

THE  
GRACE  
ACADEMY

# ROSTRUM



**LIVING INTENTIONALLY**

VOL 8 FALL 2018

THANK YOU FOR BEING A PART OF

*The Grace Gala*

PUMPKINS & PEARLS



YOUR PRAYERS, PRESENCE, & PARTICIPATION  
ARE AT THE HEART OF GRACE'S GROWTH VIA OUR  
ANNUAL FUND. THANK YOU FOR SHARING  
THIS JOURNEY. SOLI DEO GLORIA!

# GREETINGS



The privilege of raising children can be compared to running a marathon, an arduous race that requires keen focus on the long-term goal. But you don't have to run this race alone. As a school, we desire to partner with you in the pursuit of classical, Christ-centered education. Understanding that there is no neutral ground in the formation of a child's soul, heart, and mind, we want to be very intentional as we run this race with you.

In this edition of the Rostrum, we're looking at a specific theme of the Christian life: *living intentionally*. Join us as we consider the rhythms and patterns of our school traditions, intended to guide students' hearts toward Christ

and rooted in the school's Portrait of a Graduate. Read about three teachers whose passions mirror the prayerful goals of Christian parents. Reflect with us on the implications of technology as we raise our children in the Digital Age. And finally, as we enter the season of Advent, ponder with us how our attention can be purposefully directed to Christ *throughout the year to come*.

Living intentionally for more than "a sprint" requires Christ-centered purpose and identity, and it flourishes best within community. Equipping the next generation is a long-distance run; we are grateful for the privilege of sharing this journey with you. To the glory of God, let's live intentionally.

*Soli Deo Gloria,*  
Al Popp  
Interim Head of School



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ACADEMY

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# TRAJECTORY

Tuned by

# TRADITION

It's hard to live intentionally if you don't know where you're going. At Grace, our "road map" is called the *Portrait of a Graduate (POG)*, and our goal is much more than good behavior or acceptance to top-ranking schools. We're in this race for the long run, seeking testaments of God's goodness and grace in the hearts of students.

As outlined in the POG, our goal is to nurture students towards a **love for God, a love for the true, the good, and the beautiful**, and a **love for learning**. These loves are cultivated through a spectrum of school traditions. Here's an overview of a few and why they matter.

## NURTURING a LOVE for GOD

The keystone of all other loves is love for God, and at Grace we want to nurture this love by continuously pointing students toward Him.

**Chapels:** In **Grammar, Upper, and All School Chapels**, students praise the attributes of God and declare theological truths through song. They process different facets of Biblical teaching through age-appropriate messages. Each week, they form a stronger sense of community as whole branches of the school gather to commune with God and each other.

### Scripture Memorization:

Memorization comes easily between ages seven and eleven, so hiding God's Word in our hearts begins in Grammar School. In these early years, students will learn entire chapters of Scripture and memorize longer passages — even whole books — throughout their Upper School years. The true blessing of this tradition comes later as students cling to the reality of who God is, battle sin with His promises, and find hope in the comforting familiarity of Scripture.

*Love*  
**THE LORD THEIR GOD WITH ALL THEIR HEART, SOUL & MIND**

- Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior
- Participate actively in local and global church ministry
- Live a lifestyle of prayer and Scripture memorization
- Manifest a disposition of gratitude
- Think and live according to a Christian worldview
- Identify and compassionately address the needs of others
- Be able to articulate and explain the reasons for their faith
- Possess a broad knowledge of Scripture and apply it to their lives
- Steward wisely their resources of time, talent, and health
- Display the fruit of the Spirit
- Demonstrate humility and servant leadership

**PORTRAIT of a GRADUATE**

### Remembrance:

Remembrance enables us to acknowledge what God is accomplishing in and through our lives for His glory.

- At the end of fifth grade, students gather with their parents for **Blessing Day** where mothers and fathers encourage their children's walk of faith, pray over



them, and exhort them to press on in the faith as they enter the Logic School.

- At the **Rock Ceremony**, students gather with their families to publicly reflect on God's work in their lives. This tradition allows parents to acknowledge how they've seen God develop a specific character quality in their children's lives. Parents commemorate the growth they've seen with a more lasting token — a rock — known as an "ebenezer" stone, labeled with their students' character qualities (Joshua 4:21-24).

- Grace Academy's penultimate remembrance ceremony is the **Senior Gala**, held a few days before graduation. At this formal event, each senior is given a charge for his or her future, written and presented by a faculty member who knows the student well. This hope-filled celebration provides a personalized farewell to each senior class, covering them in prayer and directing their gaze to God's faithfulness, past, present and future.



## NURTURING a LOVE for the TRUE, the GOOD, and the BEAUTIFUL

Loving the true, the good, and the beautiful is inseparable from the love of God, because when love for God rules our hearts, we value what He values. Our eyes are opened to see the world with childlike wonder and through Christ — in whom, through whom, and for whom all things exist — we find meaning and purpose. This framework brings classical, Christ-centered education to life.

**Acts of Service:** One of the core values of Grace Academy is servant leadership, which defines the true, the good, and the

beautiful as God does. Servant leaders see people as souls made in God’s image; this kind of leadership teaches us to forsake personal convenience for the joy found in obedience. A few examples illustrate this in action.

- Fifth graders teach their second grade schoolmates how to play **capture the flag**. Seventh graders “kidnap” fifth graders to welcome them into Logic School with a **Christ-like hospitality**

outward, students focus on the needs of other children at Camp of the Hills and other service projects within the local community.

- Similarly, Grace’s older students engage in a **Rhetoric Service Retreat** and a **Rhetoric Leadership Retreat**. These opportunities allow Grace’s ninth through twelfth grade students to implement service, discipleship, and creativity outside the classroom. On the Leadership Retreat, students focus on what it means to be made in God’s image and how to live for His glory.

**Arts & Humanities:** At Grace, love for the good, the true, and the beautiful is nurtured through the arts and through literature (stories).

- During **Otium et Litterae**, upper school students are paired with younger children to read to one another. Another literature-based tradition includes the **Read-A-Thon**, which culminates with **Literature Day** (an opportunity to dress up as literary characters studied at school).

- Our Fine Arts department allows students and their families to enjoy the power of storytelling, nourishing the imagination through drama, artwork, and music. Specific examples of these traditions include **Lessons & Carols**, **Fine Arts Evening**, performances at **All School Recitation**, and **Drama Productions**.

**Athletics:** Regardless of the sport played by students in fifth through twelfth grade, athletics provide a canvas for our coaches to show what is truly good and beautiful: Christ-like character. Through practices and competitions, students form habits of discipline, perseverance, and teamwork, as their coaches strive to cultivate players who reflect Christ on and off the field.

Love

### THE TRUE, THE GOOD & THE BEAUTIFUL

Have broad exposure to the liberal arts and sciences, philosophy, and theology	Understand the historical development of the various academic disciplines
Recognize the interconnectedness between the branches of knowledge	Appreciate the ability of written and spoken words to communicate truth, goodness, and beauty
Have the ability to identify, appreciate, and interpret high-quality art and music	Engage in biblically-grounded and well-reasoned public discourse
Demonstrate boldness and courage to stand up for what they believe	Speak and write articulately, eloquently, and persuasively
Be academically prepared for success in college	Possess a foundation of classical languages

PORTRAIT GRADUATE

that steps into the newcomer’s space and welcomes them into the group.

- In sixth through eighth grade, the connection between what you know and how you serve is developed through **Logic Service Retreats**. Turning



## NURTURING *a* LOVE for LEARNING

At Grace, nurturing a love for learning means tapping into **the strengths of a child's natural development.** Grammar School students are particularly curious. They absorb facts and are excited to share their knowledge. Building on these characteristics, kindergarten students relish **Show-and-Tell**, which is a stepping stone toward Senior Thesis.

Nurturing a love for learning also happens when **learning comes to life.** Traditions like second grade's **Egyptian feast** and fourth grade's **Medieval Feast/Knighthood Ceremony** help students delve into the past with joy and wonder. Encouraging imagination, these traditions help students grasp a deeper understanding of God's providential narrative and their place within His story.

The way students enjoy learning changes as they grow. In response to these God-given characteristics, our Upper School teachers embrace new learning styles and incorporate them into their lessons. In Logic School, students are taught two semesters of logic, complementing their natural desire to debate and enhancing their ability for classroom discussions. Known in Upper School as **Socratic Circles** or **Socratic Discussions**, these dialogues equip students to engage and verbalize critical thinking skills with grace and rapport.

Last but not least, the love of learning is nurtured through **field trips** which closely correlate with the subjects students are studying. The zenith of all Grace Academy field trips is the **Senior Trip to Italy.** Each year, seniors spend ten days in Florence, Rome, and Naples; they visit sites studied in Latin, literature, and history classes, adding an inordinately rich dimension to their classical education.



## TRADITIONS *for* TRAJECTORY

Traditions matter because we are what we love. The patterns and rhythms of our lives reflect what we love, and, ultimately, what we love defines our relationships, orders our schedules, impacts our finances, and frames the direction of our lives. There is no neutral ground or insignificant moment in the formation of a child's worldview, and as a school, we share your calling to shepherd young souls. May God use these traditions to tune the hearts of students to love what He loves and to bring Him glory through the trajectory of Christ-centered lives. 🏰

# TEACHING INTENTIONALLY

## KRISTIN SOWERS

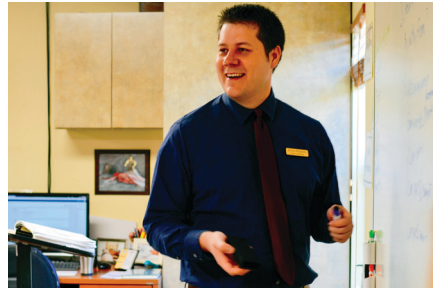
*Grammar School, Fourth Grade*



Always drawn to roles that involved leadership through teaching, Ms. Sowers earned her Master of Education without ever hearing about the classical movement. Thinking she would have to homeschool her children in order to effectively impart a Biblical worldview *and* an excellent education, Ms. Sowers found what she was seeking at a Grace Academy Open House. As a teacher, her first desire for students is that they would develop a true relationship with the Lord. She wants them to know not only the facts and figures, but to see God's sovereign hand through time and topic. Ms. Sowers strives to expose her students to the things that they ought to love and works to show her students, through word and deed, how to love the "oughts" well. By giving students the tools to learn and sharing her own deep affections for truth, goodness, and beauty, Ms. Sowers hopes to impart a sense of wonder in her students, a desire to investigate, and the ability to view everything through the lens of Scripture.

## RICHEY FERGUSON

*Logic School Humanities and Latin*



As a student at Covenant Classical in North Carolina, Richey Ferguson saw first-hand the impact of teachers who cared about students' academic goals, and even more about the development of students' characters. In this setting, Mr. Ferguson gained an initial appreciation for lifelong learning and a foundational understanding of what it means *to be human*. However, a deeper appreciation for his classical experience came after his college graduation. Through the influence of a pastor, who helped people connect the dots between their spiritual gifts and opportunities to further God's Kingdom, Mr. Ferguson realized that he'd always gravitated toward teaching roles — both at church and in work. He particularly enjoyed working with middle school students, and his own academic experience made the calling to teach in classical education a natural choice. Next time you see Mr. Ferguson, ask him about his favorite books; he is eager to share his love of literature with you!

## MATT SHELL

*Upper School Mathematics*



While our curriculum at Grace is shaped by the traditions of classical education, the pursuit of those subjects is driven by a desire to be Christ-centered in all things, including math and science. Matt Shell appreciates the freedom this gives him to guide students with Scriptural truth. Incorporating a deep knowledge of historical and modern mathematics, Mr. Shell helps students form connections between our current times and the works of ages past. This is particularly evident as he guides students through their study of Geometry's original text, Euclid's *Book of Proofs*. As a result, students develop their understanding of mathematical ideas and their historical context. As the tech industry acknowledges the need for team members who have strong skills in math and science, as well as reading, writing, and public speaking, Mr. Shell sees opportunities for Grace Academy students in any field they choose. 🏰





## TECHNOLOGY: *A Two-Way Street of Intent*

**LOOK OVER.** See the flickering reflection of light in your child's eyes. Is it harmless entertainment or is there a deeper impression being made? In this age of digital technology, we live in constant exposure to screens. Consequently, wise parents have to be intentional when it comes to the presence of technology in their children's lives. But before we consider its implications for our children, we need to calculate our own use – perhaps even misuse – of the virtual world in our hands.

In his book, *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You*, Tony Reinke examines digital technology from a biblical worldview. Rather than arguing for us to abandon our devices (along with all hope), Reinke takes a balanced approach, exploring digital technology in light of *who we are called to be* and *what we are called to do*. Additionally, Reinke provides a list of helpful questions (see right of article) to kickstart our personal examination of technology's influence in our own lives.<sup>1</sup>

These questions serve as a conversational springboard for us and our children about truth, goodness, and beauty, and these conversations are worth having because even the most mundane patterns of our lives, including technology, shape what we love. Malnourished by digital consumption, we must intentionally nurture our hearts, minds, and souls with a cultivated taste for higher ideals.

Beyond the scope of the ideas and values that are nurtured within our own families, is there further incentive for examining what influences our day-to-day lives, particularly through technology? And if we fail to be intentional, does it matter?

Indeed it does, because technology is a two-way street of intention. Unbeknownst to many there is a field of work within digital game and app design, aiming to optimize persuasive technology which makes digital platforms addictive. And our children are the most common target.

Most “tech corporations would prefer it [persuasive technology] to remain in the shadows, as most of us don't want to be controlled and have a special aversion to kids being manipulated for profit.”<sup>2</sup> But the fact remains: our children's obsession with technology is no mere coincidence, but instead the result of a “virtually unrecognized merger between the tech industry and psychology.”<sup>3</sup>

Behind the seemingly innocent, yet addictive platforms our children enjoy hide teams of psychologists, neuroscientists, and social science experts exploiting their knowledge of human vulnerabilities to increase corporate profits. The addiction typically comes at the expense of optimal child development – physically, mentally, socio/emotionally, and spiritually. The manipulation of human minds for the sake of corporate profit should ring some kind of alarm within us.

We are not the only ones being intentional with our children, and as families, that means we must discern the difference between *entertainment* and *amusement* and nurture a love of the latter. So it's worth asking:

- In general, do our children's primary means of relaxation and recreation involve entertainment or creative thinking?





- Does “down time” in the home align with the classical model we have chosen for them?
- Do we embrace “boredom” as an opportunity to imagine or something to stifle via entertainment?

Technology is a double-edged sword. It’s not inherently evil, but it is powerful and how we use it matters. Are we using technological resources to nurture our love for God – our love for the true, the good, and the beautiful – and our love for others? Or is technology functioning as a “god” in our lives, leading us to sacrifice precious relationships and opportunities on a series of altars that begin with “i”?

Let’s prayerfully and intentionally shepherd our children’s hearts in this ever changing digital landscape. Let’s be encouraged that nothing surprises our omniscient God and that He promises to answer our prayers for wisdom (James 1:5). Examining everything through the lens of Scripture, let’s stay focused on *who we belong to, what we’re called to, and what’s going to matter* in the grand perspective of eternity. 🛡️

## FOOTNOTES

1. Tony Reinke, *12 Ways Your Phone is Changing You* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2017).
2. Richard Freed, *The Tech Industry’s War on Kids*, <https://medium.com> (March 12, 2018)
3. Freed, *The Tech Industry’s War on Kids*, Medium.

## for TEENS & ADULTS

### Reinke's 10 Diagnostic Questions

#### Do my digital habits . . .

1. Expose an underlying addiction to untimely or unseemly entertainment?
2. Reveal a compulsive desire to be seen and affirmed by others?
3. Distract me from genuine communion with God?
4. Provide an easy escape from deep thinking?
5. Preoccupy me with the pursuit of worldly success?
6. Mute the leading of God’s Spirit in my life?
7. Preoccupy me with dating and romance?
8. Actively build up Christians and my local church?
9. Center on what is necessary to me and beneficial to others?
10. Disengage me from the needs of the neighbors God has placed right in front of me?

## for YOUNGER STUDENTS

### 10 Diagnostic Questions

#### Do my child’s digital habits . . .

1. Distract him from playing outside or with other friends in real time?
2. Teach him that silence and boredom are to be avoided?
3. Reveal a reliance on a device to pass time spent waiting? (stores, car rides, etc.)
4. Reveal a desire to change behavior or appearances to “fit in” with virtual expectations?
5. Teach him that the Lord speaks to all believers and quiet is necessary to listen for Him?
6. Teach him a Biblical worldview of parental authority, marriage, respect?
7. Cause him to ignore family members or friends in his presence?
8. Reveal that he has learned only what we have allowed or modelled at home?
9. Reveal a dependence upon instant gratification?
10. Encourage development of Christ-like virtues such as peace, love for others, patience, gentleness, self-control, and joy?



# LITURGICAL SEASONS:

## *Looking to Christ through the Year*

As a classical, Christian school, our pursuit of wisdom is steeped in the ideas and values of western civilization. Our study of history is a study of God's story, and for centuries, the Church has fixed its gaze on this unfolding narrative through the liturgical calendar – seven seasons revolving around the life and work of Christ.

As an interdenominational community of Christ-followers, words like “liturgy” may not be a part of our normal vernacular. However, we all have patterns and routines that shape our days and years. Regardless of our church backgrounds, we each have a “liturgy” of life, an order of habits and traditions that help us mark time and influence the focus of our lives. Season by season, the liturgical calendar enables us to live with Christ-centered focus and find our own place within God's greater story. Here is an introductory overview of the historic church seasons:

### 7 **PENTECOST & ORDINARY TIME:** *Sent for Christ*

Following the life and work of Christ, the season of **Pentecost** and **Ordinary Time** finishes the liturgical year. Pentecost, meaning “Fiftieth Day,” is a feast day, acknowledging the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church in Acts 2. Indwelt by the Holy Spirit, our Helper, Comforter, and Advocate, we are a “sent” people. The days following Pentecost are known as Ordinary Time, but they are anything but ordinary. God has poured His Spirit into us that we might be poured out for others. We no longer live unto ourselves, but are called and commissioned for His extraordinary purposes. *Do you see your family as “sent” by God and how can you serve together in your neighborhood, church, and beyond?*

### 6 **EASTER: Raised with Christ**

Beginning with **Easter Sunday**, the bright season of Eastertide spans fifty days, ending at the the Feast of Pentecost. It's a time of vibrant hope and joy as we rejoice in the gift of new life that we have through Christ's resurrection. Because of His triumph over sin and death, we can rest in God's restoration of all things, including our own bodily resurrection and the new Heaven and the new Earth yet to come. If Christ's first coming (Christmas) merits our joyful acknowledgement, how much more our divine hero's saving victory, confirmed through the resurrection? All other seasons exist because Easter exists. So consider: *how can your family relish the glory of Christ's resurrection and what does our new life in Christ mean for us today?*



## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

### *For Advent and Christmas:*

*The Dawning of Indestructible Joy: Daily Readings for Advent* by John Piper

### *For Easter:*

*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross: Experiencing the Passion and Power of Easter* by Nancy Guthrie

### *General Devotional:*

*New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional* by Paul David Tripp



## 1 ADVENT: *Waiting for Christ*

The liturgical year begins with **Advent**. This season includes the four Sundays (and final days) leading up to Christmas. Meaning “coming” or “arrival,” Advent points our gaze to Christ through anticipation, waiting, and looking for the Light. Through this season, we celebrate the coming of Christ and reflect on God’s promises fulfilled through His Incarnation, looking with longing to Christ’s second coming when He will redeem the creature and the creation. *Whatever this year has held for your family, how does your “waiting” point your hearts to Christ?*

## 2 CHRISTMAS: *Rejoicing in Christ's Incarnation*

“If Advent is a season of waiting, **Christmas** is a season of wonder,” Bobby Gross writes.<sup>1</sup> Our culture rushes into this holiday with a flurry of festivity and moves on just as quickly. As Christians, we can counter-culturally celebrate the Incarnation of Immanuel (God with us) by taking all twelve of days of this season to consider what this wondrous reality means for our lives. Gross writes, “As [Christ] gave us all of himself for us, so we give generously of ourselves for others. And in this giving, his and ours, we are spiritually enriched.”<sup>2</sup> *Focusing on the ultimate gift of God Himself, what traditions help your family give with joy and self-sacrifice?*

## 3 EPIPHANY: *Knowing Christ and Making Him Known*

After Christmas comes **Epiphany**, which means revelation or manifestation. Epiphany can be a feast day or an entire season spanning from January 6 to Ash Wednesday. It focuses on Christ’s manifestation in the world, and more specifically, His manifestation to the Magi (the Gentiles), His baptism, and His miraculous transformation of water into wine. As we consider the different “epiphanies” recorded in Scripture, this season invites us to be aware of God’s presence. It encourages us to know Christ and to make Him known. So as we come into a new year, consider: *how can we “look” for Jesus and enable others to see Him through the rhythms and routines of our day-to-day lives?*

## 4 LENT: *Turning to Christ*

Beginning with Ash Wednesday, **Lent** is the fourth season of the liturgical calendar. This 40 day journey leads us into Holy Week, and just as Advent prepares our hearts for Christmas, so the darkness of Lent is a prelude to the brilliant joy of Easter. For nearly six weeks, we “embrace a spiritual gravity, a downward movement of soul, a turning from our self-sufficiency and sinfulness.”<sup>3</sup> In this season of humility, repentance, and even sadness, “we become especially mindful of the sinfulness that alienates us from God . . .”<sup>4</sup> Lent calls us to forsake some comforts and indulgences, acknowledging our finite mortality and deep need for God. Turning from ourselves, our focus shifts to our Redeemer and the source of true life. In a humbling and sorrowful descent over our own frailty and failings, our hearts are prepared for the glorious, ascending triumph of Christ’s resurrection. *Throughout Lent, what distractions can your family remove to better focus on God?*

## 5 HOLY WEEK & THE PASCHAL TRIDUUM: *In Remembrance of Christ*

At the heart of the Christian year is the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. During the last week of Lent, known as **Holy Week**, we follow Christ’s journey to the cross beginning with **Palm Sunday** and on through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday — the **Paschal Triduum** (meaning “passover” and “three days”). On “**Maundy Thursday**” (i.e. “Mandate” Thursday from the Latin word, *mandatum*), we focus on Christ’s new mandate to love one another as He has loved us (John 13:34). On **Good Friday**, possibly derived from “God’s Friday,” we reflect on the crucifixion, remembering the events at Golgotha as Christ bore God’s wrath in our place. Next, during **Holy Saturday**, also known as “Silent Saturday,” and the **Easter Vigil**, we wait with quiet expectation, reminiscent of the silent tomb. *Building to the explosive joy of the Easter season, how can your family set apart these days of remembrance?*

## FOOTNOTES

1. Bobby Gross, *Living the Christian Year: Time to Inhabit the Story of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 64.
2. Gross, *Living the Christian Year: Time to Inhabit the Story of God*, 66.
3. Gross, *Living the Christian Year: Time to Inhabit the Story of God*, 127.
4. Gross, *Living the Christian Year: Time to Inhabit the Story of God*, 128.



UPCOMING  
**EVENTS**

GivingTuesday  
11.27.18

Lessons & Carols  
12.11.18

Upper School Drama Performances  
12.15.18

The Grace Academy Forum  
02.08.19

The Grace Academy 5K  
TBD

All School Recitation  
02.27.19

Spring Open House  
04.02.19

The Golf Classic  
04.15.19

Senior Thesis Presentations  
04.25.19

CONSTRUCTION  
**UPDATE**

The construction of our newest building is progressing. This fall, Upper School students inscribed the walls and framing with Scripture verses and blessed the site with prayers (see picture on left). Please join us in praying for God's continued use of Grace Academy for His plans and purposes. Soli Deo Gloria!