

THE GENEVA SCHOOL Magazine

THE COURIER



INSPIRING STUDENTS TO LOVE BEAUTY, THINK DEEPLY, AND PURSUE CHRIST'S CALLING.



MISSION

The Geneva School seeks to provide students in grades K4–12 an extraordinary education, by means of an integrated curriculum, pedagogy, and culture, both distinctly classical and distinctively Christian, that pursues goodness, truth, and beauty in all spheres of life, while viewing these spheres as elements of a divinely ordered whole. Further, Geneva seeks to instill in students a desire to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ's calling.

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All scripture quoted from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.



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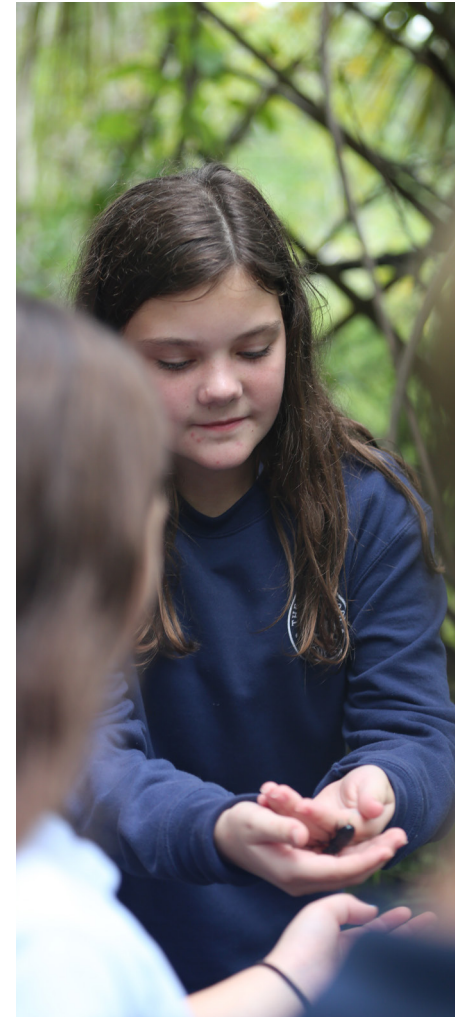
COVER PHOTO: Anna Classe
1st Grade Caps for Sale Parade



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DEAR GENEVA COMMUNITY

The Geneva School mission statement has served the school well since its founding in 1993:

The Geneva School seeks to provide students in grades K4–12 an extraordinary education by means of an integrated curriculum, pedagogy, and culture, both distinctly classical and distinctively Christian, that pursues goodness, truth, and beauty in all spheres of life while viewing these spheres as elements of a divinely ordered whole.

In 2016, the board approved the addition of the statement, “Further, Geneva seeks to instill in students a desire to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling.” We often see this addition in a shortened form, which encapsulates the mission statement succinctly:

Inspiring students to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling.

As mission statements go, I think it is really good. It captures well the distinctive qualities of Geneva’s Christian classical education, especially when compared to our competitors, and provides us guidance as to how each of us should go about our work. Our mission statement sets for us our values, priorities, and goals, and it indicates the kinds of programs and the course of study we need in order to inspire in our students a love of beauty, deep thinking, and a desire to pursue Christ’s calling.

To awaken this love of beauty within students, we surround them with things that are beautiful: stories, books, art, music, and spaces. We also allow time to appreciate the beauty and dwell upon it.

To cultivate students who think deeply, we provide students a serious education, meaning an earnest or sincere one, not one that is dour or joyless. Ours is an education that is based on timeless works that have survived the centuries because they capture ideas and stories that have proven their value in developing the mind. Ours is an education designed to nourish students’ souls through “whatever is true, whatever is

honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable” (Philippians 4:8), unlike a great deal that passes for education in many schools today that has little or no nourishing value to the soul.

To inspire students to eagerly pursue Christ’s calling, teachers nurture a sense of wonder at the marvels and mysteries of God’s creation and workings, in every subject and discipline. Understanding the devastating effects of man’s fall leads to a deeper understanding and gratitude for the awesome (in its literal sense of inspiring awe) plan that God instituted to redeem man from condemnation through the sacrifice of his son. Students also need to have opportunities to exercise or realize their gifts, which God will help them use for their good and, ultimately, his glory.

Geneva’s mission statement provides the constraints within which we operate. It helps us avoid or reject those things that lie outside of the constraints: the ugly, the shallow, and the idolatrous. It helps us make decisions regarding our curriculum, our programming, our facilities, our hiring, our marketing, our budget, and more.

We the people who are called upon to fulfill the mission must be people who live it as well. If we want our students to be inspired “to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling,” then we must also be people in whom wonder has inspired to intentionally love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling. I believe Geneva’s mission applies to all of us as well. And the struggles our students face in developing wonder are the same struggles we face. Each of these actions—love beauty, think deeply, pursue Christ’s calling—require time to be still, silent, contemplative, and meditative. They require time to read, to think, to study, to pray, and to be with God.

What currently passes as living “the good life” does not value time for silence, stillness, meditation or concentration. Like everyone else, we are frenetically bouncing from one activity to another and filling the time in between with a constant barrage of information

from electronic devices. Unsurprisingly, we, like our students, are stressed out, overworked, anxious, and exhausted. Perhaps we even feel what many report feeling today—a nagging sense of helplessness and hopelessness for the present and the future. This is not what we were created for.

I invite the Geneva community to take advantage of the gifts that God has given his people, gifts that help guide us closer to the way things are supposed to be. Spiritual disciplines once provided structure and rhythm to the daily and weekly life of Christ's followers. These habits are found in Scripture and are evident in the life of Christ but are often ignored by many Christians in America, to our detriment. They include the practice of the Sabbath (rest), prayer and fasting, tithing, silence and solitude, meditation, study and memorization of Scripture, communal worship, and the partaking of the sacraments of the faith.

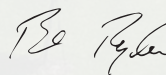
If we are to be people who “love beauty, think deeply, pursue Christ’s calling,” practicing disciplines of the faith not only serve us in our pursuit of Christ but also awaken in us a love for beauty and an ability to think deeply. The disciplines can provide these blessings because they remind us that our lives, our bodies, our money, our time, our successes, our futures, and our families belong to God.

Geneva’s mission depends upon you and me pursuing Christ. As we do so, may God develop in us a love for beauty and the ability to think deeply. In all these things, may he be pleased and glorified and bless the work we commit to him this school year.

Let me end with these words from Isaiah 58:13-14

If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL
BRAD RYDEN



The Geneva School will always seek to be a place where scholarship and Christian character thrive: a community that brings glory to God and good to neighbor.



Inspiring

STUDENTS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

MICHAEL S. BEATES, CHAPLAIN AND BIBLE TEACHER

Inspiring! You will see this word used a lot this year at Geneva. In fact, it's our "word for the year" for 2024–2025! So let's get the pedantic stuff out of the way. *Inspire* is a transitive verb whose first meaning is "to affect or guide by divine influence." This refers to the writers of holy Scripture who were guided by God in what they wrote. A cardinal doctrine of historic Christian faith is that Scripture comes to us by divine inspiration. Through the ages, Christians have believed that the original documents containing the words of the Old and New Testaments are divinely given (through human writers), just as God intended.

Of course, the source of inspiration can be mortal as well: I well remember being inspired in ninth grade by a Boy Scout leader, Carroll "Tiny" Proby. A monster-sized man (he was a six-foot-eight, 300-pound-plus gentle giant), Tiny mentored and guided me in a formative period in my teens. Perhaps you also recall a person who inspired you at some point in your life journey. You may have been inspired by someone you don't even know personally. I think of young aspiring athletes who see an Olympian perform and then become inspired to follow that example for years to come.

One can also be inspired by inanimate wonders. For example, seeing a sunset might bring rhyming phrases to the pen of the poet or artistic colors to the painter's palette. Many a song has been inspired by pivotal events with a writer swept up in the moment (I'm thinking of "The Star-Spangled Banner").

But back to the Scriptures. Interestingly enough, the concept of inspiration runs parallel with breathing. Further, the same words in Hebrew and Greek are used for breath, spirit, and wind. In 2 Timothy 3:16, Paul tells us "all Scripture is inspired by God." More recent translations have taken the bold step to render this as "all Scripture is breathed out by God." Some think Paul may have coined the word θεόπνευστος, which combines God (*theos*) and breath or spirit (*pneumos*) to create this phrase "breathed out by God." The idea is that those people whom God used to write Scripture received it by inspiration—as God breathing out to them. But if you think about it, when God breathes out, he also breathes into someone those thoughts and intentions he wishes to communicate as spoken and written words. So perhaps we can say that divine inspiration was the act of God breathing out and the writer breathing in (at least spiritually speaking).

We take breathing for granted . . . until we have trouble breathing, or for whatever reason, we simply cannot breathe! *Life is breathing.* Yes, of course, it's more complicated than merely that. We know breathing brings oxygen into our lungs and the oxygen is transferred to the blood cells. This oxygenated blood is then pumped throughout our bodies giving life and energy to our limbs and organs. Complicated. I get it. But we count our chronological age from the moment we first begin to breathe on our own. The breath of life! And breathing is truly a gift from God. Remember Paul's words to the people of Athens: God "himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything" (Acts 17:25).

In the divine sense, we say God inspired the Scriptures. Peter tells us, "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). The Spirit (the breath and wind) of God gave men the words, while using their personalities, their languages, and their context to express it.

Let's return to the human sphere. I'm not saying that *The Lord of the Rings* is "inspired" in the sacred sense, but during its writing, Tolkien wrote to one of his sons that he felt as though he were merely the conduit, that the story was already there. It was, as it were, coming through him. At times, in fact, he admitted he did not know where the characters were going next or how they would get out of the jam they were in. He expressed surprise when Faramir appeared in the saga. He said he rather liked him, but Tolkien did not expect him.

I doubt most of us will experience such inspiration. But in the human sense, parents, teachers, and coaches are called upon to inspire the children, students, and athletes under our care. We certainly don't do this perfectly. But as we seek to stay in step with the Spirit of God, we hope to guide these young people (to use Lewis's words from *The Last Battle*) "further up and further in." We wish to guide their understanding of the world and the things of God and his creation. Faculty members work hard to breathe into students, as it were, a vision for life—to cultivate eyes that see beauty, ears that hear truth, and hearts that yearn to follow the Lord Christ and find the calling he gives to each one of us.

Personally, I have been (and continue to be!) inspired by the vision of The Geneva School. So many years ago, that small group of visionaries began to dream a big, audacious, God-sized idea. For the handful of parents, thirty-three students, and three adventurous teachers that first year, no one could have imagined Ingram Hall, the new lower school, Riley Arena, and the Liddell Athletic Complex. And I know there is so much more yet to come. *That's inspiring!*

But I am also inspired by the maturing growth in some of the more intangible, dynamic aspects of our community. Our faculty and staff continue to grow in encouraging ways. Some people have made great sacrifices, taken great risks, left familiar places

and secure positions, and moved great distances (either physically, socially, or even economically) to join our community. Their stories inspire and humble me. And these same colleagues display a sincere, godly care for students, mixed with an impressive commitment to professionalism.

Then there are those strong, Christ-following families willing to sacrifice so much for their children to attend Geneva. In some cases, families have also moved across the country to join the TGS community, leaving home, friends, and familiar security to throw in their lot with us. Wow! And I know there are students whose lives are difficult for myriad reasons; yet daily, they summon the gumption to come to school, facing profound fears and challenges at times. So inspiring!

Finally, I am inspired by the humility I see around me: colleagues and students

willing to say, "I need some help," or admitting, "Yeah, I messed up. Please forgive me." The culture of desiring to do hard things together, to move forward in faith and life together: inspiring! Thus, when I arrive at the beginning of a new week and walk into Ingram Hall, I know I am not alone to think, "TGIM—Thank God it's Monday, and I have the blessing of coming to this place to do my thing and serve my students."

So we focus on *inspiring* this year. And as we do, I pray we all hold tightly to a sense of gratitude for the good gift of God's grace in our community. And may God get the glory!

Parents, teachers, and coaches are called upon to inspire the children, students, and athletes under our care. We certainly don't do this perfectly. But as we seek to stay in step with the Spirit of God, we hope to guide these young people (to use Lewis's words from *The Last Battle*) "further up and further in."

Getting to Know You, Getting to Know All about You

We asked a few Geneva employees to answer some questions, and you will find their answers thoughtful, surprising, funny, and relatable. Enjoy getting to know these amazing Geneva teachers and staff members—we think you will also find them inspiring!



LISEL ALLBEE, Economics

**"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"
(2 Corinthians 12:9).**

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

Obligatory answer: Naked Economics by Charles Wheelan ;)

Why did you choose your children's names?

Our children have family names for their middle names. Our daughter's name, Isla Rose, fits the bright, beautiful girl that God made her to be. Our middle son, Jack David, was named after his great grandfathers (Jack), who both currently reside in Orlando. Our youngest son is Noah James. One of my favorite verses in Genesis is when the Lord closes the door to Noah's ark. The Lord is so faithful and present, and Noah is the perfect bookend of our family.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

This is tough! The soy ginger salmon from Cooper's Hawk.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I spent my high school years in a colonial harbor ("hah-bah") town in Rhode Island, est. 1637. It was the kind of town where shops closed at 6:00 pm and Santa came to visit on a sailboat. I have fond memories of working at the local coffee shop (Jitters Cafe), where every customer was a regular. Summers were spent on the water: at the local beach, kayaking, playing sand volleyball, and jumping off the cliffs into the bay.

What was your best vacation ever?

In 2014, my husband and I took a trip to London, Vienna, and Munich. We visited a vineyard in Austria with the same name as my maiden name. It was beautiful!

What do you love most about your job?

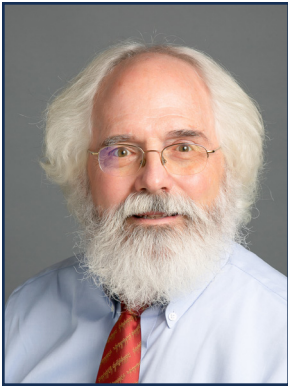
I love hearing my students' stories, thoughts, and questions. I love that I can invest in their future. I can't wait to see how they pursue Christ's calling and how he works in their lives.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I enjoy learning history, so time travel would be interesting.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Airplane! It's the quickest way to travel far away.



MIKE BEATES, Chaplain, Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, Biblical Ethics

**"Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty—never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense."
—Winston Churchill**

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

The Lord of the Rings (of course)—the epic nature and lessons on loyalty, friendship, and hope are invaluable.

Why did you choose your children's names?

Our first two (Jessica and Jameson) were chosen in our youth. We liked Jessica; Jameson was named after his two grandfathers (James and Edwin). Jameson goes by Jeb. But then we went biblical with Abraham and Abigail, and our adopted children: Elias, Shoshanah (Hebrew for Lily), and Josiah.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Oh my, a ribeye steak (with sautéed mushrooms and onions), a side of grilled shrimp, with a loaded potato, corn on the cob, and a good Tuscan red wine.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

Lived (chronologically from earliest memories) on Guam and Hawaii; then southern California; small Ohio town on Lake Erie; England (twenty-five miles northwest of London); then my parents' hometown, North East, Pennsylvania (while dad was serving in Vietnam); then Newport, Rhode Island; next, New York City; and finally Alexandria, Virginia (where I finished high school). So we were "wandering Arameans"! I always enjoyed the new adventures, new places, and new friends. It was an amazing upbringing.

What was your best vacation ever?

Either seven days on a fifty-two-foot cutter rigged sailboat in Abaco in 2005 (with two of my sons and nine Boy Scouts) or two weeks in Italy with Geneva students in 2017.

What do you love most about your job?

Hanging out with students—keeps me young.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

Seeing a kid's heart.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Depends on the destination. But I love the sea; though I would also love a cross-country train excursion too.



HOLLIE BENJUMEA, Physical Education 7, 8; Assistant Athletic Director; Director of Volleyball; Director of Youth Sports

**"Who you become as a result of the chase is the most important thing." —Dr. Jim Loehr
"The day you plant the seed is not the day you eat the fruit." —Fabienne Fredrickson**

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

One Thousand Gifts by Ann Voskamp or *Streams in the Desert* by L. B. Cowman. Both of these have been life-changing for me during times of deep spiritual growth.

Why did you choose your children's names?

We chose names with meanings that spoke to us. Cassia means "spicy cinnamon," highly valued in ancient times for its delightful aroma and medicinal purposes. We loved this name for its Greek/Latin origin as it ties to our family roots, as well as knowing the girl we prayed for would be a delightful aroma to our hearts and healing to our souls. We chose the name Caden for our son because the name means "strength" in Old English (my ancestors) and "friend" in Arabic (my husband's ancestors), two qualities we hope for him to embrace as he grows to be the man God wants him to be. We also wanted to honor my dad by giving both our children his initials (C.B.).

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Oporto, Portugal. It was the most beautiful childhood experience I could have asked for. My favorite memories are playing with our Portuguese friends creating restaurants out of large wooden fire logs in our parking garage and serving Kool-Aid and raw brownie mix we would sneak from my mom's kitchen. A lady once called the police on us because she thought we were trying to poison the neighborhood—pretty sure everyone got a stomach bug from the raw eggs in the brownie mix. My brother, sister, and I had many entrepreneurial adventures! We loved to find ways to make a few *escudos* to buy a treat at the candy store across the street. We would set up a parking attendant sign in our parking lot on Sunday afternoons for the “football” games in the arena across the street, but we always made the most money when the arena was used for bullfighting!

What do you love most about your job?

I cherish the relationships I get to develop with my volleyball girls, I love getting to talk to middle school girls about the importance of making healthy choices early in life, and I love the work I do behind the scenes to help things run smoothly and efficiently in athletics; being a part of the Geneva community has been God's greatest gift to me (besides my kiddos and husband).

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I would fly.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Airplane



SHANNON CHAMBLEY, Kindergarten

“I have become convinced that if God stands a child before you, for even just a minute, it is a divine appointment.” —Wess Stafford

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

Too Small to Ignore by Wess Stafford. Wess shares the story of his life within two worlds. He served with his family as missionaries in the Ivory Coast, but nine months out of the year, he was required to attend boarding school. The treatment was horrific. God redeemed the heart and life of this abused little boy, and he went on to be a champion for children in poverty. An absolute must-read for anyone who works with students.

Why did you choose your children's names?

We chose very traditional names for our first two children, Sarah and William. Sarah means “God's princess,” and William, which is also my husband's middle name, means “strong-willed protector.” When we were surprised with our third when the older two were nine and fourteen, we went in an entirely different direction. Kensey means “victorious royalty.”

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Steak, baked potato, broccolini, and a wedge salad

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Oviedo, when it only had one stop light. Everywhere you went in the small town, you saw someone you knew.

What was your best vacation ever?

This past summer, my husband and I got away for ten days in the Great Smoky Mountains. We hiked over forty miles and rarely looked at the clock.

What do you love most about your job?

My favorite part of what I do is watching students make connections with pre-existing knowledge, connecting what they are learning to their Creator and smiling when they do something they didn't think they could.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I would love to have the superpower of pausing time to linger for longer in some of my favorite moments.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

It depends on the destination. If I can get there by car in a day, that would be my preferred form of travel. If it takes longer, I don't hate flying.



RYAN FRASER, Greek

"Whom have I in heaven but you? / And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. / My flesh and my heart may fail, / but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalm 73:25–26).

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

The Iliad. It raises fundamental questions about what it means to be human.

Why did you choose your children's names?

Our oldest son's name is Ezra, which signifies "help" in Hebrew, a reminder that our ultimate source of help is God. Our second son's name is Isaiah. He was born around Christmas and his name reminds us that the Son of God, who is our salvation, became man. Our daughter's name is Evangeline Joy. We were inspired by the passage in Luke that states, "I bring you good news of great joy." Evangeline is connected to the phrase *good news*.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Spaghetti

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Central Florida. Some of my favorite memories are leaving the area for cooler weather.

What was your best vacation ever?

My wife and I had the opportunity to travel to Italy several years ago. I would go back again in a heartbeat.

What do you love most about your job?

Seeing students grow in their capacity to read in a very challenging language.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

It would be nice to turn anything I touched to gold. What could go wrong?

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Train



CELINE HSU, Fifth Grade

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). When I am facing difficult situations, this verse lifts me up.

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

Girl with a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier because I love how the author chose this iconic painting and depicted a deeper story within itself.

Why did you choose your children's names?

I chose the names Avalyn and Everly for my daughters because they are beautiful names and I love how they are similar but different.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

I would have an egg and ham sandwich.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Hong Kong until I was twelve. My favorite memories are visiting my grandma who lived up the hill, shopping with my parents on the weekends, and playing board games / video games with my cousins.

What was your best vacation ever?

My best vacation was to Taiwan. My husband is from Taiwan, so it was a great experience to visit where he used to live and meet some of his childhood friends. I love Taiwanese food, especially at their famous night markets. I love all their mountains and hot springs. It is absolutely gorgeous there.

What do you love most about your job?

Seeing my students grasp the concepts and seeing the light bulbs turn on for them! I also love seeing how they can relate what we learn in school to their real lives.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I would choose to fly because I could get to a destination faster.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Airplane—because it's fun and you can get to places that are farther faster.



JOSHUA KAPUSINSKI, *Antiquity II*, Introductory Debate and Speech

"Get busy living or get busy dying."

—Stephen King, *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption*

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

On Writing by Stephen King. It's amazing because I think he summarizes really well the joy of writing fiction, but I also find his life story fascinating. I've read that book once a year for about the last eight years.

If you have children, why did you choose their names? If you do not have children, what is a name that you think is meaningful and/or lovely?

I think Mirabelle is a beautiful name. Its Latin origin means "marvelous." I find it to be no surprise that I chose that name for one of the characters in my first novel.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Steak—specifically from Ruth's Chris Steakhouse.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in San Diego, California. I have wonderful memories longboarding down hills, playing basketball with friends, and hanging out with my cousins in Oceanside.

What was your best vacation ever?

Mammoth, California.

What do you love most about your job?

I love what I teach and the students whom I teach. I love reading about history, but the other half of the joy of this job is seeing students come to enjoy it too.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

Flying

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Train, but one of those fancy bullet trains. Those look neat.



DAVID LANGDON, Head Coach and Director of Football Program, Assistant Athletic Director

“Nothing great was ever accomplished without enthusiasm!”
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

The Great Dechurching, written by Michael Graham and Geneva parent Jim Davis. The book explains the religious shift in our society and gives hope by presenting a plan to renew life in our churches.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

I would have the Lord’s supper of bread and wine.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Pine Hills in Orlando, Florida. Some of my favorite memories include playing with kids in the neighborhood.

What was your best vacation ever?

Grand Canyon. Beautiful!

What do you love most about your job?

I love that my job is God-centered and I have the freedom to share my faith with the school community.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I would want superhuman speed like the Flash.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Air



ANNIE MUETHER, School Librarian

“We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.”
—John F. Kennedy

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

No particular book, but I think Georgette Heyer was a hilarious and fantastic author, and I wish her books were more mainstream!

If you have children, why did you choose their names? If you do not have children, what is a name that you think is meaningful and/or lovely?

I don’t have kids, but my niece is named Claire. It is perfectly appropriate because it means bright, and she is a ray of sunshine!

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Mushroom pizza

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Florida—I have great memories of spending time with family and friends.

What was your best vacation ever?

Maybe visiting Maine in October and seeing all the fall colors.

What do you love most about your job?

I love seeing the students get excited about books!

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I’d love to be able to teleport, so I could visit family and friends instantly regardless of how far away they were.

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Train



KELLY MUIR, Pre-Algebra

"Believe you can, and you're halfway there." Attributed to Teddy Roosevelt

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. We live in such a fast-paced world that doesn't leave space for Jesus well on its own. This book was a great reminder for me to be intentional and create that space in my own life for Jesus to speak to me.

Why did you choose your children's names?

There is no special rhyme or reason why we chose the names for our sons; we just loved the names! Our oldest is named Ashton, which is the name of a dear friend whom we have always seen model the love of Jesus so well. And for our second two, we just loved the meanings of their names: "warrior" (Wyatt) and "a quiet strength" (Owen).

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Steak, broccoli, potatoes, and creme brûlée

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Punta Gorda, Florida. I loved growing up on the coast, spending time out on the water and weekends at the beach. But my favorite memory is meeting my future husband and dating through our last two years of high school! I loved the small town feel and always running into people you know. It is a beautiful town on the Peace River and has incredible sunsets. I love Southwest Florida!

What was your best vacation ever?

We were blessed to be able to visit Hawaii as a family two summers ago, and it was a magical trip I will never forget! We kayaked and found a pod of wild dolphins that we got to swim with just as our family of five!

What do you love most about your job?

I truly love getting to know the students and building relationships with them. I love helping students grow academically and personally. I also love getting to witness the progress and success of students as they overcome challenges.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

I would choose to fly!

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

I would rather travel by boat. My happy place is anywhere near or on the water!



TECY ST. LOUIS, Sixth Grade

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

—Jim Elliot

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

The Knowledge of the Holy by A.W. Tozer. Other than the Bible, this book has had one of the greatest impacts on my thinking about who God is and what he is like (in the purest sense of the word, it's awe-inspiring).

Why did you choose your children's names?

I chose to name our daughter Aletheia (Greek for truth) because, having come across the word in college, I treasured its biblical meaning (to borrow the words from the song "O Lord, My Rock and My Redeemer," God's truth is our highest good and our unending need). Besides, it has a nice ring to it—Aletheia!

My choice of the name Ethan came with a twist. Having had our daughter, whose name consists of the digraph pair "th," we thought, "Wouldn't it be neat to name all of our children with names that contain a t-h

combo (representing the initials of our first names, respectively, “t” for Tegy and “h” for Homene) and, at the same time, carry significant meaning?” Well, in our search for a boy’s name, we came across Ethan (which is Hebrew in origin and conveys the idea of strength/firmness/enduring).

So there you have it—truth and strength! It would give me no greater joy than to see my own two children walking in the truth (3 John 1:4) and growing in strength of character (Romans 5:3–5; 2 Peter 1:5–8), understanding that the source of these ultimately come from Jesus Christ, their maker.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

That’s easy! My mom’s sauteed chicken wings and mushroom rice recipe.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in Miami, Florida; my siblings and I grew up in a small duplex shared with the family of a dear cousin of mine. Days going over to his place, playing hide-and-seek, running around the yard, and causing “innocent” mischief . . . Ahh! Wouldn’t trade it for the world.

What was your best vacation ever?

I’m not sure if this counts since it was not quite a vacation; instead, it was my honeymoon to St. Lucia, enjoying a weeklong stay at Sandals Halcyon Beach resort.

What do you love most about your job?

Engaging the students, whether laughing with them or helping them to think critically and soberly; every day is an opportunity to inspire!

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

Infallible memory (I suffer from lapses in memory).

Would you rather travel by boat, airplane, hot air balloon, train, car, or on foot?

Train; I have trouble swimming, I’m scared of lightning, I travel by car too much already (besides, I run the risk of getting carsick if I’m the passenger, depending on what I’m doing), and while I don’t mind a nice walk, it’s not quite practical (at least not in my experience) to get anywhere significant by foot.



SCOTT ZELLNER, Stagecraft, Audiovisual Arts and Sciences

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38–39).

Other than the Bible, what book would you like everyone to read and why?

The Pilgrim’s Progress by John Bunyan. It is one of my favorites. It’s just plain old beautiful. There is also something beautiful about the way people communicated in the seventeenth century. It seems that words had a lot more meaning and were much more descriptive in those days.

One of my greatest regrets is giving away a 100-year-old copy that I found in a bookstore in Winter Haven for twelve dollars. There were notes in the margins from someone long passed. I hope the person who received it has read it, and perhaps has given their life over to Christ.

I would advise anyone reading it to spend a great deal of time reading the section about the slough of despond.

If you have children, why did you choose their names? If you do not have children, what is a name that you think is meaningful and/or lovely?

We have three children: Derek, Hayden (TGS Class of 2023), and Reese (TGS Class of 2025). I did not have the opportunity to name Hayden or Reese. They graciously accepted me into their family seven years ago. Our son Derek’s name, if read in its native language from right to left as if you were reading Hebrew, is translated as “the soldier from afar who is like God the ruler.” I did not know these things when he was named. The title fits his personality perfectly. I believe children’s names are prophetic. I believe the Lord inspires parents to name their children as he sees fit.

What would you have for dinner if you knew it was your final meal?

Peanut butter and jelly: Peter Pan Peanut Butter, Smucker's Red Raspberry Preserves, on a slice of Wonder Classic White Bread. The sandwich is to be folded over. Do not remove the crust! Do not cut! Especially on the diagonal! With a glass of cold milk.

Where did you grow up? What are your favorite memories about growing up there?

I grew up in a town called Utica, New York. My favorite memories are those with my grandmother. We would take the bus downtown. There was a Woolworth's there, which first opened in Utica. My grandmother would take me to the aquariums in the back of the store, and I would look at the fish.

Sometimes after all of us kids had had our baths, my grandparents would pile us into the car in our pajamas and we would get ice cream. There is nothing like being seven years old eating ice cream in your pajamas watching fireflies from the back of the ice cream parlor.

What was your best vacation ever?

I got to experience Maine for the first time about three years ago. I never knew what the big deal was about Maine until I arrived there. We would tool around in Boothbay Harbor in my father-in-law's little lobster boat. Sometimes we would travel from Boothbay to Bath by boat. We would pass by the Bath Iron Works, which is where they build ships for the Navy. It's very cool. I am considering moving there if I ever retire.

My other great vacation was when we went to New York City as a family the day after Christmas. We went to see Hamilton on Broadway. NYC at Christmas is just magical. If I were the king of the USA, every citizen and resident would have to make a pilgrimage to NYC at Christmas. You would have to touch the tree at 30 Rock. The attendant would stamp your social security card and you would get to stay in the country for ten more years. LOL.

What do you love most about your job?

My goodness, this is difficult. There are so many great things going on here. I am not being hyperbolic when I say that being here has changed my life. The Lord is being gracious and merciful to me by lending me about 700 grandchildren here at Geneva. My heart just sings when I mic up a little one for the Three Piggy Opera or when one of my AVL or stagecraft students figures something out. I just bust (I know it's not a proper term) when I watch one of the journeymen walk an apprentice through a problem or concept.

If you could have one superpower, what would you choose?

Patience. I think patience is a superpower. I don't have it. I'm never going to attain it, so God brought me here, where I am loved. He has surrounded me with people who help me turn my reactions into responses. Some of the greatest prophets and teachers here are three feet tall with sticky hands, runny noses, and wild bed head. I look upon them with admiration and awe. They are the models. God wants me to be like them—childlike, trusting, and powerfully innocent.

LET'S PLAY A GAME: TWO FACTS AND A FIB

LISEL ALLBEE

I have a seat from the original Orange Bowl in Miami; I play the violin; and I used to coach basketball.

Fib: I play the violin.

MIKE BEATES

I broke into a secure military ammunition dump as a six-year-old in Hawaii; I have lived (for a year or more) in nine different states, one territory, and England and have traveled to nine foreign countries; I have seen and traveled in all the states except Alaska and Montana.

Fib: I have seen and traveled in all the states except Alaska and Montana.

SHANNON CHAMBLEY

I hate coffee; I am the oldest of five; and I've completed two marathons.

Fib: I hate coffee.

CELINE HSU

I love dogs; I am left handed; and I can speak Spanish.

Fib: I can speak Spanish. (But I do speak Chinese!)

JOSHUA KAPUSINSKI

I flew to Rome by myself when I was sixteen years old; I have been to Greece three times; and I repeated eighth grade.

Fib: I have been to Greece three times.

DAVID LANGDON

I used to play Disney characters at Walt Disney World; I am half Moroccan; and my IQ score is classified as exceptionally gifted.

Fib: My IQ score is classified as exceptionally gifted.

ANNIE MUETHER

I am writing a novel; I really hate mayonnaise; and I'm on a 1,400-day Duolingo streak.

Fib: I am writing a novel.

KELLY MUIR

I have been bungee jumping; I have been skydiving; and I have been hang gliding.

Fib: I have been bungee jumping. (I have never and will never bungee jump—although my husband and oldest son did this past summer in Mexico.)

TECY ST. LOUIS

I had perfect attendance while in grade school; I'm left-handed; and I was a rapper in my younger days.

Fib: I had perfect attendance while in grade school.

SCOTT ZELLNER

I am a cancer survivor; I have a BFA from Syracuse University; and I was a trapeze artist and stunt performer.

Fib: I have a BFA from Syracuse University.

Alumni Updates

WE LOVE TO HEAR FROM THE GENEVA SCHOOL ALUMNI!

Throughout the year, we will share how TGS graduates continue to be inspired to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ's calling.

'13

ANNA MEYER

I have finally graduated with my master's in occupational therapy! I also recently became a nationally certified occupational therapist. The last six months, I have worked at the University of Central Florida, supporting students with intellectual disabilities in developing professional skills and independent living skills in a college setting; it has been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. I am currently pursuing a full-time position, staying in the world of higher education if possible. And I am learning about Puerto Rican cuisine from my sister-in-law!

After my undergrad experience, I missed the Christian lens in the classroom; this was part of the reason I chose AdventHealth for my graduate work. Making the switch from education to health sciences was a struggle, and Mr. Andreasen was an incredible resource!

Geneva taught me how to think and find truth in a world full of muddled opinions. I am grateful for that foundation as I navigate adulthood, professionally and personally.

'18

JACK BLYTH

In my junior year of college, at the beginning of NIL (name, image, likeness) with athletes, I was able to connect with I Am Second and be one of four athletes to be a part of the creation of "Team Second." This is an initiative for athletes who are united in their love for Jesus to represent I Am Second, an organization that runs on the premise of putting God first. Fast forward to now, over forty-five athletes are involved, and it is growing rapidly. They are working to make disciples and help empower Christian athletes to make disciples on their own teams and campuses.

In May of 2023, I graduated with a master's degree in coaching and human performance from the University of Tennessee-Martin while running cross country and track at the division 1 level. I was able to achieve all-conference honors in the steeplechase even though I had never competed in or trained for that particular race until the day before. The thought was consistently in my mind that, oftentimes, in the Bible before God was going to do something big, he began with, "Fear not," because he knew that would be the first reaction. In fact, the phrase "fear not" is used over 365 times in Scripture. One of my biggest takeaways from this race was that we often forget that the Bible is not about perfect people that achieved great things, but it is full of fallen, broken, and ordinary individuals who depended on God rather than their own strength. He chose to use an event I had never done before as an opportunity to show me what could happen if I truly depended on him, more than my circumstances or my own strength, and it was such an incredible blessing.

This past year, I worked as a mentor and volunteered as an assistant coach for track and cross country at IMG Academy, the top athletic preparatory academy in the world. It has been such a blessing to be able to pour into the next generation of elite athletes, mentally and spiritually and in training. After a year of essentially working two full-time jobs, the Academy created a full-time coaching position for me. Not only is this a rare occurrence, but it is a testament to the fact that the Lord is always faithful and his plans will forever be better than our own.



ANNA MEYER



JACK BLYTH

'18

MARCUS KESTER

I graduated from the University of Central Florida with a finance degree in 2022, and I began pursuing an MBA from Florida Institute of Technology this year. I have been working at Lockheed Martin as a financial analyst for about eight months, after working at Chick-fil-A since high school. My two favorite hobbies are playing/writing music and playing soccer, so I spend most of my free time doing those things.

I always loved math in high school, so that is what led me down the finance path. I loved Scientific Revolution and AP Calculus BC with Mr. Jain. Also, while not career-related, participating in choir for five years with the Millers really cultivated and inspired my love for music.

Geneva prepared me very well academically for college. In a lot of ways, I think college was easier than I was expecting because my experience at Geneva was challenging but (usually) also enjoyable.

I still look back really fondly on rhetoric choir. I was in the choir at UCF as well, and those are some of my favorite memories. Since then I have become really involved with worship ministry at my church, which is pretty different in terms of style, but I love being able to express myself through music.

'20

JADA HUNTER

I graduated from Samford University May 2024 *summa cum laude* with a degree in political science and a minor in human development and family science. I am now at FSU College of Law in the Juris Doctor program.

I have also been doing nonpartisan voter registration with a local chapter of League of Women Voters. I am being appointed to their national board!

Having a Geneva education for me was extremely beneficial in connecting dots around why I believe what I do and how I can live out my faith by noticing all the facets of God that exist amid the messiness of the world.

ALUMNI ADVICE TO GENEVA STUDENTS

Jack Blyth: Be intentional.

Jada Hunter: Plug in! I promise you're not too cool for anything that is being offered to you. You'll never regret going all in, but you might regret choosing to sit out because of fear.

Marcus Kester: Find the thing at Geneva that fits you and really pour into that thing. Not everything about high school is going to be your favorite, but the things that I enjoyed and put the most time into at Geneva are still the things that I enjoy today.

Anna Meyer: Geneva students, your time at TGS is precious. It is helping build a foundation that will keep you steady in a wild world. If you have questions, ask! Don't be afraid of the big questions. Find that safe teacher or staff member whom you trust; I still keep in touch with some of mine.



genevaschool.org/salt2024

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

SALT (Serving and Learning Together) provides the entire Geneva community with an opportunity to be imitators of Jesus by serving nonprofits in our area and our school. This year, SALT day is Friday, October 4, and we cannot wait to spend this special day together with a common mission—to serve generously with our time, talent, and treasure. This service is threefold:

- The Geneva community serves local nonprofits on SALT day.
- The days leading up to the event serve to teach students about how and why we give generously for the benefit of others.
- The money raised from the students' sponsors covers the costs of each of the SALT projects as well as benefits programs such as tuition assistance, helps with campus improvements and technology advancements, and enhances the arts, academics, and athletics programs.

2024 SALT GOAL—\$400,000

Each year, students come up with creative ways to raise money for SALT along with seeking out sponsors who pledge to support them for their day of service. During the weeks leading up to SALT day, students begin to understand that there are important needs both inside and outside of the walls of their beloved school, and they are able to actively participate in philanthropically supporting the school—many students are able to attend Geneva because of the generosity of others, and the nonprofits we work with are served well by our students, staff members, and parent volunteers. We pray that SALT plants seeds in everyone's heart for a lifelong dedication to serving others with generosity.

Thank you for praying for Geneva's 2024 SALT Serveathon and for considering how you might support SALT this year.



Photos from SALT Kickoff assembly

SALT Pictionary Game: Upper school students drew pictures to get lower school students to guess the SALT projects!

WHERE WE ARE SERVING

This Year's Projects

K4: Teddy Bears for the Local Fire Station

K: Benton House of Oviedo

1st: Making Military Care Packages

2nd: Blessing Bags for the Homeless

3rd: U.S. Hunger

4th: 4Roots Farm

5th: Mead Botanical Garden

6th: Second Harvest Food Bank

7th: GreenUp Orlando

8th: The Sharing Center

9th: United Against Poverty (UP) Orlando

10th: House of Hope Orlando

11th: Sleep in Heavenly Peace

12th: The Russell Home

Project Captains

CarrieBeth Candeto and Rachel Platts

Andrea Infantino and Lana McKee

Cat Hackenberg, Andrea Read, and Shannon Nadd

Layne Spears, Sarah Stephens, and Amanda Doherty

Kirsten Raser and Naomi Wilcox

Rachael Ryan and Tiffany Phipps

Cristina Uribe

Jen Graf and Lotsie Pappas

Kelli Indrunas

Sona Jho and Jennifer McGaffic

Kirsten King and Bridgette Cahill

Rachel Smith and Michelle Blanchette

Shelley Endras and Ashley Liguori

Kelly Rives and Lauren Geiger

Projects like the SALT Serveathon would not be possible without the volunteer support of our project captains, who organize details and help make sure things go as smoothly as possible on SALT day. Thank you to our captains!

SUPPORT THE GENEVA SCHOOL SALT SERVEATHON

Donate at genesaschool.org/salt2024 or scan the QR code to make a pledge for this year's SALT Serveathon.

- **Donate to One Student:** Navigate to the individual student's fundraiser page and hit the Donate button.
- **Divide Your Donation between Two or More Students:** On the SALT Serveathon home page, hit the Donate button and divide your donation when prompted.



Credit/Debit or Check? If you are making a large donation and are able to pay by check, we very much appreciate it. This saves us from paying platform fees and credit/debit card fees.

Note: When a donation is made by a credit or debit card, a 3.5% processing fee is assessed to help cover credit/debit card fees. Your total gift is tax deductible.

SALT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

If you are able to give at one of the sponsorship levels noted below, THANK YOU! Simply make a donation in the amount of your chosen sponsorship, and someone from the advancement team will be in touch.

Diamond Sponsorship: \$10,000

- Only 4 available Diamond sponsorships
- Two large banners for one year; choices include Ingram Gym, Riley Arena, and the athletic fence
- Website recognition
- Recognition in *The Courier*, Geneva’s periodic publication
- Company logo or family name positioned on the sleeve of the SALT Serveathon T-shirt

Platinum Sponsorship: \$5,000

- Large and small banner for one year; choices include Ingram Gym, Riley Arena, and the athletic fence
- Website recognition
- Recognition in *The Courier*, Geneva’s periodic publication
- Company logo or family name prominently positioned on the SALT Serveathon T-shirt

Gold Sponsorship: \$3,000

- Large banner for one year; choice of location includes Ingram Gym, Riley Arena, and the athletic fence
- Website recognition
- Recognition in *The Courier*, Geneva’s periodic publication
- Company logo or family name (medium) on the SALT Serveathon T-shirt

Silver Sponsorship: \$1,500

- Small banner for one year; choice of location includes Ingram Gym, Riley Arena, and the athletic fence
- Website recognition
- Recognition in *The Courier*, Geneva’s periodic publication
- Company or family name (small) on the SALT Serveathon T-shirt

Bronze Sponsorship: \$750

- Website recognition
- Recognition in *The Courier*, Geneva’s periodic publication

Banner Sizes

- Small: 3’x4’ (or 4’x3’) gym banner or 54”x40” fence banner
- Large: 4’x6’ (or 6’x4’) gym banner or 108”x40” fence banner

DIRECT YOUR SPONSORSHIP

There are costs associated with each SALT project. As a sponsor, you may choose whether to have your gift cover the costs of a specific project or be given as a general SALT donation. Only 1 sponsorship available per project.

Piggy Bank Match Donor—\$3,000

Match dollar for dollar the funds donated directly from the students. You can fund all or part (\$750 minimum).

K4: Teddy Bears for the Fire Station—\$1,500

Kindergarten: Benton House of Oviedo—\$1,500

1st Grade: Military Care Packages—\$3,000

2nd Grade: Blessing Bags for the Homeless—\$3,000

3rd Grade: U.S. Hunger—\$3,000

4th Grade: 4Roots Farm—\$3,000

5th Grade: Mead Botanical Garden—\$1,500

6th Grade: Second Harvest Food Bank—\$1,500

7th Grade: GreenUp Orlando—\$1,500

8th Grade: The Sharing Center—\$3,000

9th Grade: United Against Poverty Orlando—\$1,500

10th Grade: House of Hope—\$3,000

11th Grade: Sleep in Heavenly Peace—\$3,000

12th Grade: The Russell Home—\$3,000

**\$3,000=Gold Sponsor | \$1,500=Silver Sponsor
\$750=Bronze Sponsor**

For all sponsorships, business information will be listed in a directory at the start of the 2025 school year. Each family will receive one in their back-to-school welcome bag.

QUESTIONS?

Carol Beth Haynes / cbhaynes@genevaschool.org
Call/text: 407-252-0116

Deadline
9.27.24



SALT Day
10.4.24



THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY

GENEVA STUDENTS WORK AND STUDY OUTSIDE

IN PSALM 19:1, WE HEAR THE PSALMIST'S DECLARATION:

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

All students at The Geneva School discover and learn about the marvels and splendor of God's creation; the integrated curriculum provides a framework that allows students to see God's workmanship and creative genius throughout history. Lower school students spend time outside every day (weather permitting); lunchtime is forty-five minutes and includes recess time, and classes also have snack and recess each day. Faculty and students alike recognize the invaluable lessons God's handiwork in his creation communicates. Several seniors have written thesis presentations on the essential nature of not only getting outside but becoming wonderfully familiar with the good world that God has made.

Lily Weir (TGS Class of 2020) shared her discoveries in her thesis entitled “Less Screen, More Green: The Need for Outdoor Education in Christian School Curricula.” In her thesis, she reminds us, “When experiencing God through his creation in addition to Scripture, Christians are using poetic knowledge, reinforcing concepts and understandings with tangible, real experiences”; she relates this to the incarnation of Christ who was born and lived in a very real body and died a physical and real death on our behalf. Lily urges Christian schools such as Geneva “to expose students to this form of discovery [experiencing God through his creation] . . . since the ‘book of nature’ is a vital source from which Christians are able to experience God’s glory.” She explains that, along with well-documented health benefits, being outside is “for the spiritual development of students by connecting them with their creator through general revelation. The essence of knowing is not exclusive to explicit statements of fact and memorization, but in understanding and experience of what is real.” She calls teachers and schools to action with the charge of “properly teaching children to wonder and explore the beautiful creation God has given them so that they can fulfill their calling as stewards of creation.” Her rhetoric is compelling.

Faculty also recognize the significant importance and impact of connecting with creation. Here are some enthusiastic thoughts on the ways that Geneva students experience and engage with the world around them.

JULIE BRIELMAIER Lower School Art

While first grade studies Peter Rabbit and Beatrix Potter, students spend an art class painting outside just as Beatrix Potter did. Students learn that *en plein air* is a French expression meaning “in the open air,” and it refers to the act of painting outdoors with the artist’s subject in full view. Students pick a spot in Geneva’s beautiful garden and use watercolor palettes to paint what they observe.

MATT CLARK Natural History (7th), Central Florida Natural History (12th), Art I–IV

I take my classes outside because that’s where nature lives. It’s far better to see a plant growing in the ground than to see it on a screen or in a book. There’s nothing like encountering the real thing to see all the variations, defects, and unexpected beauties that occur in the wild. When we go outside, we never know what we’ll find. I may have a plan, but that does not mean the outdoors will cooperate with that plan. For instance, my students have found bones, snakes, baby birds, turtles, giant spiders, poisonous berries, edible berries, protected species, and more all within the confines of the campus. For that reason, I never plan my outdoor trips with an iron-clad lesson plan; the chance for surprises is too great!

ERIN GORANSON Algebra II

I take my students outside on a nice sunny, but cool, day to enjoy the weather, but also to show them learning can be done in any venue. You can learn algebra while enjoying a cool breeze or listening to the water drops of the fountain. You can take a brain break and look up and see God’s beautiful creation all around you. We love outside days!

KELLIE HARDING Digital Photography II, AP Photography

I take students outside for many reasons. We can all use vitamin D and a break from the technology in the classroom. Photoshoots are all around us! Students enjoy taking photos in an outdoor setting, and we have the freedom to use water and do experiments in a way that students are not able to do in the classroom.

KACIE MELVIN Lower School Music

Sometimes you just need a bigger classroom space. I loved having the opportunity to take fourth grade girls outdoors when we were preparing the North Skelton sword dance for the Knighting Ceremony.

TAMARA MOLYNEAUX French I–IV

I take my French classes outside. Upper school can tend to prioritize one way of learning, but going outside engages our brains in a different way. Observing, occupying natural space, and being embodied give us the opportunity to better understand who we are as created beings. French students learn directions and names of things, and we all discover new things about ourselves and others. The students love to go outside. For them, it is a break from the normal routine. They get to see a different side of each other and of me.

MARY CHRIS ROWE 1st Grade

I took my class to the garden recently because we were discussing the cultural mandate given to Adam (keep and tend the garden) by God. They really got into the discussion and noted all the ways the garden has been cared for and improved and how peaceful and pretty it is. As we stood in the center of it, I told them about the trees in the middle of Eden, and how eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was what brought sin into the garden.

We underestimate children sometimes, but they are very capable of thinking deeply. They asked thought-provoking questions: What would have happened if only Eve had eaten the fruit and not Adam? What do you mean they started dying? Why were they running away to hide? Why did they have to leave Eden?

Adam and Eve did not pass the test of their faithfulness to God, and we often don’t pass our tests, either. We all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23 is the memory verse for first grade at the time of this writing). We need a savior just like they did. It is a joy to teach them about Genesis 3:15 and the first words of redemption! Time began in a garden, and someday we will all enjoy a garden together in heaven when everything is made new (Revelation 21–22).



Sometimes I go to the fountain for Bible or history because I want to imitate Jesus and the ancient philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, etc.) who walked and talked together. There is something to that peripatetic approach to learning—I have to know the material really well, and maybe it's being side by side—it's such a good thing.

One of my favorite lessons takes place at the fountain for a Florida history class. After we learn about the explorers who discovered Florida and all of the flags that flew over our great state, we make our own flags and set out to discover a new land of our own! I put on a captain's hat and one of the students carries the flag. We go out to the fountain where the aides are waiting with a small remote control speedboat (our modern day version of the sailing ship!), and we sing our explorers song as the boat sails across the fountain. We follow it to the other side and search for gold coins (hidden in the bushes by our fantastic aides). Everyone gets a gold coin and we head back inside.

Finally, one of my prized possessions is a terrarium on my desk. I have five, but this one is the best: my son (Joey Rowe '23) made it in Matt Clark's natural history class entirely from materials found on the school campus. I love the ferns and especially the mushroom growing on a piece of wood in it! I'm so glad they do that in that class and that I have something to treasure from the activity.

SANDY SHEPHERD Chemistry I, AP Chemistry, Introductory Cartography

In chemistry class, students spend two days launching bottle rockets on the athletic field. The students love working together to get the most fantastic launches, and they enjoy escaping the

monotony of a more routine day by running around to see if they can catch the rocket as it plummets to the ground. They often get wet. They later calculate the height in the classroom.

In Introductory Cartography, we go outside and play a version of broomball, like baseball with an inflated globe and a broom, and the students get on base by exclaiming the capitals of the countries they are learning, from the United States to Western Africa and beyond. We also go outside and made a map of the campus using a measuring wheel and long tape measures. Students have a great deal of fun while showing off what they have learned.

KAMILLIA WHITE Algebra I

I usually try to take my students outside a couple times a month once it cools off a bit. Often, this is during a class when we are mostly doing review work that does not require the use of the classroom whiteboards or the overhead projector. I love the freedom the students feel with the change of scenery. What better way to enjoy algebra than when surrounded by the beauty of God's creation! My eighth grade students stay on track amazingly well, even with the sounds of lower school students playing in the fields and on the playground.



AD FONTES—TO THE SOURCES

PETER VANDE BRAKE

RHETORIC DEAN OF
STUDENTS, BIBLE TEACHER

I had the great joy of being one of the chaperones for the rhetoric trip to Greece and Italy this past June. It was a truly wonderful trip, and I have over 2,000 pictures to prove it. Besides the fact that the airline lost the entire group's luggage for a few days at the beginning of the trip, it went really well. We saw the ancient wonders of Greece and Italy, enjoyed the beauty of these countries, and ate a lot of delicious food.

The trip was based on following in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul through Greece and Italy. We started our trek in Thessaloniki, Greece, spending a couple of days in this coastal city. We visited the Church of St. Demetrios, which is still an active parish, we went to Aristotle Square to window shop and get some gelato, and we bought some clothes and toiletries to hold us over until our luggage showed up.

We took a day trip from Thessaloniki to Philippi. Driving through the countryside of northern Greece reminded me of driving through the mountains of eastern Tennessee or western North Carolina. In Philippi, we saw the Baptistery of Lydia, a beautiful building, constructed in the 1970s, with murals on the walls and ceilings telling the story of Paul and Silas's visit to Philippi, their imprisonment, and their miraculous release. We saw the ancient ruins of Philippi (where archeologists have uncovered the city forum) as well as some medieval Greek Orthodox churches that were built at the site of the ancient city centuries ago.



The next day, we took our leave from Thessaloníki and went to the mountain town of Berea, one of the few places where Paul was welcomed warmly. It was only an hour ride on the bus for us, but it would have been a seventeen-hour walk for Paul.

From there we went to Vergina and visited my favorite museum in Greece, the site of the tomb of Alexander the Great's father, Philip II of Macedon. In the 1970s, archeologists found the tombs of Philip and his wife Cleopatra of Macedon (not Egypt) completely undisturbed. The artifacts found in these tombs were intricate and beautiful. The most amazing piece was the crown of King Philip—a crown of small gold leaves that were so finely crafted that they would actually move in the wind like real leaves.

We drove from Vergina to Litochoro, a town at the base of Mount Olympus. That afternoon, we hiked about a third of the way up Olympus and then came back down for a late supper of the best pizza I have ever tasted.

The next day, we continued our journey south, through the middle of Greece to Meteora where we visited one of the many monasteries that were somehow built high on pedestal rock formations centuries ago without the aid of modern machines, equipment, or engineering techniques.

We ended the day in my favorite place in Greece, the beautiful mountain city of Delphi, the home of the famous ancient oracle. Delphi is a small town with three streets: one main thoroughfare with a street above and below the main road. The view from just about anywhere in Delphi is incredibly picturesque. Looking over a valley filled with, literally, millions of olive trees, you see the Gulf of Corinth in the distance. Delphi was known as the *omphalos* (belly button or center) of the Greek world.

As we continued our trip south to Athens, the topography began to change as the terrain began to resemble the rocky mountains of Montana more than the green mountains of American Appalachia. Athens is a port city with the most famous ruins in Greece. We went to several museums in Athens, and we visited the Parthenon on the Acropolis. We climbed the Areopagus where Paul confronted the philosophers about their “unknown god” (Acts 17:23). We spent time walking the city, shopping for

souvenirs in the Plaka district, and had repeated visits to Django Gelato after long days of sightseeing.

From Athens, we took a day trip to Corinth. Ancient Corinth was a bustling port city that sits on the isthmus between Greece and the Peloponnesian peninsula. We saw the actual Roman streets that Paul walked on as he lived and worked in Corinth for a time. We saw the *bema*, a large elevated rostrum in the center of the Roman Forum, where Paul was tried after being arrested by the Jews and subsequently released by the Roman governor Gallio.

That afternoon, we hiked up to the top of the Acrocorinth, a high point next to the city where a temple to Aphrodite was located in Paul's time. During medieval times, it was a fortified position for different armies and the ruins of brick walls and gates still remain and must be navigated on the path up the mountain. From the top, you can look back at the isthmus and see the Aegean and Ionian Seas on either side. I realized that I was seeing the beautiful mountain and sea vistas that Paul would have seen from the same vantage point.

The next day, we set out for the airport to fly to Rome. I was excited as I anticipated the cultural treasures of western Civilization that I would see there. On the way to the hotel, we passed by the Colosseum. On our first day in Rome, we went to the Basilica Papale di Santa Maria Maggiore (Basilica of St. Mary Major), the Piazza del Popolo, the Trevi Fountain, and the Pantheon (commissioned in 27 BC by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa). From there, we walked to the Spanish Steps and climbed to the top to look out over the city. We went to a small restaurant on the way home and had our fill of pizza and pasta with tiramisu for dessert. The next day, we explored the catacombs on the outskirts of the city. From there we went back to the city and made our way to the Vatican Museum. There is way too much there to see in one trip, but the highlight for me was the Sistine Chapel. I was overjoyed to see in person the masterpiece of the incomparable Michelangelo. From there we walked to St. Peter's Basilica. It is a truly amazing structure. The sheer size of it is astonishing, and it is filled with beauty, both in art and architecture.

We also spent a day in Florence. While there, we climbed the dome of the Duomo, and we walked through the Florence



Baptistry (the Baptistery of San Giovanni) where we saw Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise, gilded bronze doors for the north entrance. The highlight for me in Florence was seeing Michelangelo's sculpture *David* in person.

Back in Rome for our last day of sightseeing, we visited the Colosseum, the Arch of Constantine, the Palatine Hill complex, and the Roman Forum. We then went out to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, located at the traditional site where Paul was buried after he was beheaded. This beautiful, large basilica is located on the outskirts of the city; visiting this site was a fitting way to end our time in Rome.

It was a great trip for many reasons, and it left me with much to think about. I learned a lot about Paul and the places where he lived, worked, and preached the gospel of Christ. There was more to be seen than we could possibly take in during our trip. We walked several miles every day going from site to site. Many things and places that I have seen often in pictures I was finally able to see in person. There was so much truth, goodness, and beauty in this trip!

This odyssey brought together ancient history, biblical knowledge, and theology. It helped all of us understand the context of Paul's travels and his epistles better as we learned more about the culture, history, and geography of the recipients of his letters. Students also shared their own devotional thoughts when we gathered together for discussions about the things that we were seeing and learning about. We talked about faith and friendship and about the wondrous things that we were seeing every day. Part of what makes a trip like this so rich is the opportunity to make connections between the material that we already know intellectually and the things that we are seeing and experiencing firsthand. A Christian classical education prepares the students for a trip to Greece and Italy in a way that other models of education are not able

to do. Geneva students are familiar with many of the places we visited and the historical figures that we talked about because they hear about them and discuss them in many of their classes. This understanding gave the trip a rich texture that would not be available to those who visit and only hear about these figures and places for the first time while on the trip. This was a worthwhile experience for all of us on the trip, and the opportunity was enhanced by the education students receive at Geneva.

1. MOUNT OLYMPUS HIKE
2. PHILIP II OF MACEDON'S CROWN AND OSSUARY
3. TOP OF THE ACROCORINTH, WITH CORINTH IN THE BACKGROUND
4. PLACE OF PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT IN PHILIPPI
5. THE INTERIOR OF THE COLOSSEUM
6. THE STREETS OF ATHENS NEAR THE ACROPOLIS
7. TREVI FOUNTAIN IN ROME
8. LOCATION OF LYDIA'S BAPTISM
9. AT THE RUINS OF DELPHI, GREECE



GOD IS GREAT AND GOD IS GOOD

ELIZABETH ROBERTS, CLASS OF 2025

“God is great and God is good, let us thank him for our food. By his hand we all are fed, give us now our daily bread.” We sang these words to the tune of the hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be” before we enjoyed some of the best food I have ever had in my life. After walking for miles, I was too hungry to even think through the words and not just recite them as a matter of habit, but when I really think about these words, I see beauty in the simplicity of the message. Over and over again, this trip proved that God is good, great, amazing, and every other adjective of the sort.

We declared this every day, singing in public at every meal. We declared God’s greatness boldly, just like God declares his greatness through everything I saw on the trip, such as the most beautiful architecture I have ever seen: St. Peter’s Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, the Duomo, and even in the local churches in the cities where we stayed. The opulent ceilings of these buildings with their almost imperceptible intricate detailing, vibrant paint, and glimmering gold really do draw your eyes up and lead you to worship God. Just appreciating the beauty feels like a form of worship in and of itself. However, God’s greatness was not only seen in the fanciest buildings and churches; we also saw it in the ruins of places like Philippi and Corinth as we traced Paul’s second missionary journey. These were not grand architectural feats that stood the test of time—they were now stones in the dirt—but that did not make them any less wonderful. Seeing the places where Paul taught and preached the gospel and seeing the environment in which early Christians had to keep the faith was inspiring. Hearing Paul’s words to the people in Philippi and Corinth while being in that town breathed new life, context, and understanding into these Scripture passages.

One of the most touching and spiritually moving moments on the trip was sharing communion with one another while sitting atop the ruins of Corinth, reading from Corinthians. It was such a personal experience but also really special to do this together, breaking bread with my friends. In the same vein, it was very touching to hear the other students share a bit of their testimony along with their favorite Bible verse. Every night, Dr. Vande Brake would ask a different person to share. It was very meaningful to connect with others that way. I even befriended a girl from the other school participating on the trip, whom I keep in touch with today.

My favorite part of the trip, hiking Mount Olympus, left me in wonderment. I can see exactly why the ancient Greeks thought the gods dwelt on top of this mountain. It is beautiful and magnificent. I see it as a representation of God’s creativity. God’s greatness is evident through everything he created and everything we saw on our trip.

Yes, God even showed himself as good after our flights were delayed multiple hours and we had to spend the night in Newark, New Jersey . . . and after we got separated from our luggage for two or three days. But he is good! We were reunited with our luggage, and we even had a free shopping spree for new clothes! The most significant way that God showed himself to be both good and great is by making it possible for me to go on this trip. So, as we learned to say on this trip, I say “Ευχαριστώ” (thank you) to Geneva for giving me this opportunity.

Biblical Rhythms and Spiritual Formation

Ruthie Andreacchi, Fourth Grade Teacher

Recently, the Geneva community was gifted with the opportunity to listen to and converse with Justin Whitmel Earley, author of *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms*. It was an evening where parents, grandparents, teachers, faculty, and friends gathered together for one purpose—to learn more about making the “maximum gospel impact in our homes,” as Ruth Chou Simons and Troy Simons say in the foreword of *Habits of the Household*.

For new parents, the realization is often startling—children don’t come with a manual. No guidebook arrives in the mail when your child reaches adolescence, nor when they first get behind the wheel. Thankfully, God has given us his word, which shows us the way to live as imitators of Christ. As we strive to live godly lives according to his word, we will become better equipped to guide our children in their own spiritual formation. As Justin humbly pointed out during his talk, his book is not the holy grail on how to have the perfect household; rather it is a practical guide with everyday, messy stories to help parents, wherever they are in the process, begin to intentionally form these biblical rhythms within their home.

The opening chapter, “Reimagining Household Habits as Gospel Liturgies,” invites readers to explore the distinction between habit and liturgy. Here are definitions of and more information about *habit* and *liturgy* (found online).

Habit noun

Middle English: from Old French *abit*, habit, from Latin *habitus* “condition, appearance,” from *habere* “have, consist of.” The term originally meant “dress, attire,” later coming to denote physical or mental constitution.

Definition: A habit is a routine or behavior repeated regularly, often unconsciously or automatically. It can be good or bad and involves any type of activity, from brushing your teeth to checking your phone.

Purpose: The purpose of a habit is usually related to convenience, efficiency, or personal behavior modification.

Context: Habits can exist in any area of life—physical, mental, emotional, or social.

Formation: Habits are usually formed through repetition and reinforcement over time. They become ingrained in our daily routines.

Liturgy noun

Mid 16th century: via French or late Latin from Greek *leitourgia* “public service, worship of the gods,” from *leitourgos* “minister,” from *leitōs* “public” + *-ergos* “working.”

Definition: Liturgy refers to a structured set of practices, particularly in religious worship. It involves rituals and ceremonies that are symbolic and meaningful within a faith tradition.

Purpose: The purpose of a liturgy is usually spiritual, focusing on connecting with the divine, communal worship, and expressing beliefs.

Context: Liturgy is often associated with religious contexts, such as church services, prayer rituals, and sacraments. It is communal and often publicly practiced.

Formation: Liturgy is not just personal but is a communal tradition passed down over time, shaped by theology, history, and religious tradition.



“Putting on the New Self”



Illustration by Bret Melvin, TGS Parent

How can we begin to reimagine our household habits? In his book, Justin describes how he transformed his family’s bedtime routine from an ordinary habit into a moment of worship by adding a bedtime blessing over each of his sons. He points out that our lives are already filled with habits—some good, some bad—and encourages parents to intentionally shape these existing habits into worshipful rhythms.

Reflecting on the meanings of habit and liturgy, I created a vivid picture in my mind’s eye, and as I continued to read through each chapter (each chapter focuses on a different area of habit), I couldn’t unsee it. If we take the word habit in its original context of “dress, attire,” of clothing being put on, and combine it with our present-day context meaning a routine or behavior that is regularly repeated, and blend it with worshipful practices (liturgy), we create a picture of someone walking into a closet each morning to pick out and put on their repeated habits of worship. Wouldn’t it be lovely if it was just that simple?

We all know from experience that forming any good habit is laborious, but God’s word calls us to teach our children continually—“You shall teach them [God’s commands]

diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” Deuteronomy 6:7—looking at all our ordinary, everyday moments through the lens of the gospel. We can easily become overwhelmed with where and how to start. Thankfully, Justin breaks down ten daily habits—Waking, Mealtime, Discipline, Screentime, Family Devotions, Marriage, Work, Play, Conversation, and Bedtime—in three categories: into Forming Parents, Forming Families, and Forming Children. Each chapter begins with theological roots and ends with a summary of the habit, suggestions to try, and additional resources for that particular habit. Additionally, he includes this recurring reminder throughout the book (for which I’m thankful):

We Always Need the Reminder of Grace: God’s love inspires our action, but our action does not inspire God’s love. Our family habits will not change God’s love for us, but God’s love for us should change our family habits.

Though this book is a guide for parents, Justin emphasizes the importance of community. He stresses that like-minded individuals—in one’s family, friend group, church, and school—

must hold each other accountable for maintaining these worshipful habits. The old adage “It takes a village” resonates here.

You, dear reader, as a part of this community, may be thinking, how does my child’s teacher incorporate in his or her classroom rhythms that helps to cultivate the spiritual formation of my child? The following is taken from Geneva’s website:

Students are at the heart of everything that we do and are the reason that we exist as a school. We are grateful to the parents who have entrusted the faculty and staff with the opportunity to partner (*in loco parentis*) with them in the formation of their children. We recognize that all students will have times when they experience great success and times when they are dealing with formidable challenges. . . .

. . . We strive to motivate our students to seek after the good, the true, and the beautiful. We provide redemptive discipline for our students who need redirection. And we encourage our students in the Christian faith to know and imitate Christ. (Student Support)

We believe that we are coming alongside parents as they try to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The phrase “*in loco parentis*” refers to the responsibility of an organization to take on some of the functions and responsibilities of a parent. Derived from English common law, this concept allows schools to act in the best interests of the students in a manner we trust will support the family structure and parents’ ultimate desires for their children. (Spiritual and Character Development)

I want to highlight just a few of the many ways in which our teachers, in various ways in both lower and upper school, live out these rhythms of worship within their classrooms and grade levels to impact your child’s spiritual formation positively. The following bullet points are chapter titles from Justin’s book.

- ◇ **Habits of Waking:** “Awaken to the reality of God’s love for us and be sent out to parent (teach) in that reality” (p. 48).
 - Teachers meet as teams or departments to pray before students arrive.
 - Teachers greet children at the doorway with smiles, fist bumps, high fives, and hugs while welcoming them to school by name.
 - In their classrooms, students in 2nd–6th grade recite the Apostles’ Creed together over morning announcements daily.

- ◇ **Mealtimes:** “Coming to the table is the keystone habit of forming relationships” (p. 66).

- Lower school teachers lead children through a grade-level liturgical prayer or song before lunch each day.
- Lower school grade levels come to the table and sit together in a common space to share a meal.
- Students learn to serve and love their neighbors well by cleaning their lunch area before the next class or group comes out.

- ◇ **Discipline:** “Habits help interrupt bad instincts . . . and build new patterns of love and discipleship of the heart” (p. 91).

- Through redemptive discipline, teachers and staff members address the heart of the behavior issue: our sinful human nature.
- Teachers help students practice self-control, loving others, and personal responsibility.
- Teachers speak Scripture over children; for example, a teacher may gently say, “Peace! Be still!” (Mark 4:39) in moments of high anxiety.
- Teachers guide students down the path of reconciliation with peers.

- ◇ **Screen time:** “The fight for screen time is the fight for formation” (p. 112).

- Lower school students must leave cell phones and smartwatches at home.
- Upper school students are encouraged to leave cell phones at home; however, if students bring phones to school, the phones must be turned off and stored in their lockers during the school day.

- ◇ **Family (Class) Devotions:** “Teaching simple truths and praying short prayers is one of the smallest and most powerful rhythms a family (class) can practice” (p. 127).

- Students have daily classroom devotions beyond Bible class.
- Some grade levels meet to memorize Scripture using motions and song, worshipping together with common devotions.
- Dr. Beates’s classes begin with a choral reading from Prayers for Illumination before studying the Bible.
- Students sing a hymn and recite the Lord’s Prayer in French before studying that foreign language.
- In many classes, students praise God by starting class reciting the “Doxology” in unison.

“We Always Need the Reminder of Grace: God’s love inspires our action, but our action does not inspire God’s love. Our family habits will not change God’s love for us, but God’s love for us should change our family habits.”

◇ **Work:** “We were created by God for good work” (p. 158).

- Teachers guide students in caring for their personal spaces: cubbies, desks, and lockers.
- In the lower school, classes sing songs that remind students how to write the heading on their papers, and which side the holes go on.
- Daily rhythms include turning homework in on time and diligently filling out planners.
- Mrs. Shoemaker’s eighth grade English class begins the day by answering the question, Why are we here at school? Answer: To receive wisdom, knowledge, and understanding through great books and learn how to read and write sufficiently to honor God in all things.
- Lower school students pull their class wagon from class to lunch or snack, serving others and showing responsibility by getting their belongings from one place to another.
- Lower school students learn responsibility by cleaning up their games and returning them to their proper places after recess.
- After math class in the lower school, the students clean the boards to prepare the space for the next incoming class.

◇ **Play:** “Practicing good habits of play is a way of cultivating a more Christian imagination that foreshadows the kingdom to come” (p. 173).

- In sixth grade, students have weekly teatime during literature class to encourage students to slow down and savor their reading, which allows space for them to fall in love with great literature.
- Kinder Corners is a space for some of our youngest students to imagine, build, pretend, and play.
- Teachers are often seen at recess playing alongside their students in a game of catch, pushing them on the swing, or playing go fish.
- Lower school and upper school science teachers are often outside exploring God’s creation with their students through nature walks, gardening, fishing, and more.
- Students are encouraged to use their imaginations—sticks become forts, lawn cuttings become mountains, lizards become earrings, and a group of students becomes a human pyramid!

◇ **Conversation:** “The rhythm that turns family into friends and friends into family” (p. 189).

- Lower school teachers use Scripture from the book of Psalms to invite students to the carpet for their morning convocation: “stand in awe of him, walk with integrity, praise his name with dancing, let us kneel before the Lord.”
- Teachers use pockets of time before school, between classes, at lunch, at recess, and even during carline

to connect with students. They build relationships through conversation.

- Sixth Grade Ambassadors take on extra responsibilities as leaders in the lower school. They greet lower school students in morning carline and help them out of their cars, and they welcome grandparents and help them find classrooms on Grandparents Day,
- Upper school students mentor lower school students in several ways: upperclassmen serve as knights and ladies to fourth grade squires and ladies in waiting leading up to the Knighting Ceremony, National Honor Society members tutor lower school students each week, upper school students read to kindergartners, and upper school students help with youth sports.

◇ **Bedtime (End of School Day):** “Acknowledge that at the end of the day, God loves us” (p. 204).

- Teachers speak blessings over students as they leave for the day, echoing Numbers 6:24: “May the LORD bless you and keep you.”

In closing, Justin Whitmel Earley’s *Habits of the Household* reminds us that spiritual formation is a daily practice rooted in both intentionality and grace. Whether it is through morning prayers, shared meals, or quiet bedtime blessings, each moment offers an opportunity to form habits that align our families—and classrooms—with the grace and love of God. As we build these new rhythms of worship, let us be reminded that we do not walk this path alone. In all things, Jesus goes before us, and together, as parents, educators, and friends, we form a supportive village that nurtures the hearts of our children, helping them grow into men and women who seek to honor God in all they do. Let us embrace these daily habits not as burdens but as opportunities to reflect God’s love and grace in every moment, trusting that even in our imperfections, his love remains constant.



Thank you to the Geneva Parents Council for hosting Justin Whitmel Earley for a Great Conversation.

HOPE AND HAPPINESS

Christina Walker, Advancement

Pain, suffering, loneliness, sadness—we have all been in a situation or circumstance that led to a deep longing for something different, something more. This profound yearning points to a significant truth: God designed human beings to flourish in his good world; he designed them for something greater than the disordered unhappiness the human experience often provides. In *Reordered Love, Reordered Lives: Learning the Deep Meaning of Happiness*, David K. Naugle explains how human beings arrived at this place of disordered love and disordered lives and how God, through the redemptive work of his son Jesus Christ and the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, helps his children reorder their disordered love and disordered lives; this reordering helps us learn the deep meaning of happiness in God, which was his original design for mankind.

To learn the deep meaning of happiness, Naugle encourages us to look at what the Bible says about the happy life: “What we need is a view of happiness and the happy life that does justice to our undeniable human aspirations and simultaneously avoids its reigning . . . superficiality. . . What we need is a biblically informed conception of the happy life” (p. 13). This is necessary because of the “residual memory of paradise in our minds. We intuitively know of our previous state and the way things are supposed to be. We are acutely aware of what is now absent” (p. 27), and we long to regain it, in our lives and in the world.

Naugle explains how “the opening story of the Scriptures presents the divine paradigm for the happy life, . . . God originally planned for human beings to thrive in his very good world” (p. 14, emphasis added). From the creation account in Genesis 1, we see that God created the world and everything in it, including man, and then proclaimed his handiwork “very good” (Genesis 1:31). Asserting “the original goodness of all things is important for understanding how God designed the world with our well-being in mind” (p. 15). Naugle points out that the name of the garden itself, Eden or garden of delight, points to God’s intention for us “to

live in the fullness of community with himself, others, and the world around us” (pp. 16, 17). This “edenistic happiness . . . roots the fullness of human life in God and his creation” (p. 17).

After the fall, Adam and Eve suffered the loss of this “fullness of community.” Cast out from the harmony and beauty of Eden, they experienced the chaos and confusion of the world outside of paradise. Alienation from the creator, from one another, and from the rest of creation—this disordered state that humans have experienced since the fall is the cause of our unhappiness: “No longer do we seek to love God in all things and to love all things in God” (p. 26); rather, we strive to fill a void that only God can fill with things that were not designed to fill that void.

The good news is that we have not been left to our own devices as we deal with this problem of unhappiness; there is hope for each of us! This hope is found in Jesus Christ—God has redeemed his creation from its disordered, post-fall state through his son Jesus, who was born into the world as a man to live a perfect life and die a substitutionary death and rise again from the dead, and through the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, who was sent to live in the hearts of those who believe in Christ. A helpful understanding of God’s redemption plan for all creation—restoring the proper order of things from its disorder—may begin with the understanding “that the two domains of Creator and creation are so closely intertwined that we can’t live happily if one or the other is negated or excluded” (p. 23). Naugle explains how God’s redemptive work for creation—the earth and all that is in it—provides a way for humans to reorder their love and their lives and to flourish: because of the work of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the restoration of all things to their proper state and order is made possible.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, we may take steps to reorder our love—God first, all else in its appropriate place—and this requires both faith and learning. We acknowledge that our sin separates us from God, and

we repent and turn to him in faith to pursue a right relationship with him. Following this turn, we become students of Christ and begin the lifelong process of being “conformed to the image of [God’s] Son” (Romans 8:29). We critique the prominent worldviews that surround us, we examine the cultural influences that penetrate most areas of our lives, and we use the tools that God has given to us to “beware of happiness look-alikes” (p. 47).

Each of us is to be a lifelong learner, seeking wisdom with diligence. The Holy Spirit helps to conform each believer to Christ so that each may understand his or her relationship with God as creator and redeemer and then develop virtuous lives and act to live differently because of these good gifts. When we give God the love he deserves (and is owed), he becomes the “proper reference point for all aspects and things in life, . . . [and] gives them their true meaning and puts them in the proper order in our lives” (p. 23). This pursuit of wisdom and the transformation of our eyes, hearts, minds, and wills is for the good of ourselves but also for the good of our neighbors. We strive to fulfill our callings, serving God and others with the gifts that he has given us: “We share in God’s providence and provision in meeting the needs of the world” (p. 183).

Those who embark on the path to the deep meaning of happiness have God-given instructions and tools to use as they pursue life in Christ. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we obey the Greatest Commandment, which establishes the basis for reordering our love and lives: in Matthew 22:37–40, we read,

And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” And he [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

“Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” Jesus tells us, “and all these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). God designed humans to flourish in his good world, and he will help us to learn the deep meaning of happiness as we reorder our love such that it reorders our lives. By faith and by learning, we pursue virtuous lives through spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, confession, worship, fellowship, service, and other activities that “generate, maintain, and increase godly dispositions of mind and heart and to foster holy conduct according to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ” (p. 187). We must stay encouraged and remember that these things are woven together; learning the deep meaning of happiness will not be effortless, but it will be transformative—personally as well as relationally.

At the end of *Reordered Love, Reordered Lives: Learning the Deep Meaning of Happiness*, Naugle shares a quote that inspires him (p. 202):

There are three marks of a great person:
One who is a great thinker;
One who is a great lover;
One who is a great doer.

He likes this quote because of the holistic view it takes: mind, heart, will. He sees the three as intertwined and “equally important for human greatness” (p. 202–203). He notes that the three marks also reflect the trinitarian nature of God. I was struck by how the quote also reflects Geneva’s mission: inspiring students to love beauty (lover), think deeply (thinker), and pursue Christ’s calling (doer).

As teachers emphasize with students at Geneva, life is full of discovery because God has revealed truth to us and made it possible for us to know the truth. This discovery and learning are lifelong endeavors for Christians. As the Geneva mission states, the school strives to inspire students to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling. May these lofty goals also be the goals of each member of this community. And may we choose the path that leads to everlasting happiness and flourishing.



THE GENEVA SCHOOL

1775 SEMINOLA BOULEVARD
CASSELBERRY FL 32707

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 4
SALT Serveathon Day

OCTOBER 11
Best of TGS Lite (Lower School Talent Show)

OCTOBER 12
Best of TGS (Upper School Talent Show)

OCTOBER 17 & 18
Fall Break

OCTOBER 25
Homecoming Football Game

OCTOBER 26
Rhetoric Homecoming Dance

NOVEMBER 1
No School (Teacher Workday)

NOVEMBER 22
Upper School Friendsgiving Lunch

NOVEMBER 25–29
Thanksgiving Break