

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

VIEW

Mission Faithfulness

Not Forsaking the Gathering | We Come from the Mountain | Forging Ahead with Purpose

SPRING 2024
COVENANT.EDU

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VIEW

THE MAGAZINE OF COVENANT COLLEGE

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

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ENG 255 - Students enrolled in professional writing assisted in the editing process for this issue as part of a course assignment.

AI-assisted technologies were utilized as tools for proofreading and editing purposes. This disclosure serves to promote transparency and emphasizes our commitment to ethical practices.

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

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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



Seussical™ cast featured **Michael Cooke '26** as Cat in the Hat and **Hunter Friederichsen '27** as Horton the Elephant, as well as 11-year-old Penny James as Jojo the Who.

CovenantNews

The Performing Arts at Covenant

In February, Covenant's music and theatre departments produced *Seussical™ the Musical*, directed by Professor **Claire (Larson) Slavovsky '03** with music direction by Dr. David Tahere. Over the course of three days of shows, the cast brought Dr. Seuss's story of childhood imagination and friendship to life for its audience, and talent included local elementary and high school age actors. Alongside Professor Slavovsky and Dr. Tahere, costume design was done by alumna **Courtney McKenzie '18**.

In the fall semester, the theatre department presented a student's original play, "Untitled Grief," written by **Sara Rogers '24** and directed by **Emily Cothran '21**. Sara Rogers wrote the play to process her hearing loss as well as reflect on grief as a

universal human experience. It was a two-man production played by students **Acacia Buschbach '26** and **Logan Roy '26**. To support our talented students in performances and productions like these, visit covenant.edu/performingarts.

Scholarship Weekend Success

Covenant had a tremendous turnout at both Scholarship Weekend events this spring. The first weekend had 110 students and 143 additional family members in attendance, while the second welcomed 113 students and 137 other guests. There were also 21 students who, although unable to attend in person, conducted their scholarship interviews virtually. These numbers were no small feat considering the extreme winter weather that hit the mountain in January. Tireless efforts were made by



admissions to prepare for the event, as well as by Covenant's grounds crews and safety and security team to clear the ice and check passability of roads and walkways. Facilities, business operations, and food services showed incredible hospitality to these guests, and the rest of the campus community played a crucial role by engaging and hosting visitors. We are thankful for faculty, staff, and students for creating an atmosphere of love and care for prospective students.

CovenantNews

Employee Years of Service Awards

- 15 Sandy Collins, *Building Services Coordinator*
Philip Howlett '08, *Assistant Director of Development Operations*
-
- 20 John Holberg, *Director of Library Services*
-
- 25 Jay Green, *Professor of History*
Brenda Rapier, *Assistant Director of Financial Aid*
-
- 30 Philip Little, *Lead Electrician*
Matthew Vos '90, *Professor of Sociology*
Glen Wieldraayer, *Lead Carpenter*
-
- 35 Rodney Miller, *Registrar*
-
- 40 Betty Barham, *Senior Accounting Clerk*

Betty has watched the transition of accounting processes move from individual account cards to computers to a campus-wide integrated information system. She has persevered and kept Covenant organized while serving thousands of students, faculty, and staff with accuracy and efficiency, resulting in clean financial audits.



Brock Forum Resumes under Halvorson's Leadership

The Brock Forum on Authentic Christian Leadership returned to the mountain after being on hold for several years. An event series established in 2007, the Brock Forum involves local Christian business leaders in meaningful dialogue with the Covenant community. In its return this year under the new leadership of director and president emeritus, **Dr. J. Derek Halvorson '93**, the Brock-Barnes Center hosted J. Frank Harrison III and Dr. Mark Whitacre from Coca-Cola Consolidated.



onCourse

Department: Music

Faculty: Dr. Scott Finch '96, Professor of Music

The Course: MUS 195, Chamber Singers

Music majors and minors are required to participate in departmental ensembles while taking performance seminar each semester. These ensembles vary according to chosen instrument and degree, and certain ensembles are open to non-music students; however, members are still selected through audition and must be able to commit to multiple hours of rehearsal each week. Chamber Singers is an unaccompanied choral ensemble consisting of students from majors across all disciplines.

The Project: Chamber Singers School Workshops

The ensemble sings all types of sacred tunes, both historic and contemporary, traveling locally and out of state to cities like Knoxville, Asheville, and Atlanta. Typically the ensemble will annually visit around four local churches, five schools, and two assisted living homes, performing and conducting workshops in the schools specifically. Since Covenant students are the best evidence of our college mission, these workshops enable our students to mentor younger students to inspire and empower the local school culture to more vividly honor Christ using this applied skill. In this way, our students lead by sacrifice and service.

Says the Professor:

"Each year, Chamber Singers engages the next generation of musicians by purposefully going into schools on our annual tour to conduct workshops on singing, worship, and movement. Our effort is to come alongside young people and, using our own students, show them how good it is to be embodied souls that are aimed toward the praise of Christ Jesus. In doing so, we get to give students a glimpse of the work we have the privilege of doing together here on our college campus while simultaneously inspiring each of our host schools with what is possible with the gifts they have been given. We give glory to God for this exciting collaborative opportunity." **Dr. Scott Finch '96**

Says the Student:

"When the Chamber Singers go on tour, we do more than just sing the literature we've been practicing. In fact, one of the most important aspects of what we do on tour is our workshops, especially with younger people. In these workshops, we teach a part of a song of praise, often with actions to go along with it and various percussion instruments—sort of like a controlled instrument 'petting zoo.' We do this by pairing up or getting into groups with the kids and having them participate with us—learning the song, actions, and instruments one component at a time. There is a rich ideology behind this: Children are important to Jesus and they should be important to us too. They represent the next generation of believers in and praisers of God, and in coming alongside them and inspiring them to praise God with a loud voice and dancing and instruments, we foster the continued growth of the kingdom." **Noah Shelden '24**

Personnel Changes in Student Development

Stephanie (Granberry) Formenti '04

moved from the role of chapel associate for discipleship into the position of vice president of student development at the beginning of February. Stephanie was faithful in her previous role, filling the need for further ministry and discipleship among students on campus. She is excited to continue exercising her passion for discipleship and learn from her new position. In addition, Dr. Jon Wylie has been announced as Covenant's dean of students. Having served as interim in the role since July 2023, Jon has worked in student development for nearly eight years and has cared for students with wisdom and compassion. **Lena Glaze '15** transitioned from working for the graduate school of education to the position of coordinator of student leadership.



Korean American Friendship Concert

On October 29, Professor Lok Kim had the opportunity to conduct the Korean American Friendship Concert, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the South Korea-United States Alliance. The concert took

place at Davis Theater in Montgomery, AL, hosted and sponsored by the Consulate General of Korea and Hyundai Motors.



Covenant Thanks Longest-Living Donor

In November, Merlyn Lindley, mother of **Gary Lindley '72** and **Joan (Lindley) Stanton '75**, was presented with a framed picture of the college from the Covenant College Foundation out of gratitude for decades of faithful giving to Covenant. It is believed that Merlyn is the longest-tenured donor to the college, starting a 68-year streak of giving with her husband, Winston, in 1955. Initially giving \$5 a month through President Rayburn's "Presidential Purchase Plan," they began giving and never stopped. She was joined for this presentation by her son and daughter and their spouses, **Pat (Sussman) Lindley '73** and **David Stanton '72**, as well as several grandchildren.

Res Publica Lectures on Self-Making

Latin for "public affairs" or "public issues," *Res Publica* is an annual lecture series intended to challenge and equip students to address contemporary issues thoughtfully. This year, Dr. Tara Isabella Burton, author of *Self Made: Creating Our Identities from Da Vinci to the Kardashians*, gave a series of lectures addressing the



theme of "self-making." In two public lectures and a one-credit class lecture, Dr. Burton asked listeners to consider what it means to create one's "self" and—more importantly—consider whether or not Christians should want to do so. Theological implications were emphasized as audiences were encouraged to explore the relationship of human creative freedom and self-fashioning.



69th Commencement Celebration

Congratulations to the graduates of the class of 2024 who celebrated on May 4! Friends and family rejoice alongside the college as these new graduates go out from the mountain and make much of Jesus. Join us in praying for their continued faithfulness wherever God has called them.

Gambrell Officially Selected Dean of Enrollment Management

Dave Gambrell '06

officially accepted the position of dean of enrollment management in the admissions office in February. He has been serving as an interim in this role since May 2023. The college is grateful for his willingness to lead both admissions and financial aid, and recent positive results for campus visits and current admissions numbers speak to his leadership in





Julia Hendrickson's art exhibit displayed three series titled *Droplets*, *What Lies Beneath*, and *Affection*.

these areas. Dave is married to **Christy (MacDougall) '07**, and they have three children: Knox, Hope, and Eddie.

Admissions Ambassador Program

Covenant's ambassador program has been growing to assist with a full schedule of college fairs, events, training, and local meet-ups with prospective students and families. The mission of this program is to enhance the work of the admissions office by utilizing the talents of alumni, parents, and friends interested in helping recruit outstanding students. Covenant is thankful for the many alumni and parents who have volunteered, including alumni **Erin (Farquhar) Kickasola '00**, **Jenny (Erbel) Hardison '01**, **Aden '22** and **Susan (Anderson) Hunt '22**, **Christie (Nickisch) Hummel '94**, and **Jon Hill '22** along with Scot parents Stephanie and Pat Hickman, Jenny Martin, Jana Daley, Dana and Andy McCampbell, and Dra and Suzanne Wiersema. If you're interested in being an ambassador, please email Trish Ross at trish.ross@covenant.edu.

Marketing and Communications Awarded ADDY by AAF

The marketing and communications team is proud to share that the new admissions inquiry packet, consisting of six unique, informational print pieces mailed to



prospective students, won a silver ADDY at the 2024 American Advertising Awards hosted by the American Advertising Federation (AAF) Chattanooga. The AAF is a national organization that recognizes and rewards excellence and creativity in advertising, hosting a three-tier, national competition that starts at the local level. Their work competed against entries submitted by local agencies and production companies, many of whom create content for national brands like Liquid Death, LODGE Cast Iron, and Celestial Seasonings. The team is honored by this recognition from industry professionals and thankful to serve Covenant's mission with their talents.

Julia Hendrickson Art Exhibit

Earlier this year, artist Julia Hendrickson brought her artwork, some of which was made specifically for Covenant College, for the community to enjoy at the Kresge Memorial Library Gallery from January

to March. Hendrickson engages in the tradition of *opera Divina*, daily work as prayer, and her paintings—using only water, pigment, and salt—represent prayers as she focuses on contemplation, rhythm, and grief in her series *Droplets*, *What Lies Beneath*, and *Affection*.

Faculty Awards, Publications, and Presentations

Dean of the graduate school of education, **Dr. Jim Drexler '79**, spoke on "Christ and Education: The Eschatological Reign of Christ Over Education" at a pre-conference in Jakarta, Indonesia. During the conference, held in October 2023, Dr. Drexler had the opportunity to speak with many leaders in the field of education.



Adjunct psychology Professor Liz Edrington's 31-day devotional book for teenagers, *Anxiety: Finding the Better Story*, was chosen as winner of the Bible study and devotional literature category in *The Gospel Coalition's* 2023 book awards.



Inauguration by the numbers

4,402

Photos captured throughout
the festivities

547

Students danced the night
away at the inaugural ball

137

Faculty, students, and alumni participated
in the celebration concert

92

Blink burgers ordered with
“presidential pickles”

68

Meetings took place beforehand
to plan and prepare

62

Gallons of coffee provided by
dining services for 15 events

16

Colleges officially represented
at the inauguration ceremony

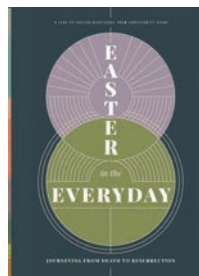
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New president confirmed

CovenantNews

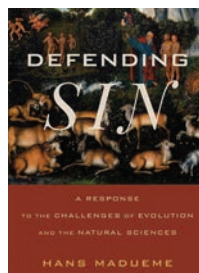
Art professor, **Dr. Elissa Yukiko (Mather) Weichbrodt '04**, was

named a winner in *The Gospel Coalition's* 2023 book awards category of arts and culture for her book *Redeeming Vision* and also received an award of merit in *Christianity Today's* 2024 book awards. Additionally, her devotional “Be Still in the Middle of the Battle” was recently published in *Christianity Today's Easter in the Everyday: Easter Season Devotional 2024*, and her commentary on Psalm 91, “The One Who Dwells,” is now available with the *Visual Commentary on Scripture* from the King's College London.



Professor of sociology, Dr. Chris Robinson, was presented the 2023 Vulcan Materials Company Teaching Excellence Award. This award recognizes outstanding commitment and dedication in teaching. Apart from teaching, Dr. Robinson directs Project 52, a nonprofit dedicated to completing 52 local service projects a year.

Theological studies professor, Dr. Hans Madueme, has recently released *Defending Sin: A Response to the Challenges of Evolution and the Natural Sciences*. In his book, Dr. Madueme responds to some of the growing tensions between the natural sciences and Christian theology; he focuses on the problem of sin while emphasizing a sound doctrinal response to questions raised by evolutionary theory.



History professor, Dr. Alicia Jackson, is one of nine recipients from over 100 applicants to receive a 2024 Louisville Project Grant for Researchers. Dr. Jackson's funded historical research on African American communities in north Georgia shows how faculty are meaningfully involved with our particular

region in service to the kingdom and the common good.

Covenant Student Volunteer Firefighters Recognized

The *Dade County Sentinel* published an article about Covenant students who regularly volunteer with the West Brow Fire and Rescue team, participating in training, equipment checks, and emergency response. Director of safety and security, Keith McClearn, began the work of reviving the volunteer program in 2017 after hearing about its influence on graduates' career choices. These students have been called upon to assist in a range of emergencies, including medical calls and fires. Their presence on campus has also contributed to fewer false alarms, which has been helpful to the fire department.

Christina Fox Hired in Office of Constituent Relations



As of February, **Christina (Apperson) Fox '96** has entered into the role of

assistant director of constituent and alumni relations. She and her husband **George Fox '96** are the parents of **Ethan '26** and Ian, a high school junior. Christina is a retreat speaker, licensed counselor, and author of multiple books for adults and kids. As an alumna, Christina has remained very involved as a member of the parents council and of the Atlanta area Wilberforce Scholarship Committee; she has also served two terms as an advisor to Covenant's board of trustees.

Beloved Bagpipes Donated to Covenant

Jack Weissert, a Michigan native with a deep love for music and Reformed theology, went to be with the Lord 10

years ago but left behind a cherished legacy in his beloved bagpipes. Known as “the piper,” he performed on the bagpipes in his family’s tartan at various events, including in Carnegie Hall. Despite not being a Covenant grad, Jack’s Scottish heritage, along with his wife Pat Weissert’s family connections to Covenant emeritus faculty member **Jim Wildeman ’73** and alum **Bob Wildeman ’65**, prompted Pat to donate Jack’s treasured bagpipes to Covenant.

Athletic Updates

› **Scott Bosgraf ’90**, head coach of the Men’s Soccer team, was chosen as Coach of the Year after leading the Scots to the CCS Regular Season Championship. Scott is in his seventh year as head men’s coach after being promoted to the position in 2017. He is now in his fifteenth year overall with Covenant’s soccer program.



› Covenant Volleyball capped off a historic season with a school-record 35 wins, a Conference Championship, and a trip to the NCAA Tournament where they advanced to the second round. Head coach **Stephanie (Phillips) Wharton ’06** was CCS Coach of the Year while **Emma Kalbfleisch ’24** won CCS Player of the Year.

› Men’s Soccer won its third consecutive Conference Championship in the fall after defeating Belhaven 2-0 in the CCS Championship match. **Kade**



Theunissen ’24 won CCS Offensive Player of the Year and **Parker Rody ’25** won CCS Defensive Player of the Year.



› Women’s Basketball put two players on the All-Conference teams after an 8-17 season. **Abby Witt ’25** and **Megan Rouse ’24** both made the cut for Second Team All-CCS while Rouse was named CCS Defensive Player of the Year. This is the first yearly award a Covenant Women’s Basketball player has received since the 2015-16 season.

› **Drew Silman ’27** won his first college golf tournament at the Pfeiffer Invitational in Ocean Isle Beach, NC. With a two-round score of 3-over par, Silman won by one shot. As a team, the Scots finished second out of 17 teams in a competitive field.

› Covenant Baseball picked up a key non-conference victory over No. 4 Birmingham-Southern on March 6. The win over the Panthers marks the second-highest ranked team the Scots have beaten in their NCAA era.

Recent Hires:

Paul Babin, PhD
Assistant Professor, Business Department

Joelle Laing, PhD
Assistant Professor, Biology Department

Bryant White, PhD
Assistant Professor of French, World Languages Department

Bethany (Mitchell) Hines ’23
Bookstore Clerk, Business Operations

Barbara King
Building Services Coordinator, Facilities Services

Brooke Kinley
Women’s Softball Assistant Coach, Athletics

Edith Matzke
Administrative Assistant, Music Department

Katie (Scharff) Mindeman ’17
Costume Coordinator, Theatre Department

Rachael Sims
Technical Director, Theatre Department

Frankie Smith
General Maintenance - Mechanical Technician, Maintenance & Operations

Daniel Emerson ’00
General Maintenance Technician, Maintenance & Operations

Rebecca Hetsler
Building Services Coordinator, Facilities Services

Josh Wallin
General Maintenance Technician, Maintenance & Operations

Matthew Luther ’13
Assistant Registrar, Office of Records

Bekah Irwin
Counselor, Health Services

Chris Cox ’18
Tennis Assistant Coach, Athletics

Olivia Jones, RN
Health Services

Emily Borland
Administrative Coordinator, Education Department

Isaac Duncan ’22
CRM Manager and Data Analyst for Enrollment



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CampusCollage



1-2 Scots Got Talent

Students put on many musical performances at Mountain Affair this year, but a yo-yo act took first place!

3 Skating Back in Time

The campus was invited to enjoy Sk80s, a night at the skate rink with '80s-themed outfits and music.

4 Christmas in the Air

The chapel seats were filled for the annual Christmas concert, "With Grateful Hearts," performed by the student music ensembles.

5 Having a Ball

After President Voyles's inauguration, students enjoyed dancing, food, and music at the Student Inaugural Ball.

6 Reading on the Overlook

Students gathered to listen to the Public Reading of Scripture (PRS) on a beautiful fall day.

7 A Chilly Day Off

The Scots spent time bundled up outside in the cold during a snow day in January.

8-9 Study Break in the Great Hall

Students in the midst of finals took a break for the Polar Express-themed Exam Cram.

10 Pecha Kucha

Senior art students presented capstone projects with 20 slides in 20 seconds per slide.

11 Red Carpet Premiere

Maclellan/Rymer residents showed their short film creations and nominated Mac Movie winners.

12 A Festive Silent Disco

Mistletoe Mingle was a success with Christmas-themed costumes, music, and even popsicles.

13-14 Family Reunions

Covenant was excited to welcome visiting families for a fun-filled family weekend.

15-16 Praying Together

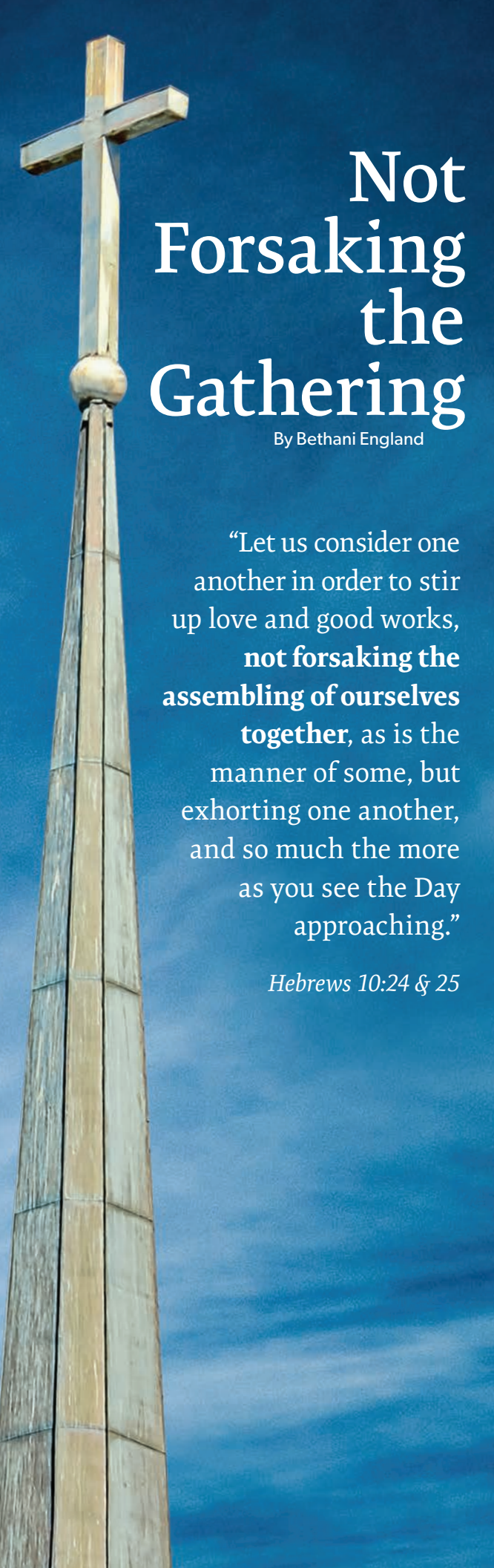
The sun rose over the Rock City overlook as campus prayed and worshiped together during the spring Day of Prayer.

17 Frankenstein

The theatre department presented the student-adapted play Frankenstein in the fall.

18 Seussical™

The theatre and music departments collaborated to produce four performances of Seussical™ the Musical.



Not Forsaking the Gathering

By Bethani England

“Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24 & 25

COLLEGE CAMPUSES HAVE often been called “bubbles” that provide a plethora of resources and entertainment. Christian colleges might even be known as extreme bubbles due to the misconception that they shelter Christians from the world. However, at a theologically sound college, a bubble can be an opportunity to focus on spiritual growth. Covenant students receive biblically based instruction, attend chapel, participate in Bible studies, worship on their halls, and are involved in discipleship. What more could they need? Although students are living in Christ-centered community at Covenant, there is still much to be said about involvement in the local church—more importantly, it is a commandment from God.

“It can be really easy for students to sort of sit and soak during their four years of college and not be engaged in the church—yet these are formative years!” Dr. John Wingard, Covenant professor and dean of philosophy and a ruling elder at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church emphatically states. “They are developing habits that will be very important once they’re done with college.”

Covenant takes church involvement seriously. In fact, Covenant lists Christian community and the church as separate elements of our core beliefs, vowing to be faithful to serve the church with our academic mission. With that said, there are a number of ways that Covenant students participate in the local body of Christ.

LEARNING FROM THE BODY

Covenant students are involved in Bible studies that meet in people’s homes, which make great opportunities for cross-generational relationships. Dr. Scott Jones, Covenant professor of biblical studies and ruling elder at Rock Creek Fellowship Church, describes how students participate in small groups, “They go all over the mountain and off the mountain to spend time in worship or prayer. Kids run around and students get to experience a Christian home, which is something they won’t find by just attending on Sunday.” Dr. Wingard and his wife Barbara, also a Covenant employee, host a small group together that Covenant students attend. He says, “We don’t have a college ministry so we encourage students to meet people who have different perspectives.”

Young adults can benefit from being around people of different ages and walks of life. “Especially in the formative years of college,” says Pastor Gabe Fluhrer of First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga. “There’s a deep-seated desire that students might not even know they have to be around multi-generational people of God.”

Passionate about students’ involvement in church for the sake of the whole body, Pastor Eric Youngblood of Rock Creek Fellowship describes Covenant students as “ever-fresh infusions of zest, willing to be woven into our one-anothering community.” He states that it heartens him to see Covenant students embed themselves in the church and remain involved through many stages of life.

MOLDING YOUNG MINDS AND HEARTS

Ministry among high school and middle school-age youth naturally lends itself to college students. Having recently been in their shoes, young adults are often

keenly aware of the challenges faced by teens. Brad Roberts, a 2015 Covenant graduate, was previously the youth pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga and is now the director of youth and children's ministry at St. Elmo Presbyterian Church. "Covenant students serving as interns at First Presbyterian didn't just help at youth events, but also at summer camps," says Brad.

Aaron Tolson, a 1997 Covenant graduate and youth pastor at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian, says Covenant students are vital to their youth ministry. "We couldn't have successful small groups in the youth without the faithful presence, zealous love, and biblical wisdom students bring from their theological training at Covenant," says Aaron. He describes what a blessing it is to see the spiritual formation that takes place when college students model faithfulness to high schoolers. Not only do Covenant students help in these ministries, but local youth directors take advantage of the opportunity to mentor the students as well. "We walk alongside our Covenant students as they pour into the youth," says Aaron. "It is a beautiful picture of how the Church is meant to function."

CARING FOR THE LITTLE ONES

Serving children is a great way for college students to learn more about our loving Father. Amy Horne, nursery director at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian, describes how she enjoys seeing Covenant students use their gifts to serve. "We love having Covenant students work in the nursery and appreciate getting to know them personally," she says. "They connect with families in the community and are a vital part of staffing the nursery."

Dr. Jones states that he is extremely grateful when he sees college students volunteering to work with children since

it allows the parents uninterrupted time in the service. He understands that it may not be their first choice, but adds, "I would encourage students to be willing to sign up for whatever, knowing that they can make a difference in the world even in the nursery."

MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE

While some enjoy connecting with young audiences, those with musical gifts may prefer to help lead in worship. Dr. Jones has always enjoyed Covenant students rotating on and off the worship team at Rock Creek. He recalls that their last violinist was a Covenant student and a bass player who often plays is a Covenant student as well.

"Covenant students are crucial to the music ministry at LMPC," state David Henry, 2009 graduate, and Joy Gibbons, sanctuary worship and music directors at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian. They describe that students participate in several services, making up nearly a fifth of the instrumentalists and vocalists combined. Although music ministry involves practice and rehearsals throughout the week, Covenant students jump in wholeheartedly.

SERVING BEHIND THE SCENES

Being involved in ministry almost always involves hard work and endurance. Sometimes it consists of singing on stage or greeting at a door, but often it might look like stacking chairs after events or mowing the church lawn. We know the Lord wasn't above kneeling down and washing the feet of His disciples, so we can emulate His humble demeanor by serving behind the scenes.

Scott Harrison, facilities manager at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian, is grateful for Covenant students who have come alongside his staff. "I have worked with Covenant students for almost 36 years," he says, "and it has been a

blessing to watch them be a part of our work team and participate in fellowship and worship." In these less exciting tasks, students learn to be the hands and feet of Christ.

UPHOLDING OUR MISSION

Covenant encourages students to get into church right away. In fact, worshipping at a local church is part of new student orientation, and upperclassmen offer rides to incoming freshmen while faculty and staff make it a point to invite students to church and often even Sunday lunch in their homes. Stephanie Formenti, VP of student development, describes the joy of seeing Covenant students serve at New City Fellowship East Lake, saying, "It's a gift to worship alongside students and especially delightful to see them teach children's church, serve as greeters, volunteer in the nursery, and play on the worship team."

Covenant maintains that the church, although imperfectly stewarded by man, is the God-ordained, Spirit-infused, body of Christ. Brad Roberts says, "We see more and more the cultural pressure for the younger generation to disassociate themselves from the church, which is lamentable. However, Covenant does a great job at instilling the value of church." Covenant's mission has always included serving the church, and that mission still holds just as true today. In fact, in a recent all-alumni survey, 96% of our graduates affiliated with the PCA described themselves as either members or regular attendees of their local church.

"The Church is vital, necessary, and indispensable," says Pastor Fluhrer. "As a centerpiece of God's unfolding biblical revelation of His plan, which is the bride of Christ's union with her resurrected Redeemer, the local expression of that is of paramount importance, especially for Christian college students." 🙏

In all things . . .

Covenant's beloved Overlook, dating back to 1928 as one of the original Lookout Mountain Hotel features, provides stunning mountaintop views—but have you ever stopped to look at the ground underneath your feet? Engraved in the stone is our motto, "In all things Christ preeminent," yet in one of the original formats that included an ellipsis and a dash in "preeminent." In the 1980s and '90s, these elements were dropped to simplify the motto. Additionally, this specific design of the thistle was discontinued in 2005 in favor of our current logo. The thistle has a longer history as the national symbol of Scotland, but for Covenant, it points to the Scottish heritage of Presbyterianism. Our prayer is that we continue to recall this heritage and etch these words into our hearts as we pursue magnifying Christ in all things.

Christ pre-eminent





MISSION FAITHFULNESS

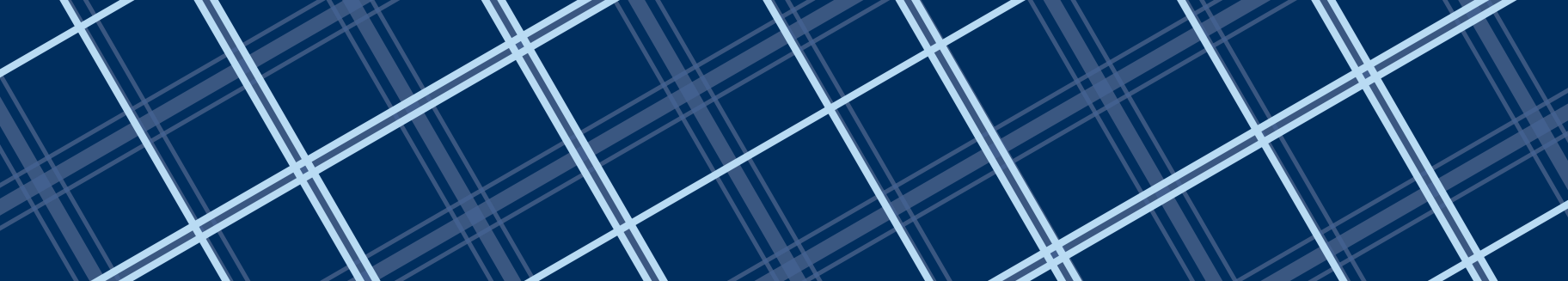
By Bethani England

In-au-gu-ra-tion - *The introduction of a system, policy, or period; a ceremony to mark the beginning of something.*

THE WORD “INAUGURATION” typically brings to mind the above definition: something new, something different, something that is just beginning. However, if you were to talk to Brad Voyles about what his inauguration as the seventh president of Covenant College represents, he would humbly, yet earnestly, tell you otherwise.

A great cloud of witnesses excitedly confirmed Dr. Brad Voyles as the seventh college president on

Friday, March 15—however, this is not necessarily the beginning of something new—rather the steadfast continuation of something that has long been upheld. “This inauguration is an institutional moment—it isn’t about me,” President Voyles stated as he began his presidential address: “I’m now confirmed as the president, but my focus is, and always has been, on this institution.” President Voyles represents the uncompromising continuity of faithfulness to the college’s mission that was penned in 1955 and has remained our foundation since.



Throughout his career and personal life, President Voyles has navigated challenges and change, embraced opportunities, and maintained a profound commitment to serving the Lord, his family, and others.

Consistent Commitment: Dedication to Service and Faith

The oldest of three boys, President Voyles was raised in a small farming community in Illinois, where his parents worked in construction and bookkeeping. At the age of nine, a simple invitation to Vacation Bible School changed the course of his life. His family began attending church together, and he soon embraced his faith, followed by his family.

President Voyles originally set out to be a veterinarian but later felt called to vocational ministry. Although neither of these plans played out exactly as he had imagined, one thing was always true—he had a God-given love for the discipleship of others. This desire was fulfilled when he became a resident

assistant (RA) during his undergraduate years and counseled freshmen through the challenges of college life.

As he deepened his faith at a local church while in college, President Voyles also grew his leadership skills in InterVarsity at DePauw University. After graduating, he became a resident director, first at Southern Illinois University and then at Belhaven College, where he later became dean of student life. These God-ordained leadership positions, combining his passion for college students and ministry, eventually led him to Covenant College, where he first served as vice president for student development and dean of students for 18 years before being asked to step into the role of interim president in spring of 2023.

Throughout his career and personal life, President Voyles has navigated challenges and change, embraced

opportunities, and maintained a profound commitment to serving the Lord, his family, and others. His enduring trust in God's guidance shapes his leadership, encouraging the Covenant community to work together to fulfill the institution's mission.

Courageous Exploration: Change, Yet Continuity

Even prior to his presidency, President Voyles was known for advocating for improvement and resisting the urge to preserve or simply care-take. Upon his selection as interim president and with full support, he led the college to make bold decisions in order to strengthen Covenant for the future. This included launching a two-year strategic plan to raise funds, drive enrollment, renew academic programs, impact student experience, and improve campus

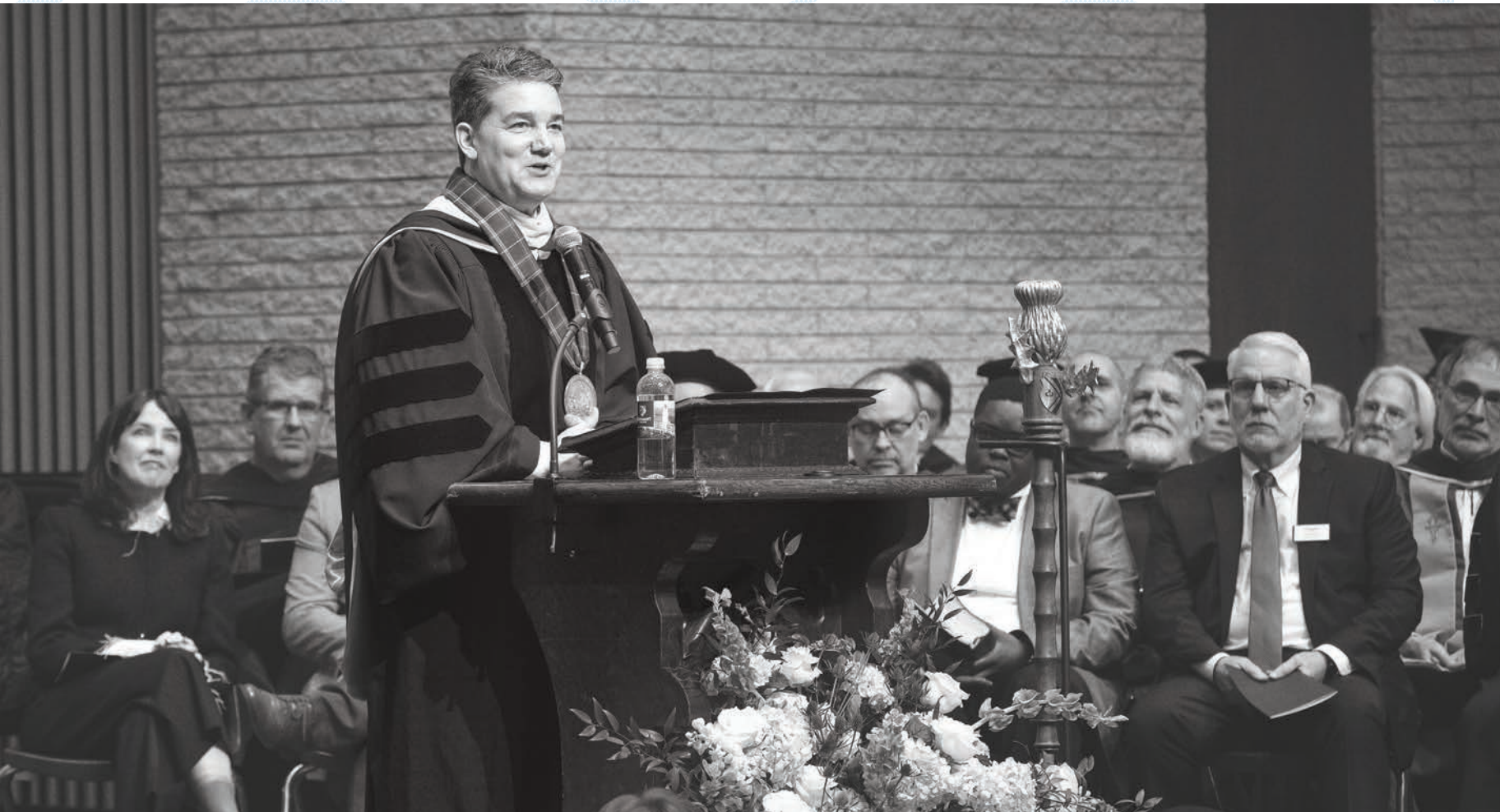
culture—all to maintain our foundational values amidst societal complexities. “I want us to courageously explore new methodologies for how we can reach the maximum number of students for Christ and His kingdom,” he announced as interim. Yet with the college’s mission in the forefront of his mind, he added, “For nearly 70 years, our mission has remained remarkably consistent even as the world has rapidly and radically changed.”

We have long seen the effects of cultural shifts that have altered the landscape of higher education. Many colleges that were founded as faith-based institutions have strayed from biblical standards of truth or abandoned them completely; therefore, continuity at Covenant is as equally valuable as change, if not of utmost importance. “Change, Yet Continuity” is the title of a heading in Covenant’s 50-year history book, *The Preeminence of Christ in the History of Covenant College 1955-2005*, written by Covenant professor emeritus and historian, Dr. William Barker. He writes, “The understanding of what it means for Christ to have preeminence in the conduct of an institution

of higher education has gone through a process of development.” Now, nearly 20 years later, these words still ring true. Change in administration, curriculum, methodologies, and even language is an inevitable part of development, but the words “In All Things Christ Preeminent” engraved into the college’s sign remain engraved on the heart of Covenant as well.

Still Equipped: Pursuing Excellent Academics

Covenant has been and continues to be uncompromising in its standard of providing rigorous, effective, biblically based instruction. While some may pit the pursuit of academic knowledge against biblical truth, we know that a complete education cannot be separated from God’s truth. The founding president of Covenant, Dr. Robert G. Rayburn, wrote the following in 1965: “While the study of Holy Scripture is required of all students, we must know of God’s work and understand truth as it is to be discovered in many fields of study. The Bible is not our only study, but all study is oriented to its truths. Our academic standards must be second to none.”



In an attempt to bolster our academics, it may be tempting to relax doctrinal principles, yet Covenant holds to these truths with a firm grip. “Education is a life-long task that constantly requires renewing and refreshing,” says Dr. Collin Messer, vice president of academic affairs. Covenant’s philosophy of education statement has even recently undergone updates, yet this process is thoughtful and methodical. “A competitive liberal arts college grounded in scripture certainly provides answers to some of life’s most important questions, but more than that, it teaches students how to serve the Church and the common good as God’s agents of shalom,” states Dr. Messer.

In his inaugural address, President Voyles referenced Covenant’s purpose statement in saying, “Because we believe that all truth is consistent with the infallible scriptures, we are free to explore every area of knowledge. There are no problems we cannot investigate, no questions we cannot ask, no answers we need fear.” A Covenant education provides a sturdy foundation for students to fearlessly engage with the world as they are reminded how Christ is working to redeem all things. “Lectures on hard ideas and hard histories need not end in despair but in hopeful lament,” firmly stated President Voyles. “We are seeking to prepare our students well so they’re not taken captive by the wisdom of this age but instead build their lives upon the Rock.”

During the ceremony, President Voyles was presented with four charges to uphold, including the charge by faculty moderator, Dr. Sarah Huffines, to not forget the joy and goodness of the academic task. “God gave us curiosity

and delight, itches that can be scratched, hearts and minds that fit into certain disciplines, and spirits that can rise to challenging moments,” Dr. Huffines said. “We must plan for the future and make decisions for our institution’s survival, but we also must remember the gift of growing in knowledge and love of our Creator.”

Covenant’s academic curriculum and methods have undergone changes in order for the college to stay relevant, yet the foundation and heart of the academic task endures and is grounded in the truth of God’s Word.

Still Known: Nurturing and Caring for Students

Covenant faculty and staff care for students and strive to embrace each individual by seeing them as a whole person, imparting personal insight through mentorship. President Rayburn wrote in 1965 regarding students, “The way of life at Covenant is the disciplined life and we endeavor to help our students mold their lives in this manner of discipline and spiritual growth. Our faculty are deeply and personally interested in their students and we guard carefully this intimate relationship.” This kind of relationship does not just exist in the classroom at Covenant, but in every building on campus from the chapel to the Great Hall to residence halls and even off campus as employees host students in their homes.

The staff in student development and residence life have created an environment that encourages meaningful relationships and guides students to understand who God made them to be through various opportunities for

discipleship. Dean of students, Dr. Jon Wylie, attests to Covenant’s mission in regard to deeply knowing and caring for students when it comes to discipline. “‘In all things Christ preeminent’ encapsulates our core philosophy and practice—there is never a moment I’m not pulling out my Bible, and that sets Covenant apart.” He continues, “Never once when I was working at a state school did anyone come into my office to tell me they broke the rules. Students at other schools created complex stories to get out of trouble. When I got to Covenant, it amazed me how many students would come forward in self-confession to say, ‘I violated the rules and want to make it right.’ I get a front-row seat to watch the Spirit at work when people have failed. I’m honored to walk alongside students in hard places because nobody ever did that for me.” Covenant has worked faithfully to provide genuine community between students and staff by creating space for open discussion, honest relationships, and sincere accountability.

In his charge to President Voyles during the inauguration, student body president Noah Sweatman, a 2024 graduate, offered the student perspective. He described the excitement when Dr. Voyles was announced as interim president and the hope that he would, indeed, be selected as president. “There’s a reason that students don’t stop clapping when President Voyles speaks in chapel and celebrated when we learned he would become our next president—the reason, President Voyles, is that we see you as a role model.”

Noah made it clear in his charge that the students not only see and know President Voyles, but also feel seen and known by him: “We see a man of God,

a husband who loves his family well, an academic who both cares about his students but also cares about their integrity and what they are trying to accomplish.” Noah continued to present his charge, “So, my charge from the students is to keep being a role model in a world that is so hard to find good people to follow.”

President Voyles has worked not only to know the student community that he serves, but has also made effort to know the faculty and staff, creating a sense of camaraderie and community amongst employees even while in the role of interim. Dr. Huffines describes how apparent it is that President Voyles wants to meaningfully know the people of Covenant: “President Voyles is invested in creating a healthy culture among the community at Covenant, a culture where voices are valued, accomplishments are celebrated, and people are encouraged and equipped to reach their goals.” She recalls, “It became clear just how ready so many people were to follow his leadership as there were cheers in the halls of Carter when the announcement about his presidency was made.”

Still Called: Growing God's Kingdom

Lastly, President Rayburn wrote the following in 1965 that still plays such a crucial role at Covenant: “Finally, we endeavor to inspire our students with a sense of mission. Every graduate of this college should realize that he [or she] has been given a world and life view which in a very real sense makes him a debtor to the age in which he lives. He must never be satisfied to live for and unto himself.”

In the inaugural charge from his wife, Kelli Voyles, President Voyles was

reminded of how we are instructed to hold God's Word close and not depart from it. “Today, as you are given the presidential medallion around your neck,” she said, “may it serve as a reminder of Proverbs 3, ‘Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. Then you will walk on your way securely and your foot will not stumble.’” Kelli continued, “As you walk humbly before us, walk in the strength and security of God's steadfast love and faithfulness. He has called you to this place, and He who upholds the universe by the Word of His power also holds you and Covenant College.”

It is clear to the Covenant community that President Voyles understands his role of being a vessel for Jesus Christ who truly directs the college. “I am humbled to be asked to lead, and I understand the weight of this responsibility,” he stated: “Please say something to me should you ever see me seeking my own glory, acting out of fear, or looking at anything or anyone other than Jesus Christ. This is His college—I am merely a steward.” President Voyles has made tireless efforts to work with the college to reach the greatest number of future students to be equipped to go out in service, stating that “there is nothing more important than remaining committed to our mission.”

The last charge during the inauguration came from Reverend Dennis Louis. Referencing the book of Numbers, Rev. Louis described how Caleb was faithful to God's Word at a time when many others doubted it,

and he charged President Voyles to do the same: “Tomorrow morning when the pomp and pageantry are over, you will be faced with the challenging task [to] lead Covenant through the various complexities of higher education that the 21st century presents,” Rev. Louis stated. He explained how many will be eager to offer advice as President Voyles navigates his role. “But I charge you,” he continued, “to ensure that the counsel you receive is filtered through God's Word, and God's Word alone. If it doesn't pass the test of scripture, it is not worth following.”

A lack of continuity can cause the foundation of an institution to crumble, but so can a stubborn unwillingness to see opportunity for growth. Development is necessary if we are to shape culture-cultivators who will enter a world that is ever-changing, yet there must remain a strand of consistency and coherency. Like in the college hymn and motto, Covenant's firm commitment to proclaim the name of Jesus Christ and hold to the inerrancy of scripture have stood the test of time and are not going to be altered any time soon.

As President Voyles continues to lead the college, he will be held accountable to biblical standards by an incredibly dedicated cabinet, trusted board of trustees, faithful faculty and staff, and Christian students who see him as an example of what a leader should be. “In the coming years,” President Voyles assures, “I am firmly committed to continue in our mission to create and maintain an environment in which all of our students can grow in maturity in their identity in Christ, in their biblical frame of reference, and in Christlike service.” 🙏

PRESIDENTIAL inauguration EVENTS

CELEBRATION DINNER



CELEBRATION CONCERT & RECEPTION



INAUGURATION CEREMONY



INAUGURAL LUNCHEON



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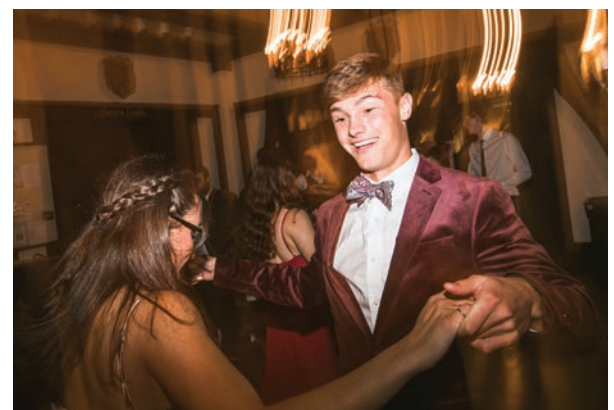
I thank the board and my esteemed colleagues for entrusting me with this responsibility—it's a privilege to serve shoulder to shoulder with you. I'm grateful for former Covenant presidents who were the Lord's faithful instruments for 68 years. I'm grateful for my kids—you are such a gift to us—and to my wife, Kelli, there's no one I'd rather have by my side as a partner. Lastly, to the students: It's been my distinct privilege to host you in our home, attend your events, meet over lunch, and pray for and with you. You are the reason I've driven up this mountain for almost 19 years.

DR. BRAD VOYLES

FACULTY LECTURES



STUDENT INAUGURAL BALL





WE COME FROM THE MOUNTAIN

a fulfillment of God's purposes

By Bethani England

FOR COVENANT STUDENTS past and present, the words, “We are the Scots! We come from the mountain,” represent school spirit and tight-knit community. However, a glimpse into the history of this mountain provides a deeper story behind the phrase. If you walk down the hill behind Carter Hall and continue past the aptly named Jackson Hall, you will find a small, fenced-off cemetery with three simple gravestones bearing the names of Courtland Columbus “C.C.” Jackson, Sallie Rhea, and Courtland Stonewall “C.S.” Many students are familiar with this family cemetery, yet few know the history of their namesakes Jackson Hall, Jackson Spring, and Jackson Hill. Gary Lindley, a 1972 alumnus and retired history professor, has done extensive research regarding Jackson Hill since he and his wife Patricia (Sussman), a 1973 graduate, currently are neighbors to Covenant College on the land that once belonged to the Jackson family.

The Jackson Family's Beginnings

According to Lindley, amidst the second Great Awakening and frontier revivalism in 1859, the Jackson family moved to Lookout Mountain from Virginia to “establish Sunday schools in destitute places to promote literacy and spiritual formation” for the American Sunday School Union (ASSU). “While today tourism and outdoor activities make Lookout attractive and prosperous, no doubt it was one of those destitute places 150 years ago,” explains Lindley. The unfortunate forced removal of the Cherokees in the 1830s created space for new settlements as well, yet despite some of the more tragic history of Jackson Hill, the Jackson family served the Lord faithfully where they were called.

There were around 12 local families with 25 children who signed up for C.C. Jackson's teaching. A descendant from Scottish Presbyterian families, C.C. was also a Presbyterian and had studied at the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. The

Jacksons' great grandson Rufus Triplett, who resides locally, has in his possession a testimonial dated to 1866 written to attest to C.C.'s good character that reads, “He is esteemed... as a teacher of highest qualifications and his zealous and persevering labors... in the cause of Sabbath schools [have] met great success.” There is also evidence that several churches in this area exist today as descendants of the Jackson family's efforts. The Jacksons lived here with the mission for education, spiritual formation, and service to the Church. Does that mission sound familiar?

Newly confirmed President Voyles told this very story at the end of his inaugural address on March 15. “Imagine with me if you will,” he said: “This young family, C.C. and Sallie, their young son, Courtland, and soon to be daughter Mary, gathering each night to pray as a family that the Lord would bless their ministry efforts, that the Lord would bring students to them, and that the students, through studying the Word of God would have their minds trained and their hearts formed.” President Voyles continued in amazement at the providence of God, “They were praying that the very ground they were on would be set apart for education and spiritual formation to the glory of God.” Those prayers were just the beginning of one of the many stories of God's abounding faithfulness toward us for His glory.

A Series of Providential Transactions

The grave markers on campus indicate that C.C. and Sallie Rhea remained in the area until their deaths in 1912 and 1920. After their passing, their daughter Mary and her husband sold the land to Paul Carter in 1925. There, Carter built the Lookout Mountain Hotel, which opened in 1928 but closed in the early 1960s. During the several years the hotel sat abandoned, a group of women and men gathered to faithfully pray for God to claim the building on the mountain. Around this time, the college had outgrown the facility in St. Louis and decided to make the bold move to buy the hotel and the land. President Marion Barnes

later wrote regarding this risky decision, "After we had learned that another group was placing a bid of \$350,000 on the facility, we decided to test the Lord's will in the matter by offering a bid of only \$250,000." To the surprise of many, this bid of \$250,000 was accepted.

Not only did the Lookout Mountain Hotel become the centerpiece of the Covenant campus, but Paul Carter later gave the college hundreds of acres of mountain property. What convinced him to be so generous was a visit with Covenant's vice president of development at the time, Allen Duble. Paul had dreamed that the Lookout Mountain Hotel would draw people from all over the country. In the face of his apparent failure, Duble reminded him, "I don't know whether you have thought of this or not, but your dream has been fulfilled in greater measure than you ever could have dreamed. We've got kids here from 24 states and 17 foreign countries, and they don't come for a weekend—they come for four years."

Mission Fulfillment on the Mountain

So here we come full circle. Not only is Covenant the fulfillment of Paul Carter's vision, but also of the Jackson family's vision who came to this mountain to establish a witness for Jesus Christ. Lindley writes, "In a remarkable real estate 'fire sale,' Covenant College was

practically given this portion of the mountain to establish a clear Reformed witness for the preeminence of Christ in all things among students from all over the world—How many schools can make such a claim regarding the significance of their physical place and its relation to their mission?"

The Jackson family made the decision to move far from home in order that Christ may have preeminence in "desolate" places, yet they had little idea of the larger purposes that God intended to establish through Covenant College. This mountain represents not only a dream fulfilled, but a community of mission-minded individuals that dates back to 1859. "How incredible is it that the Jackson family's prayers have echoed in eternity for 165 years?" President Voyles exclaimed, "They're buried on this very land, and now we're on this same land, and we bear witness to the incredible fulfillment of prayers offered long ago by a family who could have scarcely imagined this type of fulfillment."

So now, when recent or long ago graduates, new or retired employees, friends or supporters of this college say, "We come from the Mountain," it holds weight as it represents our desire to explore and express the preeminence of Jesus in all things. However, the phrase also entails accountability on the

speaker's part and on Covenant's part. If we claim we come from this legacy, then it should show. When the world interacts with the Covenant community, they should immediately wonder, "Who are these people, and where do they come from?"

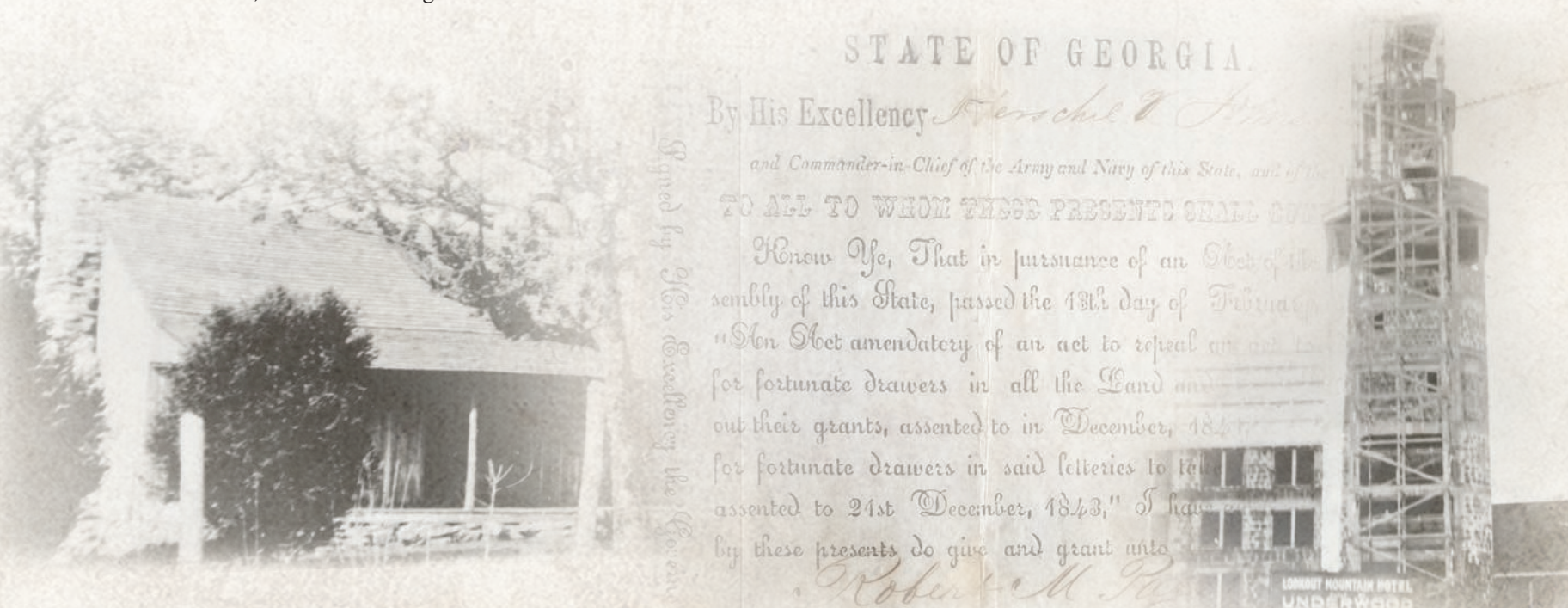
Our deepest desire is that those who come to this mountain might grow to understand where they truly come from by knowing their identity in Christ and who God made them to be. "We gather as the fulfillment of not just the Jacksons' prayers 165 years ago, nor of the 11 saints praying every week 60 years ago, nor of all the praying people of God— alumni, family, and friends around the world who lift up this college—which is all very true," President Voyles affirmed, "But ultimately, we're here as the fulfillment of God's purposes." 

To read the full story "Of Purpose and Place" by Gary Lindley, visit covenant.edu/jacksonhill.

Left page: Sallie Rhea Jackson in 1913 with her daughter Mary Jackson Triplett and family

This page: The Jackson family cabin, which was located near Frontier Bluff Road; original land grant from the State of Georgia; photo of the tower under construction, likely taken by C.S. Jackson

These photos were provided by Rufus Triplett, the great-grandson of the Jackson family.



God's Sovereignty over Dinner Conversations

By Noah
Sweatman '24

GROWING UP, I was blessed with a loving family. My parents are caring, my siblings are my best friends, and overall I had a fulfilling childhood. However, there was one big missing piece: my family did not go to church. The rhythms of a typical Christian Sunday morning were foreign to me, as was praying at the dinner table, because I grew up in a religiously divided home. My dad had walked away from the faith while my mom was still a believer, which created a quiet conflict and ever-present awkwardness surrounding topics of faith. Though I didn't attend church, I had come to know Jesus as my Savior due to my mom's efforts, and, as a homeschooler, I was a part of groups like Classical Conversations, so the Bible was a core part of my education. When I was 17, I decided to start going to church on Wednesday nights, however, not for the right reasons as I was mainly interested in a girl. The relationship did not last long, but it left me with a desire to keep going. For the first time in my life, I regularly attended church, but the absence of my family was glaring. The thought of not seeing my dad in heaven began to cause anxiety that splintered in my chest. This pain was hard to carry, so I tried my best to ignore it even as I headed off to a small Christian school on a mountain.

In my first year at Covenant, I began to notice an improvement in my ability to articulate my beliefs. The classes, chapel, and conversations over meals in the Great Hall discussing sanctification or different views of creation all contributed to this. When I went home, I would naturally share this excitement with my family around the dinner table, telling them what I had learned. During my sophomore year, I started taking Christian Doctrine with Dr. Clifton Ward. This class captured my attention and gave me newfound confidence in theological vocabulary, and, once again, I took

this knowledge home. Because it was connected to my school experience, it did not feel awkward to bring up my faith or talk about books I was reading, such as *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, with my dad. I now realize the Lord's hand was in all of these conversations.

One day, as I was ending a phone call with my mom, she said that my dad wanted to visit a local church. In my confusion, I ended the call a bit abruptly, but I would come to learn that the Lord had used all my phone calls and dinner conversations, the simple recounting of my day-to-day in college, to encourage my dad to reconsider church. The next time I was home, I did what I would often do and sat with my dad to talk, but this time we talked about God. In between ESPN highlights on the TV, my dad and I had a serious conversation about faith for the first time. He told me he was impressed by how seriously I was taking my faith and that my excitement had rubbed off on him. Later, as I got to watch my dad get baptized, I was in awe of what the Lord had accomplished.

I'll never forget the hug my dad and I shared after that because I felt my anxiety melt away, replaced with the assurance that I would see my dad in heaven.

Looking back, I see all the little steps the Lord led me to take and the small things He conducted to bring my whole family to Himself. What I learned at Covenant and the community of professors and students who helped me dive deeper in my faith showcased that God is the main character of the story. I am thankful that my family had listening ears for my many monologues. But ultimately, I'm thankful for God's ever-flowing mercy and humbled that he used phone calls, dinner conversations, and a school on a mountain to bring His children back to Himself. He is truly sovereign over all things! 🙏



Lessons of Delight and Neighborliness in Math

IS THERE SUCH a thing as a Christian perspective on math? Are there ways to apply a biblical framework to teaching math? How can math class increase one's capacity to love one's neighbor? These are some of the types of questions that arise throughout introductory math courses for Covenant students from various majors as well as content and methods courses for future elementary and middle grade teachers. Since I began teaching in 2010, I have grown in my understanding of what it means to teach math as a Christian. The claim that there even is a way to teach math that is uniquely Christian may be strange or even controversial to some. However, I have found that the goal in my classes for students to increase in their capacity to love God and love their neighbor through the study of math has been quite influential, and at times transformational, for my teaching and my students.

Unfortunately, for many, learning math consists of memorizing seemingly arbitrary facts and procedures with no connection to anything meaningful and no hint of creativity or joy. This type of experience does not allow for the full expression of the multifaceted nature of those who bear the image of God. The Lord has designed us as relational beings who learn better when we interact with others. We are also rational beings with minds to see connections and mathematical order. Lastly, we are creative beings, capable of solving problems in unique and interesting ways.

With that said, there are many ways that math can help us to love our neighbor. Responsible, honest use of data and statistics along with the ability to interpret numeric information are very practical ways to use mathematical understanding to show kindness, bringing truth to those around us. In a typical Financial Literacy class, students may be asked to find ways to maximize profit in order to increase personal wealth. As Christians, we also ask how we can use this wealth to serve others. Or consider a Business Math course in which students learn about mortgages and interest rates. In a recent class, I asked students to consider how they could use their knowledge about mortgage payments to not only be good stewards of the resources God has given them, but to share sound financial advice with others. Additionally, take problem solving as an example. Many solutions—to both large problems and small—have a mathematical component, whether it be spatial (*How can we maximize green space in a city? How much paint do I need to cover these walls?*) or quantitative (*What do statistics tell us about effective methods of poverty alleviation? How do we budget responsibly?*). Solving such problems requires a level of comfort



By Dr. Sarah Donaldson '98, Professor of Education

with mathematical thinking. And more often than not, the best solutions come when people collaborate and think creatively. All of this can and should happen in the math classroom.

Math can also increase one's capacity to love God. Nicholas Wolterstorff said, "Schooling, well conducted, expands the range and depth of delight available to a human being." I believe, and strive to persuade my students to believe, that understanding and appreciating mathematics can indeed increase our capacity for delight. And that delight, rightly directed, is actually a response of worship to the God who created a world full of mathematical structure and beauty. Examples abound of mathematics in nature—the tessellating structure of a beehive, pineapple, or turtle shell; the golden-ratio-based growth patterns of flowers, snail shells, and even galaxies; the fractal design of trees, river systems, and blood vessels—all waiting to be discovered. As Christians, we can take particular delight in the magnificent design of creation because we actually know the Designer! What a gift.

One of my favorite examples of mathematics in nature is Fibonacci numbers, a sequence of numbers where each subsequent number is the sum of the previous two numbers. These numbers are special for many reasons, one of which is that they show up frequently in nature. The number of petals on a flower is usually a Fibonacci number, as is the number of peas in a pod, and the number of spirals on a pinecone or pineapple. Not every flower is "Fibonacci," but a vast majority of flowers and plants exhibit Fibonacci numbers.

I am well aware that not everyone will describe their experience with mathematics as "delightful," but my goal is to provide students with the opportunity to grow in their understanding of mathematical truth for the purpose of increasing their capacity to love both God and neighbor. It truly is a joy to explore and express the preeminence of Christ in all things, including math. 🙏

Wolterstorff, N. P. (2002). "Task and Invitation" in *Educating for Life*. pp. 253-264. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.



COME JOIN US ON THE MOUNTAIN

Looking for ways to visit us on the mountain or encourage others to visit? Check out a few of our key events held throughout the year. For more details, be sure to check out our calendar at covenant.edu/calendar.

2024

SEPTEMBER

sneakPEAK

Bring your high school junior or senior student to our preview experience, featuring academic showcases and an optional overnight stay with a current student in the residence halls.

Homecoming

Revisit your days as a Scot, reconnect with old friends, and enjoy Jazz on the Overlook, lectures, sports events, and more.

OCTOBER

Worship Leader Summit

Join us for our first worship leader summit, designed to support music ministers through workshops, networking, and breakout sessions covering diverse worship genres.

sneakPEAK

Bring your high school junior or senior student to our preview experience with an optional two-night stay where they can also enjoy our yearly tradition of Mountain Affair!

DECEMBER

Christmas Celebration Concert

Come experience the joy of Christmas at our annual Celebration Concert, featuring various music ensembles presented by students and faculty.

2025

JANUARY

Scholarship Weekend

By invitation only, our scholarship finalists join us on campus for interviews.

FEBRUARY

Family Weekend

Join us for our annual Family Weekend where families of current students can experience campus, engage with the community, and bring a little sunshine to their students.

Spring Musical

Be delighted with a spectacular musical performance featuring our students.

Admitted Students Day

By invitation only, all admitted incoming students are invited to celebrate!

MARCH

sneakPEAK

Bring your high school junior or senior to our preview experience, featuring academic showcases and an optional overnight stay in a residence hall.

APRIL

sneakPEAK

Join us for this one-day only preview experience that provides ample opportunity for prospective students to get to know Covenant.

Spring Concert

Experience our music department's spring concert, the culmination of our student music ensembles' hard work throughout the year.

MAY

Commencement

Celebrate our seniors as they close out their college years and continue to faithfully pursue their callings and careers!

JUNE

General Assembly

Join us in Chattanooga for the 52nd annual PCA General Assembly.

closerLook

Covenant Champion and Legacy of Faith

By Bethani England



Known as a trailblazer in Christian journalism, **Joel Belz '62**, who went to be with the Lord in February of this year, was the founder of *WORLD* magazine where he served as editor, publisher, and regular contributor. However, before his career in journalism, the Belz family were founding members of Covenant College, where Joel was a lifetime champion for Covenant.

Joel attended and graduated from a fairly new and emerging Covenant College that was still located in St. Louis, MO. While a student, Joel was an English major and served as the editor of the *Tartan*, sophomore class president, and student body president. After graduating in 1962, Joel began graduate studies at the University of Iowa, but soon felt the Lord was redirecting him to a future in ministry, so he transferred to Covenant Theological Seminary. It was during this time that Covenant was making the move to Lookout Mountain, and Dr. Robert Rayburn, founding president of the college, knew Joel and his father well and asked him to help with the transition by doing advance publicity work in the Chattanooga area. Of this, Joel said, "That was my specialty, and although I was totally inexperienced, I had this allegiance to Dr. Rayburn, so I dropped out of seminary, got in my car, and moved all of my belongings to the top of this mountain."

While working to spread the word about Covenant's impending arrival, Joel lived alone for months in what he described as

a very "bleak" Carter Hall, seeing as it had been vacant for several years at this point. "This place had an incredible reputation," Joel said during a talk he gave to the Covenant community. "As the word began to get out that a college was moving here and the property was going to be resuscitated, it began attracting visitors. So, I had to be a jack of all trades. I had to be a guard or security person, a cook for my own meals (which was horrible), and a guide to the tourists who were beginning to come!" Joel was one of many who tirelessly worked to prepare for Covenant, and the Lord blessed his efforts. "The Lord was good and helped us discover good purposes for this building," he said of Carter Hall, "which to this day serves as an anchor for people's identification with what the Lord has done here on Lookout Mountain."

After working several years for the college, Joel earned a masters of communications from the University of Iowa in 1971. Also during the '70s, he served as headmaster for Lookout Mountain Christian School, later to relocate and become Chattanooga Christian School. He later taught mass media and communication at Covenant and was influential in making *The Bagpipe* a totally student-run newspaper, encouraging staff and faculty to allow students full editing power as an opportunity for them to develop as writers and journalists. In 1976, he joined the staff of the *Presbyterian Journal*, a magazine that served a significant role in the establishment of the Presbyterian

Church in America. Once the magazine's primary mission was accomplished, he shifted his focus to current events with the creation of *WORLD* magazine. He was a ruling elder at Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church in Asheville, NC, served as moderator of the 2003 General Assembly of the PCA, and has been a leader in the denomination since its founding.

Apart from his many impressive professional accomplishments, Joel was always a family man and Covenant College was indeed a family affair. His wife, **Carol Esther (Jackson) '71**, is also a Covenant graduate, and they had five daughters, four of whom are Covenant alumnae, and 16 grandchildren, several having attended Covenant. He was named Covenant College Alumni of the Year in 1977, then served on Covenant College's Board of Trustees from 1978-2016, including as chair from 1988-91 and again from 1995-2000 with only three mandatory one-year breaks, and was later bestowed the title of emeritus trustee. He was also a board member for the Covenant College Foundation from 2004-2015. Speaking in chapel one year during homecoming, Joel recounted his witness of the Lord's work at Covenant saying, "There are lots and lots of stories to tell [about Covenant], but the biggest story is still the faithfulness of our God." Joel Belz was a godly man whose legacy will endure as a testament to his unwavering faith, journalistic gifts, and dedication to Covenant College.

Q & A

WITH
BRAD
VOYLES



Who is your favorite musical artist or band?

It seems like the music you loved in your teens ends up being the music you love forever. I would include Hall and Oates, Billy Joel, Toto, Foreigner, Rich Mullins, Lionel Richie, and so much more.

When you were a college student, who was the most influential person in your life?

My InterVarsity campus pastor and I met pretty regularly to study the Bible together, which was very impactful. One year, we matched up Paul's letters with Acts to study his missionary journeys.

What is your favorite book?

I have a favorite genre that includes The Lord of the Rings, Watership Down, and Lonesome Dove. I really enjoy stories about groups of people with different gifts on a mission working together towards that end.

What did you do on your first date with Kelli?

It's kind of a long story, but our first date involved eating at Kenny Rogers Roasters and walking up and down the rows at Target identifying which toothpaste and which deodorant we used (an odd little game of getting to know one another). We ended up at a coffee shop for dinner, and at the end of the night I actually totaled her car.

Why did you propose to Kelli?

Kelli is beautiful, she's smart, she's funny—all that is very obvious—but I asked her to marry me after getting to know her because I knew Kelli would be the person most instrumental in my sanctification and that she would shepherd my heart carefully, and that has really been evident through the craziness of this last year.

How did becoming a dad change you?

I've learned that family is never just additive, it's multiplicative. Over the years we have added three children to our family, but this has had a multiplying effect. It has multiplied our love, our hearts, and our joy.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

Kelli and I had an anniversary trip to Rovinj, Croatia, because Kelli had spent time there as a missionary kid, and there is so much beauty and kindness in the people. We'd probably live there.

What excites you most about becoming president of Covenant College?

The work we do has generational and eternal impact, and the collection of gifts and talents represented by the Covenant staff and faculty is exciting to me. We get to do this together, and there's a coherence in our mission.

What Bible verse best reflects the mission you have for Covenant?

"Because we cared for you, we were not only delighted to share with you the Gospel, but our lives as well."
1 Thessalonians 2:8

Forging Ahead with Purpose

AT A TIME when the words “Christian College” increasingly mean neither, there is an opportunity for Covenant College’s uncompromising commitment to provide a biblically faithful and academically excellent education to stand out strategically while serving the Church and world. In the current marketplace of higher education, institutions dilute their missions in an effort to be all things to all people. While remaining missionally faithful, Covenant will continue to deliver a whole person, formational experience that prepares graduates for their callings while maturing them in their identity in Christ, biblical frame of reference, and service that is Christ-like.

Threats abound, and yet strategic opportunities exist if we take advantage. 1) The enrollment cliff is real but unevenly distributed. There are fewer high school students, yet the Lord is bringing them to our region as many families leave the West Coast, Upper Midwest, and the Northeast to move to the South. 2) The value proposition for higher education has increasingly become a harder sell, but the data continues to show that our graduates stand out in measurable outcomes regarding graduate school, job placement, and, most importantly, church membership and involvement—counter-cultural to the prevailing behaviors of the day. 3) The current climate rife with distrust in institutions, hostile culture wars, and concerns about religious freedoms can be challenging to navigate with nuance. However, the institutions that know who they are and are unashamed to tell their story are set up to stand out in the marketplace and become ever more appealing to families searching for a college that stands for biblical truth, excellent educational outcomes, and whole-person discipleship.

We know who we are—we are a coherent, confessional, Christ-centered college. We are a sending agency of the Presbyterian Church in America. We exist to inspire, equip, and send out our graduates to be excellent in all their callings, bearing witness to a watching world as they serve as gap closers and signposts for the Church. There is incredible potential on this mountaintop ready to be unleashed. To that end, we will strategically invest in thriving majors while adding additional majors, programs, and modes of delivery to grow the number of students inspired by Covenant’s distinctive mission and used by the Lord to further His Kingdom.

Mission faithfulness does not have to mean method faithfulness. We are boldly taking action now as we launch a comprehensive campaign that will allow us to make programmatic and facility improvements that will set us up for new initiatives focused on increasing our reach and strengthening our core programs and identity. Through the Lord’s mercy and in submission to His call, we seek to be a stronger, more nimble, and more faithful institution, reaching more and more students each year. I invite you to join us in praying and supporting us to that end. 🙏



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Brad Voyles
President



Covenant College
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Lookout Mountain, GA 30750

OUR STUDENTS ARE EQUIPPED, KNOWN, & CALLED.

The Covenant experience is deeply interconnected where the whole person is seen and formed as students are equipped, known, and called alongside faculty, staff, and peers who confess Christ's preeminence in all things.



INVEST IN OUR STUDENTS AS THEY PURSUE THEIR CALLINGS & CAREERS
AND GROW TO FAITHFULLY IMPACT COMMUNITY AND CULTURE FOR CHRIST

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