

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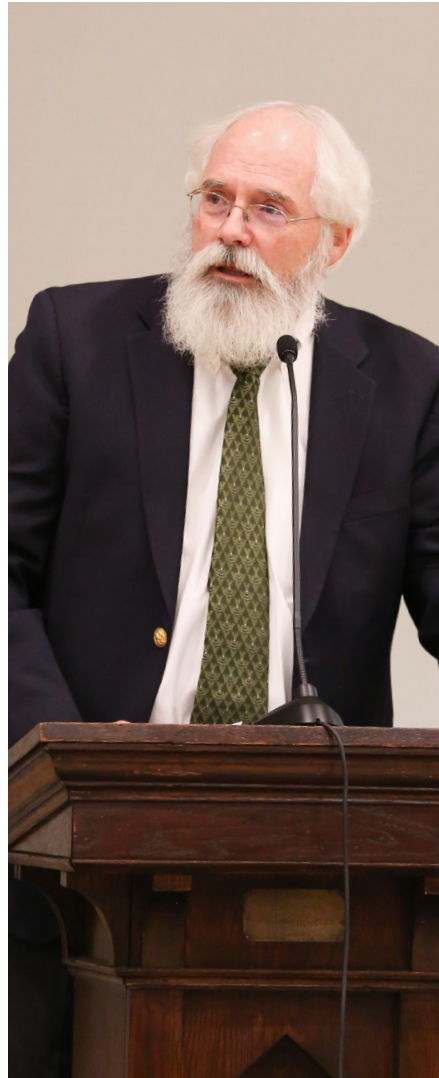
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All scripture quoted from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.



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COVER PHOTO: Anna Classe
Christmas Festival and Market



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DEAR GENEVA COMMUNITY

The 1960s clinical psychologist Diana Baumrind garnered a lot of attention with her research and writing on parenting styles. She identified three styles: the permissive parent, the authoritarian parent, and the authoritative parent. Later, a fourth style was added: the uninvolved parent.

Dr. Baumrind's interest in studying parenting styles had to do with the effects they have on children. For example, research shows that permissive parents tend to have children who are poor in regulating their emotions and who have low resolve when facing challenging tasks. Authoritarian parents tend to have children who are anxious, withdrawn, and unhappy. Their children may do well in school but often have poor reactions to frustrations by either giving up or becoming hostile. Research shows that authoritative parents tend to have children who are self-confident with good emotional regulation as well as lively and happy dispositions.

Since the sixties, we have been bombarded with a menagerie of metaphors related to parenting and parenting styles. Rather than the straightforward descriptors of uninvolved, permissive, authoritarian, or authoritative parents, we now have tiger parents, elephant parents, and jellyfish parents. We also have parents who are Velcro, helicopters, snowplows, bulldozers, and lawnmowers. All of these have negative connotations, both to the parent and consequently to the child.

Recently, I came across a new one that caught my attention. In *The Atlantic*, Russell Shaw, the head of school at Georgetown Day School in Washington, DC, proposed a new metaphor for successful parenting: the lighthouse parent. He came to this metaphor based on his experience in raising children and serving as an educator. In the article, he recalls an incident in which his toddler son fell while playing and looked to him for a reaction. Shaw realized that by how he reacted to the fall, he could influence his son's mental state and interpretation of the world. If he reacted with worry, then there would be wailing. If he reacted calmly, then there would be a lightheartedness and resumption of play.

Fast forward to middle school when Shaw's son told him over homework that a classmate had been unkind earlier that day. Shaw realized he could follow his first instinct and rush to fix the problem with phone calls, emails,

and demands. Or he could reply calmly with, "That sounds hard. What did you do?" A conversation ensued, and Shaw gave his son affirmation that he handled the problem well. The son went back to his homework, encouraged that he could handle his own problems. No phone calls, emails, or demands required.

For Shaw, a lighthouse parent "stands as a steady, reliable guide, providing safety and clarity without controlling every aspect of their child's journey." To be one, he writes, requires parents to learn to "substitute the impulse to fix problems with the patience to listen." These words resonated with me as my first impulse when my kids were young was to fix their problems. I am their dad, after all, and my job is to provide protection for my children from all harms, both physical and emotional. I am blessed (and my children equally so) to have partnered in parenting (and life) with a godly woman who had the maturity to listen first.

Lighthouse parents operate like a lighthouse, providing "firm boundaries and emotional support while allowing their children the freedom to navigate their own challenges. They demonstrate that they can trust their kids to handle difficult situations independently." I love the image of a parent as a lighthouse. Lighthouses are strong and stable, providing a beacon of hope and direction while weathering life's storms. Dangers abound, and lighthouses exist to indicate safe passageways. Of course, there are times when parents need to intervene, especially with young children who are learning to navigate life. The blessing of the lighthouse approach is that it reminds us to reclaims our perch once the momentary squall has passed so that we can reclaim the larger perspective that our children so desperately need from us.

Lighthouses are often isolated structures, existing in remote areas away from others. Parenting can feel that way. That is why places like churches and schools are so important for parent well-being. When we are around other parents who do the "parent-thing" well, then we gain knowledge, understanding, and wisdom on how to carry out some of the most important and challenging responsibilities that we have. I hope that The Geneva School can be such a place for you—a place to come alongside wise and loving fellow lighthouses that are shining beacons of hope for their children.

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.



FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL
BRAD RYDEN

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brad Ryden".



Mercy Promised

By Dr. Michael Beates, Chaplain

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high

to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 57–80

Luke's Gospel contains four songs in the birth narrative in chapters 1–2. First, we hear Mary's song (the Magnificat) in the opening chapter. Then the scene moves to the birth of John, Jesus's cousin. When John is born of Elizabeth, her husband, Zechariah, affirms by signs that his name would be John; his tongue is loosed and he breaks into a poetic psalm-like song (the Benedictus). But some background before we look at the Benedictus.

One of the most desperate life situations in the ancient world was to be without child. And since God looks on the brokenhearted, this is one of numerous stories where he, indeed, shows great mercy in such a situation: here to Elizabeth and Zechariah. And there was great rejoicing. "She bore a son. And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her" (Luke 1:57–58).

But this story was bathed in controversy. Zechariah suffered silence for months as a result of his unbelief at the angel Gabriel's announcement to him in the temple, doubting God's goodness and sovereign power. But this suffering led to deep godly meditation. The custom was always to give a firstborn the father's name. And names carried meaning and significance (Zechariah means "Yahweh remembers" and John means "Yahweh is gracious"). In the article "Jesus Is the Horn of Salvation," John Piper encourages those who read Zechariah's story: "Remember, . . . you who now suffer from the scars of past sins. If you keep faith now, God will turn the marks of sin into memorials of grace" (*Desiring God*, December 14, 1980). Zechariah kept faith, albeit in silence, and when he agreed with Elizabeth, writing on a tablet that the newborn son would be named John, he was released from this silence. His first words after

months of silence were praise to God. And verses 65–66 say, “Fear came on the people,” and they “laid these things up in their hearts.” These personal recollections lie behind Luke’s gospel account.

So Zechariah, filled with the Spirit, sang a song traditionally entitled by its first word in the Latin text: *Benedictus*. This song breaks out into two parts—speaking first about the Messiah to come and second about the Messiah’s forerunner, Zechariah’s son, John.

First, Zechariah affirms that Yahweh “has visited and redeemed his people” (Luke 1:68). Zechariah is so sure of the present/future reality that he speaks of it in the past tense! There had been no visitation, no word, for four hundred years! Israel had waited. Amos had prophesied there would be a famine, not of food but of the hearing of God’s Word, and there had been—silence from God—for four hundred years. But the waiting was over. Anticipation was about to be fulfilled. But this deliverance and redemption was not what they thought it would be. God seldom does things the way we expect. They expected (as they saw with Moses) deliverance from the present existential state of oppression: from Rome. But God had much bigger plans.

Second, God “has raised up a horn of salvation” (Luke 1:69). The horn is not a musical instrument but a sign of strength and a means of victory throughout Scripture (Micah 4:13, Psalm 18). As weak and broken people, we need God’s strength. One of the big lies our age seeks for us to imbibe is that we are strong, able, and self-sufficient. I believe the opposite of faith is not doubt; rather, it is self-reliance. But God’s people, the Israelites, knew that no amount of self-reliance or strength (personal or national) would solve their problems. They needed a strong ox with a mighty horn to free them.

Third, he addresses freedom from whom. “He spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us” (Luke 1:70–71). The people of Israel needed a strong savior to bring deliverance from oppression. But they were thinking physically, and God was communicating about spiritual truth. Yes, indeed, they suffered from oppression and slavery—though not what they thought. Rome was an enemy, yes. But sin is a much worse and much more evil taskmaster, oppressive beyond the imagination not just for Israel but for all mankind. Just as with ancient Israel, we need to be saved from the hand of the one who hates us and all things good and true—Satan, the father of lies. But God’s purpose was not merely to save us but also “to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant” (Luke 1:72).

The word *mercy* harkens back to that big, bountiful Hebrew word *hesed* that speaks of God’s steadfast love, unfailing covenant loyalty, and deep, abiding affection for his people. The Savior about whom Zechariah speaks, Jesus the Messiah, would show this covenant love, this steadfast mercy to his people. Did God forget his holy covenant? Of course not! The word *remember* here carries the sense of fulfilling and bringing to full fruition the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the prophets.

So God’s purpose is to save, show mercy, remember covenant, and deliver his people from the hand of their enemies. Why? “That we . . . might serve him without fear.” How? “In holiness and righteousness before him all our days” (Luke 1:74–75). God desires

our worship. And as he provides for us what he requires of us, so he gives us the grace to worship him. Week in and week out, this is a profound privilege that we should not lightly give up or pass over.

Zechariah’s words about John reveal his future role: one who “will go before the Lord to prepare his ways” (Luke 1:76). When John is older, he confesses that he is unworthy to untie Jesus’s sandals, telling his own followers that Jesus must increase while he (John) must decrease (John 3:30)! And just as he must decrease, in the second stanza of Zechariah’s song about John, the focus turns back to Jesus. He would “give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins” (Luke 1:77). Then we hear this precious thought, that Jesus will display “the tender mercy of our God” (Luke 1:78). In his tender mercy, God has come to us in Jesus—Advent is the arrival of his most tender mercy. He has come to walk with us, to empathize with us, suffer with us. So he was prone to come alongside the most needy among people: the sick and helpless, the rejected and marginalized. This is tender mercy. And it goes on that this Messiah, Jesus, would “give light to those who sit in darkness” (1:79).

Notice especially that he is the rising sun for those who sit in darkness. Those who are motionless, without hope, and without light. Those who know their plight is far beyond any remedy they might conjure up themselves. This light is for us!

Seventy years ago, in a Nazi prison, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote that a prison cell is a good analogy for Advent. He said that in prison, “One waits, hopes, does this or that—ultimately negligible things—the door is locked and can only be opened from the outside” (Letter to Eberhard Bethge, *Letters and Papers from Prison*). Tony Reinke expands on this in his article “Christmas in a Cold Prison,” saying, “There is a hopeless precursor side to Advent. Until God arrives, we have no hope for release from the imprisonment of our sin. We are stuck and condemned and the door is locked from the other side. We depend completely on Someone from the outside to free us” (*Desiring God*, December 20, 2012). Jesus has brought this light to our darkness to show us “the way of peace” (Luke 1:79). The great shalom!

We live in a world sorely in need of God’s shalom. We live with rushing, anxiety, pressure, unmet expectations, disappointment, depression, sadness, loss. Oh, how we need peace. This tender mercy of God condescending to us in Christ brings every miracle you can think of into one. Imagine a paralyzed, sick, blind beggar, languishing in a dark prison. And Jesus comes, bringing light and life and strength and wholeness and hope and escape from an enslaving enemy of sin and darkness. This is our story. At the first Advent, it began, and with this Advent 2024, it continues as we embrace the One who comes to release us, lift us on formerly lifeless legs, and walk with us from incarceration to freedom and light and life. Oh, the goodness of God’s tender mercy for us.

Do you see the gospel here friends? Has God brought light and sight to the eyes of your heart to see his strength, his horn of salvation, doing for us what we cannot do? Have you experienced his gentle and tender mercy, lifting you in your broken state, clothing you with righteousness and holiness to serve him without fear? Oh, the goodness of God with us, of God for us, of God in our midst. Thanks be to God.



RHETORIC RETREAT

Over(Knight) Adventures

Field trips at The Geneva School, whether they are for just a few hours or for a few nights, are integral to Geneva's incarnational education. They offer students opportunities to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell the world around them, appealing to all five of these learning gates, giving students the opportunity to truly experience what it is that they are studying, and providing experiences that will contribute more substantively to their learning than merely reading a book about an event or even reenacting an event in the classroom or for an audience. During the fifth grade through twelfth grade years, students have the opportunity to go on multiple overnight trips, which build on what they are learning in their classes that particular year. These trips also provide room to grow in independence, foster a sense of community with classmates and trip leaders, and deepen student understanding of their world and their heavenly Father and creator.



FIFTH GRADE CEDARKIRK TRIP



SIXTH GRADE WILLIAMSBURG / DC TRIP

FIFTH GRADE CEDARKIRK (LINDA URICHKO, FIFTH GRADE TEACHER)

Fifth grade provides a three-day retreat for students at Cedarkirk Camp & Conference Center in Lithia, Florida, (near Tampa) that aligns with the fifth grade curriculum, bringing them closer to one another and Jesus and reflecting the model of classical education. While fostering a sense of community, students deepen their understanding of Florida's unique science and ecology. Throughout the journey, students engage in hands-on activities and discussions that highlight the diverse ecosystems found in our state. Additionally, the trip incorporates elements of nautical history, allowing students to connect their classroom learning to real-world application by going to the Florida Aquarium and participating in activities at the conference center. By immersing themselves in these experiences, students not only enhance their knowledge but also strengthen their bonds with one another as they explore and learn together.

The Christian understanding of knowledge also implies that all truth is an integrated whole. Therefore, we do not compartmentalize subjects. Rather, we strive to see all of reality through the perspective of God's sovereignty and providence over all things; the natural and beautiful environment at Cedarkirk enhances the students' ability to grasp and understand this perspective. By enriching students in this environment, we pray that God speaks through all of creation to teach them who he is so that we may glorify him in all things. Indeed, the essence of all life is knowing him (John 17:3).

SIXTH GRADE WILLIAMSBURG, JAMESTOWN, YORKTOWN, AND WASHINGTON, DC (ANNA LIMBER, SIXTH GRADE AIDE)

As they near the end of their grammar school years, sixth graders enjoy a much-anticipated event: the class trip to Washington, DC, Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown. After studying the time period from the late 1400s

to the mid-1900s during fifth and sixth grade, learning about the people, events, and ideas that have shaped our country's formation and development over the past five hundred years, students experience this truly culminating and fitting end to their grammar school education.

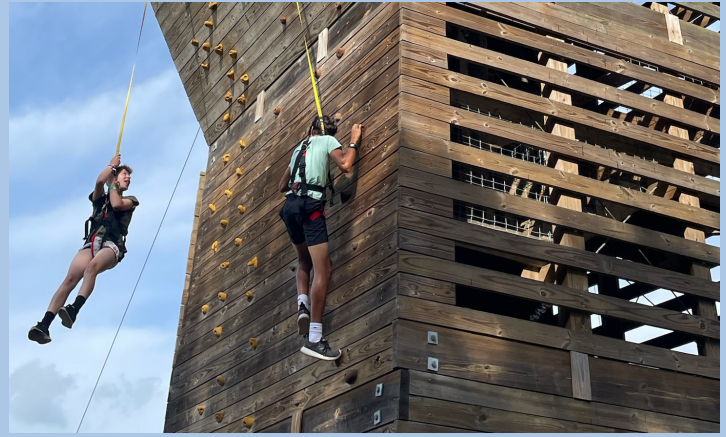
Visits to numerous museums, monuments, historic sites, memorials, and government buildings lead to an ambitious pace! From places one might expect to visit on a trip like this, such as Colonial Williamsburg, the revolutionary museum at Yorktown, and the Jamestown Settlement to the Smithsonian museums, the Capitol Building, Arlington National Cemetery, and so much more in Washington, DC, students also visit a few places perhaps not as typical—the Museum of the Bible, the Pentagon, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Beyond the overt educational value, traveling as a school group deepens friendships between peers, teachers, and parent chaperones. Playing card games thirty thousand feet above the ground, staying in a hotel room with classmates, sharing meals together in restaurants are fun and unique learning opportunities for these young students on how to be considerate travelers and guests in a city not their own. For many, this is the first time they've traveled without their families and, as such, is another step in the experience of growing up.

Whether it is seeing the battlefields of some of the key Revolutionary War battles, experiencing life in a colonial settlement, witnessing demonstrations outside the US Supreme Court, viewing the Gutenberg Bible in the Library of Congress, or shaking the hands of the many war veterans students meet at Arlington and the memorials, history comes alive for students when they visit these areas that were so significant during the founding and growth of the United States of America. These experiences help lay a foundation that students will build upon as they continue to learn US history and government at a deeper level in rhetoric school. Placed where it is, this trip is both a culmination and a starting point; one stage comes to an end but provides a solid ramp for the many good things in store for Geneva students in the upper school!



SEVENTH GRADE NORTH FLORIDA TRIP



EIGHTH GRADE FLORIDA ECO-ADVENTURE

SEVENTH GRADE NORTH FLORIDA TRIP (TONY MEDINA, DIALECTIC PE TEACHER)

In October, seventh grade students take a trip to North Florida for five days. The students and chaperones benefit in so many ways. A different level of learning takes place outside of the classroom; having time to connect and grow with one another and staff chaperones on a more personal level is invaluable. Staff chaperones appreciate the time they are able to mentor and engage with students, and students relax and feel less pressure in this less academic environment, and their different personality traits shine. Participating in activities such as canoeing, trail hiking, swimming at the beach, cavern exploring, and enjoying free, recreational time at the camp itself is fun, of course, but students are also able to apply daily classroom lessons to their experiences all week.

The theme of the week is transformation. From students overcoming fears to finding ways to encourage one another to spending time together in worship, students have many opportunities to grow in their relationships with each other, teachers, and the Lord. In the evenings, students and chaperones enjoy a chapel and devotional time. Students are encouraged to pursue and deepen their relationships with Christ, to grow in their faith, and to open their hearts to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit; teachers speak life and truth into the students throughout the week. Overnight trips like this provide students an extra opportunity to truly love the beauty in God's creation, to think deeply about the issues they are facing and the lessons shared during chapel and devotional time, and to open their eyes and hearts to pursue Christ's calling.

EIGHTH GRADE FLORIDA ECO-ADVENTURE (RYAN SHARP, DIRECTOR OF DIALECTIC SCHOOL)

The Geneva School seeks to provide students with a truly “extraordinary” education, in the sense that teachers and staff want

students to experience an education that is “outside” what other schools might consider ordinary. This philosophy of providing an extraordinary education certainly extends to grade-level field trips as well.

In eighth grade, students participate in a four-day, three-night Florida eco-adventure to the Gainesville area. This trip has two primary purposes. First, this eco-adventure is part of a series of trips that introduce students to the beauty found in the state of Florida. In seventh grade, students explore the Florida Panhandle area. In ninth grade, students explore the southernmost Everglades area of the state. In eighth grade, students explore several of the natural springs found in Central Florida, and they hike the depths of the 120-foot-deep Devil's Millhopper sinkhole and explore the vast Payne's Prairie in search of wild horses and bison. Florida is a beautiful state, and it is our desire as a school to help these students recognize and appreciate the beauty surrounding them. Second, eighth grade is a capstone year for our students. They are transitioning from dialectic school and preparing to enter rhetoric school. Through our evening devotion times, this trip provides an opportunity for students to grow socially and spiritually. Students are encouraged to, “put off childish ways” (1 Cor. 13:11) as they transition from dialectic and are growing and maturing into young men and women of the rhetoric school.

As director of dialectic school, I see this eighth-grade trip as an integral part of our curriculum and an important opportunity for our students to grow in virtue as they continue to pursue the Good, the True, and the Beautiful.

NINTH GRADE EVERGLADES TRIP (RANDY DOOLING, ALUMNI PARENT AND TRIP CHAPERONE)

“Experiential learning” is how I would describe the ninth grade Everglades trip. The students are taken to an outdoor classroom, which for most is away from their normal and out of their comfort zone. It is a chance to not only see what God



NINTH GRADE EVERGLADES TRIP



RHETORIC RETREAT AT SOUTHWIND YOUNGLIFE CAMP

has created but experience it firsthand and up close. It is looking up at the stars of the Milky Way without ambient city lights, and spotting crocodiles and alligators at the marina before building campfires and singing praises to our God. For some, it is the experience of mosquitos at dusk, and, while annoying, later understanding their significance in God's creation. And oh, by the way, reminding you or your tentmate the importance of zipping up your tent!

Any student can read about the Florida Everglades, but ninth graders at Geneva get to feel sawgrass and look down into solution holes (pits in the limestone bedrock that are formed when sea levels lower), and see how they are made. They are able to touch periphyton, while others might want to toss around some kayaks (right Mr. Sharp?). During the trip, the ninth graders begin to comprehend both the complexity and simplicity of creation and how everything works together. They learn to work together in this environment and face obstacles and overcome them. This becomes real in the Everglades, not just a text, a GIF, a blog, or a TikTok video. It is experiencing the connection between creation and the Creator. There is a bond between students who experience the Everglades trip. Many reminisce about their experience years afterwards.

As a chaperone on the trip for over ten years, I have experienced not only changes in the Everglades and the varied ecosystems, but I have seen and experienced changes in the students from Monday to Friday. They leave campus playful, wide-eyed youths and return changed individuals who have experienced a world bigger than themselves and more complex than they expected. It is an environment created for them to subdue and preserve by a God who gloriously planned out every detail for humanity to admire, wonder, and experience.

RHETORIC RETREAT (RUSS KAPUSINSKI, ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL)

At the very foundation of a Christian classical education lies the concept of amity. As Robert Littlejohn and Charles T. Evans put

it in *Wisdom and Eloquence: A Christian Paradigm for Classical Learning*, "Every relationship [at a school like Geneva] should be characterized by mutual respect and by recognition on the part of each that the other is an image-bearer of the Creator" (p. 55). When teachers are for students and students understand that teachers know them and see them as fellow image-bearers, this sense of amity forms the seedbed for holistic growth in students. Therefore, amity is highly relational in nature. Healthy, vibrant, loving relationships are at the heart of Geneva's mission to inspire students to love beauty, think deeply, and to pursue Christ's calling. Herein lies the "why" behind TGS's commitment to begin every school year with the rhetoric retreat for ninth through twelfth grade students.

The rhetoric retreat, in its essence, is about the cultivation of amity between faculty/staff and student, student and student, and faculty/staff and faculty/staff. Additionally, there is a large group of upper school parents who get in on the fun through their service on the rhetoric retreat work crew. Singing together, recreating together, eating together, and enjoying the togetherness of the whole experience is what makes the rhetoric retreat a great way to start the school year . . . together! New students have the opportunity to get grafted into the school relationally, new friendships are kindled and deepened, and faculty/staff get to enjoy students outside of the classroom setting. It is a time to set the tone and the relational thermostat for the new school year. It is a time to communicate to students that they are more than just a line item in a teacher's gradebook. It is a time to communicate to students that they are seen, loved, and valued as a unique image-bearer of God. It is a time, according to the Preacher (ESV) of Ecclesiastes, to heal, build up, laugh, dance, embrace, and love.

Powerfully formative Christian classical education does not exist without amity. The rhetoric retreat is one of the intentional ways that we seek to curate a culture where love is established as the foundation for learning that leads to human flourishing.



LUCAS ROSELLO



BELLA MUTO

FALL SPORTS WRAP-UP



CRAIG GODWIN

VOLLEYBALL

VARSITY BY HOLLIE BENJUMEA

The 2024 varsity volleyball team faced unusual challenges this year. The team, composed of ten juniors and one sophomore, worked hard in the offseason to be better this year than when they finished last year. Caroline Costar led the team in assists, with 329, and in hitting percentage, while Mim Robbins and Maria Seneff led the team in kills. Bella Muto was the team's libero and led in defense. She was named to the All-Tournament Team at the Spruce Creek Invitational, and she and Caroline Costar were named to the All-District Team.

The varsity volleyball team finished in the top thirty-two teams in the state for FHSAA 1A teams in the regional quarterfinal match against Altamonte Christian. While the match started off strong with Geneva winning the first two sets, the team could not muster enough momentum and consistency to close out the win. The silver lining for Coach Hollie Benjumea was that her former player Jordyn Stiger (class of 2018) was the opposing coach. Stiger was a dominant middle for Geneva coached by Benjumea 2014–2017 and helped lead the TGS team to two state semifinals. The Altamonte Eagles pushed through and took the match in the fifth set.

While the team struggled to find consistency on the court, the memories made and lessons learned on and off the court were priceless. The team started off the season by completing a ropes course with over sixty aerial challenges and a giant zip line! The girls worked on team dynamics, communication, and overcoming obstacles. At the KSA Tournament, the squad played teams from all over the country, and they grew tremendously through the competition at the Spruce Creek Invitational. One of the most memorable events was getting to serve in the Gingerbread House at Give Kids the World. The team was able to serve food, bus tables, and assist families as they experienced an enjoyable dining experience as part of their Make-A-Wish vacations. Being part of the girls volleyball program at Geneva should be fun—and these girls know how to have fun! The team has vowed to work on being mentally tough, persevering, and developing grit to come back even stronger next year.

JUNIOR VARSITY BY DELANEY HEIDENESCHER

The junior varsity volleyball season this year was marked by significant growth and teamwork. Throughout the season, the team improved in both skill and communication, learning how to work together more effectively on the court. Their hard work during practices and commitment to improvement paid off, resulting in several exciting victories and close matches.



CAROLINE COSTAR



MARIA SENEFF



MIM ROBBINS



**AUDREY SMITH AND
LEAH AITCHESON**



**CAROLINE LANIER AND
SCARLETT NEWHARTZ**



AUDREY ROBINSON

While winning was an important goal, the real success came in the form of personal and collective development. Caroline Lanier and Scarlett Newhartz stepped into leadership roles this year and guided their team in a supportive yet competitive atmosphere. Audrey Smith led the team offensively with well-placed shots and powerful swings. Leah Aitcheson consistently displayed leadership on and off the court, contributing not only with strong blocks at the net but also with encouragement and motivation for her teammates during every match. By the end of the season, the team had not only progressed as athletes but also as a cohesive unit, ready to take on future challenges together.

MIDDLE SCHOOL—WHITE TEAM BY CANDACE HODGES

The middle school white team had a season full of growth. On and off the court, this team represented Geneva's core values well. Most importantly, they maintained a good testimony for Christ.

Leading the team in assists and mental focus were Aly Gallo and Tate Johnson. Emmy Endras, Zoe Holcomb, and Emily McGaffic finished the season with outstanding performances in the outside hitter position. Improving their blocking skills and swinging in the middle for the Knights were Zoe Betlock, Audrey Robinson, Annie Seneff, and Norah Simons. The team also benefited from the great versatility of Ivey Davis, playing successfully in several positions throughout the season. Finally, much of the team's success depended on the consistency of the team's libero, Molly Sharp. The Knights middle school white team fought hard and finished second overall.

MIDDLE SCHOOL—BLUE TEAM BY KAITLYN FARLEY

The middle school blue team worked hard this season to grow as individuals and as a team. The team was made up of all seventh graders, and several of the girls had never played volleyball. The girls encouraged one another while having fun at games and practices. Hannah Blackston and Kennedy Graf were outstanding as setters for the team this season, and all of the girls showed a strong work ethic and commitment to the program. Lena Blackwell took on the role of libero and led the team defensively. The girls went undefeated in the league and only lost one set the whole season. Coach Farley is so proud of the girls and their hard work. The middle school blue team was named the Monday Night League tournament champions.



BOYS AND GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

CROSS COUNTRY

BY MARTY PHILLIPS

The 2024 Geneva cross country season was a highlight year for the program. Eleven boys and fourteen girls comprised the team; it was exciting to see the program grow in numbers from last year, and to see teammates grow closer to one another through team dinners hosted by cross country families throughout the season. Michael Liguori and Samantha Petrak were elected co-captains. They led team prayers before every race, reminding Geneva cross country runners they were competing as God's athletes. The incredible season included not only personal records for many of the runners but also the joy of hosting seven other schools at the second annual Geneva Invitational at home, where Michael Liguori won the boys event.

Following a training program that started in June, the Knights began competition in August. From the early races on, many runners set personal records at each meet. Throughout the season, these athletes continued to surpass their previous goals: Catcher Cunningham, Will Faith, Beatrice Frazer, Reese Gallo, Sarah Goranson, Michael Liguori, Jurrien Mejeur, Emili Mosquera, Rachel Mosquera, Mattie Shepherd, Emily Sills, Daniel Silva, Margaret Sutton, and Luke Whipple. Among other team accomplishments, Michael Liguori ran the fourth fastest time in school history at the Harmony Invitational. Other key moments include Michael Liguori and Emili Mosquera being awarded medals for their performances at the Tiger Invitational, and another team recognizing Geneva for amazing sportsmanship at the Lake Minneola High School meet when Geneva athletes cheered and encouraged a struggling runner from another school to reach the finish line.

After the Geneva Invitational, the final meet of the regular season, the Knights advanced to the district competition, where the boys team finished in sixth place and the girls team finished in fifth place. Outstanding performances earned both squads a place at the regional meet in Lakeland. The boys were led by Michael Liguori and the girls by Emili Mosquera.

Both the girls and boys teams finished strong in the regional meet, advancing to the state meet in Tallahassee; this is the first time the boys team has gone to the state competition in five years! The team was led by William Faith, Michael Liguori, Daniel Silva, and Luke Whipple. The girls team advanced to the state meet for the third year in a row, led by Reese Gallo, Sarah Goranson, Emili Mosquera, Samantha Petrak, and Alayna Shepherd. At the state meet, they finished in the top twenty-five teams in the 1A division in Florida.

Geneva Cross Country looks to return to the state meet next year, with the goal of both teams finishing in the top ten teams in the state in the 1A division.

FOOTBALL

BY DAVID LANGDON

VARSITY

The Geneva School varsity football team completed their second season of football with a 7–5 record and a berth into the second round of the Sunshine State Athletic Association class 3A playoffs.

Offensively, the Knights were led by sophomore quarterback Luke Gilmartin. Gilmartin threw for 1,588 yards and 19 touchdowns. He also rushed for 541 yards and ran for 10 touchdowns. Senior Griffin Smith led the team with 34 receptions. Junior Garrett Fredericks led the team with 4 touchdown receptions. The trio of senior Nathaniel Alilin and juniors Turner Davis and Marchus Jho combined for 1,021 yards rushing and 13 touchdowns. Sophomore offensive lineman Spencer Smith led the team with 17 pancake blocks.

Defensively, junior linebacker Andrew Gilmartin led the team with 75 tackles and 5 interceptions, which included a 3-interception game. Defensive ends, sophomore Duke Carpenter and senior Craig Godwin, each had 16 tackles for losses and combined for 11.5 sacks. Senior linebacker Michael Sharp also had a productive season with 61 tackles, 3 interceptions (2 for touchdowns), and 6.5 sacks. Junior linebacker John Gabriel was second on the team with 73 tackles. Senior defensive lineman Noah Geiger had a productive season with 46 tackles and 11 tackles for a loss.

Returning 2023 all-state punter Griffin Smith had another productive year punting and also was 100% on extra-point kicking conversions.

Senior Craig Godwin was selected to play in the Seminole County versus Volusia/Flagler Senior High School Cure Bowl. Craig is one of only three private school players that were selected to play on the Seminole County team. Other schools with selected athletes that will be playing on Craig's team are Seminole, Hagerty, Oviedo, Lake Brantley, Winter Springs, Lake Howell, and Lyman High Schools. Geneva's own Coach David Langdon is coaching the game. The Knights are proud of Craig and Coach Langdon!

DEVELOPMENTAL FOOTBALL TEAM

The Geneva School's first-year developmental football team had a productive 2024 season. The team maxed out in the league-mandated roster numbers, and they played hard and showed great improvement every week. Offensively, big plays were constantly made by quarterback Roe Robbins, running back Collins Davis, and wide receiver Davis Howell. Defensively, Braddock Carpenter, Shamus Houf, Mark Sharp, and Zach Sutton showed great promise throughout the season.



LUKE GILMARTIN



GRIFFIN SMITH AND GARRETT FREDERICKS



DUKE CARPENTER



SWIMMING & DIVING—

BY MELISSA ROSELLO

The swimming & diving team had a stellar season. The thirteen swimmers began the season with many first- and second-place finishes against much bigger schools in a multitude of races. Lucas Rosello had many first-place finishes in both the 200m freestyle and 100m breaststroke. Those finishing in second included Cole Dedekind in the 200m individual medley, Amy Higerd in the 200m freestyle, Ella Incinelli in both the 100m freestyle and 100m backstroke, and Stone Parker in the 100m backstroke; in the girls 200 medley relay, Astrid Feeny, Amy Higerd, Ella Incinelli, and Brylie Pappas also finished second. The team continued swimming with excellence as they racked up first, second, and third place finishes in meets against Trinity Preparatory School, Lake Mary Preparatory School, Foundation Academy, The Master’s Academy, and Orangewood Christian School.



The team earned spots in the district meet, where the swimmers had a fantastic day in the pool with many top finishers, qualifying the team for fourteen races in the regional competition: Cole Dedekind (100m breaststroke and 200m individual medley), Astrid Feeny (100m backstroke and 50m freestyle), Amy Higerd (200m freestyle and 100m breaststroke), Ella Incinelli (50m freestyle and 100m butterfly), Brylie Pappas (100m breaststroke), Lucas Rosello (100m and 200m freestyle), and Astrid Feeny, Amy Higerd, Ella Incinelli, and Brylie Pappas (girls 200m medley relay), Astrid Feeny, Amy Higerd, Ella Incinelli, and Sophia Rosello (girls 200m freestyle relay), and Cole Dedekind, Will Heidmann, Stone Parker, and Lucas Rosello (boys 200m medley relay).

Lucas Rosello had personal best swims in both his races at the regional meet, qualifying him for the state meet in both his events, the 100m and 200m freestyle.

The coaches look forward to more athletes joining the team and seeing the veteran swimmers mature in their athletic pursuits next season.



MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER—

BY FERRON BROOKS

Another great season of middle school soccer has come to a close. These teammates learned and grew together and had a great time in the process. There were a lot of young players on the team this year; this team will grow in size and strength as it moves forward. They won over half their games and will seek to improve upon this next year.

The last game was a perfect conclusion to the season, as it showed the overall development of the team, and many players rose to the occasion, helping to end the season with a positive team win. With the opportunity to move players around, it was exciting to see athletes up top who rarely have a chance to play, and then score! Simon Turkanik scored two beautiful goals, and Carter Kennedy added one.

The coaches also recognize the consistent play of the team captains, Jack Birx and Penelope Brehm. The most improved player should also be recognized: Rory Limber. And finally, Sarah Kinley showed great sportsmanship and a focused desire to learn and was an anchor for the team, despite being young. The assistant coach, Josh Gregory, also deserves thanks for all his hard work with the players, especially the goalkeepers. Everyone looks forward to a great season next year!

GIRLS GOLF

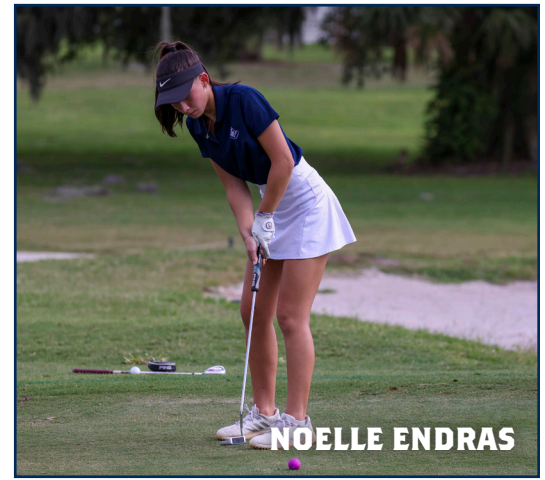
BY RON WOOD

The girls golf team had an enjoyable season making lasting memories. Noelle Endras and Naomi Kinnett, co-captains of the team, both posted impressive scores throughout this season's matches. Whether they were navigating tricky bunkers or bumpy greens, the girls continuously cheered each other on every step of the way.

Throughout the season, the girls faced challenges, but they handled each one with resilience and a positive attitude. No matter the score, they stayed motivated and found joy in the little moments. With their senior year on the horizon, Noelle and Naomi look forward to leading the way again next season!



NAOMI KINNETT



NOELLE ENDRAS

BOYS GOLF

BY JOHN KOESTNER

The Geneva boys golf team had a very successful season with most of the core players from 2023 returning to the team this year.

Coming off an 8-3 season in 2023, the team was hard-pressed to improve from a very successful campaign. But the team worked hard in the preseason and potential was evident.

As the season began, even with regular rainouts, the team started out 3-0, including a 1-shot win over Foundation Academy with Thomas Milajecki shooting a season low score of 35.

From there, Geneva kept winning, finishing with a regular season record of 6-1. The team finished with an average score of 163, 6 strokes better than the year before.

Scores during that span were often in the 30s, including several 38s from Andrew Milajecki. Isaac Kang and Jackson Allen each averaged 42 for the season and played in every match. Tate King and Cooper Cross also shot scores in the 40s to help Geneva win matches. The future of Geneva golf looks bright.



THOMAS MILAJECKI



k4 happy harvest play



kindergarten thanksgiving play



1st grade animal monologues

the play's the thing

Making curricular connections through play, imagination, and wonder fuels a student's love of learning.

True education begins in wonder and delight. When students prepare for a play, they learn history, spatial relationships, teamwork, storytelling, and communication skills. Educator and author Susan Wise Bauer writes, "Because it [classical education] uses real, living books and hands-on experimentation rather than relying on textbooks and canned presentations, classical education is a matter of exploration, of reading, thinking, and talking, and of discovery—not of rote memorization and regurgitation."

The grammar school years at The Geneva School provide educational experiences full of wonder and growth. For example, students sail across the sea as Pilgrims, feast in a new land with new foods, share monologues with facts about native Florida animals, and build houses and friendships in the Winnie the Pooh play. And this is just the first semester! Our prayer is that education like this within a loving, thoughtfully designed, stimulating environment forms children who become lifelong learners.



2ND GRADE WINNIE THE POOH PLAY



GENEVA'S IN THE HOUSE

In August 2016, The Geneva School introduced the house system to the upper school (at the time, the house system included seventh through twelfth grade students). Here is what Andrew Smith, the director of the upper school at the time, had to say as we implemented the house system that year.

Our students want to participate in life in ways that matter. They have something to offer, and they have the ability to be responsible, to be counted on. Knowing this about our students and desiring to foster a school culture in which they can provide leadership and give shape to our entire school community, we have decided to implement a house system at TGS.

A house system is a time-tested structure schools have used for facilitating student culture and student government by organizing students into different groups, called “houses.” At TGS, we are implementing this structure for our upper school students, those in seventh–twelfth grades. Each student has been placed into one of four houses and will remain part of that house throughout his or her time at Geneva. The upper school teachers have also all been placed into houses, which will allow them to participate in events with the students and give support to the leaders of the houses. Those leaders are our twelfth graders, who all have a role to play in demonstrating what it means to be a TGS student. Some of those twelfth graders have formal roles of leadership, the highest of which is house

captain. In this, our inaugural year, we are spreading out the responsibility of leading the houses by having two co-captains (one male and one female) per house. The other formal roles of leadership at this point are secretary and historian.

He went on to explain the names of the four houses: Alexandria, Iona, Florence, and Wittenberg.

There are four houses and each one has been named for a geographical place of major significance in our Christian tradition. They are Alexandria, Iona, Florence, and Wittenberg. These names represent places, time periods, people, and events that remind us of God’s faithfulness to his people. By identifying with one of these houses, all of our students will get to think and imagine more deeply about our past, learning the stories of some of their Christian forebears and finding the symbols that best represent what it means to belong to that house. It is embedded in the DNA of The Geneva School to train our students to care about the past so that they might live more faithfully in the present. As the house system is not an academic structure, it will allow that training to take place in ways that are different from the classroom and include more variation in participation.

While the house system has seen a few changes over the last eight years (for example, students in ninth through twelfth grade are in houses rather than seventh through twelfth), the overarching goal

has remained the same: to promote both unity and diversity among students in the upper school. The house system provides opportunities for students in multiple grades to spend time together in relationships that foster growth, allow for student leadership, and set the tone for younger students who will take up the mantle when they become upperclassmen. There are many house events throughout the school year that illustrate that the system continues to be, as Andrew Smith put it, “a wonderful structure for facilitating the best and most fitting kinds of student participation. TGS students are seeing more clearly that not only are we depending on them, but they are more alive, creative, and free when they participate for the sake of the school community.”

Currently, Rob Shelton, the rhetoric school director of student life, oversees the house system. He shares some thoughts on the house system at Geneva today.

Reminiscent of traditional British public schools, all Geneva rhetoric students (and all upper school faculty) are divided into houses. In traditional boarding schools, the students actually live in and with these houses, but our system is a bit less ambitious. Here, students and families don't live together but have an affiliation with one of the four houses: Alexandria, Florence, Iona, or Wittenberg. Besides the natural fun that comes along with such a system, the house system affords additional opportunities for the following:

- Nurturing relationships across rhetoric school grade levels
- Leadership, friendly competition, and service
- Faculty involvement with students on a different relational level
- Positive peer pressure and mentorship
- Opportunities for parental involvement and support in the rhetoric school.

To elaborate on the final bullet point, because it can sometimes be less clear in rhetoric school how parents can be a part of what is happening on campus, we want the house system to be an avenue for parental support and involvement. After all, it is families, not just students, who are members of a house. Toward that end, this year we have instituted the role of house moms to assist the house leadership in recruiting volunteers and support for their houses. These wonderful moms are serving this year:

- Alexandria: Paula Dixon and Amy Pitsch
- Florence: Michelle Blanchette and Ellie Frost
- Iona: Lisa Miranda and Cristina Uribe
- Wittenberg: Bethany Gerber and Kirsten King

While the purpose of the house system is still primarily to foster community for the students on campus, it is even more fun when families can be involved. So watch for opportunities to support your house by volunteering for tailgates, lunches, field days, and our annual house induction assembly (incoming freshmen discover their house affiliation in the spring of their eighth grade year at this special assembly).





LEONARDO DA VINCI'S NOTEBOOK PAGE

“CARRY AROUND A NOTEBOOK”

“Carry around a notebook.” When you think of a notebook for jotting down phrases, quotes, and ideas that you want to remember, what do you think of—a spiral notebook, a journal, or maybe a pad of paper? Here at Geneva, students use a commonplace book. Hearing the phrase *commonplace book*, one might think of something ordinary, something unremarkable (which are the words Merriam-Webster associates with the word commonplace). However, a commonplace book is far from unremarkable. Rather, a commonplace book may serve as a powerful tool for connection, reflection, and inspiration.

Ninth grade students (and new rhetoric students) receive commonplace books—lovely, journal-sized hardback notebooks embossed with the TGS seal—to use throughout their rhetoric school years. If they fill it up, we give them a new one! This tradition began in 2014 when rhetoric students were first given these books at the beginning of the school year so they would have a repository for capturing wise, eloquent, meaningful ideas or quotes that they find to be true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8).

Having a dedicated book like a commonplace book for writing down the ideas and questions that students have during the rhetoric school years comes with multiple benefits. The habit of writing

thoughts down helps students to remember important details and connects them to the words they are considering. Saving quotes and ideas connects students to other thinkers as well as to those with whom they may share their ideas as they write essays or give speeches or have everyday conversations with peers, teachers, family members, and even those they meet in the future.

In medieval times, commonplace books were referred to as florilegia, which means “collection of flowers.” A collection of flowers is beautiful and life-giving to the one who has created it. As students (and teachers!) fill their commonplace books with the good, the true, and the beautiful, their minds and hearts also become full of these worthy ideas.

Many teachers at Geneva have also incorporated the commonplace book into their daily lives. Teachers encourage students to use their commonplace books and also to share with classmates some of the ideas that may be in their books. This gives them practice speaking in front of others, preparing them for the rhetorical exercises they will face during these years and beyond.

A few students and teachers have shared how they use the commonplace book here at Geneva.

LUKE BIRX '27

I think that a commonplace book is a good thing to keep. I have found myself putting quotes from a number of different sources—from a book I'm reading or something someone at my church or somewhere else said offhand. Someone told me that a commonplace book is a collection of aha moments—something you see that you never thought of before that you find inspiring or just beautifully worded. When I first needed to keep a commonplace book for class, I thought of it more as another assignment to get done, but then, while I was reading one of my books, something a character said hit me in a new way, so I wrote it down, then later transferred it into my commonplace book, and have been doing this ever since, filling it with tiny nuggets of simple profound truths, even if it's a metaphor about life and barbeque chips.

I can't choose a favorite quote, but one that I like a lot says this, "It frightens me, because we all see the world by some kind of light personal to us, and that light changes our perception. I don't see clearly. I want to, but I don't know if I ever truly can" (Brandon Sanderson). Though I can't remember the title of the book it came from, I do remember the author. The original context meant the quote to be a bit more literal, but when I read it, it reminded me of what we are like without salvation through Jesus. Without him, our perception of the world is warped, twisted to fit our version of reality, but when the true light comes—Jesus—he pushes away our pale, mini-light, so to speak, and replaces it with one that lets us view him and the world more clearly. Without God, we know something is missing, and we feel it down to our core and we don't have any hope. But Jesus is our hope, and that empty feeling of life without him leaves us.

CHRISTOPHER BREHM '28

I find commonplace books to be a great way to collect several varying quotes and wise words that many different people have written or said. These quotes help me grow in wisdom and knowledge as a Geneva student.

JOSHUA HOU '27

I wish to share this quote with the readers of *The Courier*. I chose this because I found that it was a quote that could be applied to Christ and his blessings, even though it is from a secular source.

The places that he visited
Were dreary once upon a time
But he showed them how to come alive
In their darkest times, he brought them light
And when he had to leave them all behind
Rode off into the night
The people in the crowds
Whispered "Legends never die"

—Amanda Fagan, "Legends Never Die"

MATTIE SHEPHERD '25

There is a sort of thrill in receiving the commonplace book in ninth grade. I was overjoyed that I got to have a place to write down meaningful quotes, chapel homilies, and even funny moments with teachers and classmates. In ninth grade, the book sat on my desk or in my backpack every day all year long. I added quotes almost daily, as I was astounded with the amount of things said that seemed meaningful to me and would point me to Jesus. In tenth and eleventh grade, I started illustrating poems in my commonplace book, as assigned by Mrs. Ryden (tenth grade English teacher). These poems were both French and English, so I filled pages with both languages and illustrations in case I got confused with the French. I printed out film photos and taped them in the middle of my commonplace book, and I had friends write their favorite quotes in the pages as well. This year (twelfth grade), I have been using it to take notes in chapel, and I have been trying my best to carry it with me after losing the habit over the summer and toward the end of last year.

I really enjoy using the commonplace book, and I hope to continue to use it or something like it next year as I go to college.

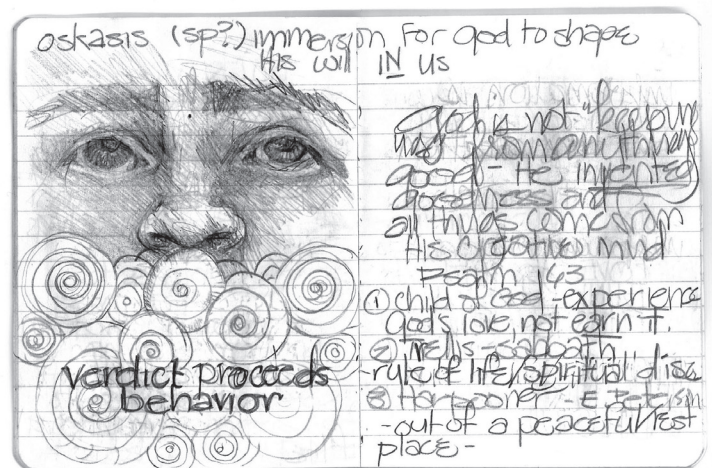
AUDREY SOLIS '26

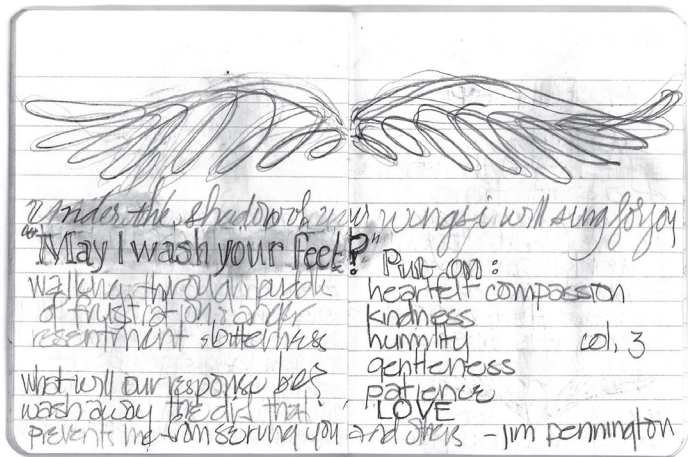
The best thing I have used my commonplace book for was the Passion Conference 2024. I have gone back to the quotes and little things I had jotted down while I was listening to the various speakers. I enjoy using my commonplace book at school as well and would love to see it used more frequently in classes.

SHELLY BRADON, UPPER SCHOOL ART

Leonardo da Vinci defined his commonplace books as "a collection without order, drawn from many papers, which I have copied here, hoping to arrange them later each in its place, according to the subjects of which they treat."

I have used a commonplace book for years to notate favorite passages from novels, speakers, songs, Bible studies . . . my brain cannot possibly keep track of all the random thoughts and bits of information that I want to retain, so I find writing them in my book very helpful. I





writing. He said two things, and the one that I remember is, “Carry around a notebook.” In the age of Pinterest and Tumblr (and even Evernote), I think his advice is still good.

BECKY RYDEN, ENGLISH (TENTH GRADE), RHETORIC (ELEVENTH GRADE), STUDENT MAGAZINE

I encourage my students to use the commonplace books to do their poetry journals if they want to. Some do them in a separate book, but many do in their commonplace books, which I love. They have all the poetry they write for our unit along with all the poems they read throughout the unit.

I have a commonplace book of my own, but it is incorporated within a journal that I always keep updated.

SCOTT ZELLNER, STAGECRAFT

Commonplace books for Stagecraft students are a little interesting. The students use the front of the book for technical purposes. For instance, they may draw their designs, generate cut lists, delineate materials, and, in some cases, budget. So the commonplace book ends up being a recipe book for their artifacts.

If you flip the book over as if you are flipping a coin, it becomes the Book of WiZdumb.

The book of WiZdumb is a collection of sayings and little anecdotes that help us be better at doing life. When we do something that is, let’s just say, the opposite of smart, we then know a little more about what not to do. We don’t learn what to do, we learn what *not* to do. It’s called trial and error for a reason.

I consider our classroom a four-walled commonplace book, full of interesting and meaningful things students have studied and created or fixed up, from a console stereo from 1962, pinball machines, the best guillotine ever made for English class (it chops carrots), 3D-printed shooting gallery ducks, and many things students have made for plays.

If you are ever visiting campus, swing by and I will ask a couple of students to show you their commonplace books.

also frequently sketch ideas that are inspired by something I hear; drawing is my personal shorthand. I do not enjoy journaling and find that my mind is frequently going in three or more directions at the same time. My commonplace book actually helps me focus and stay in the moment. Using commonplace books during chapel or a class often helps with paying attention and even staying more focused, for students as well as myself.

NATHAN RALEY, CAPSTONE THESIS AND BIBLE

I have a quote on my classroom wall that is purposely incomplete. It says, “Meet it is I set it down...” I used to have the quotation up for weeks before explaining to the students why it was there and what it meant. Now, my seniors have studied *Hamlet* in Mr. Forrester’s English class, so my hope is that at least a few of them will recognize it as something Hamlet says as he reaches for his notebook to jot down a piece of wisdom he has recently learned from his experience (that wisdom being “that one may smile, and smile, and be a villain,” referring to his uncle and new king).

Although we encourage the students to use the commonplace books primarily for writing down other people’s wisdom, the idea of a traveler’s journal or a notebook to note down things heard, said, or observed is what Shakespeare is playing with in this scene from *Hamlet*. I love the idea of encouraging our students to create a repository of wisdom and beautiful sayings that they can draw on later for their own writing. I also like that the book gives them a record of what they found interesting or valuable. Years later, whether they glow or cringe at what they see impressed their younger self, it can be a valuable lesson. I started in this habit around the time I graduated from high school, when my father gave me a blank journal on which he had recorded pages and pages of quotations he loved—from the Bible, from Shakespeare, from spiritual writers like Thomas Merton, from novels like *Doctor Zhivago*, and from many other sources.

Many years ago, when David Brooks spoke to a combined Geneva School / Rollins Crummer School audience, I asked him what advice he could give to my AP English students to improve their

“CARRY AROUND
A NOTEBOOK.”

DAVID BROOKS
ON HOW TO IMPROVE ONE’S WRITING



The Holly and the Ivy: An O. Henry Christmas



The short story writer O. Henry was noted for writing tales with an ironic twist—situations that turned out, in one sense, as we knew they would, indeed that they must, but nonetheless catch the characters in the story by surprise. The most well-known of these stories is, of course, “The Gift of the Magi,” a tale of ordinary people making ordinary sacrifices in the name of plain, ordinary love for one another. The irony of their impractical benevolence is, of course, the twist at the end of the tale, but the real irony is that it is through their selfless, useless gifts that the depth and genuineness of their affection for each other is shown.

This is the magic of O. Henry, whose stories the Merely Players production this December brought to life. *The Holly and the Ivy: An O. Henry Christmas* is a tale particularly suited to our jaded, materialistic era, turning the spotlight on folks much less privileged than we are. Yet they are ordinary humans, too, going about their days as best they know how, fraught with worries, sorrows, hopes, disappointments, and hang-ups. The down-and-outers who come together to share Christmas on a lonely backstreet of turn-of-the-last-century New York are not necessarily an immediately likable bunch. They’re grumpy, selfish, opportunistic, prone to hasty judgments and harsh words—in other words, just like us. But with a little help from an equally down-on-his-luck stranger, these so-called hoboes come to share in the Christmas spirit...and, our Merely Players did a great job sharing it with the audience, as well.

Please scan the QR code
to donate by e-check or
credit/debit card



WHAT GIFTS CAN
WE GIVE OUR
CHILDREN AND
GRANDCHILDREN
WHOSE IMPACT WILL
LAST FOR YEARS, IF
NOT A LIFETIME?

We are grateful for each family that chooses The Geneva School for their child or children’s education. Geneva provides, of course, a Christian classical education, but the school also provides the opportunity for community with others who long for the same things: teaching students how to think well, follow Jesus, and serve their neighbors.

The partnership between the school and families is one that takes the long view, and it brings great joy to watch each story unfold. We pray that growth in wisdom and faith, along with the skills learned and the commitment to serve others, that takes place while students are at Geneva will be a foundational part of the structural support in our students’ lives decades beyond their next chapter of college.

Like nearly all private, independent schools, Geneva’s tuition covers approximately 88% of the operating cost to run the school. Donations from individuals and corporations comprise the remaining 12%. The Geneva Annual Fund is the fuel that immediately allows the school to provide excellence in professional development, the quality of facilities that match the quality of education happening inside, the opportunities available in the arts and athletics, the safety of the whole campus, and the community events that grow relationships between students, parents, and employees.

Please consider expressing your gratitude by making a gift before the end of the year to support The Geneva School, whose mission is to inspire students.

Each year, gifts of every size help Geneva reach its financial goals. Thank you for considering a contribution as we near the end of 2024. Thank you for supporting The Geneva School as we continue to inspire students to love beauty, think deeply, and pursue Christ’s calling. We are grateful for the generous people who recognize the value of giving—giving because they have seen and are seeing lives shaped in meaningful ways and are grateful.

This year, the goal is \$1.4 million before June 30, 2025. To date, \$600,000 has been given. Thank you for making your gift. *Every gift, any amount, helps equip Geneva with the necessary resources to provide the quality of education, arts, and athletics that elevates every student’s experience.*

Alumni Update

TGS HOMECOMING 2024

It was wonderful to see so many Geneva alumni at this year's homecoming football game—catching up, reuniting with friends, and cheering on the Knights.



CARE PACKAGE PARTY

The moms of the TGS Class of 2024 reunited just before Thanksgiving to prepare holiday care packages, which were mailed to all forty-four graduates just before exam week. These boxes were filled with notes of encouragement, a plethora of snacks, cozy socks, Starbucks gift card, Bible verses, and, most importantly, a reminder that they are well-loved and continue being supported by a community of Geneva families at home. The morning was also a beautiful time of fellowship for the moms as they caught up and spent time together praying over the graduates.



CHRISTMAS PARTY

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2024
5:30-7:00 PM

THE HANGRY BISON
480 N Orlando Ave Suite 130
Winter Park, FL 32789

YOUNG ALUMNI FIRE PIT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2024
7:00 PM

THE PAUL'S HOME
524 Manor Road
Maitland, FL 32751

ALUMNI GAMES

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2024
10:00 AM-12:30 PM

THE GENEVA SCHOOL
1775 Seminola Blvd
Casselberry, FL 32707

SCHEDULE TBD

Archery
Soccer
Softball/Baseball
Volleyball





Off to the Races

The Geneva School Annual Auction Gala

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 29, 2025

THE GENEVA SCHOOL



BECOME AN AUCTION *Sponsor*



SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

Table Sponsorships

All tables are for 10 guests

Triple Crown \$10,000

- Premier table placement
- Four bottles of fine wine for your table
- Full-page advertisement in the event program
- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Logo displayed during slideshow at the event

Kentucky Derby \$7,500

TABLE & TENT SPONSOR (LIMITED TO ONE SPONSORSHIP)

- Premier table placement
- Logo on tent bunting
- Four bottles of fine wine for your table
- Half-page advertisement in the event program
- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Logo displayed during slideshow at the event

Preakness Stakes \$6,000

- Premier table placement
- Four bottles of fine wine for your table
- Half-page advertisement in the event program
- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Logo displayed during slideshow at the event

Belmont Stakes \$3,000

- Premier table placement
- Half-page advertisement in the event program
- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Logo displayed during slideshow at the event

Keeneland \$1,750

- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Quarter-page advertisement in the event program

Additional Event Sponsorships

All sponsorships receive

- Recognition and logo on the auction website
- Logo displayed during slideshow at the event

Churchill Downs \$5,000

PADDLE SPONSOR (LIMITED TO ONE SPONSORSHIP)

- Logo on the live auction paddles
- Full-page advertisement in the event program

Steeplechase \$5,000

PROGRAM SPONSOR (LIMITED TO ONE SPONSORSHIP)

- Full-page advertisement on the back cover of the event program

Mint Julep \$3,000

BEVERAGE SPONSOR (LIMITED TO TWO SPONSORSHIPS)

- Logo tag on wine bottles placed on tables
- Full-page advertisement in the event program

Oaks Lily \$3,000

BAR SPONSOR (LIMITED TO TWO SPONSORSHIPS)

- Logo advertisement near the bars
- Full-page advertisement in the event program

Jockey Silks \$3,000

T-SHIRT SPONSOR (LIMITED TO FOUR SPONSORSHIPS)

- Logo on the volunteer T-shirt
- Half-page advertisement in the event program

Race Bibs \$2,500

TABLE NUMBER SPONSOR (LIMITED TO ONE SPONSORSHIP)

- Logo on table number placements
- Half-page advertisement in the event program

Photo Finish \$2,500

PHOTO SPOT SPONSOR (LIMITED TO ONE SPONSORSHIP)

- Logo at photo booth
- Half-page advertisement in the event program

Hot Browns \$1,750

APPETIZER SPONSOR (LIMITED TO TWO SPONSORSHIPS)

- Logo and business name on cocktail napkins
- Half-page advertisement in the event program

Derby Pie \$1,750

DESSERT SPONSOR (LIMITED TO TWO SPONSORSHIPS)

- Logo and business name on cocktail napkins
- Half-page advertisement in the event program



THE GENEVA SCHOOL
1775 SEMINOLA BOULEVARD
CASSELBERRY FL 32707

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2025 (K4-6TH GRADE)

Grandparents & Special Friends Day