

WINTER 2017

# *Ex Veritate*

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRUTH

*Goodness, Truth,  
and Beauty*

GENEVACLASSICALACADEMY.COM  
**Geneva**





## *A Word from the Headmaster*

### AND THE WORD IS “WISDOM”

“If you seek [Wisdom] as silver,  
And search for her as for hidden treasures;  
Then you will understand the fear of the Lord,  
And find the knowledge of God.”

The book of Proverbs teaches that we should “Get wisdom!” This has been my charge to Geneva students since the assembly on the first day of school and has become the theme for the school year. We have been discussing this idea each week at Consilium, in Curia, and in other class opportunities. Wisdom is a word with a lot of nuance, and may even hold different meanings for different people. For some, it is related to one’s intellect or moral code of behavior; for others it is a way of thinking about reality that enables a person to pursue what is good. The Scriptures specify that God through wisdom reveals the most important values in life; in fact, Wisdom is personified because God is Wisdom. Get Wisdom because God, Himself, is what we need. Geneva’s mission statement relates wisdom and our purpose this way:

“Geneva Classical Academy exists to assist families in fulfilling their biblical obligation to educate and train their children by providing an extraordinary education founded upon a scriptural worldview, distinctively Christian and classical, thus equipping students to know, love, and practice all that reflects goodness, truth, and beauty and encouraging them to live purposefully and thoughtfully in the service of God and man.”

In other words, we seek Wisdom. We seek to help our students find Him by reading great books from history and utilizing the time-tested method of the Trivium, and evaluating everything through Scripture. This is how we bring the ancient wisdom to bear on the present.

Geneva is accomplishing this with more students, as our enrollment has grown by another 10% to 153 students. In addition to receiving scholarship money from Step Up for Students, a privately funded program for the state of Florida, we received an additional \$50,000 from the George Jenkins Foundation. We are very grateful for four years of support from these folks. These scholarship monies have enhanced our growth to help us reach more students and more families.

Many other important things are happening, and in this issue, I pray that you will see how we seek to cultivate wisdom in our students by nourishing their souls on goodness, truth, and beauty. The political rhetoric of this past election season has demonstrated the great need our society has for wise, virtuous leaders. Geneva seeks to train future leaders, and with the Lord’s help, we will do so.

“Wisdom calls aloud outside;  
She raises her voice in the open squares.  
She cries out in the chief concourses,  
At the openings of the gates in the city  
She speaks her words:  
‘How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?  
For scorners delight in their scorning,  
And fools hate knowledge.  
Turn at my rebuke;  
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;  
I will make my words known to you.’”

Soli Deo Gloria,  
RICH CALI, Headmaster

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRUTH

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## MISSION STATEMENT

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## *In This Issue*

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- 4 FEATURED TEACHER: BOB MACEY
- 5 ATHLETICS: AN IMPERISHABLE WREATH
- 6 KIND CRITICISM: A GUIDE TO DISAGREEING AGREEABLY
- 8 A TEACHER'S SEARCH FOR A CHRISTIAN AESTHETIC
- 9 GRACE OF GIVING
- 10 LORI GERMANY: INTERVIEW WITH AN ALUMNI PARENT





## *One of Geneva's Own is Recognized*

Bob Macey, a longtime friend and supporter of Geneva, recently received the top award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals from among a very long list of nominees in the greater Polk County area. Mr. Macey was recognized in November at a breakfast held in celebration of annual National Philanthropy Day and by the association where they honored him as the 2016 Philanthropist of the Year for Polk County.

In 1975, Mr. Macey was working on his doctorate at the University of Illinois when his brother convinced him to come to central Florida and help him start a steel pipe distribution company that would cater to the phosphate, power, and construction industries. The company, Bartow Steel, prospered, and in 1997 they sold the company to a holding company that would evolve into the current

global corporation, Edgen Murray. He is currently the branch manager and director of mining at Edgen Murray Corporation. Hence, he has worked at the same location and industry for over forty-one years.

Married to his high school sweetheart, Jane, they have three grown children and six grandchildren. His children and grandchildren are the joy of his life and take up much of his free time.

Mr. Macey has always believed in supporting his community with time, talent, and resources. He is a former member of the Polk County School Board (1998 to 2002) and has also been involved in the arts community in numerous capacities over the past forty years, for example, Lakeland Community Theatre, Theatre Winter Haven, Polk Theatre, Polk Museum, Platform Art, Silver Garland, His Company, and Geneva Classical Academy Theater Arts. His wife also actively participates in the arts community behind the scenes, and in recent years her chief focus has been on her grandchildren. Mr. Macey continues to be actively involved in many educational, service and civic organizations as well as being an elder in his church. His lifelong hobby is slight-of-hand magic, and he is an accomplished magician. For the past two school years he has been teaching an elective at Geneva titled Prestidigitation, an introduction to sleight-of-hand card magic. In addition to all of this, Mr. Macey has also served on Geneva's board of directors and was a featured speaker in our Curia Podcast conversations on Christians and culture.

Congratulations to Bob Macey for a well deserved award!





# *An Imperishable Wreath*

In I Corinthians 9:25-27, Paul teaches, “Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” At Geneva, we want our athletes to be trained physically and in sportsmanship as way of pointing them to the spiritual, and this year our fall athletic teams have done very well.

The Geneva Knights won the FCAPPS six-man state championship game December 10 at Southeastern University. Hernando Christian Academy was favored to win, but the Knights came out ahead in the last seconds of the game, winning 39-36. Geneva junior Luke Brandt won Most Valuable Player. Many thanks to Athletic Director Rick Strawbridge, Coach Hornsby, Coach Sloan, and the other coaches for a great season and for bringing our team to victory.

Abby Smith coached the JV and varsity girls’ volleyball teams this season. The JV team came in second in the league tournament, and the varsity ladies made it to the second round of the varsity tournament.

Cross Country coach Kris Smith continues to push his runners to success. This Fall season, 8th grader Jack Brooks set a school record, running his 3k in 11:07. He came in 55th out of 375 runners at the Middle School State Meet. We are thankful for how well our athletes have performed this year and are most grateful for the good sportsmanship they learned.

In Spring 2016, Geneva successfully added a girls’ varsity soccer team and is now looking forward to having its first girls’ varsity basketball team this winter! Athletic Director Rick Strawbridge hopes to continue to grow the sports program to help students develop their athletic abilities and to encourage the athletes to play sports in a way that glorifies God.







# *Kind Criticism*

## A GUIDE TO DISAGREEING AGREEABLY

*By Bethany Lynam*

“Offendedness is just about the last shared moral currency in our country. And, I’m sorry, but it’s really annoying. We don’t discuss ideas or debate arguments; we try to figure out who is most offended.” – Kevin DeYoung

Yikes. How are we to engage with culture if we are too busy being offended by it? How do we season even our disagreements with kindness and generosity? What is good rhetoric? Here are some wise suggestions from what might strike you as a very surprising source. Daniel Dennet is one of “the Four Horsemen” of New Atheism. And although his worldview is very much at odds with a Christian view of the world, we intend on “walking the talk” by stopping to listen to some of his suggestions on how to

create a generous and charitable commentary or critique of an opponent’s argument.

Dennet says:

- You should attempt to re-express your target’s position so clearly, vividly, and fairly, that your target says, “Thanks, I wish I’d thought of putting it that way.”
- You should list any points of agreement (especially if they are not matters of general or widespread agreement).
- You should mention anything you have learned from your target.
- Only then are you permitted to say so much as a word of rebuttal or criticism.

Wise advice indeed. But of course, Dennet is not the first to make these suggestions. Aristotle, the king of formal logic encourages speakers not to be so biased as to avoid a real consideration of an opponent’s position saying, “It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.” Mortimer Adler acknowledges that we must take the time to thoroughly know and understand an opponent’s views: “You must be able to say “I understand,” before you can say “I agree,” or “I disagree,” or “I suspend judgment.”

And most importantly, we see that Scripture encourages this kind of charitable attitude and describes when, how, and why we ought to speak:

“Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:23-25 ESV).

Scripture suggests that there are some conversations that may simply require our silence. Some require gentle critique. But when engaging in every kind of argument, servants of God are told that they must always be kind, teachable, patient, and speaking for the benefit of others. Galatians warns that, if we do not keep this attitude, we begin to get a falsely high view of ourselves and may miss the will of Christ altogether:

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself” (Galatians 6:1-3 ESV).

Perhaps Christian philosopher Peter Kreeft would add a fifth step to Denner’s list by applying a filter not only to technique but also to tone:

“The arguer’s tone, sincerity, care, concern, listening, and respect matter as much as his or her logic – probably more. The world was won for Christ not by arguments but by sanctity: “What you are speaks so loud, I can hardly hear what you say.”

Kreeft reiterates the importance of a speaker’s heart and intention when entering into a challenging conversation. He points out how very clearly both reveal themselves in our mannerisms and how, without sanctification, that reveal may be so unattractive to a listener that his/her attention may be lost completely.

At Geneva we train our dialectic students in formal logic, encouraging their inclination to question. The discussion-based atmosphere of our rhetoric school takes that questioning a step further and teaches students to know when and how to ask. Geneva does not wish to produce students that react, but ones that actively listen and thoughtfully respond. Our desire is that, upon leaving Geneva, students are prepared to recognize truth in all contexts,

even when it is shrouded in inconsistencies, disguised in complexity, or comes from very unexpected sources. We also hope to instill in students the Christ-like humility to be charitable when they experience any amount of friction or hostility. We pray that they

## **GENEVA DOES NOT WISH TO PRODUCE STUDENTS THAT REACT, BUT ONES THAT ACTIVELY LISTEN AND THOUGHTFULLY RESPOND.**

would be wise enough to listen also for where they might be mistaken, and are being called to adjust. Geneva strives to disciple men and women who lead to a knowledge of the truth of Christ, not their own.

May we all be examples for them as we pause to listen well, understand thoroughly, see what truth can be gleaned in all conversations, and move forward in hope that all will experience the grace and peace of Christ in their interactions with his church. Amen.





# *A Teacher's Search for a Christian Aesthetic*

## **What is your new role at Geneva Classical Academy?**

I teach Visual Arts to Geneva's rhetoric school students, and I am also Geneva's Marketing Director.

## **What do you like best about it?**

The freedom. As a teacher, I am able to utilize whatever pertains to the students' growth in skill, intellect, and sanctification. I can speak to them as a whole person. I can speak about truth as it pertains to their hearts not simply their intellects, and, to me, that is the only true way to speak. Geneva gives teachers this rare freedom, and I don't take it for granted.

## **What has prepared you for this?**

I graduated from Berean Academy, a classical Christian school in Tampa, Florida, and then attended New College of Florida, a liberal arts honors college in Sarasota, Florida, where I designed an Interdisciplinary Arts degree. I moved back to Tampa to continue studying Philosophy at University of South Florida before teaching elementary and middle school Art and Music at a small Christian school in Odessa. Most recently before coming to Geneva, I worked in retail at an organic spa and at a local boutique in south Tampa, utilizing principles of marketing and PR for these businesses. I make my own artwork and most recently was commissioned by a college and career ministry located in Brandon, Florida. I am a member of CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts) and participate with IAM (International Arts Movement), a culture-care hub out of NYC. I also work closely with local arts label, The Two Keys Press, and currently sit on the board of OPUS, an annual art event held in Tampa.

## **What are your strengths that you bring to your students?**

I think my main strength is that I have experienced the unique and very strange multi-

cultural experience they are wading through. Students are growing up in a violently erratic time, and though we think it is worth it, giving them a deep, thorough, and robust education is not necessarily making things easier for them. Better, yes, but definitely not easier; I know, I was a 21st-century classical Christian student. They are learning not only what it means to be a Christ follower, but a church member; not only a student, but one being introduced to deeply complex, nuanced human conversations that have been wrestled over for millennia; meanwhile trying to figure out how to live in American western culture filled with "awareness," Facebook soap boxes, rampant narcissism, and vulgar songs built around sex, betrayal, moral relativism, and the message that Christ, his church, and their classical education is ignorant archaic bigotry. My point is, I get it. It was my grade school experience too.

Aesthetic culture is good truth-scouting practice. I feel like that's a vital lesson to learn for the thinker and the believer. Also, arts culture can be found everywhere, in ivory towers and house parties. If students can look at Picasso, Rothko, or

a random portrait and explain to me what's going on and how Christ's truth pertains to it, they will probably be able to handle an Instagram post or Drake song.

## **What are your strengths for your position as Marketing Director?**

I am living proof of what I'm marketing, and I don't mean that arrogantly. (Hopefully Geneva will turn out students that surpass me in every way!) But I have been through the grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric stages of the Christian classical education that I am marketing. I learned the grammar chants, and the Latin vocabulary, and history timeline. I took the logic and rhetoric classes and debated theological stances and read college-level philosophical texts. I wrote the 25-page thesis and defended it against a panel of experts and mentors. I lived all the joys and challenges of a Geneva style of education. I feel I was well prepared. I learned how to think, speak, and communicate. I learned how to see the world and how to teach myself to see more of it. Students need this, and our culture needs this. Classical





Christian education is not only a “better” but VITAL style of education for students growing up in this time because it fosters the whole student, growing knowledge and wisdom, head and heart. I know this from experience. I love the opportunity to be able to speak to the community and to parents about the work that is done here.

**How has graduating from a classical Christian school, one similar to Geneva, influenced your life’s passion?**

Most visibly, my senior thesis literally changed my life’s trajectory. I grew up wanting to be an artist: a musical artist, a visual artist, a poet. I wanted to do any and all of it, but I never felt like it was welcomed in the church. Those artsy crowds were “emotion based” and “worldly” or concentrated too much on the “flesh” to some of my other Christian communities. My senior year I made it a goal to use my thesis to figure out how a Christian could go into the arts and do it well. What I found was something much more nuanced than was ever expressed to me. I found art to be this culmination and outpouring of one’s theology, philosophy, psychology, and more. I found art to be

immensely important in and outside the church. I also discovered that an artist could be a perfectly faithful Christian! It was important for me to make these conclusions and discoveries on my own. I needed to go through the research and have the freedom to press through something I was passionate about without any hindrance. I didn’t know where that senior thesis was going to lead me at the start, but it ended up leading me to my life’s passion.

**How do you apply the ideals of classical and Christian education to your own life?**

“Goodness, Truth, and Beauty” was not the slogan at my school as it is at Geneva, but those three sister virtues are deeply rooted in the classical tradition, and so I heard of their symbiotic relationship often. Those three qualities have acted as a kind of quick test I use on everything. “Is that true? Perhaps, but what is that truth’s relationship to God’s standard for goodness?” Or, “Is that true and good? Fantastic. But is it beautiful?” That last question is often the harder and trickier answer to give. It has taken me longer and much more care and concentration to learn the weight and

significance of Beauty than the other two virtues. At the very least, it is this sublime characteristic of graceful movement throughout the world, and it has moved through all of my ideological, professional, and artistic work. I have studied beauty through philosophy, history, literature, art, art history, music, and theology. I credit the roots of this passion to my classical and philosophical introduction to it.

My rhetoric school text books were Britannica’s Great Books introducing me to something so much bigger than myself. That changed the whole tone and purpose of gaining knowledge to me. I was inheriting an opportunity and conversation that was millennia in the making! My classical and Christian education also made me brave intellectually. I don’t feel like I have to avoid any culture or company old or new because I might catch some infectious idea. I have been trained to recognize ideas and take them captive in order to submit them to the word of God. There is no fear of questioning or ideas different than mine. I feel like I can experience another facet of what Paul means when he says that it is for freedom that we were made free.

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## *Grace of Giving*

Thanks to Geneva’s faithful supporters, 153 students are being given a classical and Christian education this year. They are being taught to think critically, to communicate winsomely, and to measure all ideas in accordance with God’s word.

Every day, I hear stories from parents, teachers, and students about the ways in which our unique education touches hearts and lives and affects families. For example, one of our current students, Alex, was impacted by a study in his public speaking, or rhetoric, class. In their readings and discussions, the class wrestled with definitions of words related to persuasion, rhetoric, and sophistry for several class periods, and I know that he took that conversation home to discuss with his parents. After a week of contemplation, Alex finally settled the issue at hand in his own mind and then used his conclusions as he evaluated the rhetoric from both sides in this year’s election process. Our classes and teachers have a real impact every day! Our culture and community need Geneva students who think, communicate, and act according to biblical standards.

Geneva’s fundraising goal is \$200,000 over the course of the school year to support this great work, and we have \$120,000 yet to raise. Would you consider a year-end gift of any amount to help us reach this goal? You can send us your special contribution, or give online at [www.genevaclasicalacademy.com](http://www.genevaclasicalacademy.com). Grace is thought of as being given favor. Please show us your grace by supporting our efforts, and by God’s grace, we will continue this work together.





# Lori Germany:

## INTERVIEW WITH AN ALUMNI PARENT



### **How many students attended Geneva?**

Two: twin girls, Jordan and Jennifer

### **What grades and years did they attend?**

They started the Spring Semester, 9th grade, 2012 with Monica Maravilla in order to study Dante. We enrolled them full-time for 10th grade in August of 2012.

### **You chose to place your students in Geneva's Rhetoric school later in their education. Why?**

Up to that point we had mostly homeschooled.

### **What did you feel your students were missing in their educational environment?**

Jennifer was really wanting to interact with other students on a daily basis. I felt that they needed a more advance educational experience than I was able to provide [at home].

### **Do you think they received it at Geneva?**

They were not only able to interact with students in their own grade, but students ranging in age from Pre-K to 12th grade. Academically, they were not only encouraged to learn their subjects, but to understand them, making subjects like geometry and

chemistry infinitely more interesting to them.

### **What difference did you see in your students while attending Geneva?**

Initially I saw frustration. They loved what they were learning, but they had never had to view their subjects in such a challenging integrated manner. The teachers were all very hands on and encouraging during this period. By the second semester they had begun to assimilate the classical way of learning.

### **What evidence of their Classical Christian education do you see now?**

Both girls look at life through a different lens and are open to considering differing points of view that I find unusual in the present culture. While we don't always agree, they are both confident in their point of view, knowing what they believe and why they believe it.

### **What part of the Geneva experience do you think resonated/was a favorite for your girls?**

The relationships that they formed. I loved the way the class was so close and supportive of each other. They were also very good at holding each other's feet to the fire. There also

were some very significant friendships formed with their teachers, often going to them with life challenges as well as educational. Many of the faculty have become much more than just teachers to our whole family.

### **In what ways do you feel Geneva has equipped your students to serve the church?**

Often there are sins or beliefs that the church neglect out of comfort or not wanting to offend. They have no problem confronting these. They will always want to see biblical proof of a teaching and have no problem challenging someone else's view if they believe it is contrary to the Bible.

### **In what ways do you feel Geneva has equipped them to serve the culture at large?**

Probably the manner with which they are able to look at life and engage with it. For example, they are able to hear what another person is saying, and while possibly disagreeing with them, they are able to have a civil conversation. On a more academic note, they have a love of learning and an understanding of a broad area of subjects.

### **Describe your experience as a Geneva parent. Did you benefit in any way from being part of the Geneva community?**

Absolutely! Teachers and other parents have become lifelong friends. It was very easy to become involved with the Geneva community through volunteer opportunities, extracurricular activities, and the educational options for parents. We immediately felt welcome and supported throughout our time at Geneva.

### **What sets Geneva apart to you now?**

Geneva is a unique opportunity for students to discover a love for the Lord and how He has interjected Himself into their world through history, science, and even math. I will forever be grateful that my girls had the opportunity not only to see Christ as their savior, but as a savior who is intentionally at work in their world, lives, and throughout time. Geneva is a wonderful school, but the families and faculty make it so much more. It was our home away from home, a support system, a true blessing to our family.



# — THAT'S — SO YESTERDAY



*Shakespeare is the new black.*

*A play produced by Geneva Classical Academy*

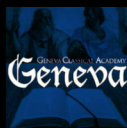
**Jan. 13 & 14 7:00 PM**

*Doors open at 6:30pm for viewing first floor exhibits*

ADULTS: \$10 STUDENTS: \$5

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Please join us for Geneva Classical Academy's 10th annual Shakespeare production: a conglomeration of Shakespearean tid-bits strung together with modern song and dance. This year's show celebrates ten years of this Geneva performance art distinctive and features decades of fashion styles from the 1920's to the 2010's.



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