who will not very likely be reached by outsiders. The dramatic arts are arguably the most influential mode of cultural communication today. We would be foolish to neglect proclaiming the Kingdom of God in this vital marketplace.

The title above, "Theatre Is Incarnation," refers to several things. First, there is something fundamentally similar between an actor's incarnation of the words of a dramatic text and the Divine Word himself having put on flesh. If in the world of philosophic discourse it can be said that "ideas have legs," in the dramatic world they have legs, hands, eyes, mouths, loves, hatreds, joys, sorrows, good deeds and evil. As Covenant Seminary grad and retired dramatic scholar Max Harris proposed in his erudite study *Theater and Incarnation*, "the idea of the Incarnation is through and through theatrical, and . . . the theatre, at its most joyous, occupies common ground with the Incarnation in its advocacy of what Karl Barth has called 'the good gift of [our] humanity.'"

Second, while the *end* of dramatic production (i.e., the performance) is incarnational in nature, we must make certain that the *means* (or process) of production is incarnational as well. That is, dramatic art, as a *collaborative* art form, shared as a *collective* experience with live audiences, is involved at every turn with human relationships. Jesus said men will know we are his disciples if we love (John 13:35). Paul says, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (1 Corinthians 12:27); we are "to be *imitators* of God" (Ephesians 5:1), for "God has chosen



by Camille Hallstrom, professor of theatre and film studies

to make known among the nations the glorious riches of this mystery: which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). *How we interact* with our brothers and neighbors—be they fellow company members, audience members, or members of the dramatic professions—is a very large portion of our witness and calling in the world. In our production practices at Covenant—i.e., how we behave with each other onstage and backstage, our consideration of the impact our production decisions will have on those who see them, and even how we handle business dealings with theatre professionals "out there"—we must always keep the call to love one another foremost in our theory, planning and prayers. We must "incarnate Christ" for those we encounter.

"I see my calling as twofold," theatre grad Laura Bannister '07 says, "*to love and to do good art*. . . I love the power that live storytelling has on a group of people—the audience. . . It is a privilege to be a physical part of telling stories that move and change people. . . Theatre allows me to interact with other artists, Christian and non-Christian. These people need love, and I hope that I can show them that love." 🙌

To learn more about theatre and film studies at Covenant, visit covenant.edu/tf or contact Camille Hallstrom at camille.hallstrom@covenant.edu.



IN ALL THINGS CHRIST PREEMINENT

Covenant College

14049 Scenic Highway

Lookout Mountain, GA 30750

888.451.2683

info@covenant.edu

covenant.edu



Carter Hall

Opened in 1928 as the posh Lookout Mountain Hotel, Carter Hall is now Covenant's flagship building. Visit covenant.edu/carterphotos to see more images of this beloved building through the years and add your comments. If you'd like to contribute to the Carter renovation fund, please go to covenant.edu/giveonline.