

C O V E N A N T C O L L E G E

VIEW



Imitating THE Original Engineer

Contents

Departments

- 4 Covenant News
- 8 Campus Collage
- 12 In Focus
- 23 Faculty View
- 24 Alumni News
- 30 Editor's Desk
- 31 President's Postscript

Features

10 The IMPACT Campaign: \$32 Million

Join us in thanking God for His provision for the future of Covenant.

14 The Academic Hall

After 35 years at Covenant, Jeff Hall has retired. Read about his legacy as VPAA and friend to many at the college.

16 Imitating the Original Engineer

For 50 years, Covenant has formed excellent, thoughtful engineers. Hear alumni stories and learn about our engineering program.

22 Practicing Life Together

Jon Hill '22 shares his testimony about surrendering to God and being part of rich community when it isn't easy.



C O V E N A N T C O L L E G E

VIEW

THE MAGAZINE OF COVENANT COLLEGE

The College of the Presbyterian Church in America
Published by the Office of Marketing
& Communications

Editor

Lydia Berglar '18

Creative Director

Mario Carrillo

Lead Photographer

Tad Ewearitt '98

Contributing Writers

Lydia Berglar '18, Henley Henderson '22,
Jeff Hall, J. Derek Halvorson '93, Jon Hill '22

Contributing Photographers

Tad Ewearitt '98, Hannah Rodehaver '22,
Joel Dahms '21, Greg Bagby, Michaela
Kourmoulis, Carissa Shallee Photography,
Volume Collective, Star Gazer Media

Proofreaders

Hannah (Tippens) Glad '18, Sarah Huffines,
Henley Henderson '22, Elysse Carrillo '23

Letters to the editor are welcome.

Contact the editor at:

Editor, View
Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750
view@covenant.edu

**Send alumni news & photos for
consideration to:**

Office of Alumni Relations
Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750
alumni@covenant.edu

Covenant College reserves the right to editorial
review of all submissions.
© 2022 Covenant College

Covenant College complies with federal and
state requirements for nondiscrimination
on the basis of age, race, color, gender,
disability, or national or ethnic origin in the
administration of its policies and programs.

Opinions expressed are those of the
contributors or the editor and do not
necessarily represent the official position of
the college.

View's purpose is to:

- Encourage alumni, parents, and friends to
keep Christ preeminent in all areas of their
lives.
- Offer alumni, parents, and friends – our
most important ambassadors – stories
and information about the college and its
students, alumni, faculty, and staff.
- Foster in alumni a sense of pride in
Covenant College and connection to the
Scots community.

**COVENANT
COLLEGE**

IN ALL THINGS CHRIST PREEMINENT



Our men's and women's soccer teams celebrate winning the USA South tournament championship.

The Journey to the NCAA Tournament

Congratulations to both Covenant men's soccer and women's soccer teams on their USA South Tournament titles and NCAA Tournament appearances. The men defeated NC Wesleyan in a penalty kick shootout for the USA South title on November 6 before defeating Denison University in the first round of the NCAA Tournament on November 12. They fell to No. 1 ranked Washington & Lee in the second round on November 13. The women took down Piedmont University to earn the program's first USA South Tournament title. The women advanced to their first NCAA

Tournament and fell to Centre College in the first round on November 12.

With both teams advancing together, this season brought extra excitement across the campus as we cheered on the Scots. The NCAA selection show on November 8 was a moment when coaches, faculty members, staff, college leadership, and both teams paused to celebrate the accomplishments while awaiting the tournament bracket announcements and looking forward to the competition.

Career Lunch Series

This year, the Center for Calling & Career hosted a lunch series to cover a range



of topics like budgeting, resumes, and preparing for interviews. The series also included presentations from alumni in a variety of careers. These resources, connections, and conversations are intended to set students up for success in their careers after Covenant as they consider how God has gifted them and where He may call them to work, lead, and serve.

Kingdom Life Conference

At the start of February, Pastor Russ Ramsey of Christ Presbyterian Church, Cool Springs visited Covenant to lead the Kingdom Life Conference. He explored the role of imagination in the Christian life through biblical passages and reflections on the art of Van Gogh and Michelangelo. A founding member of The Rabbit Room (a creative publishing group and collective based in Nashville), Russ is passionate about exploring art as a significant part of the human experience.



Covenant Joins New Conference

Beginning in the 2022-23

academic year, Covenant will be part of the newly-formed Collegiate Conference of the South (CCS). The USA South was the nation's largest NCAA Division III conference, with nineteen member institutions. After years of internal discussions, a two-conference separation strategy emerged, and more recently, the USA South Presidents Council formally committed to the establishment of two viable conferences. Approved by the NCAA as a new Division III athletic conference, CCS is made up of nine institutions from the USA South Athletic Conference: Agnes

Scott College, Belhaven University, Berea College, Covenant College, Huntingdon College, LaGrange College, Maryville College, Piedmont University, and Wesleyan College. This shift cuts down on travel time and allows for stronger connections and competition between regional teams.

Tim Sceggel: Fifteen Years of Service

After fifteen years of faithful service to Covenant, Tim Sceggel is moving to LeTourneau University, taking on the role of vice president and director of athletics. As Covenant's athletic director for the past six years, Tim remained firmly committed to cultivating disciples and pursuing excellence through athletics. While we will miss Tim, we are thankful that he has this opportunity. Covenant has begun a national search for a new athletic director.



Res Publica Lectures Consider Imagination in the Christian Life

This year's Res Publica Lectures encouraged students to consider the challenges of our digital age. Dr. Read Schuchardt, associate professor of communication at Wheaton College,

delivered the lectures entitled "Seven Vices of the Virtual Life: The History and Future of Digital Media's Spiritual Effects." Students taking the sociology course Social Media Ethics attended the lectures as part of their coursework.

The Magic Flute: Covenant's First Opera

This February, Covenant performed our first-ever opera production. The music and theatre departments worked together along with outside experts and Covenant alumni to perform *The Magic Flute*. Keturah Stickann and Caitlin Grammer joined us as director and assistant director, working with faculty members David Tahere and Claire Slavovsky. **Cara Smole '22** worked as the stage manager, and the cast included **Mary Brook Diamond '22** and **Ian DeGraaf '22** in lead roles along with numerous other students and music/theatre department alumni.



onCourse

Conversing in the Classroom

Department: World Languages

The Method: When learning a new language, students engage in five different areas: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural understanding. Covenant's upper-level conversation courses focus on listening and speaking while also providing ample cultural engagement. Students converse with each other solely in the language being studied while the professor guides the class.

This spring, a unit in Spanish Conversation focused on Spanish for the professions, which included mock job interviews and investigating ways to use Spanish in various fields. Students in French Conversation read about opposing views on current issues in the French world and discussed them together. In a similar fashion, German Conversation in the fall semester saw students discussing various works including news reports, a novella, and a mystery novel.

Practical Experience: Students also put these languages to use in study abroad programs and practicums. For example, German student **Brendan Lyster '22** immersed himself in German language and culture while studying abroad in Heidelberg, Germany. **Henry Hooks '22** worked with a dental office serving the Spanish-speaking population of Chattanooga, and **Audrey Parker '22** worked with Spanish-speaking immigrant families. French student **Emerson Moore '22** studied at Aix-en-Provence in the fall and aided other students with French through her work in the Language Lab this spring.

Says a Professor: "Being able to converse in another language, to express one's views and understand another's, to show kindness to the stranger, to experience the small things of life in another culture - these are gifts from the Lord." - Tom Neiles, Professor Emeritus of French and German

Says a Student: "It brings me a lot of joy to truthfully say, 'Ich spreche Deutsch!' Learning a language teaches that other ways of experiencing and talking about the world exist - often in ways that our limited imaginations could not otherwise begin to fathom. It widens our conceived horizons of the possible. In that regard, I think taking a foreign language is crucial to a liberal arts education." - **Jackson Murray '22**

Senior Capstone Projects



122

Fall 2021
Completed
Capstones

129

Spring 2022
Completed
Capstones

18

Fall 2021
Capstone
Faculty
Advisors

21

Spring 2021
Capstone
Faculty
Advisors

68

Capstone Carrels in
Kresge Memorial Library

Capstone Theatre
Productions

1

Production

2

Capstones

3

Capstone Art
Exhibits



Olivia Sanders '22, Professor Kourmoulis, and Wesley Dusek '24 at the CFP National Championship.

Students Work CFP National Championship and Final Four Games

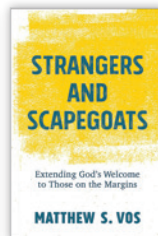
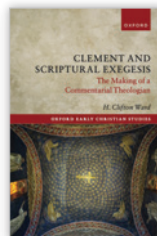
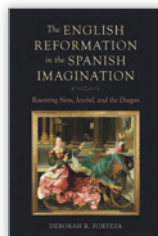
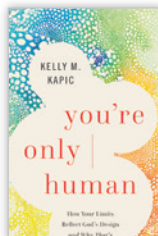
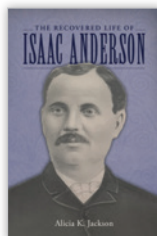
Through the work of Michaela Kourmoulis, assistant professor of sport management, Covenant students had the opportunity to work at the College Football Playoff National Championship game in Indianapolis, IN and the Final Four in New Orleans, LA. **Olivia Sanders '22** and **Wesley Dusek '24** worked with students from Shenandoah University at the College Football Playoff National Championship while **Caleb Miller '22**, **Lydia Radmacher '23**, and **Madison Blevins '24** worked the Final Four.

"You don't get to see how much work goes into an event like that on TV," Olivia said in an interview with *The Bagpipe*. "It was amazing to get to learn more about what goes into a championship game and meet some of the hundreds of staff that make the event happen. I specifically appreciated getting to meet other professionals in the industry and getting to talk with them and ask them questions."

Seven Faculty Publications

This year, seven faculty have published or will soon release books. In order of release date:

- *The Recovered Life of Isaac Anderson* by Dr. Alicia Jackson
- *You're Only Human: How Your Limits Reflect God's Design and Why That's Good News* by Dr. Kelly Kopic
- *The English Reformation in the Spanish Imagination: Rewriting Nero, Jezebel, and the Dragon* by Dr. Deborah Forteza
- *Clement and Scriptural Exegesis: The Making of a Commentarial Theologian* by Dr. Clifton Ward
- *Fictional Labor: Ethics and Cultural Production in the Digital Economy* by Dr. Jiewon Baek
- *Strangers and Scapegoats: Extending God's Welcome to Those on the Margins* by **Dr. Matt Vos '90**
- *Xenophobia as Symbolic Politics: A Cross-Regional Explanation of Anti-Refugee Activism from Brussels to Beirut* by Dr. Anna Rannou



CovenantNews

Break on Impact: Yakama Indian Reservation

A team of ten Covenant students traveled to the Yakama Indian Reservation for a Break on Impact Trip, joining an RUF team from the University of Pittsburgh to work with Sacred Road Ministries. This was the third time that Ron Thomas, who served with Mission to the World and now supervises Covenant's grounds and equipment department, has led the trip.

Being Human Conference

Going beyond lectures, panel discussions, and Q&A sessions, the March conference also included dramatic readings and student presentations. Dr. Christina Bieber Lake, professor of English at Wheaton University, and Frank Mihelich, artistic director of New Threads Theatre Company, engaged with students, staff, and faculty alike in thoughtful discussions about biblical anthropology as informed by literature,



Top: Students of all majors attended the inaugural Being Human Conference.

Bottom: Student presentors from left to right: Ray Lantrip '23, Elysse Carrillo '23, Casen Bailey '24, Abraham Fields '24



The Covenant team at the Yakama Indian Reservation.

theology, and drama. Students had the opportunity to submit papers and creative projects for the conference, and student presenters were selected from by Covenant faculty members. **Elysse Carrillo '23** was awarded the top prize for the presentation of her creative nonfiction piece.

In Memoriam: Janice Adams

Jan Adams, who served with the Covenant College Board of Trustees, went to be with the Lord in early March 2022. Her family - including children Esther, Naomi, Agur, Hannah, and Isaac - remind the Covenant community that we grieve but not as those without hope. Jesus enters our world and our circumstances to comfort on one hand, and, on the other, to say, "This will not separate me from my beloved." Jan is with her beloved, Jesus is with us, and one day, all that is sad will become untrue.

Faculty Announcements

While sad to say farewell to several beloved faculty members as they retire or move on to other pursuits, we delight in welcoming new professors. We say farewell to Dr. Dan MacDougall (professor of biblical

studies), **Dr. Bruce Young '73** (professor of education), Dr. Nola Hecker (associate professor of linguistics), Professor Kayb Joseph (professor of art), and Dr. Jiewon Baek (assistant professor of modern languages). After teaching as a visiting professor for a year, Dr. Clifton Ward joins us full time as associate professor of church history and theology. **Dr. Heather (Nation) Hess '09** also joins us full time as assistant professor of English after teaching for several years as a visiting professor. We also welcome Dr. Lynell Martinez as assistant professor of biology, Dr. Rod Wilson as associate professor of psychology, and **Dr. Luke Irwin '10** as assistant professor of biblical studies.

Psi Chi & SEPA: Psychology Student Achievements

In March, eighteen Covenant psychology students presented their research at the annual Southeastern Psychological Association convention. Additionally, **Emma Marcotte '22**, **Savannah Savage '22** and **Summer Johnson '22** were accepted into Psi Chi, the International Honor Society in Psychology.





4



5



8



9



13



14

CampusCollage

1-2 Jazz on the Overlook Students and alumni dance the night away during Homecoming 2021.

3-4 Fall Festival With square dancing, games, and treats, students and staff welcome fall weather.

5 Scots Volleyball In the final season under Coach **Joanna (McGill) Ehman '10**, the team secured a 21-9 overall record and a 14-2 USA South record. While bittersweet that Ehman has stepped down, we welcome **Stephanie Wharton '06**.

6 Carter Christmas Carter residents transform their halls into winter wonderlands.

7 Senior Social The Class of 2022 celebrates in Chattanooga as they wrap up their last fall semester.

8 Exam Cram A Harry Potter themed evening offers students a mental break from papers, projects, and tests.

9 Snow Day Scots thoroughly enjoy the January snow with sledding, snowman building, snowball fights, and photo shoots of the wintry landscape.

10-11 Max Out Barnes Students cheer on men's basketball, ending the night with a 66-52 victory against Piedmont. That same evening, while on the road, women's basketball secured a 54-46 win against Agnes Scott.

12 Around Founders From *Alice in Wonderland* to *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Founders Hall residents bring favorite stories to life throughout the dorm.

13-14 Sk80s Students dress up and let loose to classic 80s tunes at 80s Skate Night.

THE

IMPACT CAMPAIGN

\$32
MILLION

Join us in thanking God for His provision for the future of Covenant College. Through the completion of the IMPACT Campaign and all who contributed to its success, God has strengthened our institution to remain faithful for generations to come.

By Henley Henderson '22 & Lydia Berglar '18





I knew in my head and my heart that I wanted to go to Covenant, but I knew without scholarships, that wasn't possible."

**Justin
Carter '24,**
WILBERFORCE
SCHOLAR

WITH AN INITIAL GOAL OF \$30 million and an end result of \$32.1 million, the IMPACT Campaign is both the most ambitious and most successful endowment campaign in the history of the college.

We kicked off the IMPACT Campaign in December 2018 as part of our long-term goal to bring Covenant's endowment to \$100 million. This campaign focused on two goals. First, make Covenant more affordable for our students. Second, recruit and retain outstanding faculty who align with our theological beliefs.

With ten new endowed scholarships created and millions designated toward forty-two existing scholarships, we are able to provide aid to more deserving students. The Covenant community stepped in to make this education a reality for future generations of Scots.

The IMPACT Campaign also raised funds to invest in faculty members, ensuring that distinguished Christian scholars remain a steadfast mark of Covenant College. In order to develop successful students who are dedicated to their faith, our faculty must be committed to academic rigor as well as spiritual discipline.

The process of finding Covenant professors proves challenging because they must be academically excellent, gifted in their field, and great teachers and mentors, while also sharing our beliefs and biblical commitment. The college prioritizes this integral endeavor, and the funds raised through this campaign are an investment on behalf of the faculty.

Join us in praising the Lord for His faithful provision, celebrating this moment of success, and recognizing the many people who united to make this campaign a reality. 🙌



"God brought bountiful mercy and provision through the IMPACT Campaign, which brought together multiple generations of students, families, faculty, staff, donors, and even presidents - all working toward the same goal. A solid financial foundation allows an institution to look forward, plan, dream, strategize, and prepare for fulfilling its mission. Rarely are we able to actually dig in for tomorrow, next year, and decades down the road, but through this campaign, Covenant was afforded such an opportunity, and we are thrilled."

Bob Curtis • BOARD MEMBER, COVENANT PARENT

IMPACT NUMBERS



\$32,163,223+

in commitments



\$5.5M committed to
42 existing
scholarship
endowments



329

participants



47

partners
contributed
through
estate
planning.

10

new
endowed
scholarships
were created.

Refracted Light

Since 1979, Covenant Scots have gathered beneath these stained glass windows. Year after year, students gaze upward when sunbeams stream in through the Covenant of Life window, bringing beautiful vibrancy to the glass depiction of Christ's return and the consummation.

Like colorful light refracted onto the chapel bricks, the love that the Covenant community shows each other reflects God's enduring love for us.

To further explore the chapel windows, visit covenant.edu/chapel-windows.



THE ACADEMIC HALL

After 35 years of service to Covenant College, Jeff Hall has retired from the role of vice president for academic affairs (VPAA).

By Lydia Berglar '18



ANYONE WHO HAS HAD THE PLEASURE of conversing with Jeff Hall is familiar with his calm, welcoming demeanor, his sincere, thoughtful reflection, and his deep care for Covenant. More than his diligent work and expertise, it is Jeff's irreplaceable character and friendship that our community will miss the most.

For the last 20 years, Jeff served as chief academic officer and VPAA, a significant role that oversees accreditation, institutional research, the Office of Records, and more. While Jeff's work impacted the experience of every Covenant student, his duties involved very little time with students. "I oversaw everything that takes place in the classroom and everything that supports academics directly, but I almost never saw a student," says Jeff. "The most important part of my work was the welfare of the faculty," - selecting and developing the people who teach and influence students on a daily basis.

Jeff worked alongside three Covenant presidents (Dr. Frank Brock, Dr. Niel Nielson, Dr. J. Derek Halvorson '93), a number of cabinet members, and countless board members. "I've enjoyed all three presidents and learned many things from all of them. We also have a special board that enjoys being together. When interviewing faculty candidates, board members ask deep philosophical and theological questions. It is delightful to witness the rich conversation between board and faculty members accompanied by laughter and friendship."

Jeff is thankful for years of deep friendships with many Covenant colleagues. He notes that Lou Voskuil influenced him academically and personally through years of working and attending church together. Remembering Nick Barker, Jeff notes, "He loved to make up words."

KEY DATES IN JEFF'S LIFE



1978

Earned AB in elementary education from Grove City College.



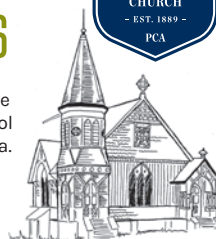
1981

Earned MEd in elementary education from University of Slippery Rock.



1978-1986

Jeff and Lynn taught at Jubilee Christian School in Pennsylvania. Jeff appointed as principal.



1986

Moved to Chattanooga to become Chattanooga Christian School's elementary principal. Joined St. Elmo Presbyterian Church.



1987

Began teaching at Covenant as an adjunct professor.



MEET COLLIN MESSER

Our New VPAA

Dr. H. Collin Messer joins us after sixteen years at Grove City College where he taught English and served as an assistant dean. Collin grew up in Clinton, SC, attending Westminster Presbyterian Church. He earned his BA in English Literature from Emory University and his MA and PhD in English Literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Collin and his wife, Elizabeth, have three children. Their oldest, Camille '21, was the first Messer to join the Covenant community. The Messers' second daughter, Grace, is a senior at Grove City, and their son, Mac, is a high school senior.

Jeff and Paul Morton (professor of history, department chair, dean of academic programs) meet together in Jeff's office.

When you talked with him, you never knew if a word had been heard by humans before or if he just made it up." Of Bob Harbert and Kevin Eames, Jeff says, "We served as elders together at St. Elmo Presbyterian. Among many other things, Bob taught me about college finances, and Kevin and I shared in the adventure of accreditation." In regards to the current dean of academic programs, Jeff jokes, "I probably spend more time with Paul Morton than with my wife."

Spending that much time with Paul is no small feat, given that Jeff and Lynn have been married for 45 years. Lynn has been his wise counselor, constant encouragement, and faithful prayer partner throughout their married life. They have four children and six grandchildren. Abby Choi '04, Nathan '05, Sarah Ocando '07, and Micah '08 all graduated from Covenant.

"We let them choose where to go to college, and they all came to Covenant," says Jeff. "The most important thing to us is that our children are all believers, actively involved with their churches, with intact families, and they all live generous lives."

When reflecting on Covenant's uniqueness, Jeff comments that it is difficult to explain to those who haven't experienced it. "Reformed colleges tend to become cerebral and a little chilly, but Covenant is either young enough or southern enough that we remain warm and humble. We have deep and nuanced thinkers who are all grounded in personal relationships with the living God. Learning ought to lead to deeper humility before God, which is evidenced on our campus by the presence of laughter. Our professors take their work seriously, but they also laugh together often." 🙌

"I nearly came to Covenant for my undergrad, and I often think back to that decision, but decades later, Cammie became the first Messer at Covenant. Working in higher ed while our oldest experienced it at a parallel school was a blessing to us. Over the years, Elizabeth and I have sought to disciple college students, and while Cammie was 600+ miles away from us, she was cared for and disciplined by the Covenant community.

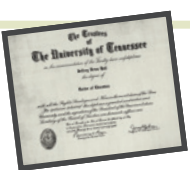
"I look forward to serving Covenant's fine faculty, one that routinely punches above its weight and remains devoted to a beautiful, faithful mission. My satisfaction comes from seeing other people flourish in what God has called them to do. As a professor, that meant helping students flourish. As a department chair, I wanted to help younger colleagues grow in their teaching and studies. As Covenant's VPAA, I hope to enable all faculty members to flourish in their work.

"Elizabeth and I are delighted to move back to the South after many years in Pennsylvania. We look forward to exploring the area and seeing daffodils bloom in February."

The Messer family, pictured left to right: Grace, Elizabeth, Mac, Camille, Collin

1992

Earned EDD in Educational Administration and Supervision from University of Tennessee, Chattanooga.



1994

Became full-time associate professor of education at Covenant.



1998

Became dean of faculty.

2001

Became chief academic officer.

2003

Became vice president for academic affairs.

44 2022

Retired after 44 years in Christian education.



Imitating The Original Engineer

By Lydia Berglar '18

SINCE THE 1970s, COVENANT COLLEGE HAS FORMED engineers who create, build, problem solve, and improve in imitation of God, the original engineer. The first engineering students enrolled at the college in 1972 – 50 years ago this fall – and in 1973, Dr. Jamieson C. Keister (math and physics professor) negotiated an agreement with Georgia Tech to offer a dual-degree program in engineering. Today, Dr. Curt Stern guides students who have the desire and talents to be engineers. Along with numerous professors in the math, physics, and chemistry departments, Stern prepares students for success at engineering schools, grad schools, and in their careers. Over 150 men and women have gone through Covenant's program and completed their undergraduate degrees at other institutions.

ENGINEERING AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

Covenant engineers benefit not only from the liberal arts and biblically grounded education they receive on Lookout Mountain, but they also benefit from the resources and specializations of engineering schools. While we have official agreements with both Georgia Tech and the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, students can complete their dual degree at any engineering school. "By studying first at Covenant, students have the chance to

mature and build a strong foundation, both academically and spiritually," says Dr. Stern. "Then, when they move to an engineering school, they're extremely well-equipped to thrive. Professors at Georgia Tech have told me that they will take as many students as we can send," says Curt. "They love the students we send, and they've watched them succeed."

Before coming to Covenant, Dr. Stern taught at Virginia Tech for over 20 years. Carina (Stern) Nasrallah, Curt and



Dr. Stern and the Class of 2019 engineering students (from left to right): Roy MacGregor '19, Abigail Gianis '19, Mason Gregoire '19, Jason Gaby '19



Andrew Hobbs '99

Astec Industries | Head of Simulation
Sheffield, United Kingdom



Each year, I give a talk to Covenant's freshmen engineering students. It's been rewarding to make connections with these students, some of whom have interned at my company and at least one is now a full-time engineer at Astec. I tell freshmen that engineering school is a place to learn the foundational skills necessary for a systematic approach to problem solving. In the same way musicians practice scales or basketball players practice free throws, engineering school provides students with the basic toolset they will need when they enter the workforce. I also suggest two traits that I have found in all successful engineers: curiosity and determination.

Personally, I enjoy the creative side of engineering and applying new technologies to solve problems. I'm fortunate to work on a great team - collaborating with and learning from others keeps every day interesting.

K. Virginia Kegel '17

Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, Kirtland AFB | Intelligence Engineer
Albuquerque, NM



My dad is an engineer, and he has this way of cobbling together bits of scrap to make something magical. When I was little, he opened my mind up to new possibilities, such as taking a basic papier-mâché project to the next level by adding LEDs. He always encouraged me to take the extra step to improve an idea or process.

Working with the Department of Defense is a harrowing reminder of the abject evil that exists in the world. My director reminds us that we do our jobs so that our families and friends can sleep peacefully at night. What keeps me going every day is knowing that God has a plan that was set in motion with the creation of the universe, and the war against sin was won with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. All evil, suffering, and threats will eventually fall, with God sovereign over it all.

At Covenant, Dr. Petcher and Dr. Broussard had us write weekly labs in LaTeX (a software system). It was a grueling exercise, but those labs were foundational in developing the skill of organizing and communicating thoughts and processes. Almost every aspect of my job requires communicating technical data to a broad audience in a clear, digestible way.



Abigail Gianis '19

**Apple | Technical Program Manager
for iPhone**
Santa Clara, CA

The engineering courses at Covenant are no joke. In fact, many of them were more rigorous than my Georgia Tech courses. Dr. Stern and the physics professors are incredibly helpful and supportive. They always took the time to help me through challenging topics and supported all my wild ideas.



I recently read an intriguing piece in *The Wall Street Journal* titled, "Silicon Valley's Secret Christians." It discusses the hesitation and hostility toward Christianity in Silicon Valley despite the many calls for tolerance of different belief systems. Being a Christian in the workplace does not necessarily mean evangelizing to your coworkers. For me, it just means demonstrating the love of Jesus. I've connected with an amazing PCA church called Grace Silicon Valley. The congregation is made up almost entirely of engineers! It's been an incredible blessing to connect with other Christians through the Church and see what God is doing in Silicon Valley.

Bill Meffert '78

**Retired from Georgia Tech |
Principal Research Engineer**
Marietta, GA

I had a natural curiosity about God's creation and always tried to learn how things worked. As a Christian, I strived to provide the best engineering services for my clients and sponsors. Receiving millions in federal funds was a public trust that I took personally and tried to provide excellent results for the tax dollars entrusted to my group.



One favorite project: Being part of the US delegation that helped develop the first international standard (ISO 50001) for managing energy in organizations. I got to travel, interact with delegates from 40 countries, and have the satisfaction that this standard has been used in thousands of companies around the world to save energy and reduce greenhouse gasses. I consulted with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to provide training for engineers in several countries on how to implement ISO 50001.



Mark Roos '22, Luke Cary '23, Antonio Hatch '23, Matthew Barber '22, and their teammates take first place in Georgia Tech's annual Mini 500 tricycle race.

**"By studying first at
Covenant, students have
the chance to mature and
build a strong foundation,
both academically and
spiritually."**

DR. CURT STERN
Engineering Professor at Covenant

Marianne's oldest child, attended Belhaven University to study dance, but then their eldest son, Bryan '16, came to Covenant to study engineering. Through this, Curt and Marianne learned about the mission of the college and wanted to be part of it. In 2012, Curt became the director of Covenant's engineering program, and the Sterns' younger three sons also came to Covenant. Tim '17 studied engineering while Paul '20 and Nathan '21 studied business. "As a parent," says Curt, "I'm glad my kids came to Covenant, which opened the door for two of them to study at Georgia Tech, but I'm even more pleased about how Covenant shaped them in all areas of their life, including their walks with Jesus and in their relationships."

Curt is just one example of the remarkable faculty that God has assembled at Covenant. He earned his undergraduate degree from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his PhD in mechanical engineering from University of California, Berkeley, and he has decades of experience in industry and teaching. He came to Covenant so that he could serve in a community of committed, Christian academics and pour himself into the formation and preparation of believing engineers.

Today, we have nearly 30 students studying engineering at Covenant. While most pursue mechanical engineering, alumni work in numerous other branches including civil, electrical, chemical, aerospace, and nuclear engineering. The dual-degree program (also called the 3-2 program) means students earn a bachelor of arts in natural science with a concentration in engineering from Covenant as well as a bachelor of science from their engineering school.

A FAMILY OF ENGINEERS

Two threads seem to run in the Van Stelle family: Covenant and engineering. Rachel (Van Stelle) Rienstra '12 and Matt Van Stelle '15 followed in the footsteps of their parents,



Above: Ken and Rachel at the Infinity Science Center in front of an Apollo Era Saturn V rocket. Ken's company produced the engines for these rockets in the 60s and 70s.



Right: Rachel, Ken, and Matt in front of Carter Hall.

Ken '86 and Christy (Longacre) '84, by graduating from Covenant, but they followed in Ken's footsteps specifically by studying engineering.

Ken chose Covenant because he knew he would receive a well-rounded education and he was interested in our partnership with Georgia Tech, which is where he completed his degree. He remembers, "I didn't know the first thing about engineering, but I knew I was good at math. I also knew Covenant would offer me a lot of fallback options if engineering didn't pan out, but I fell in love with engineering and never

looked back. It was where God gifted me and clearly led me."

During Ken's time at Covenant, the program was led by Dr. Keister and Professor Ray Dameron, the physics professor. "I saw Dr. Keister and Professor Dameron as mentors," says Ken. "Having access to professors was one of the unique benefits of Covenant. Professor Dameron would turn us loose in his physics lab, which was basically a workbench with all of his toys. He had one of the early computers that we could practice programming on. He spent time with us and answered our questions. We had lunch with Dr. Keister a couple times a year." Ken also notes that engineering is a group effort, remembering the countless hours shared with fellow students. "There were about six or eight of us who went through the program together, studying together, crying together," Ken laughs. "You never study engineering alone; you do it as a group."



Mark Roos '22

Georgia Tech |
Civil Engineering Masters Program
Atlanta, GA



My Covenant Senior Capstone Project is about the ethical obligations of Christian civil engineers. The American Society of Civil Engineers' Code of Ethics is quite rigorous and consistent with Christian values, but as Christians, the character of God must be the foundation of all our views on ethics (as opposed to professional pride or humanist benevolence).

I loved my three years at Covenant on my hall in Founders. Late-night conversations and drives down the mountain to Cook Out will always be cherished memories. I also miss going into Dr. Ward's office to have a cup of tea and chat about life or sitting in Dr. Stern's office talking about the engineering program and what comes next. Currently, I attend Atlanta Westside Presbyterian Church. I'm also involved with RUF at Georgia Tech and have been helping lead worship since January 2021.

Roy Makkar Gabriel '21

Makademy LLC | Founder and Owner
Georgia Tech | Quantitative and
Computational Finance Masters Program
Atlanta, GA



My business idea is simple. Create, revamp, and optimize technical learning and development programs. What I love about it is that it is simple yet effective. You don't have to create the next Apple or Uber to start a business. Sometimes all it takes is supply and demand. As I build technical learning and development programs for my clients, my faith informs the way I interact with AI systems. Big data and AI can easily be used with a sinful mindset to manipulate data and abuse its power, yet it is also able to solve complex problems in our world. It is how we use such technology that makes a difference, and it can be used to further God's kingdom.

There is no engineering program at Covenant without the engineering, math, physics, and chemistry professors. Specifically, Dr. Stern was and is a great mentor to me and never fails to share valuable wisdom. Transitioning to Georgia Tech was easy with his leadership. Covenant's engineering program challenged me to solve difficult problems while enriching my faith and developing me to boldly glorify God in all things.



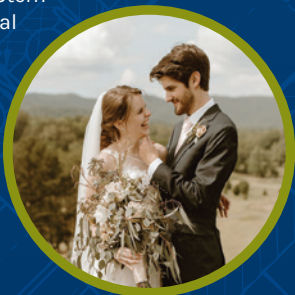
Elias '20 and Anna (Danek) '21 Irick

Anna • Enercon Services | Mechanical Engineer

Elias • Georgia Tech | Mechanical Engineering Masters Program

Atlanta, GA

Elias & Anna: Dr. Stern does a phenomenal job of guiding discussion about engineering and Christianity. The short version: God is our creator. He set us apart by making us in His image. Being made in the image of a creator, humans in turn have the ability to create, and God delights when we exercise that ability for His glory. He was the first engineer.



Elias: I really enjoy the locomotion neuromechanics class at Georgia Tech, a study in the mechanisms of how our brains control our muscles. We focus on patients who have lost mobility, and it's exciting to see the research being done for the next generation of prosthetics and exoskeletons.

Anna: Contrary to my initial perception of engineering, there's not always one right answer. In the machine design course at Georgia Tech, our professor gave us industry-applicable design problems, and we had to figure out the best solutions to meet both technical requirements and budgetary constraints. These projects challenged the idea that there's always one right answer and brought to life concepts from my coursework in a practical way.



The Van Stelle family from left to right: Daniel '12, Rachel (Van Stelle) '12, and Calvin Rienstra; Ken '86 and Christy (Longacre) '84 Van Stelle; Caroline (Berry) '16 and Matt '15 Van Stelle

“There were about six or eight of us who went through the program together, studying together, crying together... You never study engineering alone; you do it as a group.”

KEN VAN STELLE '86

Operations Manager, Stennis Space Center

Ken credits both the resources of Georgia Tech and Covenant's biblical liberal arts foundation for preparing him for his career. “Georgia Tech got my foot in the door to get the interview, but telling the whole story about my well-rounded education background helped me land the job. I’ve been working for Aerojet Rocketdyne and its predecessors ever since graduating.” Aerojet’s 5,000 employees are spread across the United States at about ten separate sites, but Ken’s specific role is operations manager at the John C. Stennis Space Center in

Mississippi where they assemble and test large rocket engines.

CONNECTED THROUGH THEIR COMPANIES

Another interesting Van Stelle family thread is that Rachel’s company, Lockheed Martin Space, uses some of Aerojet’s engines to launch, steer, and position their satellites. “Engineering really happens in a team,” says Rachel.

“In school, that meant studying together, and it translates to the real world in examples like the partnership between our companies.” Lockheed Martin has developed many exploratory probes in partnership with NASA including Juno to explore Jupiter and OSIRIS-REx to collect material from an asteroid. The company also designed and built the heat shield for the Mars lander Perseverance and is in the midst of building the next line of Artemis spacecraft which will take astronauts to the moon and beyond. Based in Colorado, Rachel is the lead materials & processes engineer for GPS III



Dr. Stern in action, teaching a calculus course at Covenant.

and IIIF programs, meaning she is responsible for the selection and performance of mechanical parts, materials, and processes used to build satellites.

Like Ken, Rachel reaped the benefits of both a Covenant and Georgia Tech education. “I got the best of both worlds. If I hadn’t attended Georgia Tech, I wouldn’t have had the opportunities or connections to work at Lockheed, but I’ve been successful in my career because of Covenant College. I got to take classes like The Christian Mind and Cultural Heritage of the West with great Covenant professors. I learned course material thoroughly because I had a small cohort and class size. We received personal attention and time from the professors. Georgia Tech opened the door to my career, offered connections, and covered the technical bases while Covenant provided me with the soft skills, the ability to communicate, and ways to relate with many different people.”

A SOFTWARE STARTUP

While Ken and Rachel attended Georgia Tech and now work for large companies, Matt chose a different route. He completed his degree at the University of Florida, earning his BS in Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE), and since 2013, he’s worked at a software company started by

Covenant alumni. The Chattanooga-based company, Paragon Component Systems, makes software for wooden truss engineers and designers. John Holland ’14 is the founder and current CEO, Scotty Hoelsema ’15 is one of the original members, and numerous other Covenant alumni played important roles and continue to run the startup. Helping to lead a startup means Matt’s work includes a variety of areas like project management, technical support, UX design, and consulting with engineers.

“When I was choosing an engineering field to pursue,” Matt recalls, “I was drawn to the growing field of ISE because it involves big-picture thinking, people skills, and data analysis in ways I didn’t see in other fields. Like Rachel, Covenant equipped me with the tools to succeed at UF and in my present career. Navigating complex questions, communicating with people from diverse backgrounds, and approaching difficult problems with hope and compassion are all skills I honed at Covenant and have used every day since.”

This year marks 50 years since students first entered Covenant’s engineering program. As the program continues to grow, we eagerly send out alumni who practice their God-given creativity and problem-solving in imitation of our Creator, the original engineer. 🛠️



Lance J. Edling '93

Slurry Management Systems |
Managing Partner
Sacramento, CA

God is the Great Engineer. Sometimes, I laugh at how hard I struggle to treat industrial wastewater from a steel mill or some other factory while a single word from God could clean it all up! Other times, I marvel at how we treat wastewater problems by using bacteria, algae, plants, and other natural systems. In many cases, the best we can do is mimic the natural solutions that God has already given us.

At Covenant, I studied under Dr. Joseph Clumpner. He was an excellent teacher who prepared us well for Georgia Tech. More importantly, he took time to go through the Book of Daniel with us. I wouldn’t have survived Georgia Tech if I hadn’t first received a broad liberal arts education with others of varying interests and career paths. I had the opportunity to be in a small role in Covenant’s yearly play and teach a rat to perform lever tapping skills in psychology class and listen to my math professor talk on the Book of Daniel.

The various disciplines within math, science, and engineering are fascinating. It’s like being a member of a secret society, but it is also inherently anti-social. As you delve into your specific field, it narrows until only a few of your colleagues understand what you’re talking about. What makes Covenant so amazing is that an engineer like me had friends who studied education, English, history, biblical and theological studies, and other disciplines that don’t exist at technical schools.



Practicing Life Together

By Jon Hill '22



MY COLLEGE YEARS WERE AN EXERCISE in trust, humility, and the power of surrender. When choosing Covenant, there was so much I didn't know about what lay ahead. In many ways, entering college felt like conducting a trust exercise with the LORD. While I didn't know the future, God knew His exact plans for me.

My first year at Covenant was exactly what I needed in so many ways. I had no knowledge of what life on my hall - Blackwatch - would be like, but I couldn't have picked a better home if it'd been up to me. It was a paradoxical match that grew me in unlikely ways. An introverted homebody, now experiencing rich and intense brotherhood. An overthinker, surrounded by spontaneity, like trips to Waffle House at 2 a.m. A background player, eventually stepping into a leadership role as resident assistant. None of those characteristics are better or worse than the opposite, but by experiencing both, I saw a fuller picture of God's design for Christian community. God pulled me into something special, and I was incredibly thankful.

Entering sophomore year, I thought I'd discovered the secret to what Christian community should look like, and as a resident assistant, I desperately wanted the hall to experience growth

through that special brotherhood. Many seniors moved off-campus, and freshmen moved onto Blackwatch. I felt responsible to give the newcomers the same wonderful experience I'd had my freshman year. I couldn't have been more unwittingly

arrogant, and sadly, it took a semester before I stepped back and realized what I was doing, with the help of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

In *Life Together*, Bonhoeffer explains that having your own ideal of what Christian community looks like is not only equating yourself with

God, but also has more to do with wanting things to go your way than God's. When that ideal inevitably falls apart, you begin to accuse involved parties for the failure. It was like Bonhoeffer was a fly on the wall of my hall. With a renewed sense of humility and with an apology to the hall at our semester-opening meeting, I was able to step back. The LORD humbled my heart and enabled me to surrender to Him. By granting space and letting go of control, I saw relationships on Blackwatch grow. Life together is a lot better when you're not micro-prescribing a standard for what Christian community must look like.

In all of this, the LORD was teaching me what it truly means to trust Him and His plan above my own - something I often profess but fail to live out. Neither my hall community nor Covenant is perfect, but the beauty is in the faithful work. It's in the recognition of our finitude, in the humbling times, where we experience God's love and care for us most. I am beyond thankful to the LORD for giving me these experiences and to Covenant College for being the place where they could happen. 🙏

“My college years were an exercise in trust, humility, and the power of surrender.”

The Heart of the College

AFTER 44 YEARS IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, I'VE REACHED retirement. The closing role of my career - vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) at Covenant College - is a mystery to many: My parents never really understood my work at the college. Most students don't know me, and when I meet them at church or in the community, they seem confused by my attempts to explain my role. In the simplest terms, I lead the academic program of the college. The most important part of my job is overseeing the recruitment and development of faculty members.

There are many ways a Christian college can lose its way, but probably the most common originates in the faculty. The faculty is the heart of the institution, and as such, its influence is quick to take effect throughout the school. Professors share in academic governance and set the tone for the transformational learning that occurs in the classroom. Those of us who have gone to college (Covenant or elsewhere) have likely been transformed, perhaps even significantly, by the mentoring and teaching work of professors. Such transformation can be for good or ill. It is imperative that the professors of a college believe in and live out the mission of the college.

Therefore, oversight of faculty work is crucial to missional fidelity. Here are some principles I've sought to employ while recruiting and developing the faculty members of Covenant College.

- Successful candidates sincerely believe what the college espouses in its foundational documents. It is not enough for professors to not oppose the mission of the college; they should be "all in."
- Successful candidates are enthusiastic scholars, eager to connect learning and faith. Their academic work proceeds from their relationship with the living God.
- Successful candidates love students and serve as good mentors and models.
- A community of faithful scholars attracts other faithful scholars.
- The board, administration, and faculty must be involved in the oversight of the hiring and development of faculty members.

“It is imperative that the professors of a college believe in and live out of the mission of the college.”



Dr. Jeff Hall, Vice President for Academic Affairs

- Collaboration between faculty members of various disciplines opens avenues for motivation and insight.
- Awarding of promotions and tenure reinforces the mission of the college, not just the disciplinary guild of the professor.
- There is flexibility in job and position descriptions to accommodate the right person, not vice versa.

These principles may appear simplistic or overly obvious. However, failing to recruit, develop, and retain the right professoriate will cause the college to lose its way in profound and perhaps unrecoverable ways. Momentum is inevitable. Energy will

follow the heart. My friend Hendrick Krabbendam - known as Dr. K to many of you - is fond of saying, "The heart of the matter is a matter of the heart." So it is with the faculty of a college.

Although my position involves plenty of office work, meetings, policies, and logistics, the essence of my work is found in guarding the heart of the college. I do not do this work alone. With God's good help, the Spirit's use of the momentum of our community, the wisdom of colleagues and board members, this work has proven fruitful. It has not been done perfectly, but it has been my great honor to witness God's Kingdom in our midst. May His continued faithfulness inspire faithful responses from us as we proceed. 🙏

Rhythms, Seasons, Cycles

I'VE FOUND MYSELF REFLECTING ON THE RHYTHMS, SEASONS, and cycles of life more than usual this spring – in part, because it was four years ago that I graduated from Covenant. If you will, this was my senior year as a full-time employee of the college.

When searching for some detail from Covenant's history, I occasionally stumble across an archived edition of *The Bagpipe* (a surefire sign that I'll spend the next hour poring over old stories). One afternoon this spring, I paused, realizing that some of you who will read this magazine are the writers whose work I've had the pleasure of unearthing. I then realized that high school students might even now be reading something I've written about Covenant as they begin to imagine themselves here. Perhaps one of those future students will fill my current role, and I'll be reading stories in the *View* written by someone else.

This future student might experience the same daily rhythms that marked my time as a student: the quiet morning calm in the Great Hall and time alone with the Lord; the thrice-weekly gatherings for chapel, greeting hallmates and roommates as we reunite partway through the school day; the loud lunch rush with the rumble of laughter and conversation; chatting with coworkers as we clock in for our work-study shifts; evenings in the library, gym, and dorms pursuing our studies and hobbies and friendships. In the midst of hectic college life, I found comfort and joy in these daily rhythms.

While these little rhythms may not stand out as the key traditions of the college – thinking instead of Jazz on the Overlook, Day of Prayer, "All for Jesus," and bagpipe processions – these are the small, everyday marks of life at Covenant that I imagine many alumni remember most fondly.

In addition to daily rhythms, the changing of the seasons never cease to leave me in awe. Any of you who've walked across campus on a

pleasant day or driven through the valley and up the mountain know this astounding beauty in ways my words can't convey. I delighted in the shifting beauty while a student and have yet to grow tired of my daily drive up and down Lookout Mountain. Through sunshine or fog (even when it's thick and oppressive), beneath gleaming red leaves or frosted trees (even when the wind is bitterly cold), it's new every day and yet the same cycle each year. The sun rises above the mountain and sets across the valley whether I've had a wonderful week at work or whether it's felt like drudgery. In the uncertainties of life, the seasons bring a sense of peace and consistency, reminding me of the Creator who set these seasons in place and sustains them still.



Lydia Berglar '18

The Class of 2022 is the first class that I didn't overlap with as a student, so this year especially, I've felt the impact of watching one class matriculate, study, thrive, and graduate. One student in particular worked with me in our office while she was a freshman and I was in my first year post-college. Now, four years later, she's beginning the next stage of her life. She is just one such student that we say goodbye to and send out each May. At a college, change is ever-present.

On a routine basis, I lament to family or roommates about how much I dislike change. I know I'm not the only one who prefers the familiar and comfortable, fearing the new and unknown. However, while reflecting on seasons and cycles, I'm struck by the fact that they encompass both change and the steadiness of routine rhythms. In times when life's changes seem so immense that I fear I'll lose my footing, I find comfort in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 – "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." How comforting that we serve the only unchanging God. 🙏

Lydia

The Gift of Friction

FRICION OFTEN GETS A BAD RAP. MANY OF US LOOK FOR WAYS TO ELIMINATE FRICTION from our lives, whether by installing apps that let us accomplish tasks with minimal friction—say, ordering dinner without having to leave the comfort of our couch—or by avoiding friction with friends or family over contentious social and political issues simply by steering clear of those people. Frequently, we view friction as something to avoid or minimize in order to make our lives smoother and more enjoyable. Sometimes, this desire to steer clear of friction is not all bad. There are situations and places that promise lots of friction which ought to be avoided. However, I wonder if we might miss out on the gifts friction offers.

Anyone who took physical science in school knows that friction plays an important role in the physical world. Without friction, one cannot get traction. If you have tried to push a car out of snow - or tried to make it from Barnes Gymnasium up to Carter Hall when there is ice on campus - you know just how true this is. Likewise, those who have studied human anatomy know that muscles and bones grow stronger when they encounter resistance, which can often involve friction. The tension placed on those parts of our bodies makes them stronger.

In Scripture, James tells us that trials or challenges are not necessarily bad but often work to our benefit: "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4, ESV). Even more pertinent to the concept of friction, the book of Proverbs famously tells us, "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17, ESV). It is clear from this metaphor in Proverbs that just as the friction between two pieces of metal results in the sharpening of a blade, so the friction that arises between persons can result in their sharpening and becoming more like Christ.

This notion of the salutary effects of friction has been on my mind as we have emerged from a season in which, initially, many commentators touted the inevitable triumph of friction-free education. Once everyone was forced to experiment with educational technologies that eliminate the friction of in-person education, the world would never go back to the old-fashioned ways - or so the argument went. And yet, one of the things we have noticed in recent months—besides the enthusiasm of students for that "old-fashioned" approach to education—is just how much of a gift some types of friction really are.

There is, no doubt, an inherent friction in getting out of bed, getting dressed, brushing your teeth, and going to an in-person class. Likewise, there is friction in going to an in-person chapel service. And there is friction in living on campus, with roommates and hallmates and classmates and staff. All of these features of life on a residential campus could be viewed as friction, yet it is in these very frictions that we see real educational traction: vibrant classroom interactions and measurable progress in learning outcomes and men and women being fashioned—through their real-time, embodied interaction with faculty, staff, and fellow students—more and more into the image of their Savior and King.

And so, as things have returned to some semblance of normal on top of Lookout Mountain, I give thanks to God for the gift of friction and for the real and meaningful fruit of that friction in the life of our community and the lives of our students. 🙏

“Without friction, one cannot get traction.”



J. Derek Halvorson '93
President



Covenant College
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHATTANOOGA, TN
PERMIT NO. 836

Dr. Frank Brock
Executive Campaign
Committee Chair

Sam Smartt
Joint Endowment
Committee Chair

**“If you endow a school,
you fortify it to stay true to its beliefs.”**

– Sam Smartt

Donors who include Covenant’s endowment in their estate plans keep the college grounded and provide for future generations of Scots. A strong endowment bolsters us for the future.



COVENANT COLLEGE FOUNDATION
covenant.edu/foundation



Watch the conversation between Sam
(board member/longtime friend of Covenant)
and Frank (Covenant’s fourth president).
covenant.edu/sam-and-frank