



Spring 2012

Insight

The Magazine of
Coventry Christian Schools



Passing the Mantle



HOMECOMING WEEKEND 2012



October 12-14

Schedule of Activities

Friday, October 12

- 8:45-11:00 a.m. Grandparents' Breakfast
3:30-6:00 p.m. Volleyball and Soccer v. Concord
6:30-8:30 p.m. Alumni Association Reception

Saturday, October 13

- 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Hayrides, petting zoo, and fall harvest activities
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Sports Boosters Cookout
1:00-2:30 p.m. High School Soccer and Volleyball Games
5:30-6:00 p.m. Reception at Norco Fire Hall
6:00-8:00 p.m. Founders Dinner in Honor of Mr. Mark Niehls
(Purchase tickets at coventrychristian.com/giving
or RSVP by returning invitation, coming by mail
and email in July.)

Sunday, October 14

- 9:30-10:45 a.m. Praise and Worship, Events Center

**For assistance with lodging or airport transportation, email
homecoming@educatingforlife.com or call 610-326-3320.**



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PASSING the Mantle

by Mark E. Niehls

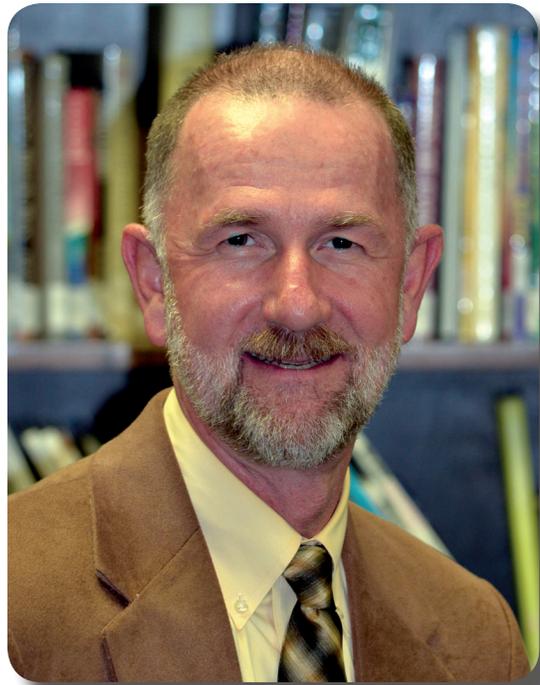
As I reflect back on my life, and especially my nearly 30 year career in Christian education, I am amazed at how God has continuously blessed me! He brought me into this world, placing me into a wonderful Christian family who nurtured me in the faith and love of Jesus Christ. I grew up knowing the love of God for me and that He had a calling for my life.

Some of the greatest blessings God has granted to me and to CCS over the years are the godly men and women who have joined others in devoted sacrifice to the school and the Kingdom. Many have come, served, and gone on to other work and service. Several have stayed to spend and be spent in service to the Coventry Kids for years and even decades. My loving wife Beverly has been so very supportive and a constant source of encouragement throughout the years, not only to me but to the school.

Over the years I have been blessed to serve with a team of dedicated servant leaders on the board and administration. What a blessing it has been to have had loyal and faithful servants guiding and shaping the policies of the school as it began, grew, and developed. Consistency has been one of our greatest treasures, ensuring continuity of philosophy, mission, and action.

In my prayers for the school's future and the fulfillment of her mission on behalf of our students, I have come to understand ever more profoundly that our future is about people. It is entrusted to our parents, teachers, coaches, and other mentors who influence and direct the lives of our young people. It depends upon depth of leadership, talent, and faith in every aspect of our community. God has been faithful in answering those prayers by raising up servant leaders within our school who have come alongside me and given me great confidence in the plans God has for us.

Because of this great confidence I am blessed and honored to share with our worldwide CCS family my passing of the mantle of leadership of Coventry Christian Schools to Mr. Paul Q. Fisher. Paul and I have spent 14 years serving the CCS community together. His influence and leadership within the



school and the broader Christian education movement have grown with every passing year. He has been working on school-wide initiatives and leading the faculty for several years as we anticipated this transition in God's timing. Paul leads with the faith, integrity, and professional expertise necessary to take CCS from good to great. Good can become the enemy of great, and Paul has always demonstrated a relentless commitment to a higher standard. We can all be certain that Paul's leadership will lead to higher academic standards and performance while strengthening our commitment to our heritage. As CCS looks to begin its 29th year of service to the Tri-County area, I am pleased to introduce to you Paul Q. Fisher as Coventry Christian Schools' second head of school.

I am eager to begin my new role in assisting Mr. Fisher with development and community relations. I will even get to put my degree in biochemistry to use again in the classroom. I look forward to watching the Coventry Kids, including my own grandchildren, become distinctively Christian thinkers and leaders. What a blessing to have participated in the founding and development of Coventry Christian Schools and to witness the growth that God continues to supply as we follow Him!

Thanks be to God for His providence and blessings which have brought the school to where it is today! Please join me in prayer for Paul and his team as we all embark on the next leg of our journey together.



More Than We Could Imagine

by Paul Q. Fisher, M. Ed.

When Mark Niehls opened the doors of the Coventry Hills Church of Christ on South Hanover Street in North Coventry some 28 years ago to welcome seven preschool students and two volunteer teachers, he admits he did not realize what he was ushering in, “I wish we could say we had this clear vision of the current CCS in mind when we set out, but we really didn’t. God’s plan was for much more than we could imagine.” In 1984, Mark and Beverly Niehls were the proud parents of a one-year-old son, John Mark, and the new perspective that they gained from becoming parents became the impetus for the founding of Coventry Christian Schools.

In 1984, academic preschools were rare and the Tri-County area was sparsely populated by Christian preschool options. Mark and some like-minded members of the Coventry Hills Church of Christ were taken with the idea of a distinctively Christian preschool that would offer an academically rigorous curriculum. Mark recalls, “We wanted to enrich the program with opportunities that no one else was providing at that level.” The new preschool offered computer instruction at a time when computers in every classroom were not even a reality in the well-funded public schools. Spanish and sign language were staples of the program as well. Coventry Christian Schools grew in popularity as parents experienced the jump start their children were

given in reading, number sense, and the host of multi-faceted experiences in which they were immersed.

Mark’s leadership was always characterized by an exuberant enthusiasm that captivated and converted those around him from onlookers to stakeholders. His commitment to being accessible to parents and students cultivated a family culture that is now a hallmark of the school. Every CCS student that has ever been dropped off or picked up by Mom or Dad has been greeted and helped out of or into the car by the superintendent. University schools of education do not teach accessibility. The boundaries between the professional and the home are rigid. At CCS, those boundaries are nearly impossible to make out. New teacher orientation at CCS has always required a paradigm shift for veterans of other schools. The level of service, flexibility, and accessibility that Mark has always expected of himself has become the expectation that all CCS teachers have grown to have for themselves. During my first stint at CCS in 1997, I was shocked to learn that my students and their parents would be given my home address and phone number. I still remember some of the conversations I had with parents while sitting at my kitchen table during that first year of transformation. That same level of service is the expectation for teachers and administrators today, and Mark is its inspiration.



The school community responded to Mark with generous reciprocity. When he called all-school work days on the weekends, families came together, tools in hand, to renovate, build, and beautify the campus. When volunteers were needed to teach classes or to lead school initiatives, parents, community members, and employees went above and beyond the call of duty as they followed Mark's example. When funds were needed for capital projects, scholarships, or simply to make ends meet, parents and other stakeholders dug deep for the school community that they had come to regard as family. This overwhelming response to Mark was certainly due to his apparent love for the families served by the school. Every CCS parent has seen his love not only in action but in the way he speaks so tenderly and even emotionally about the Coventry Kids at promotion and commencement ceremonies.

That love made leading CCS far more than a job for Mark. It became his life. He worked with a determination and perseverance uncommon in any organization. When I asked him to share the attributes that best describe the team of people he has worked with over the years, he used those two words, determination and perseverance. As he led, so the team followed. "They always knew the value of sacrifice, a willingness to work incredibly hard, to give up resources and precious time for the cause. Time from family and recreation. They could have been used in so many ways but instead contributed to the Coventry Kids, even in ways many labeled irresponsible and foolish," Mark recalls with a sentimental grin.

The degree to which God took the initial efforts of the founding families and multiplied them exponentially to become so much more than they had dreamed bred a mindset of manifest destiny. Still amazed by it all, Mark contemplates, "God has from the very beginning raised up people who stepped in and showed up when they were most needed to make a difference." One of his theme verses comes from Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory."

This perspective that gives credit to God for all of the good that has been accomplished through the school reveals the humility of a leader who has deftly shepherded educators, both old and young alike, into the green pastures of humble service. There is a spirit in the classrooms and halls of CCS that is born of the humility

taught by the Spirit of God. Mark always demonstrated that humility in his service to not only our families but our employees as well, giving of his time to listen to those needing an ear, to drive those needing a ride, to clean up after sick children, to shovel snow, and to empty trash and turn the lights out when everyone else had gone home. That same humility has been learned by a faculty and staff who consider their positions those of servants.

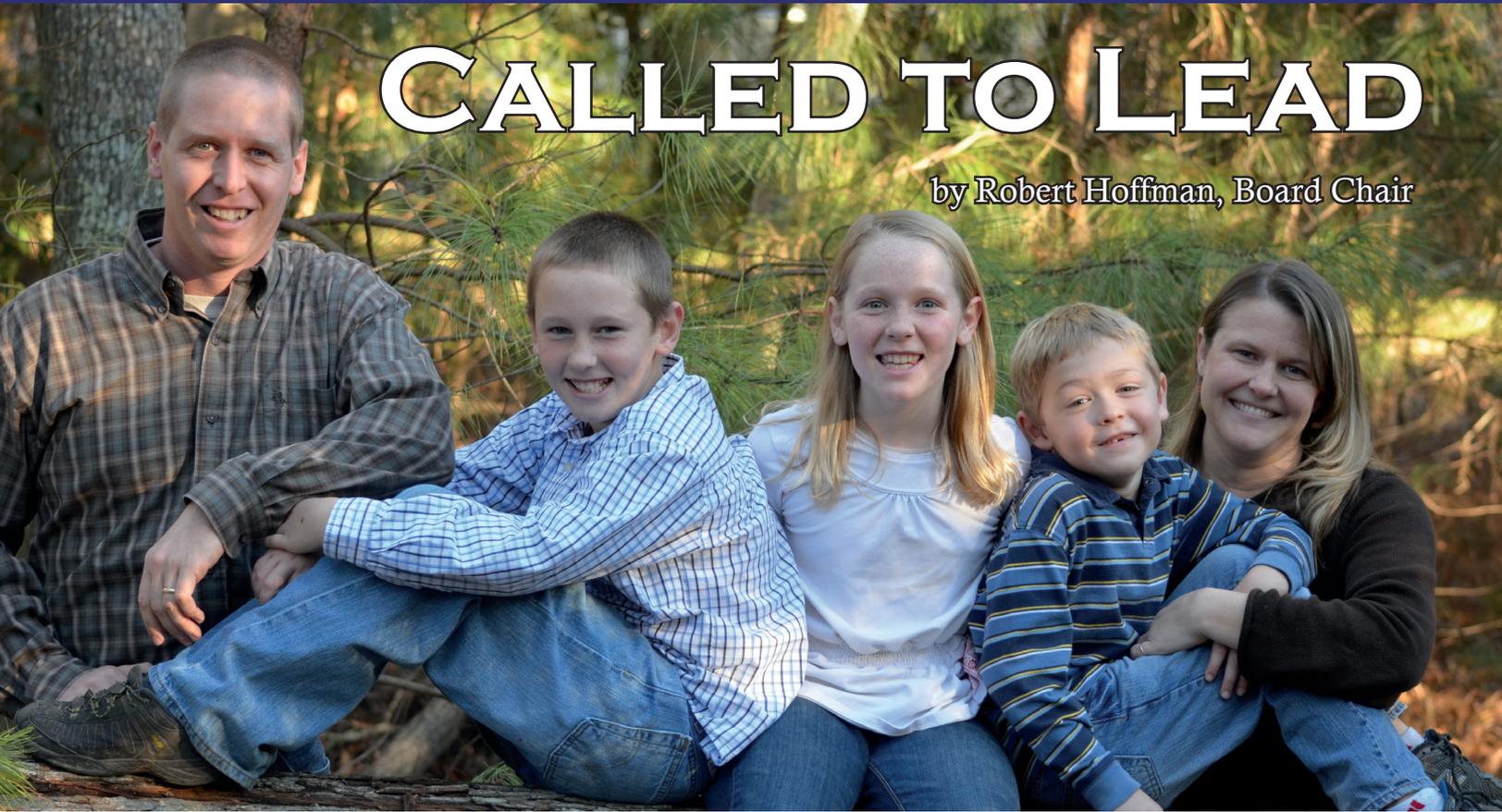
*He worked with a
determination and perseverance
uncommon in any organization.*

Faith, enthusiasm, perseverance, love, and humility. These are the legacy of Mark Niehls. They are inextricably woven into the fabric of the CCS family, from faculty to alumni to parents. They now characterize the school's culture. As Mark embraces a new role within the school, the spirit with which he led will not leave the superintendent's chair. The mantle of leadership consists of these virtues, and as it is passed on, the spirit it represents is passed on with it. The school is blessed to retain Mark to serve alongside the new administration, providing a spiritual anchor for the next generation of leaders within her halls, and Mark could not be more eager to see what unfolds, "Seeing those years of prayers and hopes and dreams fulfilled and realized as I get to see the school continue to develop and mature, becoming yet again more than what I can envision myself, is so exciting to me. I look forward to seeing that realized in the lives of my grandchildren and other second generation Coventry Kids who are receiving an even better Christian education than what I was able to give their parents."

As the reality of Mark's transition grew closer, those in the inner circles of board conversations and family meetings needed reassurance that he would not leave CCS altogether. Such a thought had never even crossed Mark's mind. "Once a Coventry Kid, always a Coventry Kid. Why would I go anywhere else? This is where I want to be and where I ought to be. It's been such a blessing to be able to be here. It is a privilege that I do not take for granted, and there are still many ways I can contribute." And contribute he will. More than he can imagine.

CALLED TO LEAD

by Robert Hoffman, Board Chair



Pick up the yearbook of any secondary student from the last decade and you will likely find this passage scrawled on the inside cover, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Prov. 3:5-6). Over the course of his 14 years at Coventry Christian Schools, Paul Fisher has signed every yearbook the same way, hoping to leave this lesson, above all others, in the hearts and minds of Coventry Kids. Our alumni have taken a diverse array of paths through life, but regardless of which ones they have chosen, if they walk them in the steps of Christ, acknowledging his sovereignty over their lives each step of the way, they will be blessed. For Mr. Fisher, knowing that our alumni walk in trust is the greatest reward he could receive for service to his students.

“For me, it’s the ‘in all your ways’ that’s the real kicker,” he explains with gravity in his voice. “I did not always comprehend the extent to which Christian education was necessary for bringing this to fruition in the lives of our children.”

Mr. Fisher first came to CCS in the summer of 1997. He and his wife Sheri, a fifteen-year veteran of teaching first grade at CCS, graduated from Harding University in May, were married in June, and began working Summer Day Camp the first week of July. Having

studied English, Biology, and Bible and Religion in college, Mr. Fisher first taught middle school English and Humanities at CCS. In those days, our program ended with 8th grade. After one year with CCS, he secured a contract as an English teacher at Ephrata Middle School in Lancaster County. A product of a public school in Delaware, his view of Christian education at the time was a low one. He believed that Christian educators needed to work in the public schools, where the need for Christian influence was greatest. Christian schools seemed like more of a retreat than a necessary intellectual resource. “In those days,” he explains, “I did not have a vision for truly excellent Christian education. I believed it was simply equivalent to public education with Christians, Bibles, and chapel added.”

Mr. Fisher’s resignation after just one year teaching at CCS came as a shock and disappointment to Mr. Niehls, who was impressed with the young teacher and his leadership potential. Mr. Fisher recalls, “I remember how we went back and forth in his old office at the top of the steps in the old schoolhouse, debating the merits of Christian education. I wish the 23-year-old Paul Fisher could debate the 37-year-old one.”

After one year in the public school system, Mr. Fisher began to second guess his dismissal of Christian education. Teaching literature in a secular school presented

countless challenges to his integrity. The position of neutrality required for teaching in a public school, of pretending that faith had nothing to do with truth, was intellectually dishonest and frustrating to Mr. Fisher. The handcuffs that bureaucracy and the teachers' union placed upon him were a source of regular friction, not just as a believer but as a quality-minded educator. It did have its benefits, however. "Sure, my salary doubled when I went to public school. The quality and potency of my work, however, was easily cut in half. I loved the people there, but the end game was questionable." In the spring of 1999, then secondary principal, Bill McGee, called Mr. Fisher to discuss whether he would consider returning to CCS to serve as the next secondary school principal. It was the nudge he needed to inform his public school principal that he was jumping back into Christian education. In the 13 years since that day, he has never second guessed his calling to Christian education. He deliberately chose a graduate program that would provide an authentically Christian philosophy for education, earning his Master's in Educational Leadership and Administration from Philadelphia Biblical University. Today, Mr. Fisher believes that Christian education is not just an option for parents but is, in fact, an obligation. He explains, "Deuteronomy 6 mandates that believers integrate a holistic view of reality, one that includes who God is and what He is doing, into every facet of life. This is especially true of formal education."

"I answered the call in '99, but I didn't have a vision for exactly what Christian education meant until our accreditation visit from the National Christian School Association (NCSA) in 2000," he confesses. The president of Brentwood Christian School (Austin, Texas), Marquita Moss, was the commissioner on the visiting team from NCSA. Mr. Fisher does not know why she specifically sought him out to discuss curriculum, but the meeting, he believes, was a divine appointment. "In that half hour, she opened my eyes to the potential—a holistic approach to education that did not treat matters of faith as separate and distinct from the rest of the curriculum. She explained to me that our school was not, in fact, a Christian school until we articulated and delivered a philosophy, mission, and scope and sequence for all disciplines that was fully integrated with our faith." If Christian education could truly be conceived and delivered that way, it would be the only responsible way to educate a child.

The vision inspired Mr. Fisher, and the rest is history.

During his tenure with CCS, Mr. Fisher has served students directly in countless roles. He has taught English and Bible to all secondary grades, Biology and Human Anatomy and Physiology, Algebra I, Spanish I, Comparative Worldviews, Creative Writing, Western Civilization, and SAT Prep among other courses. He has served as a counselor for Summer Day Camp and is the founder and leader of the legendary 9th grade backpacking trip. He has coached soccer and cross country. His administrative duties, though most significantly marked by his role as the founding principal of the high school program during his 12 years as secondary principal, include a host of other school-wide responsibilities. His K-12 roles have included Director of Curriculum Development, Director of Staff Development, Director of Middle States Accreditation Protocol, Campus Minister, and his current role as Director of Advancement. His work and counsel as a regular contributor to executive decision-making at school board strategic planning meetings has been integral and appreciated over the years.

On the national stage, Mr. Fisher has taken his passion and expertise for authentically Christian academic excellence to conferences in Boston, Orlando, Baltimore, Nashville, Richmond, Knoxville, Birmingham, and San Antonio, where he has presented on a host of topics related to Christian education. He is a popular consultant on curriculum development and theory and has been asked to provide counsel to communities planning their own Christian schools. In recognition of Mr. Fisher's exceptional understanding of Christian worldview integration across the curriculum, he was awarded the C.S. Lewis Award for Christian Worldview Integration in 2008.

The CCS Board of Trustees is pleased to present Mr. Paul Q. Fisher as the second head of Coventry Christian Schools. As all of our alumni and their families, the faculty and staff, administrators, and Trustees can attest to, Mr. Fisher's service and leadership over the last 14 years, half of the school's history, have been invaluable and have demonstrated the faith, integrity, knowledge, skillset, and vision required to serve admirably as our head of school. Please join us in praying for Mr. Fisher and his family as he receives the mantle of leadership from Mr. Niehls, and join us in thanking Mr. Niehls for the tremendous blessing that his vision and leadership have been to us and especially to our children. May we forge a future for CCS that is rooted in trusting the Lord and acknowledging Him in all our ways.



What Makes a Good Book Good?

by Peter M. Shipman, M. Ed.

“How are you? How was the game, the movie, the book?” “Good,” we reply. I am perplexed at how quickly we throw this word around. It certainly is the easiest and safest answer. The follow-up question is much more difficult, “Why? Why was the movie good? What made this book better than that one?” Typically the answer is rooted in the way that it made us feel. We certainly live in a “feeling” culture. A college admissions counselor recently told me the number one reason cited as to why students chose a particular college: “It felt right.” Not the curriculum, quality of professors, dorm life, or even the cafeteria food. It just felt right. This must leave college admissions officers and administrators quite frustrated. How does one quantify, “It just feels good to me.”

In selecting books for students to read, we certainly want to choose good books, but what makes a good book good? Some would say that the answer is simply a matter of opinion, preference, or taste. This may work when it comes to our favorite ice cream or fine wine, but books are about stories, ideas, and worldviews. Every book teaches a particular worldview, a set of beliefs about the underlying, driving truths of our world. Even the seemingly most trivial of books, stories, and movies teaches. Remember the question from grammar school, “What is the moral of the story?” Unfortunately, we have moved away from this question and embraced a new one, “How did the book make you feel?” While there is nothing *malum in se* about reading a book for entertainment, we must never stop asking the questions, “Good for what? Good for whom?”

Some have come to a simple conclusion – there is only one good book, The Holy Bible. I have heard it said that Christians are a one-book kind of people. While there is no substitute for the inerrant word of God, I would like to think that we are a people of many books; we just elevate the right book to its proper place. While we must evaluate all works by the scriptures, we must also practice academic freedom

and thus read secular literature. Why? There are many instances in the scriptures that demonstrate that the author was familiar with contemporary pagan writings. In each case, the knowledge gained served as the defense or the explanation of the Gospel. (Acts 17:28; Acts 26:14, Titus 1:12, 1 Corinthians 9:16). Additionally, we believe that all truth comes from God. Christians should use all truth for God’s glory (Col. 2:3,8). So how should we select literature, or for that matter, any form of story (magazine, movie, TV show, etc.) for our children to read and watch?

A GOOD BOOK HAS EVIL. Many in our broader culture believe that for something to be Christian it must present exemplary morals. By “good,” they mean the absence of evil altogether: safe, non-confrontational, *Chicken Soup for the Soul* in all forms and genres. At CCS, we desire for students to see ugliness, sin, and oppression as it is. We want to shepherd young people through the world, not shelter them from reality. Sheltering leaves young people ill-equipped, lost in their own artificial world, impotent to engage society or to affect change within it. Those who live in fear and promote censorship and book banning have forgotten Jesus’ words, “Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person” (Mark 7:14-20).

Mind you, this is not a license to read, view, or listen to all forms of books and entertainment, but rather to evaluate, “What fruit will be born from this?” A steady diet of books and entertainment without discernment or a guiding teacher can lead to a worldview diametrically opposed to truth, beauty and goodness, but this does not mean that we should simply ban all media without a Christian author or Christian endorsement.

A GOOD BOOK SHOWS REALITY. This certainly does not mean that fiction is out of the question. G.K. Chesterton writes, “Fairy tales are more than true; not that they tell us that dragons exist, but that they tell us that dragons can be beaten.” Meaning, of course, that we will always have an imagination, but a real story, if it is to be a story at all, shows how good trumps evil. In other words, it follows the biblical structure of reality.

Every story has an origin (starting place), a conflict, and a resolution. In theological terms, we would use creation, fall, and redemption. Because of this reality, even non-Christian stories will have allegorical elements that come from the Christian universe. It is a fallacy to believe that a Christian story must end “happily ever after” for everyone. While it certainly warms the heart when this happens, a book is just as good when it ends in tragedy. I think of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. While tragic to the characters, *Macbeth* illustrates poignantly the truth that the wages of sin is death. Both *Macbeth* and *Lady Macbeth* experience demise, but justice prevails. The real tragedy would be if they all persisted and gloried in their sin. As the reader, you find yourself pulling for them, wanting them to succeed even despite their obvious sins. It is so easy to get emotionally attached to characters and stories without evaluating them in the light of truth. This is why a good book tells the whole story of sin in all of its ugliness rather than glorifying it.

A few years ago my wife and I watched an independent modern musical, *Once* (2006). Despite the fowl language, it was quite entertaining and thought-provoking. The film told the story of a couple who fell in love – in a week. They happened upon each other at the “right time,” the woman, estranged from her husband, the man, bored with his girlfriend. They made music and created an album together, which led to their attraction. They came so close to kissing once, and I remember wanting it for them, but a twinge from deep within me spoke, “But she is married! God forbid! That would be adultery!” It had already been an emotional affair - Aphrodite masquerading as love. In the end, the woman returned to her husband and daughter, the man to his girlfriend. I suspect most viewers were disappointed and chalked it up to a “longing for love that would never be.” I was pleased to see someone make the loving choice of commitment. The film was honest about the struggle against sin and the quest for truth and beauty.

A GOOD BOOK TEACHES TIMELESS TRUTH TO ALL AGES. A fundamental cultural shift has occurred right under our noses: adults and “adolescents” no longer read and watch the same things. While this has been a part of a wider cultural shift of generational separatism stemming back to the 1920’s, it has been intensified by the entertainment and marketing industry. Columnist Meghan Cox Gurdon writes, “As it happens, 40 years ago, no one had to contend with young-adult literature because there was no such thing. There was simply literature, some of it accessible to young readers and some not.



As elsewhere in American life, the 1960’s changed everything. In 1967, S.E. Hinton published *The Outsiders*, a raw and striking novel that dealt directly with class tensions, family dysfunction, and violent, disaffected youth. It launched an industry that has grown exponentially. While some would argue that young-adult literature makes books appealing and accessible to young people who would not otherwise read, I would argue that we must usher young people into the “adult world.” One of the greatest tragedies I witness as an educator is that we tend to treat young people as if their “world” is separate from ours, that their struggles are just a phase they will go through and are unrelated to the “adult world.” In reality, they are wrestling with the same questions we are: Who am I? How do I relate to God and others? To relegate them to their own world is to patronize them and handicap them for life. Why do we not want young people to emulate the wise and aged? When adolescents and children become their heroes, that is all our children can aspire to be. Do we really want our children to strive for adolescence?

What students read and watch contributes mightily to their maturing process. I think of one of Western Civilization’s oldest epics, *The Odyssey*. While the hero is Odysseus, the adolescent Telemachus plays an equal role in restoring his father’s house. The fundamental

difference between this ancient classic and modern adolescent literature is the central relationship and the significance of the young person involved. In modern adolescent literature, the young person is the central character in the story. While he may seek, he often has to figure out the problem on his own. If parents, mentors, and authorities are even present, they are either the cause of the conflict or are portrayed as irrelevant. Characters must rely on their friends. In entertainment, think of the very popular TV show Family Guy – the father, Peter, is the family moron. How about Homer from The Simpsons?

Finally, we will do well to remember that what we read not only gratifies our appetite, but creates it as well. From the Bible, “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s

thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, ‘Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?’ But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 2: 10b – 16)

Good News for the Least of These: A Christian Worldview for Preschool

by Jill Barton



Taste and see that the Lord is good, how blessed is the man who takes refuge in him! Psalm 34:8

A four-year-old child and his playmate run up to their teacher on the playground. Excitedly, the child encourages the teacher, “We are finished out here, can’t we go in and do Bible? We can’t wait to see what happens next!” A teacher in the nursery takes time to wash a toddler’s hands carefully before lunch, and just as carefully leads the child in prayer for her food. Beautiful thoughts and actions permeate the atmosphere of a loving and Christ-centered school, even as early as the age of one. Truly, as parents choose to have their child spend time in preschool or extended day care settings with those who have faith rooted in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are honoring the blessing of heritage that the Lord has given them.

Teaching children to “taste and see that the Lord is good!” is a heavy obligation, especially as the world teaches that its ways are wisest. Discerning parents understand that all truth and knowledge is the Lord’s, and it is from that joyful standard that all decisions can be made in confidence. Teaching children the ways of the Lord as Deuteronomy 6 instructs is accomplished

with diligence and intercession; “these words that I command you this day shall be in your heart, and you shall teach them diligently unto the children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, and when you rise up, and you shall bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets before thy eyes, and you shall write them upon the posts of your house and on your gates.” Indeed it does take a village to do this, to borrow the cultural malapropism, but specifically it takes a community of Christ-followers to partner with parents as they seek to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

As multitudes of early childhood theorists have stated, the bulk of a child’s personality, skillset, and ability to acquire knowledge is formed by the time he is six. Clearly, then, we are compelled to surround our young children with those who can teach, by deed and word, towards God’s whole truth in their moment to moment interactions. Why, exactly, do we need to take turns at the block center? One teacher may instruct specifically and brusquely, in essence, that we do that because “I told you to, and if not, you will be subject to my discipline, as this classroom is my space.” Where is the whole truth in secular settings when it comes to preschool education? Noticeably absent. Students cannot be instructed fully when there is not a framework of Godly understanding upon which every rule and deed are premised. The classrooms of secular preschools are rife with teachers who are forbidden to express any calling to higher truth. They must only refer to the “rules,” which are derived from nothing more than the cultural norm. Often the cultural norm is a sliding scale, which takes on the underlying philosophy of the teacher. Expedience is often the day-to-day governor of law in a classroom for young children. Unfortunately, secular settings, while well-intentioned in premise, may fall prey to the temptations that adults face to “put in time”

before they get their dream job, and students become a cog in the wheel of getting through the day with no one being hurt, and all immediate needs being met.



There is no investment of eternal value to be infused in a setting that is not led by eternal truth and good. What unspoken measure does the teacher use to manage the classroom? Will she take time to really explain to a child not only the rule but the underlying reason for it? No, they cannot fully explain; they may not even fully understand themselves. Will they be able to point to the glory of God’s creation and teach that the heavens declare his handiwork as the students enjoy science and art time together? Again, no. Can they adequately guide instruction when another child voices his parent’s anti-God viewpoint? Again, not permitted. What reasons can they give children for why we would want to do our best in our chores and tasks? Only for the common good, nothing greater.

Teachers who choose to practice their gifting in a setting where Christ is honored and God’s law is upheld are practicing the ongoing sanctification process of joyfully submitting to the love of Father God, and are able to daily and adequately articulate in action, word and deed, the peace and joy that come from that knowledge. They are able to respect a child as a creation of the most high King and to speak to that child with the measured tones that instruct her to act more perfectly when discipline is needed. They know that their higher calling in education is not simply to get the kids through the day safely and able to recognize a new letter or number. They are called to educating the whole child, which requires far more than just the curriculum and its developmentally appropriate parts. It demands showing the joy of the Lord and His creation, teaching the Love of the King when we acquiesce to a classmate in an act of submission, and gladness of heart for all as a teacher shares a learning experience face-to-face on the floor with her students.

These same teachers find joy in teaching traditional academic knowledge as well as instructing students in behavior, but they also have the unique privilege of imprinting the word of God on the hearts and minds of their students through words and song. Teaching what grown-ups sometimes call spiritual disciplines (prayer, singing and reading of scripture) is one of the many ways we enrich the hearts and minds of our children on a daily basis when we surround them with Christ's ambassadors. We could train them to sing, do or create almost anything, but the Christian preschool teacher fills the time with knowledge that honors and includes God both specifically and indirectly, teaching truth through the lens of faith rather than the precepts and presuppositions of man.

As we consider our calling in Christ, we ask God to intercede at will in our hearts, to provide discernment to our teachers, and to nurture a faithful partnership between parents of like faith and our faculty and administration. We seek his provision and wisdom in selecting teachers and assistant teachers whose primary qualifications are not only those which hold them accountable to what is required in their vocation traditionally, but those required to be Christ's ambassadors to our youngest students. Parents extend the reach of their own spiritual teaching to their children when they consider the eternal value of a Christian preschool education. May God equip us with the love of Christ as we minister to the souls of our smallest charges, sharing the Good News with the least of these.

Preschool Reaches for the STARS *by Mary Niehls*

There are numerous benefits of early learning programs like the preschool program at Coventry Christian Schools. A quality childcare program has a direct impact on a child's ability to learn, to build healthy relationships, and to realize her potential as a child of God. CCS takes this responsibility so seriously that it secured Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation for not just its K-12 program but also for its preschool. Additionally, CCS has long participated in the Keystone STARS program. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, which licenses and regulates preschools in the state, sponsors the Keystone STARS program, which is a statewide initiative in Pennsylvania to help improve, support, and recognize quality childcare in early learning programs. The acronym STARS stands for Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources, and Support.



Keystone STARS schools represent the most professionally credentialed and proven programs in the state. It is essentially a continuous quality improvement program with five STAR levels, culminating in Star 4 designation. Each Star level builds on the previous level, using research-based best practice methods to promote quality early learning environments. Our preschool and extended care programs at CCS are currently undergoing the designation process for Star 3. The staff has been working hard to make improvements to the classroom environments and to participate in more professional development opportunities to ensure CCS maintains the highest quality standards in early childhood care and education.

Children who participate in quality early learning programs tend to be more successful later in school, are more competent socially and emotionally, and show higher verbal and intellectual development during early childhood. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "The brain undergoes its most rapid development in the first three years of life, and in this development the environment plays a central role. Nerve connections that are associated with specific skills such as language are developed during this critical period." Ensuring healthy child development is an investment in your child. It is an honor for us to partner with you, helping your child grow and develop in a Christ-centered preschool program.

Preschool Parents Express Appreciation

“CCS has allowed our children to talk about God, something they wouldn’t be able to do in public school, and to continue to sing the songs they learn in church that they love. My husband and I are very happy with CCS and love the teachers there!”

Brad & Heather High

Coventry Christian has been a great fit for our son because of the love, dedication and flexibility that are provided to him and us every day. Dominic loves coming to school, and we are amazed with all that he learns; academically, socially and spiritually. Our appreciation is immeasurable.”

Michael & Denise Frosty

“Through the biblical teachings, the children are establishing a desire to learn while incorporating the values and morals that will create great students as well as great citizens.”

Dave & Charity Hurlock

“Samuel is our cherished gift from God, his presence in our life represents a special grace that has been bestowed upon us. Knowing that people of like mind and spirit care for him daily, remembering him in prayer constantly, wanting the very best for him as much as we do, makes it easy to bring him to school daily.”

Akinwole & Seyi Akinfenwa

“What I love about my children going to a Christian preschool is that I know my children are truly loved and cared for. The teachers do not see this as a job, it is a calling and they truly understand the responsibility they have been given. My children are not just receiving an academic education, they are being developed as whole beings – intellectually, socially and spiritually.”

Jeff & Terri Kuklinski

“The teachers are friends with God.”

Mallory Hurlock – Pre-K (student)

Preschool Easter Egg Scramble!



From Thoughts to Words

by Sylvia DeJesus



It is written:

**“As surely as I live,’ says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’”**

Romans 14:11

You should meet Stevie. He’s in my 7th grade English grammar class. If it were possible, he would be making movies in Hollywood right now. He is constantly creating characters and developing screenplays. He is truly talented. So the writing topic was Comparing and Contrasting the *Use of Cell Phone Texting versus Verbal Phone Conversations*, and Stevie quickly became very passionate about the topic. He wrote a very strong case against cell phone texting, telling about how, in his own words, “texting is sucking our I-Q away.” Stevie, thanks for the inspiration for this piece.

Texting? But everyone’s texting these days, aren’t we? It’s the new form of dialogue with its own dialect as well. Ten years ago I purchased my first cell phone in case of emergencies. Now there’s texting! Yet, I wonder what will take the place of our beloved texting in the next ten years. I’m positive that we will advance to something much more... new.

So what is it with us that we are always looking to advance to the next new thing and working on creating the next ultimate thing? According to my student, Stevie, we’ve got it all wrong. We should all just go back to “the good old days of playing with rocks on a riverbank.” Still, there remains a yearning inside man that leads him to want more and better than before. I guess we are made this way, and so we are always climbing to presumably greater heights. However, ironically enough, we are never satisfied. Why is that? Why was it that playing with rocks by the riverbank was not enough to satisfy? And why was it that the rotary phone wasn’t sufficient? Why is it that man’s yearning and potential for achievement leaves him wanting more?

I think there is a very clear reason. Man has great potential because God made us this way. Our intellect, talents, and skills are beyond measure. And so we aspire for the impossible. At times, we fool ourselves into believing that we can actually do the impossible. At times, we reach such an amazing level of accomplishment, that we believe that we have no boundaries and that we are limitless!

Halt. That is where the error turns up, and we are left to wonder, “What just happened?” You see,

man in all of his potential begins to trust much more in his own abilities than in the one who provided them. We begin to see ourselves as greater beings, much greater than even God. We trust ourselves to be all that we need. How foolish are we?

I’m a fan of the *Mission Impossible* movies, and I recently watched the latest one. However, I wish I could direct an additional installment and add an awesome twist to it--Tom Cruise finding himself literally at the end of his rope for the 100th time but this time calling out to God for help. That would be incredible. I think Stevie may even agree with me on this one. *Mission Impossible* and similar films represent what man’s ultimate goal is: to do the impossible and to be self-sufficient.

Yet with all of our striving we ultimately come to the realization that, indeed, we are not limitless; there are immovable boundaries we cannot cross. We come tumbling down the great stairwell of pride and idolatry we have built for ourselves. We fall all the way down to humility, finding ourselves before a God bigger and greater than we had imagined.

Only then do we see ourselves for who we really are--immortal children of a sovereign, most-powerful and eternal God. And no matter how much we achieve or how we make the old things newer and better, we are limited. That’s a good thing! It’s good to know that we are not the ones in control, that we do not rule the world. That texting is just a passing thing. That spending time by the riverbank can still be cool. Mostly, it is good to know that God is God, and we are not.

Student Voices

by Mrs. Dove's 3rd Graders and Leliani Boyle (6th)

Save

Save the tears He shed for you,
the love that He had.
Save the agonizing pain
He went through for you.
Save the love He had for mankind.
Save the thought He made you
without anything in return.
Save the friends and family
He blessed you with.
Save the precious moments He planned,
for you'll never get them back.
Save the holy name.
Save the thought He died.
Save Him, Jesus Christ,
Lamb of God,
Prince of Peace,
Messiah,
Holy Redeemer,
and most of all
you're Best Friend.

Leliani Boyle, 6th

Interpreting Scripture

"The religion that God, our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." James 1:27

"This verse helps me understand why my parents keep us from watching those shows that show stuff that you can't always see or understand. This verse also makes me feel good that God is helping my parents help me so that when I'm older it will be easier to do the right thing."

by Arden Fisher, 3rd

"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

Luke 6:27-28

"I think it means you should love everyone, not just the people you like."

by Aidan McDermott

"To me, this verse means to be nice to people who are mean, help people who hate you, say good things about people who gossip, and ask God to give people who don't treat you right the goodness that other people have. It also means to love everyone."

by Jake Shirey

"It means I should help people even if they aren't kind to me. It also means to treat those who don't like me the way I want them to treat me."

by Isabella Evans

"Love your enemies, and all the people that don't like you, because you should still be nice to them. Maybe if you keep doing it, they might not be your enemy anymore. They might turn into your friend."

by Joshua Monastero

"I think it means that it does not matter who or what you are, you love every body. I also think it means to show your enemies love, respect, kindness, joy, peace, goodness, faith, and see if they notice that you are a good person."

by Shelby Laffey



PROJECT PURPOSE: REACHING OUT

by Paul Q. Fisher, M. Ed.

If you have been on campus Wednesday or Sunday evenings, you may have had trouble recognizing all of the faces in the classrooms and hallways or on the front steps. That's because it's more likely than not that they do not belong to CCS students. They are children being served by Project Purpose, a collaborative educational outreach ministry of CCS. In February of 2011, several CCS families began praying for opportunities to show the love of Christ in very tangible ways to the most needy in Pottstown. One month later, Project Purpose was born. Three months later, 106 low-income, underserved youth were being tutored and mentored through the program, which had grown to include a sponsored Athletes for Better Education program with two teams. Players are required to attend Project Purpose tutoring in order to be eligible to play on the teams. Last summer, 19 Pottsgrove High School students from Rolling Hills, a subsidized housing development, graduated from Project Purpose's Summer Scholars program, a credit completion summer school for students who needed to recover credits but could not afford summer school with Pottsgrove.

Director of Advancement, Paul Fisher, founded the program in response to a passionate plea from Rolling Hills resident, Kevin Mitchell. At a prayer breakfast held by the Chesmont Church of Christ on the Pleasantview Campus, Mr. Mitchell and Joe Jardine, father of

Darmon Jardine (10th), expressed the dire need of young people in Rolling Hills to break the cycle of dropping out, becoming dependent on government-subsidized entitlements, or turning to illicit activities, all of which collectively rob the youth from their neighborhoods of hope. Their passion was contagious, and the calling loud and clear when Mr. Mitchell pounded his fist on the cafeteria table and declared, "It's got to stop now!" There request to start a basketball program for the youth there and to utilize the Events Center for their sessions was granted.

As Mr. Fisher listened to the discussion of what it would take to start the basketball program, he was burdened by the realization that basketball was not going to provide any lasting solutions for these young people. There he was, sitting in the cafeteria of a school, surrounded by a community of mission-minded educators and well-connected to a CCS family of mission-minded parents, students, and churches. He developed a flier inviting the youth attending the basketball program to come to tutoring sessions, which he called Project Purpose. He began attending basketball, meeting young people, and working the bleachers, trying to break through their tough shells. For three weeks he campaigned, handing out fliers and going door-to-door in Rolling Hills and sharing hope with the attendees.

On Wednesday, March 23, 2011, CCS opened its doors to 17 students from Rolling Hills. Ten volunteer tutors conducted intake sessions to get to know the young people and their specific learning needs. The tutoring was followed by a meal in the cafeteria. Every Wednesday since that first session, volunteers, led by Jay Jeffries, grandfather of Paula Decamillo (9th), have prepared and served hot, nutritious meals to Project Purpose students and their tutors. Since that first meeting, we have served over 130 young people from Rolling Hills and Walnut Ridge through academic tutoring, mentoring, and college and career counseling. Jill Barton has taught etiquette classes to middle school girls and a GED preparation course to adults in Rolling Hills, some whose children are being tutored by our program. Bill Ziegler, principal at Pottsgrove Middle School, has been teaching with her. Volunteers have begun home visits to build bridges between parents and volunteers as well as parents and the school district.

In July 2011, the CCS Board of Trustees voted to adopt Project Purpose as an official program of the school, primarily so that it could be incorporated under the direction of a licensed non-profit organization. The program is completely funded by outside grants and the support of concerned citizens and churches. The school does not fund the program, nor does it require any employees to serve in it. In December 2011, the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation awarded Project Purpose a \$20,000 grant to primarily fund a part-time assistant director. Rachel Kratz, a recent graduate of Messiah College and one of the program's volunteers, was hired to do the bulk of the management and community networking for the program. No one is more thankful than Mr. Fisher, who was the right person to start the program but was too busy with work responsibilities to lead it. "Rachel is a passionate, talented, Spirit-filled young woman.



Her work this year has provided the structure, professionalism, and momentum that Project Purpose needed to establish itself as a long-term ministry to our community."

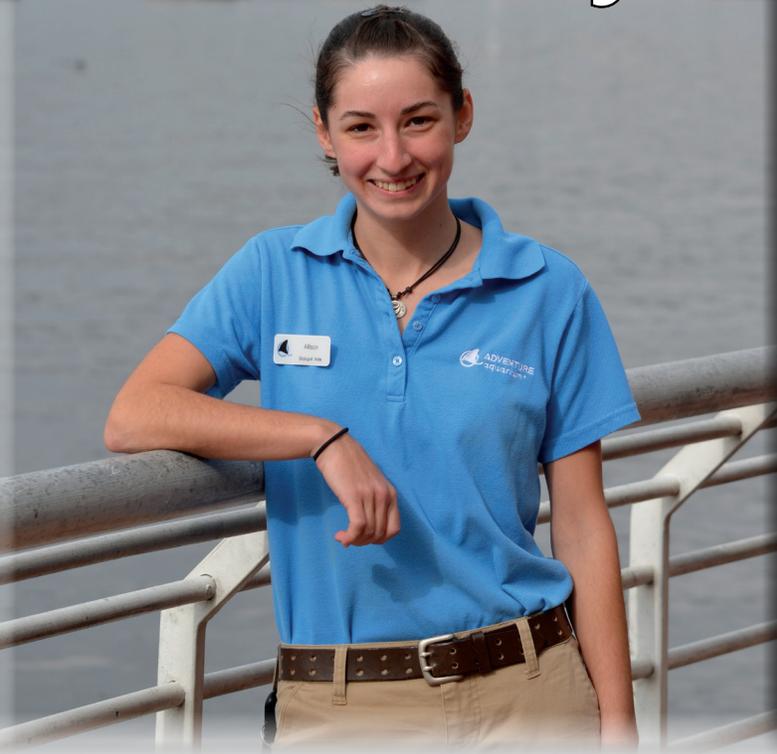
Under Ms. Kratz's leadership, Project Purpose has become a go-to resource for Pottsgrove teachers and administration as they look for assistance with their most challenged students, many of whom are now enrolled in Project Purpose. The adults in Rolling Hills have embraced her as a sincere voice of concern, and the kids love her. Currently the leadership team of Project Purpose, which is comprised of CCS parents and parents of alumni, is meeting once per month to provide necessary support to Ms. Kratz as she manages the ministry as its only employee. She is currently working on grant applications that would secure funding for a full-time assistant director position to meet the growing needs of the program.

Ms. Kratz and the leadership team are supported and surrounded by an army of volunteers from Northpointe Community Church, Chesmont Church of Christ, Journey Church, Spring Valley Community Church, and Abundant Life Bible Church. Current needs of the program include (in addition to help with grant writing and donor solicitation): basketball coaches (focus on spiritual mentoring), K-12 tutors in all subjects, Summer Scholars teachers (June 18-29), and garden tool donations and volunteers for the new Project Garden, which will be worked by several Project Purpose students this summer. The program and its volunteers and students always cherish your prayers.

If you have any questions or would like to help with Project Purpose, contact Rachel Kratz (rachelkratz@educatingforlife.com) at 484-390-2726.



Alumni Spotlight: Allison Place, Marine Biologist



Most 17-year-old girls don't dream of swimming with sharks for a living. Allison Place ('07) is not most girls. A quiet, unassuming student during her time in the classroom at CCS, Allison was a veritable Bear Grylls outside of the classroom. She grew up hunting with her father, backpacking, and eventually scuba diving. In college she was an outdoor adventure enthusiast, leading student trips into the wild.

Today she works as a biologist at Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ, and even though the job is a little more regimented and routine than her outdoor passions, Allison isn't complaining. "I love my job. It's fun, I get a lot of hands on time with the animals, I'm learning a lot, and I get to dive."

An alumna of Penn State, Allison was interested in veterinary medicine when she was in high school. During her summers she worked at a spay and neuter clinic. She was unpleasantly surprised by the demands placed upon her by customers. She had not considered that veterinary medicine required so much people

time, and she had not imagined how difficult some of those people might be. "I prefer working with the animals. I almost never get stressed out at work. It's just enjoyable."

Allison credits her father for introducing her to marine biology. Growing up, her family traveled to St. John's. Diving courses were available on the island, and her father, Jim, an adventurer himself, suggested that the family get initiated into diving. "Dad signed us up for an introduction. We were so amazed by it that we got certified as soon as we got home from vacation. I was 17."

As soon as she graduated from high school, Allison starting volunteering as a dive team member at Adventure Aquarium. Some would have questioned her judgment. Here she was, volunteering in New Jersey, commuting from South Coventry, spending the time and money required to do that, so that she could be the tank janitor, cleaning out shark habitat. She also gained experience doing diving demonstration shows for guests of the aquarium.

The venture would have been simply an expensive hobby if she didn't have a greater end in mind. During her sophomore year at Penn State, she applied for an internship in animal husbandry at the aquarium. Her two years of volunteering there pushed her application to the top, and she secured the internship, which provided her with a summer of shadowing a biologist and learning about what working in marine biology is all about.

"That was a really good experience. Before I graduated from college, I was offered a position as a biologist aid, which is essentially an assistant biologist. It was nice having a job right out of college."

Allison quickly moved up the ranks to secure a position as a biologist. Today she is responsible for several of the exhibits. She monitors and adjusts water quality, feeds the animals under her care, cleans the tanks--virtually anything necessary to keep the animals healthy and the exhibits looking good for guests.

Allison was glad to be able to put her biology, chemistry, and anatomy and physiology to work, but she admits that there was a learning curve for much of the job. "I was a bit surprised by the mechanical work required, such as dealing with pumps and plumbing."

Another challenge, which Penn State inadvertently prepared her for, is the antagonistic atmosphere that the scientific community often presents to scientists of faith. At Penn State, Allison found herself challenged by professors who often went outside of the curriculum

to declare judgments on people of Christian faith. She credits CCS with preparing her for the difficulties of being immersed in ideologically hostile environments. “The strong foundation in my faith was invaluable. If I did not have that, going through the science major would have been extremely difficult. As it was, I had answers and a strong foundation that kept me on course.”

Allison’s advice to CCS high school students who are considering a secular college is to immediately get involved in a Christian student organization. Allison found her social and spiritual family in the Christian Student Fellowship (CSF). CSF provided a strong social group with a campus minister and worship services. It was Allison’s spiritual community at Penn State, providing daily encouragement and accountability and giving her opportunities for service projects and mission trips. She reflects, “Without CSF, I would have had trouble finding friends with my faith. That’s where my friends came from. I lived outside of town, which helped me avoid the party scene, which was

pretty repulsive. It did annoy me to have to step around puddles of vomit on my way to classes, but I didn’t have to live around it all the time.”

Most of us end up somewhere we never expected. Our high school dreams stand in stark contrast to our post-college careers. Ask Allison if she’s living her dream, and she’ll tell you, “Absolutely.” She believes she has a formula for CCS students who have a sense of calling to a particular career or ministry. Start young. Look for work and volunteer opportunities in organizations that do what you want to do. Those opportunities won’t be glamorous, and they may not pay well or at all, but they begin to build experiences and references that will serve you well later. “If I did not volunteer on that dive team, I would not have gotten that internship, and I would not have gotten hired there.” What if Allison hadn’t made such disciplined and deliberate decisions as a high school and college student? She doesn’t like to think about it. “I could never do a desk job.”

Honor to Whom Honor Is Due

For 28 years he has served thousands of children with the love of Christ. He has inspired hundreds of Christian educators. He has been a source of wisdom and support for our school family. He has given all of himself to us. His love, his vision, and his faith have left us a noble legacy and been a blessing to our families. It is time for us to bless him.

When we gather together October 12-14 for Homecoming Weekend, we will be having a Saturday dinner at Norco Fire Hall to say thank you to Mr. Niehls and to celebrate God’s work at CCS. Please plan on joining us for this very special occasion. We want all of our alumni, former employees, alumni parents and grandparents, and current families and employees to come out in force to thank and encourage Mr. Niehls. You are his opus, and this dinner will not be the same without you there. You can purchase your tickets to the dinner at coventrychristian.com/giving or wait for your invitation to come in the mail in July to reply. This is a catered event, so you must purchase your tickets in advance, and preferably before October 1.

We also encourage you to send your own memories, thank you’s, and messages for Mr. Niehls to thank.mrniehls@educatingforlife.com. These will be printed in a keepsake book for both Mr. Niehls and for the CCS archives. To be included in the book, these must be received by no later than September 10.



Questions about Homecoming or need help with travel arrangements?

Email homecoming@educatingforlife.com to let us know how we can help you be there for this historic weekend!



ROUNDUP

CCS Shines in Science Competitions

The high school science extension, Scientific Research, has had a highly successful debut this year. Under the direction of Mrs. Clare Price, CCS students are making waves at local and regional competitions. Emily Snyder (11th) took second place in the engineering category at the Montgomery County Science Research Competition (MCSRC) and advanced to the Marie Curie regional science fair, where she received the Society of Women Engineers Honorable Mention Award. Emily also

took first place at the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Sciences (PJAS) competition and advanced to the state competition at Penn State in mid-May. Mikayla Deluca (9th) and Connor Smale (9th) took second place at PJAS in ecology and computer science, respectively. Connor also placed second at MCSRC. Extension courses are new to CCS this year, and it is for opportunities such as these that they have been created. These courses give students an opportunity to complete major projects in fields of interest and to compete on a larger stage.

Writing Students Published

Five of Mrs. Dana Perich's eighth grade students were selected by Creative Communication for its Fall 2011 edition, entitled *Celebrating What Is Important to Me*. The students wrote autobiographies for English grammar class and were asked to shorten them to 250 words for submission to the contest. Ryan Bristol, Kaitlyn Hafer, Rachel Monte, Jeremiah Niehls and Kaylie Niehls were selected by the editors for the publication. Creative Communication has two contests each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Students can enter essay or poetry contests, which are judged separately. This gives students the chance to take risks and the opportunity to be published. Four students have already submitted poems for the spring contest. This effort is part of an intentional focus upon providing CCS students with opportunities to complete significant projects that contribute to intellectual dialogue in local, regional, and even national and international venues.

High School Boys' Basketball on Rebound

The high school basketball program has had an uphill battle since joining the Atlantic Coast Christian Athletic Conference (ACCAC). This year the boys turned the perpetual corner and brought the Events Center crowd to life. The team finished in a three-way tie for second place with a conference record of 5-3.

Middle School Boys Basketball Team Wins Conference

Coach Josh Dove and the middle school boys went undefeated in the conference with an overall record of 11-1, with their only loss coming by six points to undefeated non-conference powerhouse, Lincoln Leadership Academy.

Science Lab Budget Doubles for 2012-13

In anticipation of an expansion of laboratory experiences for secondary science courses next year, the budget for lab supplies has been doubled. "The commitment expressed by our board to classical education calls us to invest in the resources necessary to improve the schools of logic and rhetoric (middle and high school) by equipping them to lead student through more hands-on logical processes provided by laboratory experiences," explains Paul Fisher, Director of Advancement. Design and implementation of research to solve complex problems will be the capstone of the science program at CCS.

Commitment to Faculty Excellence Evident in 2012-13 Budget

Excellent schools invest in an excellent faculty. The school board is in year three of a five year commitment to set aside one percent of the budget for professional development, a number suggested by Independent School Management (ISM) research to be a key stability marker for private schools. Three years ago, funding for faculty education was at one-hundredth of one percent. The 2012-13 budget will include \$11,000 for faculty professional development, or six tenths of one percent of the total budget.

ALUMNI NEWS

Nicholas Perich ('01) and his wife Kristin currently reside in Pottstown. Nick is a math teacher for the Norristown Area School District. He recently completed his MS in Math Education at West Chester University.

Abby Daroci ('03) earned her nursing degree at Montgomery County Community College. She currently works as an operating room RN at Physicians Care Surgical Hospital. She also works part-time in the cardiac unit at Phoenixville Hospital.

Vincent Spiezio ('04) recently received his bachelor's degree in Psychology from Oregon State. He has relocated to Eugene, Oregon, where he currently works part-time at a juvenile corrections facility. He is also teaching Karate.

Donald Dilliplane ('04) is currently finishing his MA in English at Loyola Marymount University in the greater Los Angeles area. He is emphasizing in creative writing and currently teaching freshmen composition classes as well.

Jessica Custer ('04) received her BA in English from Harding University. After graduation, she spent a year and a half teaching conversational English at a Chinese university in Hubei Province, where she also did mission work. She is currently teaching middle school reading and language arts at a Title 1 school in Orlando.

Nathan Smoyer ('04) graduated in 2010 from Central Penn College with a BS in Business. He is currently living in Bellingham, Washington and working as the Social Media Coordinator for Logos Bible Software.

Joshua Coughy ('05) is currently living in Nashville, Tennessee working as a full-time concert audio engineer and working in studios on the side. He's worked with artists and clients such as Hillsong United, Michael W.

Smith, O'Charley's restaurants, author Donald Miller, and country singer Jimmy Wayne.

Charlie Perich ('05) and Dana Dilliplane Perich ('06) were married in July 2011. Both currently work as teachers for Coventry Christian Schools. Charlie also works part-time as a computer technician and website coder for the Burkhardt Group.

Sapphire Goodman ('06) graduated from Morgan State University in 2010 with a BS in Social Work and in 2011 with an MS in Social Work. She now works for the Baltimore City Department of Social Services as a caseworker with Child Protective Services.

Mary Mazzoni ('06) recently received her bachelor's degree in Journalism from Temple University. She has relocated to Tempe, Arizona where she currently works as a staff writer for Earth911.com, an online publisher of green news and lifestyle content. Mary's written work has also appeared in the *Philadelphia Daily News*, *The Northeast Times*, *The Fishtown Star* and *Philadelphia Magazine's Philly Post*.

Kevin Meyer ('06) graduated with a BS in Psychology from Harding University in 2011. He is currently continuing his studies at Harding and plans to graduate in the summer of 2013 with a MS in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Daniel Niehls ('06) graduated from Harding University in 2011 with degrees in Finance and Accounting. He also played baseball for Harding. He now works at All Star Baseball Academy as the Assistant Manager at their indoor facility in Warminster, PA.

Brandon Custer ('07) is currently in his eighth month teaching science classes at Kigali International Christian School in Rwanda after receiving his BS in Biology at Harding University.

Christopher Dilks ('07) is a physics graduate student at Penn State. His research is in experimental particle physics and is conducted at the STAR detector at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider at Brookhaven National Lab. He has the experience of colliding protons at nearly the speed of light to peer into the internal spin structure of protons.

Jafar Hussain ('07) graduated from Lehigh University with a BS in Biology in May 2011. He has been accepted to Temple University Medical School. He works at Aesculap Implant Systems in Breinigsville, PA.

Kelly Jacoby ('08) will be graduating from Grove City College in May with a BS in Sociology. She plans to spend some time in the area raising funds for mission work in South Africa, which she hopes to begin in January 2013.

Jade Schnovel ('08) is studying for a BS in Social Work and Biblical studies at Kentucky Christian University, where she plays volleyball, and serves in student ministries, prison ministries, and works with foster children and families.

Teague Emery ('09) is currently enrolled at Susquehanna University as a Business Administration major with an emphasis in Finance and Entrepreneurship. He plays golf, serves as a Freshman Orientation leader, student conduct board member, and a Student Representative to the Susquehanna Board of Trustees.



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Summer Day Camp 2012 Is Almost Here!

**June 18-
August 24**

**Register
Now!**



**For All Kids
14 and Under**

Mondays and Wednesdays

Swimming & Splash Day: Kiddie Kampers will enjoy our own splash pools and water slides here on campus. Day campers will go to Camp Manatawny to swim, along with morning rotations of Bible, games, & crafts.

Tuesdays and Thursdays

Day campers will be enjoying a day trip to parks and other field trips planned throughout the summer! Kiddie Kampers will have Bible, crafts, games and other fun activities.

Fridays

Picnicking with the whole camp and fun activities like scavenger hunts, Olympic Games and splash days will be great ways to end the week!

To register for Summer Day Camp 2012, pick up a registration packet from the school office or email melissagelwicks@educatingforlife.com. You can also print the registration materials from www.coventrychristian.com.