

EX VERITATE



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GENEVA CLASSICAL ACADEMY

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MISSION

Geneva Classical Academy seeks to cultivate wisdom and virtue in the souls of our students in order that they may love what is true, good, and beautiful through a growing academic community focused on Christ.



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SO PAUL, STANDING IN THE MIDST OF THE AREOPAGUS, SAID: “MEN OF ATHENS, I PERCEIVE THAT IN EVERY WAY YOU ARE VERY RELIGIOUS. FOR AS I PASSED ALONG AND OBSERVED THE OBJECTS OF YOUR WORSHIP, I FOUND ALSO AN ALTAR WITH THIS INSCRIPTION: ‘TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.’ WHAT THEREFORE YOU WORSHIP AS UNKNOWN, THIS I PROCLAIM TO YOU.

ACTS 17:22-23



WELCOME *from the* HEADMASTER

I bring you greetings from the Board of Directors, Administration, Faculty, and Staff of Geneva Classical Academy, and we want you to know how pleased we are to share this latest edition of our magazine, *The Ex Veritate* (Latin for “out of the truth”). It is our intention that we always speak out of God’s truth with respect to our great salvation found in Christ through His Word, but also that we speak the truth with regard to how He providentially guides this school, i.e. our latest news.

Exciting things continue to happen on our campus. In 2023, Geneva:

- Celebrated the 26th anniversary of BuckFin, honoring our founders and event hosts, the Albritton family, for their contribution to the school at DANA Camp House.
- Achieved our re-accreditation with the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS).

- Experienced continued growth in enrollment, reaching 250 students for 2023-24, our highest enrollment to date, and added a second section of 4th Grade.
- Refurbished the playgrounds this summer from our BuckFin “Fund the Need” special auction.
- Hosted our second ACCS Regional Summit for administrators. Many schools in the Southeast are now looking to Geneva for how to accomplish a classical Christian education.
- Expanded our athletics department through the completion and dedication of the Field House, hiring a new full-time athletic director, becoming more competitive, and strengthening the participation of the Geneva community.
- Received generous scholarship support from the George Jenkins Foundation. They have been supporting Geneva since 2014 with over \$1M given in scholarships and grants over that time!

You will be able to read about and see much of these happenings in your current edition. I also direct your attention to the featured article by Geneva parent and board member, Shane Morris.

Shane works with the Colson Center following cultural trends, and he gives a great perspective on why we need classical Christian education. We pray you are as encouraged by the news of what the Lord is doing at Geneva as we are!

Blessings,

Rich Cali





WHAT DO THEY TEACH IN THESE SCHOOLS?

THE DANGER OF A 'USEFUL' EDUCATION

By Shane Morris

Being on the internet inevitably means acquiring snippets of pop culture knowledge from entertainment you've never watched. One snippet I can't forget came in the form of a meme based on an episode of *That 70s Show*. A young character about to go off to college says, "I've decided to major in philosophy."

An older character responds, "Well, that's good, because they just opened that big philosophy factory in Green Bay!"

We laugh because we get the joke: a philosophy degree is a big investment, yet it doesn't help students produce anything of practical value. Studying philosophy is esoteric, akin to sitting around with your chin on your fist like Rodin's *The Thinker*, contemplating questions whose answers won't help you pay off student loans or put supper on the table. Only non-contributing eggheads waste time and money on such studies. A worthwhile education involves training in some technical skill—something, for instance, within the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

This attitude is common among political conservatives. At any rate, they're usually the ones I see "sharing" that meme. I can understand their feelings, considering the philosophies on offer at so many American universities these days. Students at top schools tend to be obsessed with identifying power dynamics, dismantling social institutions, and celebrating degeneracy under the guise of empowering "marginalized groups." We can forgive tradition-minded parents for being suspicious of modern higher education, especially the humanities, after seeing what it produces: student groups at Harvard and elsewhere applauding Hamas attack on Israel, or Seattle descending into garbage-strewn anarchy a couple of years ago when 20-something ideologues set up the "Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone." Philosophy means "the love of wisdom," but there's nothing lovely or wise about the next generation being taught to despise Western civilization, their own heritage, and Christianity.

Yet those with sharp eyes will notice that we can't rid ourselves of philosophy by simply dismissing it and focusing on "useful" studies that generate paychecks. By rejecting philosophy, we have, unknowingly, embraced a philosophy that treats education as a way of increasing our earning

potential and our future economic output. We might call this the “utilitarian philosophy” of education. And it’s a very new one, largely alien to Western civilization or the classical Christian tradition.

For centuries that saw the founding of the great universities in Europe and America, education was guided by a philosophy that saw all human knowledge as related and purposeful, and viewed learning about creation as a way of “thinking God’s thoughts after him,” to quote Johannes Kepler. If you look up at the peaks of archways in the most storied schools, you can still see traces of that philosophy, long forgotten by most professors and students.

Lux et Veritas—light and truth—is the old motto of Yale. *Dominus illuminatio mea*—“The Lord is my light”—has been Oxford’s slogan for centuries. These Latin phrases harken back to a view of education as neither an effort to deconstruct civilization, nor a means of acquiring marketable skills to secure middle-class status. Those who dedicated their lives and institutions to this view of education saw learning as a way of forming virtuous citizens who would use their knowledge for the good of all. They sought to form young men and women with well-ordered affections who would love what is true, good, and beautiful, and hate what is false, evil, and ugly.

The very word “university” is a relic of this view. It implies a unity of all knowledge, whether math and science or theology and music. Likewise, to have a “liberal” education today may mean learning to replace the American flag with the progress pride flag, or to replace Christianity with critical theory, but the term originally meant an education suited for a member of a free society—someone worthy and capable of self-government.

Few in the 20th century argued for this view of education more eloquently than C. S. Lewis, who was himself a lifelong educator. In both his fiction and nonfiction, he frequently portrays the foibles of modern education to humorous effect. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, he describes Eustace Scrubb as a boy who had read all the wrong sorts of books—those about “exports and imports” and “governments” and “grain elevators,”—but never books about dragons. The same Eustace later

“By rejecting philosophy, we have, unknowingly, embraced a philosophy that treats education as a way of increasing our earning potential and our future economic output.”

finds himself at an experimental school where bad behavior and bullying are studied by psychologists, rather than punished. And in one of the most memorable exchanges in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, Professor Digory Kirke chides the Pevensie siblings for not using logic as Plato taught. “What do they teach in these schools?” he marvels.

For Lewis, as for any teacher steeped in the classical Christian tradition, education is about much more than what to think, especially as a mere means of making money. It is chiefly about how and why to think. Miseducated characters like Eustace amass technical knowledge about many subjects, some of which probably had economic promise. But these skills don’t help Eustace on an adventure that calls for wisdom and virtue. Other characters, like the three oldest Pevensies, have learned to treat fantastic and supernatural claims (like a magic land inside a wardrobe) with determined skepticism. The wise, old professor who first entered Narnia rebukes them for seeing the world through their ideology, instead of their eyes. School has taught them not to think, instead of how to think.

Nowhere does Lewis more clearly articulate the wrong turn education has taken in the modern world than in *The Abolition of Man*. Through his metaphor of “men without chests,” he forecasts the consequences of an education shorn of value judgments. Students who are taught to treat the good, true, and beautiful as subjective opinions will not become objective observers of the world around them, warned Lewis. Instead, they will grow into “trouser apes” ruled only by their passions, and enslaved to the wills of more ambitious men who seek to “condition” the populace. The book’s title suggests the inevitable end of such miseducation:

the destruction of students' humanity, and of society, itself, if the contagion is allowed to spread.

This is why Lewis, following the classical Christian tradition, saw the primary purpose of education from grade school to grad school as nothing less than the formation of virtuous human beings. The very name "humanities" attests to this purpose. Acquiring profitable skills, while important and worthwhile, was not the original or ultimate aim of academies and universities. Rather, the great thinkers of the Christian West believed in a world that made sense, fit together, and could be understood. Taking their cue from Proverbs 25:2, they taught that mankind's purpose is to plumb the secrets which God has concealed in His world, and give them back to Him as glory. Far from a trivial pursuit, they saw philosophy and other less practical disciplines as the essence of human vocation, the heart of the reason God formed creatures who could sing and think, not just eat and breed.

Of course, we still have to eat. Not everyone should major in philosophy, or even go to college. The world needs skilled farmers, craftsmen, pilots, surgeons,

plumbers, soldiers, and mothers in far greater numbers than it needs academics. But the promise of classical Christian education is that our farmers, craftsmen, pilots, surgeons, plumbers, soldiers and mothers can also be people of virtue and learning, philosophers and theologians in their own right. Indeed, they *must* be such people if we want those who grow our food, build our homes, and raise our children to value something higher than paychecks!

In our understandable eagerness to reject the ideologies tearing down civilization, we must not dismiss the ideas that built it. Demanding education always serve a practical purpose misconstrues the purpose of education, and the high calling of being created in the image of God. We were made to ask *why* and *how*, and given the means to answer—and not just an elite few, but all of us. That's why the philosophy of education we teach our students now will shape the world we live in tomorrow into one that is true, good, and beautiful, or not. In a manner of speaking, our institutions of learning really are factories. The question is: what kind of product are we turning out?



FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Interview With Megan Boutwell



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A LAKELANDER? WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CITY COMPARED TO OTHER PLACES YOU'VE LIVED?

I was born in Lakeland and have lived here my entire life with the exception of college and a couple years of living overseas. The appeal of Lakeland is my church and church family. If I could package it all up and live somewhere that had four seasons, I would move rather quickly.

WHAT IS YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND?

My entire grade school experience was at Lakeland Christian School. After graduating, I went to Covenant College where I earned a BA in English along with minors in history, Bible, and business. After college, I lived in Germany and worked in the dorm program of Black Forest Academy, a boarding school for the children of missionaries.

More recently I have completed the certificate coursework through CCEF (Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation) which is part of the requirements for a MAC (Masters of Arts in Counseling) from Westminster Theological Seminary. Whether I ever fully complete the MAC coursework is yet to be determined.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TEACHING AT GENEVA? WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FONDEST MEMORIES OVER THAT TIME?

This is my eighteenth year at Geneva; I taught fourth grade for five years before moving to teach sixth grade for five years; for the last eight years I've been teaching sixth grade humanities (Bible, English, history) along with 7th and 8th grade English. Over my time at Geneva, I also served as yearbook editor for two years, led two Senior class trips, and coached girls' soccer for several years - I think four.

As to my fondest memories, I am a big fan of little things. While I know God is at work in big moments, it is often in the series of little moments that he is faithfully accomplishing his work in us. I am most fond of those little moments in my students' lives. I love when a student in Bible class says, "We talked about this same thing in church on Sunday." I love when students make comments showing they understand how a culture or author is right about the human condition but wrong about the solution, and they see how the Bible speaks the truth more clearly. I love when students are as moved by Corrie ten Boom's story as I am. I love when I can tell a student enjoys being here at school among their friends and teachers. The big

moments are too few to be sustaining. It is the little moments that make what we do here worthwhile.

HOW DID THE LORD PREPARE YOU FOR THIS?

How did he not prepare me? I believe in God's sovereignty, so every moment of my life, all the directions my life has taken, have prepared me for the work he is calling me to do. There is nothing particular that stands out as a defining moment.

WHAT ARE YOUR GREATEST STRENGTHS THAT YOU BRING TO YOUR STUDENTS?

There's no good way to answer this question without sounding a bit arrogant, but I'll try. I think the greatest thing I bring to my students is a genuine love for them (even though I don't always express it). No one seems to like middle school students as is evidenced by the number of people who question my sanity when I tell them what my occupation is. I, however, really do love middle school students. The greatest thing I can offer them is an enjoyment of being around them and not just having to "suffer through" teaching them. The things that make them so awkward and off-putting to others seem more like opportunities. I am not bothered by the tactless comments, unexplainable tears, or weird smells...okay, the weird smells bother me.

DESCRIBE SOME OF THE SPECIAL ACTIVITIES YOU DO WITH STUDENTS IN YOUR TEACHING AND EXPLAIN WHY.

In sixth grade, when we study the Great Depression, we do a hands on activity to try to help the students understand the combination of bank failure, stock market issues, and unemployment that led to so much suffering for all Americans. They all get jobs, have money, invest it, and make plans based on the way the economy is projected to advance and then watch everything get taken from them as the economy turns down. I've found it to be very helpful to make a complex issue more tangible.

In eighth grade, students choose a person who lived in the last eighty years and turn their lives into a Greek tragedy complete with a "chorus" pulled from modern music. This project not only gives students empathy for the Greek playwrights, but it solidifies the technical aspects of Greek plays and reinforces what we are learning. Plus, we get to listen to a lot of good (and some bad) music.

"I believe in God's sovereignty, so every moment of my life, all the directions my life has taken, have prepared me for the work he is calling me to do."

HOW HAVE THE IDEALS OF CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IMPACTED YOUR OWN LIFE, IF AT ALL?

I think teaching has pushed me to be more aware of my desperate need for the saving and sanctifying work of Christ in my life. There is no part of life where Christ's sovereignty is absent or scripture is silent. The daily challenges of teaching and the thoughts, dreams, hopes, struggles, and difficulties that students bring with them into the classroom have reinforced what I know to be true. Our hope is in Christ; nothing else can answer the suffering of the world; nothing else has already defeated the evil of the world; and nothing else gives us a hope for our future – not even a classical Christian education. However, we have the opportunity at Geneva to point our students to their Savior in every class and with every activity.

IS THERE SOME OTHER AREA OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO YOU THAT I HAVEN'T ASKED ABOUT?

I love reading, which is no real surprise. If I can be outside while reading, even better.



WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO?

I have loved being a part of the huge growth Geneva has undergone in the past eighteen years. When I first started teaching we were on split campuses dreaming of the day we would all be together and own our own property. To be in the front row as God has answered prayer after prayer for our school has been a delight. Geneva has been richly blessed by the Lord's provision of students, facilities, faculty and staff. While I would love to stay home in my pajamas and spend the day reading every day, I also love to come to work and fellowship with my colleagues and minister to my students. My hope is that Geneva, while staying faithful to the mission of its founders, continues to grow into the school God has for us to be. I look forward to seeing how the Lord will work this out.



FAMILY HIGHLIGHT

THE RENFROS





How long have you been in Lakeland? What do you like about Lakeland?

Rachel has called Lakeland home since 1996 and Chris joined her in 2002. Both Reilly and Brielle were born in Lakeland. Our deep affection for the tight-knit community and shared culture in this area are some of our favorite things about Lakeland.

How long have you been at Geneva and how did you end up here?

We are now in our sixth year at Geneva. We have always been steadfast in our belief that a private Christian school education is the best choice for our children. We grew fond of the classical model, and our children attended Heritage Christian Academy in Winter Haven, another classical school, until its unfortunate closure. Several teachers we were fond of found a new home at Geneva in prior years. During our search for a new school, we toured nearly every Christian school in the vicinity. However, it was Geneva's community, culture, and educational philosophy that captured our hearts and solidified our commitment to the school.

What are some of your fondest memories over this time or favorite activities?

Geneva possesses a remarkable talent: when you immerse yourself in its community, it integrates you into a larger family. This family exudes warmth, humor, and genuine care. We've cherished the good-natured sarcasm, spirited competition, and unwavering dedication to the children's education that the school fosters. This spirit particularly shines during events like Roman Day. You don't want to pass up the opportunity to be part of the D.C. trip, witness the students' presentations, or be enamored with special projects like the castle build. The curriculum truly springs to life.

“Geneva possesses a remarkable talent: when you immerse yourself in its community, it integrates you into a larger family.”

Your family is involved at Geneva at many levels; describe ways you serve and minister at the school.

Rachel has served as a PTF member and room mom for five years, which has involved attending classes and school events, acting as a field trip chaperone, and helping with BuckFin. Chris has volunteered as the basketball coach at the middle school, JV, and Varsity levels for the past six years. The basketball program's goal is to teach the boys to glorify God through their hard work, effort, discipline, and attitude. He also willingly takes on whatever responsibilities Rachel signs him up for, often without his prior knowledge.

How have you balanced home life, church, work, and school?

This is our greatest challenge and remains a work in progress. Who needs a work-life-home-church balance anyway? We simply keep moving forward, trusting that it will align with God's plan.

Have you observed growth in your children?

Reilly and Brielle represent the best parts of us. We are confident that they will surpass us. They have a deep love for the Lord and a strong foundation, which Geneva played a crucial role in establishing. They are bright, respectful, empathetic, and have a strong sense of responsibility.

How do you anticipate that Geneva helped prepare your children for life after school?

At Geneva, they acquired values such as hard work, discipline, the ability to defend their beliefs, and maintained strong logical reasoning. Most importantly they have developed critical thinking skills. All these characteristics are immensely valuable for their future and will guide them to live for God's glory.





THANKS TO THE BUCKFIN FOUNDERS

How can we describe this one-of-a-kind fundraising event that was hosted at the DANA Camp House for 26 years, but more than that, how do we give ample thanks to the individuals and families who have been the driving force behind it?

The idea for this fundraiser began in 1998 when two Geneva dads were looking for a way to raise much needed funds for the school.





They created a wild game feast much like the First Thanksgiving at Plymouth with fish that the dads caught, deer they hunted, and side dishes brought by other families. From humble beginnings of 62 guests in 1998 raising \$8,000, the event now hosts 200+ guests raising over \$100,000 each year. In recent years, BuckFin has offered:

- Food: Appetizers such as whole roasted hog, country sausage, quail, gator tail and many other delicious homemade dishes. Main course items included fabulous salads, fried mahi-mahi bites, venison bites, slow cooked pulled pork, barbequed yard bird, and mouth-watering brisket, not to mention plenty of delicious homemade desserts.
- Fun: Excitement abounded with raffles, card tricks, silent auctions, and the high-spirited live auction led by the pro team at Mike Garner Auctioneers.
- Exotic and luxury items: live artist's painting, vacation destinations, hunting excursions for hog, Florida deer, and turkey, fishing with the pros, puppies, specialty dinners, and guns.

- Community: old and new friends coming together, sharing tables, celebrating, feasting, socializing, and enjoying the Lord's blessings on the school.

None of this would have been possible without the support and vision of the founding families of Jack Breed, Bobby Smothers, Bo Raulerson, and John Ball, hosts Dale and Carolyn Albritton and their daughter Laura McGinnis, Nick and Phyllis Albritton and their daughter Sabrena Smothers, long-serving BuckFin Committee members James Cook, Andy McGinnis, Georgiana Goodson, and Laura Warneke, and our first teacher, Kem Cook. These wonderful people, along with countless others, have raised in excess of \$2 million over this time! We are deeply grateful for their support and sacrifice for the school.

We look forward to how the Lord will continue to bless Geneva through its one-of-a-kind event, BuckFin, at our new location on the school campus.





GENEVA TENNIS IS NUMBER 1 IN WEST POLK COUNTY

Geneva men's tennis team had a 9-1 record during the regular season last spring.

Geneva men's tennis team won the West Polk County Championship!

Teams in the West County Tournament Bracket Include:

George Jenkins High School, Lakeland High School, McKeel Academy, Lakeland Christian School, Santa Fe Catholic School, Bartow High School, Lake Gibson High School, Kathleen High School

Individual accomplishments include:

Tanner Simpson at #1 Singles was the West County Finalist.

Wiley Simpson at #2 Singles was the West County Champion and also the #2 Singles All County Champion.

Luke McCastlain at #3 Singles was the West County Semi-Finalist.

Eli Lindsey at #4 Singles was the West County Finalist.

Zach Lindsey at #5 Singles was the West County Finalist.

VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY WINS COUNTY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SCHOOL HISTORY!

This Cross Country season was a huge success for the Geneva Cross country team! Boys varsity won the Polk county championship for the first time in school history! The varsity boys competed in the 5k distance and were led by Liam Holzer (17:17) in 5th place, Tyler McDow (17:21) in 7th place, Oliver Dempsey (17:22) in 8th place, and Michael McDow (17:23) finishing in 9th place, all taking home individual medals for finishing in the top 10. Rounding out the varsity scorers and just missing out on the top 15 were Ben Hill (17:45) in 17th, Will Yates (18:02) in 21st place, and Eli Kennedy (19:07) in 42nd place.

Next, the J.V. boys had quite a few personal records and finished in 2nd, only 1 point out of first, including Jude Stainsby (19:34) in 5th place, Carter McCastlain (20:00) in 7th place, Titus Suits (20:30) in 11th place, Isaac Ostrom (20:32) in 12th place, and Jackson Smith (20:49) in 14th place, all winning individual medals by finishing in the top 15.





Geneva Athletics

By Athletic Director, Jess Belli

Holy, Holy, Holy.” Right now, at this very moment, creatures like we have never seen, made unique for the task, are in the throne room of heaven singing this on repeat to the one true living God. What does this have to do with athletics? Everything.

In his book *Don't Waste Your Sports*, CJ Mahaney provides incredible insight for Christian athletes:

Here's the difference knowing God makes: when I encounter the eternal, almighty, infinite, and merciful God, something changes in my heart. My attention turns away from myself and toward this glorious God. I walk onto the field much less likely to brag, jockey for attention, or try to win others' admiration. Every play, every inning, every race becomes an opportunity to draw attention to God. That's what we call worship. And this is why worshiping God isn't just something we do in church. It's something we do in all of life, including our sports.

One of my favorite coaches of all time is John Wooden who was most famously the long time coach of UCLA basketball. I agree with his thought and famous quote,

“Sports don't build character; they reveal it.” Romans 3:23 states, “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Luke 6:45 reminds, “out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.” I personally have had sin revealed in my heart directly in relation to athletics. There are many ways to sin in athletics, but it's not the fault of the sport. What's at fault here are our “idol-factory hearts” as Calvin would say. Our hearts wander; we lean towards making everything about the win; we lean towards treating people only with the value they bring with their performance on the field or the court. Ultimately, we lean towards making everything about us. Rather than singing “Holy, Holy, Holy” at the throne in heaven, athletics reveal our temptation to enthrone ourselves.

I have been either playing or coaching soccer for the past thirty-six years, I love the sport of soccer! However, I have considered how absolutely ridiculous my sport is: a whole bunch of people just running around kicking a ball, trying to get it in a net. How could this possibly be of value? Can sports be redeemed? Or should we just throw these silly games called athletics out and focus on more important, godly things?

“Every play, every inning, every race, becomes an opportunity to draw attention to God. That's what we call worship.”

As people have brought these questions to me over the years my mind goes to two things. First, what Olympic Track Legend Eric Liddell meant in *Chariots of Fire* when he told his sister why he was delaying his move to China to become a missionary, “I believe God made me for a purpose. For China. But He also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure.” Second, “whatever you do, work wholeheartedly, as for the Lord not for men” (Col. 3:23).

¹ Revelation 4:8

² p.6

³ Chariots of Fire, Directed by Hugh Hudson (Allied Stars Ltd, 1981), 01:54:25

⁴ Matz, Robin. “I Play for the One who Made Me”

When the well of man's applause runs dry,
When I put the team first and to myself die,
When I succeed and keep my eyes fixed on the
most High,
I play for the One who made me.
When I am tired and worn, but His strength
prevails,
When I play with joy because His love never fails,
When I sacrifice for others remembering the nails,
I play for the One who made me.
When I give my all and finish the race,
When I get up and try again because I see His face,
When I compete with passion but lose with grace,
I play for the One who made me.

When we play, watch, and coach sports in light of
eternity, we are part of a chorus of brothers and

sisters across the world singing, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY,
IS THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY WHO WAS AND IS
AND IS TO COME."

May we prepare the way for the second coming of
Christ in a similar way John the Baptist prepared for
His first coming, boldly declaring with how we live and
how we compete in athletics, "BEHOLD, the Lamb of
God who takes away the sin of the world" and "He
must increase, I must decrease." We have been invited,
in Christ, to join in with the glorious melody of heaven
singing Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. As
we race, play volleyball, football, basketball, soccer,
tennis, and archery may we live every moment holy.
We are closest to the throne room of heaven when we
sing, with our lives, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY!"



STUDENT ART FEATURE

By Ethan Chea, Tenth Grade



This piece depicts a gargoyle mounted on the side of a church building with a Bible in its grip. Ethan's reference for the drawing was selected for him as the most challenging. He created the artwork with an array of 7 graphite pencils of different values with the focus of creating depth and shape.

STUDENT ART FEATURE

Hannah Seger, Fourth Grade

Each month, Geneva grammar students study a master artist from the past. They learn about their lives and how their artwork developed over time. Each grade attempts to recreate a different piece by the artist being studied.



To recreate the Van Gogh Sunflower piece, the students looked at a few different examples. They were allowed to make their sunflowers their own but they had to reflect the style of Van Gogh. Students were provided with closeups of different Van Gogh sunflowers laid out on tables. They used only warm colored pencils.

STUDENT ART FEATURE

Charlotte March, Fourth Grade



For Picasso's Blue Period Flower pastel, the students had to attempt a challenging technique of drawing an object using negative space. They used oil pastel to smudge shadows and a deep background.

STUDENT WRITING FEATURE

THE TRUE GOD AND HIS MEANING-FILLED UNIVERSE

One portion of Geneva's senior Capstone class is a brief survey of philosophy, ranging from the pre-Socratics and Plato all the way up to such modern philosophers as Friedrich Nietzsche and Jean-Paul Sartre. The students also consider what Scripture, including the book of Ecclesiastes specifically, teaches on the questions the class raises. One of the central questions concerns what the implications of life in a Godless universe would be. Considering this very question, three of Geneva's seniors—Michael McDow, Amirah Elamm, and Abby Viner (with a little coaching from Mr. Strawbridge)—wrote the following essay.

In his 1882 work *The Gay Science*, the great existentialist philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche presents a madman, a prophet, who comes with a lantern to bring light and knowledge to the people. He announces to his audience that “God is dead!” and they simply laugh at him. However, the madman continues, explaining that the death of God bears profound significance. He compares the death of God to unchaining the Earth from its sun, leaving it to spin off into nothingness with no purpose or meaning. He exclaims to the people that they cannot continue to live like there is a God, in a world with meaning, value, morality, and transcendentals, if they have killed him! If God is dead, all these become either products of subjectivity or social construction. They lose any claim to inherent truth or universality. Nietzsche uses this story to emphasize again and again the profound significance of the death of God, how it changes literally everything. The madman eventually humbles the people, smashing his lantern and proclaiming that he “comes too early” with these prophetic warnings. He goes on to say that if God is dead, then humans have no choice but to replace Him and must become gods themselves to fill this void, which is an impossible task.

Thousands of years before Nietzsche's madman warned the people of the overwhelming implications of life in a Godless universe, the book of Ecclesiastes brought to light the emptiness of life without God. If we do not have God, we do not have anything at all. The author of Ecclesiastes writes, “Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun” (Ecc. 1:2-3)? Vanity here means empty, temporary, meaningless. Under the sun refers to our lives here on Earth. These verses clearly indicate the very theme that life is meaningless without God.

The author does not say we are not allowed to enjoy earthly pleasures. In fact, he professes that we must “eat and drink and take pleasure in all of [our] toil” (Ecc. 3:13), but we must remember that God is the giver of these gifts. “Fear God” (Ecc. 12:13), he proclaims, and stand in awe of who He is and what He has graciously given us. The pleasures of the earth will surely fade away into nothingness, but God alone will not, for He has “placed eternity into man's heart.” (Ecc. 3:11). Understanding this, one can draw from Nietzsche's writings and Ecclesiastes that we must have God in order for our lives to have true meaning.

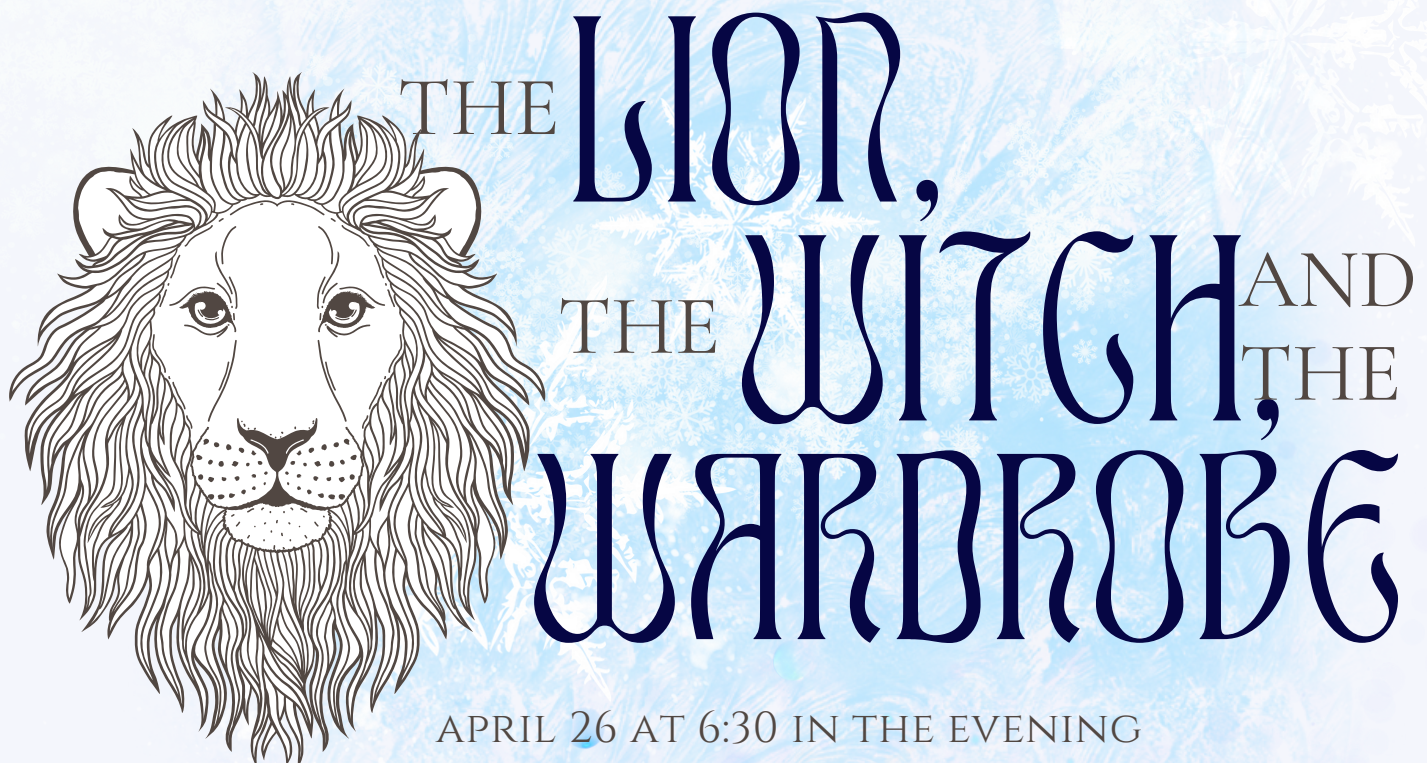
In our senior Capstone survey of Western philosophy, ranging from the ancient Plato to the modern Nietzsche and Sartre, we have seen just how right Nietzsche was in revealing the profundity of the death of God and the meaning He brings to our lives and our world. We found the same reflected in Ecclesiastes, and this has driven us to realize the inescapable nature of the eternal God who has revealed Himself in His creation and His Word. Understanding this, we are now able to rationally and clearly defend our Christian faith. When turning to Scripture, we must recognize that we are not all-knowing. God alone is omniscient. By exploring and navigating these diverse ideas in the history of philosophy, we have been able to gain a better understanding of how to engage with others respectfully while grounding our beliefs and claims in our faith. As we enter a stage of life where we will be constantly faced with opposing beliefs, we are now better equipped and are more encouraged to make known the true God and His meaning-filled universe.

Fine Arts Festival



December 1, 2023 | Geneva Auditorium | 6:30 PM

THE GENEVA THEATER ARTS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:



APRIL 26 AT 6:30 IN THE EVENING
APRIL 27 AT 2:00 IN THE AFTERNOON
1736 NEW JERSEY ROAD LAKELAND, FL.

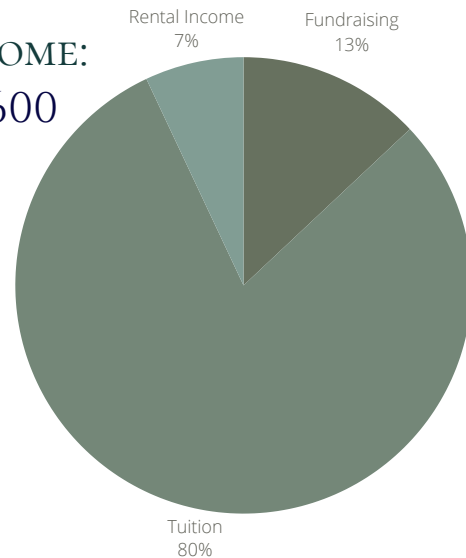
STATE OF THE SCHOOL

A LOOK AT OUR ENROLLMENT:

2017-2018	ONE FIFTY-FIVE
2018-2019	ONE SIXTY-FIVE
2019-2020	ONE EIGHTY-FIVE
2020-2021	ONE NINETY-FIVE
2021-2022	TWO HUNDRED
2022-2023	TWO HUNDRED FORTY
2023-2024	TWO HUNDRED FIFTY

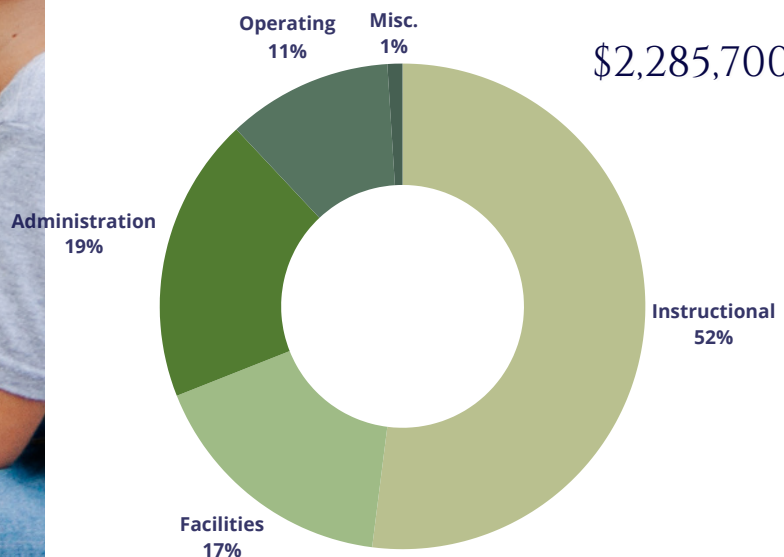
TOTAL INCOME:

\$2,637,600



TOTAL EXPENSES:

\$2,285,700





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