

OUR FAITH. OUR FUTURE. OUR TIME.

chimes

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



SPRING 2024

**What Makes
Westminster Special?**

**Congratulations to
the Class of 2024**

**Alumni Spotlight:
Christian X. M. McGhee '17**

**Planting in
Good Soil**



What Makes Us Unique?

A NOTE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Westminster Friends and Families,

We know that Westminster Christian Academy is a special place. But have you ever asked yourself, “What makes Westminster, Westminster?” As I contemplated an answer, I identified four core elements that, in combination, make Westminster unique in Saint Louis and, indeed, the country.

- **Rooted in God’s Word**—Our foundation is steadfastly anchored in God’s Word, which guides every aspect of Westminster’s life. Biblical truth is integrated into everything we teach so that our students develop a biblical perspective on life. This commitment ensures we remain faithful to our vision to prepare and equip young men and women to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ.
- **A Community of Caring, Outstanding Christian Staff**—Our teachers, coaches, and staff are more than just professionals; they are dedicated to nurturing students’ hearts and minds. Their commitment to teaching a biblical worldview across all disciplines sets Westminster apart, preparing students for challenges and opportunities with confidence, character, and faith.
- **World-Class, High-Value Programs**—WestminsterYOU, Academies, Enrichment courses, and an Esports program coming this fall are just a few recently added innovative programs. We are also exploring additional innovative programs.

- **Commitment to Accessibility**—We have always desired to partner with Christian families who want an excellent Christian education for their children. This is why we have a robust, need-based tuition assistance program. This year, we extended \$3.2M in tuition grants to over 30% of students to ensure more parents can give their children the gift of a Westminster education.

Westminster is more than a school; it’s a community united in faith, dedicated to excellence, and committed to shaping the next generation of Christian leaders. We remain firmly rooted in God’s Word while providing students with the knowledge, skills, and character they need to engage and impact the world for Jesus Christ. I’m thankful and blessed to be part of it.

Dr. Barrett Mosbacher
Head of School

OUR FAITH.
OUR FUTURE.
OUR TIME.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WESTMINSTER

While Westminster is already special, we are passionate about the continuous pursuit of excellence. In that spirit, this fall, we’re launching Our Faith. Our Future. Our Time. The Campaign for Westminster—a strategic initiative to strengthen our school for current and future generations of Wildcats. We’re excited to share more soon!

chimes

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Academics

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT



NEW FACULTY PROGRAM

This past fall, we launched our new Faculty Fellows program. This new program serves to train future teachers by pairing Fellows with veteran teachers who can provide both training and support. In the program's first year, we welcomed two full-time Fellows: Colton Albers and Caleb Laschinski. Mr. Albers joined Brian Maloy in our Business Department, and Mr. Laschinski worked with Dr. Jeff Gall in our History Department as well as served as a long-term substitute in 11th grade English during second semester. The program has been a terrific success, with both Mr. Albers and Mr. Laschinski becoming excellent additions to the Westminster community.

YEARBOOK RECEIVES HIGHEST RATING

The 2023–24 yearbook received its highest rating from the National Scholastic Press Association in the last 14 years. It earned a First Class distinction with Marks of Distinction for Coverage, Design, and Photography. The book was also featured in Walsworth Publishing Company's Possibilities Annual, which showcased the publisher's 2023 outstanding yearbooks. We are proud of our students for putting so much effort into the yearbook each year and for their accomplishments.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

This spring, Westminster participated in the Great History Challenge, a national contest for middle school students. All of our middle school students took a 30-minute online history quiz. The top performers qualified for the Regional Competition hosted at Westminster in April. 7th graders Harrison Steiner, Ben Marsh, Josiah Butz, Jacob Keesling, Lucas Sobers, and 8th graders Megan Mueller, Carson Bichsel, Aloker Pieris, Camryn Cunningham, Gianna Clark, and Leah DeBosch all qualified. Harrison Steiner and Megan Mueller received the highest scores in their respective grades.



On April 18, Westminster went even further, hosting the St. Louis Regional Great History Challenge, where 7th grader Harrison Steiner and 8th graders Carson Bichsel and Aloker Pieris became regional medalists. At the end of the competition, these three scholars, along with Jacob Keesling (7th), Lucas Sobers (7th), Gianna Clark (8th), Leah DeBosch (8th), and Megan Mueller (8th) qualified for the National competition in Chicago, which will take place over Memorial Day weekend.

In the upper school, junior Taryn Cunningham was honored by the Local Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) for her entry into their annual history essay contest. Taryn wrote about Sybil Ludington, a teenage girl who made a daring ride much like Paul Revere's. Sybil rode across two states to warn her father's regiment of forthcoming British attacks. The DAR presented Taryn with a medal, a certificate, and a cash prize.

PRESENTING THE ARLEN R. DYKSTRA TEACHING PRIZE

Each year, the Arlen R. Dykstra Teaching Prize is presented to faculty members for their outstanding expression of the Christian worldview and honors the recipient for his or her mastery of teaching matter, involvement in the life of the school, and creative and innovative presentation of curricula. This year, two of our esteemed teachers have been honored: Aaron Layton and JD Perona.



Mr. Layton joined Westminster's middle school special services department in 2008 and has taught middle school Bible, created an upper school race and culture course, coached various sports, and currently serves as the Coordinator for Minority Community Development & Inclusion.

Mr. Perona began his career at Westminster in 1998 as the head football coach where he helped begin the program. Since 1998, he has served as the middle school athletic director, coached multiple sports, and is currently the Math Department Chair.

MIDDLE SCHOOLERS JOIN THE BUSINESS

Beginning this past fall, our middle school students had the opportunity to join the Business Academy Jr., a new program within WestminsterYOU. The purpose of Business Academy Jr. is to give our middle schoolers the opportunity to engage with business through practical, hands-on opportunities. In partnership with Pawprint Coffee, our Business Academy Jr. students opened a “Pawp-Up” shop in the Hub, selling cookies and other pastries while learning from students in the US Business Academy.



EXCELLENCE IN ENGINEERING

Our First Robotics team recently competed in the St. Louis Regional competition. Despite many challenges, the Cyborg Cats worked diligently to fix both the software and hardware issues they faced. Because of the engineering team’s hard work, documenting how they followed the design process with its many iterations (successes and failures), the Cyborg Cats won the Excellence in Engineering Award for the second year in a row. STEM Director Mike Decker said he is especially proud of these students for their hard work and determination.

TRANSFORMATIONS

Every year, the Youth Bridge Community Foundation presents the Progress 64 (P64) Entrepreneurial Scholarship to a current high school student in the St. Louis and St. Charles areas. The one-year scholarship is awarded to students who present a well-thought-out business plan that includes the business’ mission, objectives, market analysis, business operations, and sales and marketing strategies. This year, senior Elizabeth Whaley was awarded the P64 Entrepreneurial Scholarship for her business plan, Transformations. Transformations is a full-service landscape, design, and maintenance lawn service with the option of outside holiday decorations. The business will primarily hire reformed convicts, providing opportunities for them to transform their lives through meaningful employment. “Since I was little, I always participated in the Christmas Angel Tree through Mission Gate Ministries,” says Elizabeth. “This idea generated my overall idea to incorporate ex-felons into my business plan. My business name was ‘Transformations’ because it would be transforming lives and residents’ lawns.”



CLASS SIZES AND CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

Providing individualized attention for our students is important to our academic philosophy, and one way we have sought to work towards enhancing these opportunities is by reducing the class sizes in our Math Department. With reduced class sizes, there are more one-on-one interactions between students and teachers. This will continue to be the focus in other departments as well as we look toward the future.

This year, we have also expanded our middle school math program by offering a new Algebra 1 honors course. Along with the new course, we added structure and executive function support to our Academic Connect time each day.

In Academic Connect, students learn skills to strengthen their organization and prioritization abilities and become academically autonomous. Within the first 10 minutes, students review assignments as a class, make individual goals for their time in Connect, and choose their first steps to reach that goal. Teachers are available to help students prioritize their work and support them in their goals and learning.

We continue to add new and creative enrichment offerings as part of our WestminsterYOU program. This year, students had the opportunity to be trained in CPR/First Aid, explore deep questions of the Christian faith through film study and discussion, and take part in a wide array of opportunities offered by our Performing Arts department. We’re excited to introduce even more opportunities in the fall!



FOLLOW WESTMINSTER ON INSTAGRAM!

Make sure to follow [@wcastl](https://www.instagram.com/wcastl) for great photos showcasing what’s going on inside the classroom and around the school, community announcements, and much more.



LOOKING FOR MORE?

For access to even more photos, view full albums at [wcastl.org/photos](https://www.wcastl.org/photos).

Arts

CREATIVE EXCELLENCE



Art à La Carte

One of the highlights of the school year is our spring Art à La Carte—a showcase of our talented and artistic students. This year, the evening included musical and theatrical performances from our upper school students as well as displays of our visual art classes. The AP Studio Art students also showcased their work in a special exhibit in the Hub along with the Visual Arts Academy's Capstone Projects. To round off the night, our improv students put on a hilarious show after the main events.

Creative Film-Making

The 48 Hour Film Project organization hosts a competition every year for high school students to write, direct, and produce a complete short movie within 48 hours. Beginning late on a Friday night, students receive a specific genre for their film and have two days to complete and submit their project. This year, several Westminster students took part in the competition. Juniors Taryn Cunningham, Nevan Shively, Adina Whaley, Chase Borage, Gideon Schwamb, Kaitlyn Cragg, Abel Tucker, and sophomore Adam Schelker came in first place in the competition. Their film, *Chain*, will be screened at Filmapalooza in Seattle next year.

A European Trip to Remember

Students enjoy spending their Spring Break in many different ways. Some go to the beach to enjoy the weather, some go to visit family, and some go to Europe with their classmates to perform. This past March, our choir, band, and orchestra students spent a week traveling to the Czech Republic, Germany, and Austria to explore the beautiful European landscape and to perform concerts in different cities. Sponsored by Vertical Fellowship, a ministry that connects churches and organizations both locally and internationally, our students got to visit several cities, including Dresden, Germany, and Prague, Czechia, and perform with other choirs. Pastor Michael Šust runs Vertical Fellowship and was impressed with the maturity of our students, saying, "We were truly blessed by all their questions, conversations, as well as their boldness in sharing the gospel and handing out Bibles to people during their concerts!"



From the Classroom to Center Stage

This past year, our talented students participated in the Metro St. Louis All-District Orchestra and Choir competitions, and several received honors for their performances.

In October, 8th graders Aloker Pieris (violin) and Micah Whyte (viola), sophomore Elizabeth Myers (violin), and juniors Amie Do (violin) and Raquel Herrera (violin) were all named to the Metro St. Louis All-District Orchestra. In January, sophomore Sam Wenger-Stickel (violin) was named to the Missouri All-State Orchestra. Sam also auditioned for and earned a leadership position as Principal 2nd Violin.

In November, 7th graders Elijah Aucker, Lily Martin, and Tielakay Strong, 8th graders Carson Bichsel, Aden Schwamb, Aurora Synowiec, and Brenna Williams, sophomores Ginger Cox and Quentin Farquharson, juniors Kaitlyn Cragg, Caroline Engel, Charlie Mathis, Carissa Mitchell, and Charlotte Roberts, and seniors Jack Nelson, Jacobi Robinson, and Gwen Wardenburg were all named to the Metro St. Louis All-District Choir. Charlotte was also named to the Missouri All-State Choir and competed as the St. Louis Metro District representative in the Missouri State Sight-Singing Bee.

The District Solo Festival took place on March 8, where junior Amie Do received an Outstanding rating for her performance on the violin. At the festival, sophomores Sam Wenger-Stickel (violin) and Enoch Wong (piano), junior Charlie Mathis (vocal solo), and seniors Mallory Pfuetze (violin), Anna Enger (violin), and Gwen Wardenburg (vocal solo) received an Exemplary rating and were invited to compete at the State Level. The State Solo Festival was held in April, where Mallory received a Bronze Medal, Charlie received Silver, and Sam and Enoch both received Gold. Congratulations to all of our exceedingly talented musicians!

Ceramic Creations

This past spring, junior Kyleigh Johnson had one of her ceramic creations accepted into the St. Louis Guild Young Artist showcase. Her work, a beautifully sculpted turtle, was on display at the St. Louis Artist Guild in Clayton on March 1.





Our Town

In January, our upper school students put on a captivating performance of Thornton Wilder's American classic, *Our Town*. The play, written back in 1938, tells a timeless drama of life in the fictional village of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire. For sophomore Josie Mosley, "[*Our Town*] really makes you think about the little things in life. The sad reality is that we do not truly stop and appreciate every minute of our lives. That is why it is so compelling and thought-provoking."

The Music Man

This year, the theatre department brought *The Music Man* to the stage for the first time in several years. A cherished American musical by Meredith Willson, *The Music Man* debuted on Broadway in 1957. The musical centers on Harold Hill, a charismatic con man who aims to swindle a small Iowa town by selling the idea of a boys' band. Junior Charlie Mathis, who played the part of Harold, says, "The hardest part has been showing the character's development and expressing his change as he falls in love with people and with the town. Where do I show that character change? How do I engage with this character with a Christian mindset when I know what [Harold] is doing is bad and wrong? By the end, though, he realizes he's not perfect, but he becomes genuine and seeks to change to do good. It's really rewarding to see the show come together and see this character develop."

Following an impressive weekend of performances, Westminster's production was nominated for nine St. Louis High School Musical Theater Awards: Outstanding Technical Execution, Outstanding Costume Design and Execution, Outstanding Ensemble, Outstanding Musical Direction, Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Supporting Actress (senior PJ McCauley), Outstanding Lead Actor (junior Charlie Mathis), Outstanding Lead Actress (senior Morgan Pett), and Outstanding Musical. Congratulations to all of our incredibly talented budding thespians and the staff that made the show possible!



Athletics

NEWS AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS



HONORING JIM MARSH'S INCREDIBLE LEGACY

Last summer the court in the Arena was refinished and repainted, including a special new addition: the name of our Head of School Emeritus, Jim Marsh. In recognition of his significant contributions to the Westminster community, we are privileged to name the Arena court in his honor.

VENTURING INTO ESPORTS

We are excited to announce that esports will be coming to Westminster next school year. Beginning in the fall, 7-12th grade students will have the opportunity to participate. In 7th grade, the purpose of this sport is primarily to engage students and build community while developing healthy and Christ-centered habits with regard to technology and online communication. Beginning in 8th grade, students will compete in esports competitions in preparation for high school where students will try out for each esports season depending on the game being played.

COMMITTING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

This past year, several of our student-athletes made commitments to continue their athletic careers in college. Congratulations to these 15 seniors on their successful careers at Westminster!

- **Josh Avery**
Football (Truman State University)
- **Joseph Anderson**
Football (University of Iowa)
- **Harrison Bailey**
Baseball (Wheaton College)
- **Lydia Bailey**
Soccer (Taylor University)
- **Isaac Boss**
Baseball (University of Evansville)
- **Hunter Cunningham**
Baseball (Rockhurst University)
- **Lexi Frazier**
Volleyball (William Jewell College)
- **Chris Heard**
Football (Wartburg College)
- **Monica Knapp**
Ice Hockey (Liberty University)
- **Hannah Lawson**
Field Hockey (Concordia University Wisconsin)
- **Grace Mitchell**
Lacrosse (Spalding University)
- **Faith Moeller**
Dance (Texas Christian University)
- **Joey Morici**
Ice Hockey (Maryville University)
- **Corinne Plumb**
Lacrosse (Calvin University)
- **Mia Scheulen**
Field Hockey (Ohio University)
- **Cameron Schlegl**
Baseball (Westminster College)





TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

GO CATS!

BASEBALL

The baseball team finished the season with a 21-15 record following a 2-1 district quarterfinal loss to Ladue in a fierce pitcher's duel. Devin Coulter was named the Metro League Pitcher of the Year as the team finished 10-2 in league play to capture the Metro League championship.

BASKETBALL

Boys — The boys varsity basketball team finished the season 17-11 after a narrow loss in a Class 5 district semifinals to Ladue in a rematch of last year's heart-stopping state quarterfinal game. Junior JD Robertson was named to the All-District Team and led the team in scoring, averaging just over 13 points per game.

Girls — The girls basketball team fought through adversity throughout the season before falling in the district quarterfinal game. While it was a tough season in terms of wins and losses, the team consistently played with strong effort. Junior Addie Kane led the offense, averaging over 18 points per game.

GOLF

The boys' golf team had a terrific season, ending with sophomores Charlie Kruse and Ben Weinstein playing in the Class 4 State Tournament at Dalhousie Golf Club. With a cumulative score of 153, Charlie finished in 11th place making him a state medalist and a member of the Class 4 All-State Team.

HOCKEY

This year's hockey team concluded the season competing in their second consecutive Founder's Cup championship game after winning the tournament last year. Senior Joey Morici capped off an incredible career scoring 26 goals and leaving the program as the statistical leader in many offensive categories.

LACROSSE

Boys — After a one year hiatus, boys lacrosse returned to the Westminster campus this spring. With an intentional focus on recruiting classmates to join the program, many of who had never played lacrosse, the team filled a roster with 26 players, including 12 seniors. It was a successful year, and we look forward to many more in the future!

Girls — Even though the team finished with a 6-8 regular season record, its tough schedule ranked it high enough to earn a first-round bye and a second-round home game in the playoffs. The team would go on to reach the Sweet Sixteen before losing to Cor Jesu. A strong senior class provided over 75% of the team's goals and led it to a successful season.

SOCCER

The girls soccer team ended the season with a 12-4 record, including a 5-0 league record to bring home the Metro League championship and a top seed in their district tournament. Despite the graduation of some strong players, the team will bring back some key components to make another run at a district championship next year.

SWIM AND DIVE

The girls varsity swim and dive team had a terrific season, with girls qualifying for the MSHSAA Class 2 state meet in 11 total events: eight swimmers and three divers. The 200 Freestyle Relay team consisting of junior Janna Moellenhoff, senior Ellie Berkland, and sophomores Gigi Demaggio and Edde Doehring earned a 6th place medal while sophomore Taylor Synowiec medaled in diving with a 7th place finish.

TENNIS

The boys varsity tennis team upset top-seeded Parkway West in the district championship to earn a trip to the MSHSAA Class 2 State Final Four. Despite losing in the state semifinal to the eventual champions, the team rallied and defeated Branson to bring home the 3rd place trophy.

TRACK AND FIELD

Senior Joseph Anderson capped off an incredible career with a Class 5 State Championship in the Triple Jump, his second championship in that event. He also placed 4th in the Long Jump and earned a total of 6 individual medals during his time as a Westminster athlete. Sophomore Aunika Groat also qualified for her second consecutive state meet in the high jump.

VOLLEYBALL

The boys varsity volleyball team's season ended in a riveting five-set match against St. Francis Borgia in the MSHSAA Class 1 District 4 Tournament. The team graduated two seniors and brought back a strong nucleus of juniors as it looks to continue building the program.

WRESTLING

Boys — Senior Nehemiah Oginni and juniors TC Collins III and Luke Hornburg all qualified for the state tournament. Luke earned his first district championship, winning the Class 2 District 2 tournament in the 215-pound weight class.

Girls — Senior Kate Van Zee and junior Kyndal Brown both qualified for the MSHSAA Class 1 state tournament. Kyndal became Westminster's first girls wrestling medalist with a 6th place finish in her weight class.



WHAT MAKES
WESTMINSTER

Special?



chapel

GIVES
US TIME
TO SLOW
DOWN

Westminster is special. But what makes it so? You hear that word often when people discuss where they work. Some schools and businesses strive towards that distinguishing marker by incorporating the latest curricula and modern learning methods. Westminster always seeks opportunities to push the learning mold by utilizing cutting-edge technology when applicable. But is that truly what makes us special?

By definition, being special means being set apart by some unique quality. Westminster is not alone in the technology we use or the classes we teach. What sets Westminster Christian Academy apart is our dedication to relationships with one another, academic rigor, and restoration.

“I looked at other schools, but I liked Westminster the most,” says senior Molly Kate Bugh. “When I visited Westminster, I had way more fun. The kids in the other schools I visited didn’t look as happy as they did here. I got to go to a chapel. I loved it. The whole school was there together.” Every Wednesday morning, the entire school—faculty, staff, and students—gathers for Chapel. It is a time for us to pray and sing praise to our Lord and to hear from speakers how God is working in their lives. Spiritual growth is crucial in all our lives, and just as we want our students to develop their minds, we want them to develop empathetic hearts open to Christ’s good news. Chapel is a critical part of our weekly schedule because it gives us time to slow down from our busy schedules and remind ourselves that everything we do, say, and learn is because of God’s love and mercy.

Like Molly Kate, senior Ellie Berkland had the opportunity to “shadow” a student for a day and see what a typical day at ▶



TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS CAN
TALK ABOUT

faith

Westminster would look like. “My old school was supposed to be religious but really wasn’t,” says Ellie. “Every week, we’d have a chapel. There was one time when one of the teachers was reading a Bible story and then just closed it and said they didn’t like it. There was nothing Christian about it. For me, I [visited] on a day when Westminster had Chapel, and seeing how they were gathering and worshiping and having it built into the schedule was amazing.” Our school’s mission is rooted in our faith in Christ and our desire to see our students live faithful lives dedicated to changing the world for God’s glory. We don’t take faith lightly, and we seek every opportunity for spiritual growth.

Along with weekly Chapels, the daily school schedule allows for time at the beginning of each day for teachers to hold a devotion in their first-hour class. Regardless of their subject, every teacher gets time to study God’s word with their students. It is truly a blessing to have a special place like Westminster where students and teachers can come together regularly to embrace Scripture.

Westminster opened its doors in 1976 when a group of people saw a need in St. Louis for a school that provided an excellent and rigorous education rooted in Biblical truth for Christian parents. Faith has always been at the core of Westminster’s purpose. Every day, we are all inundated with messages of who and what we should identify with and what we should consider to be true. We cannot escape what the world tells us to believe, but Scripture gives us something different. There are more stories every day of schools across the country teaching conflicting ideologies in their classrooms, which puts students in difficult positions. What truth should they trust? The world’s or Christ’s? When our culture tells us to focus on our individual truths, the Bible points us to the truth that God created the universe and we belong to Him.

“I was teaching in a public high school for three years, and I remember in 1977 there was an assembly event,” says upper school

science teacher Dr. Andrew Shaw. “This particular assembly was to drum up support for an upcoming dance, and the girls’ club was patterning the assembly after the dating game. I remember sitting in that assembly, and the answers were not good. Borderline obscene. When we returned to the classroom, my students looked at me for my opinion because they knew where I stood in my faith, and I said, ‘I just can’t agree with the kinds of things that were said from the stage.’ That was the one time I got called down to the office for ‘preaching.’” For Dr. Shaw, that was the moment when he realized that he was not free to teach the truth in that school—to proclaim the authority of Scripture and the truth of God’s word and God’s world. Very soon after, Dr. Shaw received a phone call from Westminster Christian Academy in St. Louis asking him to teach science. As Dr. Shaw puts it, “It just felt obvious that God was saying ‘go here,’ and I like to do what God says. Things go better that way.”

Where other schools conform to social and cultural pressures, Westminster has remained steadfast in its mission to teach Biblical truth in every facet of learning. This permeation of faith is certainly what makes Westminster special, and for senior Harrison Bailey, it is one of the best parts of being a Westminster student: “My favorite thing about Westminster is the fact that I can have conversations with other students and teachers about faith. When I’m reading a Bible verse at night and don’t quite understand it, I can go to my teacher the next day for clarification.”

At the core of everything we do at Westminster is teaching students how to live a life that reflects God’s call. As Head of Academics, Micah Gall, often says, we use a biblical framework to inform our decisions and our curriculum. As a college preparatory school, our students come to class and engage in difficult and challenging classes, including dual-enrollment and Advanced Placement courses in math, science, literature, and much more. We want our students to succeed, not just here in high school but also at the next level, wherever the Lord leads them. Our classes prepare students for numerous career opportunities, but what sets a Westminster education apart is that our teachers present the material through a biblical lens.

Academics at Westminster are rigorous, but we do not use the term lightly for its own sake. Why do we have to do the work? Why do we challenge ourselves and our students? We do so because when we study math or science, we study the mind of our Creator. 11th-12th grade principal Dan Burke says it best, “We cannot love God well unless we are actively trying to discover who He is.” Education is valuable because we push our students to think deeper and reach higher. An education that does not ask anything of us is not worth anything. Whether our students are studying biology or American history, the beauty of Christian education is that our faculty are given license to talk openly about what they believe and why and how it can be applied to any subject matter with the intention of preparing our students to go out into the world and serve the Kingdom of God.

Of course, integrating faith with academic study extends beyond the classroom. Every summer, upper school students have the opportunity to go on a summer trip to South Korea, Spain, or France as part of our global partnership and world language programs. Not only did our students have an opportunity to become fully immersed in

the language, but they also stayed with host families to engage with the culture personally. Along with our summer programs, this year, the Music Department took a group of students to Europe during spring break. “We performed concerts for different groups of people, and during some of these concerts, I could feel the Holy Spirit moving through everyone listening,” says senior Jacobi Robinson. “Watching people receive the Gospel was really moving for me.”

At Westminster, our seniors are required to take Worldviews as part of our Bible curriculum. The course outlines different philosophies that exist throughout the world, from different forms of atheism to other religions such as Judaism and Islam, all to better equip our students to listen well and be gracious even to those we disagree with. International trips such as the music department’s spring break journey to Europe offer our students practical opportunities to express their faith and practice what they learn in the classroom. For Jacobi, “Going there to

listen and learn the way we do in Worldviews, to see how they live, hear about their experiences and respond with love and understanding make our overseas trips special and important. I really appreciate Westminster giving us the opportunity to go on these trips.”

Westminster has always seen the importance and value of integrating a Christian worldview into academics. If the vision of our school is truly to prepare and equip our students to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ, it is crucial to ingrain excellent academics in Biblical truth. Going into his senior year, Kent Kehr ’78 was attending Ladue High School, where he was earning straight As and on the high track for math when George Knight approached his mom about enrolling her children at a new school, Westminster Christian Academy. It could have been a risk, transitioning from a nationally well-known school to one opening its doors for the first time, but God was in control. “There was no downside when transitioning to Westminster,” says Mr. Kehr. “The biggest change was having classes as a senior with 9th graders, but I realized that God was using me as a leader to touch more lives than I could have done before. [Coming to Westminster] I knew I’d be losing out on something, but I realized that this was God emphasizing that relationships matter. When you got to Westminster, you could see that this was a place where you had relationships with the church, family, and the school all bound together beautifully.” This year, Mr. Kehr retired after many years of working at Westminster, having been a tremendous blessing to our students and our community. God’s faithfulness to Westminster is evident in stories such as Mr. Kehr’s.

Susie Brown, retiring this year along with Mr. Kehr, has worked at Westminster for 21 years in various capacities, including the Student Life office. Throughout her time at Westminster, she helped oversee exciting community events such as Carnival and Spirit Week and was integral in implementing our expanded Faith in Action program. She remembers fondly her time at Westminster, and as she looks to the future of our school and our community, she hopes and prays that as we develop and change over time, we always keep our eyes on God and continue to “grow and invest in students to live out our vision to change the world for Jesus.”

From our humble beginnings to our current beautiful campus, our students have gone on to live out our vision to change the world for Christ in cutting-edge organizations, prestigious universities, and the mission field. From having only a few classes and rooms to multiple dual-enrollment and AP courses, from a makeshift stage in a gym to a 600-seat Theatre, God has blessed our school, and we continue to look to Him as we approach our 50th anniversary and beyond.

God was faithful to the men and women who planned and founded our school, and He has remained faithful for nearly 50 years. As the students of Westminster said in the school’s very first yearbook, “In the beginning, Westminster Christian Academy was only a thought... a dream. Thanks to the diligence in work and the faithfulness in God of a few teachers and parents, that dream became a reality.” When we look at the history of our school, we see God’s faithfulness, and we know that He will remain faithful now and in the years to come. •



STUDENTS HAVE
OPPORTUNITIES
TO ENGAGE THE

world



BY JENNIFER SENGPIEL, HEAD OF ENROLLMENT

“The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.”

— Zephaniah 3:17

What started out as simply the theme for our Open House back in October quickly became the arc of the story we share with each family that walks through our doors.

This admissions season, we have welcomed families from a wide variety of schools seeking many different grade levels. It has been wonderful to interact with so many people from all over St. Louis and out-of-state. Many of these families attended our annual Open House held on October 19, 2023. There, we had a record-breaking number of RSVPs, with 540 people in attendance! During Open House and throughout the year, we never try to “sell” Westminster. We want to reveal the wonderful world of Westminster by telling our stories, sharing our beliefs, getting to know our visitors, and enabling them to interact with our incredible teachers and staff. This is God’s school, not ours. God determines who walks in our doors and attends His school. As an admissions team, we are simply here to listen and take great care of our visitors while sharing how we prepare and equip young men and women to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ, our savior!

We know Westminster is not for everyone, and that is okay. We also know in a world that seems to be upside down more times

than not, our visitors can be running away from something more than running towards who we are and what we believe. We trust God’s wise and sovereign providence in guiding families to Westminster, and it is an honor to be a small part of that process. This is why, in our admissions practices, we value connecting with all who walk in our doors whether that’s for the Open House, a family tour, a shadow visit, or at our many community events. The stories we hear on how families were led to visit Westminster can be extraordinary. Then, we get to share the incredible experiences occurring here, from working to grow Atlantic coral to operating a thriving coffee shop within our business program to hearing students’ testimonies in all-school chapels and watching upperclassmen mentor middle schoolers in our Peer Connector program. It truly is a wonderful world at Westminster, and our story is just beginning! •

Jennifer Sengpiel serves as the Head of Enrollment at Westminster. If you have questions about admissions or know someone interested in enrolling, please contact her at jsengpiel@wcastl.org.



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024

Congratulations, Class of 2024, and to valedictorian Caden Collison and salutatorian Caidan Brophy! We praise God for the time you spent at Westminster and recognize the hard work and dedication you showed to your school, your communities, and each other.

This senior class collectively completed over 8,000 hours of community service, practicing our core value of leading through service. Whether they stepped foot on campus for the first time in 7th grade or began their time at Westminster in high school, we have been blessed to see each and every one of them grow and mature into the men and women God has designed them to be. Join us in praying for our graduates as they leave for whatever the Lord has planned for them.



98%
ATTENDING
COLLEGE

8,000+
HOURS SERVING THE
COMMUNITY

\$26.5M
TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS
EARNED

24
BRIGHT FLIGHT RECIPIENTS
WITH ACT 32+



SPIRIT WEEK

THIS YEAR IT ALL CAME DOWN TO THE VERY LAST DAY to declare the winner. Following an intense week of tug-of-war matchups, ultimate chicken rivalries, and dress-up days with 100% participation, the final rankings were determined by the Lip Sync performances. In the end, the 2024 senior class won the Florence Johnson Lewis Memorial Cup. The Artboard competition was an impressive showing of creativity as students from all grades were required to create a representation of an assigned book. The 9th grade class came in first place in Artboard for the second year in a row with a marvelous representation of Alice in Wonderland. The juniors took first in the Film Project while the seniors won Boys Poms with a heart-warming tribute to their final year at Westminster and also Lip Sync with a class-wide performance of Barbie. It was a great week of competition and community!



Community Events

AROUND CAMPUS

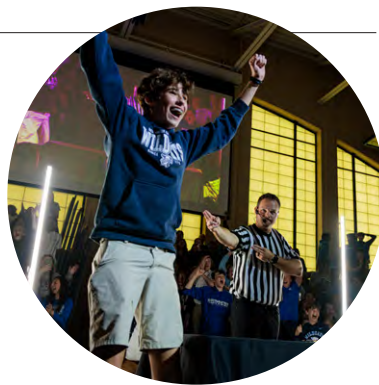
PUTTING OUR FAITH IN ACTION

One of the many ways to integrate spiritual formation into Westminster's experience is by providing our students ample opportunities to practice one of our core values: leading with our service. To advance such efforts, we expanded our Faith in Action program this past fall to require all students from 7th-11th grade to complete a set number of service hours each year. This year, our student body as a whole needed to complete 20,920 hours. We are proud that every single student took our mission to serve the community to heart, completing nearly 30,000 hours combined. Students served with various non-profit organizations around the St. Louis area, at local churches, and at service events organized by parents and the Student Life department.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

On Monday, March 4, the sophomore class welcomed athletes from six special school district schools for a Special Olympics Challenge Day. The day of service began with buddy training followed by Opening Ceremonies and competitions in the Arena and Gymnasium along with fun activities in the Blue Gym. Each student was partnered with a special school district athlete and had the privilege of cheering and assisting them throughout the day, including escorting them from one activity to another and eating lunch together.



RPS MAKES A COMEBACK

After a two-year hiatus, Rock Paper Scissors made its return to Westminster. Students from all six grades competed in best-of-five matches. At the end of April, the top two from each grade competed in the semi-final rounds before the top students moved on to the live finale on May 1. In the end, freshman James Marsh won the cash prize. On the faculty side, upper school teacher Jennifer Bilder won during the live finale.



WE ARE ONE

On Thursday, February 15, we hosted our annual We Are One program to celebrate Black History Month and the rich history and significance of Negro Leagues Baseball. This year, several of our students put on a "Living Museum" of some of the most notable Negro League players in history. Guests were able to view displays of Negro League artifacts and take part in an interactive baseball experience in the Arena while also enjoying quintessential ballpark foods. There was also student art on display in the Grand Entry. Our keynote speaker this year was particularly exciting, as we got to hear from Bob Kendrick, the president of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City.

LEADING WITH SERVICE

This past spring, 8th grader Hannah Cullen was recognized by the National Charity League for earning the President's Volunteer Service Award. The National Charity League is a mother-daughter organization that provides service to numerous nonprofits in St. Louis. At Westminster, we always want to challenge our students to go above and beyond. While our new Faith in Action program requires middle schoolers to complete a minimum of 10 hours, Hannah practiced one of our core values as she completed more than 100 hours of service.



A Life of Music

CHRISTIAN X. M. MCGHEE '17

Christian graduated from Westminster in 2017 before moving to New York City to attend the Manhattan School of Music, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees. For the past seven years, Christian has been performing at various jazz clubs and music venues around New York City.

In addition to venues around New York City, Christian has performed at jazz festivals in Montreal, Toronto, Rochester, and DC and has performed in other events abroad, such as a tour in China last summer, where he performed in jazz clubs in Beijing and Shanghai.

Christian attributes his success to the guidance and support he received from the Westminster faculty. He fondly remembers Mr. Jones, Mr. Taylor, Dr. Gargrave, Mr. Schwamb, Mrs. Eichelberger, and Mrs. Rohlfing, who not only taught him about music but also prepared him for the work he does today. The skills he acquired at Westminster are not just theoretical knowledge but practical tools that he uses every day in his career.

While at Westminster, Christian studied AP Music Theory and performed with the concert and jazz bands as well as occasionally accompanying the orchestra. He also remembers the writing, public speaking, and video editing classes he took in high school. “I had an English class with Mrs. Keith my senior year, and she really challenged me to become a better writer. I took a public speaking class with Mr. Butz, which was incredibly helpful. My job is literally talking to people and playing music. The same with video storytelling and business classes with Mr. Kim, Mrs. Newlin, and Mr. Horn.”

In college, Christian had the opportunity to study alongside some of his heroes in scoring for media. He has also received awards and nominations, such as the 2023 BMI Future Jazz Masters Award.

Since his time in school, Christian has gone on to compose for several different films and projects, including a PBS Documentary set to be released in 2024. Now, Christian composes music for commercials. Some of his clients include State Farm, Doritos, Disney+, and many more. Deadlines are intense, and turnaround times are quick, but Christian's tracks are competing with professionals who have been in the industry for 20+ years and twice his age.

“My time at Westminster was really amazing,” says Christian, looking back. “I met some really awesome people there. I think that was the biggest thing that made the whole experience great: the people and the community. My advice for current WCA students is that high school only happens once, so make the most of it by really enjoying your friends and family. Cherish that time with them.”

Christian's debut album, “A Winged Resilience,” was released on May 20, 2024. Make sure to look out for his future performances by visiting his website: christianmcghee.com. •

CLASS NOTES

ALUMNI NEWS



REFLECTIONS

A Note from Your Alumni Relations Coordinator

As the second semester comes to a close, one favorite part of my job is welcoming the seniors as the newest members of our alumni community. I am privileged to shake their hands, learn their plans for the future, and, of course, give them their first alumni swag. They are so excited to be setting out on a new path; their enthusiasm is contagious!

I sensed that same enthusiasm each time I was involved with an alumni event this year. Whether it was the most attended alumni hockey game to date or the Spirit Week alumni judge panels, our alumni show up when called on. And they show up with happy hearts, ready to work and have fun while doing it. There were other opportunities as well: class reunions, the alumni day of service, and a young alumni social.

As we settle into summer and our graduates begin a new journey, my prayer for them remains the same: that they will use their God-given gifts to change the world for Jesus Christ. Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat!

Blessings,
Hannah Wallace Murray '93



'86

David Hearne lives in Charleston, South Carolina, and continues as a senior vice president of commercial banking for ServisFirst Bank. He has two grown children, Caroline and Samuel, and enjoys the beach, shooting sports, and traveling, often to visit friends, including a recent hunting trip with several WCA alumni (Dale Port '85, Brian Bendick '93, Matt Hearne '85, Eric Jost '85, James Meng '84, and Chuck Barker '83).



'04

Daniel and Lane (Anderson) Koch, their daughter Langley (11), and son Beckett (8) welcomed a new blessing—a daughter, Hollie Belle—into the family on May 7, 2022. The family lives in Chesterfield, Missouri, where Daniel works as Vice President of Business Banking at PNC and Lane works as a political and government affairs consultant at Arena Campaigns, LLC. The couple celebrated their sixteenth wedding anniversary in April.

'07

Michael Colins Polovich married Makenzie Roach on June 10, 2023, in the Boston Library at Copley Square. Quinn Zielonko '07 and Sam Moergen '07 were groomsmen. Michael is a lawyer for a global firm and is in the corporate litigation division and Mackenzie is a veterinarian.



'09

Eric Terschak and his wife Melanie welcomed their baby, Parker William, on December 8, 2023. The Terschak family lives in Kansas City.



'11

Matt McDaniel and his sister, **Megan '15**, have started a travel planning agency called "Magical Adventures," specializing in all things Disney, Universal, and cruising. Their primary goal is to glorify God by providing full service to their clients for peace of mind traveling.



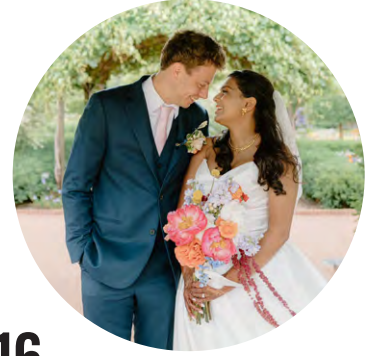
'13

Brooke Cusumano and Chris Cacciarelli were married on June 24, 2023. Several alumni were in attendance (Alex Cacciarelli '10, Alex Cusumano '10, Erin Bognar '13, Ryan Conaghan '13, Taylor Deves '13, Ellie Straub Huff '13, Megan Tilley '13, Della Woodward '13, Nick Cacciarelli '16, and Dominic Cusumano '18).



'14

Haley (Woolbright) Horina and her husband, Matthew, welcomed their first baby, Josie Lynn, into the world on November 14, 2023.



'16

Jack Andrews married Grace Christodoss on June 25, 2023. They live in the Wheaton, Illinois, area where Jack works for a ministry for at-risk youth and their families.



Ben Lovell and his wife Kasey work with Athletes In Action on the Purdue University Fort Wayne campus. The Lovells reside in Fort Wayne with their sons Emmett and Ezekiel.



Jordan (Weber) Parker and her husband, Will, welcomed their first child, Thomas (Tommy) Parker, on January 5.



'17

Amanda Ahlbrand and Josh Pottebaum were married on October 27, 2023.



Josh Ortiz and his wife, Gina, were married on August 6, 2022. They reside in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, with their dog Lucca.



'15

Christian Meeks and his wife, **Celia (Avery) '16**, welcomed their first child, Zoë, on February 16.



'19

Allison Broadhurst is a cheerleader on the prestigious Indianapolis Colts cheer team. In December, Allison was selected to perform the National anthem at the last Colts game of the season.

Hannah Sturr works at Cox Automotive in Atlanta, where she works on a cutting-edge AI product called the Fixed Imaging Tunnel. This tunnel uses 44 cameras to capture pictures of cars while they're still in motion, then uses AI to pick and crop the 12 best photos and use the rest of the photos to write a condition report.

Alumni: If you would like to be included in the next issue of Chimes, please send your update, graduation year, and a recent photo to alumninews@wcastl.org.

'21

Margo O'Meara set a new swimming and diving record at Duke University. Her astounding score of 345.38 surpassed a nearly decade-old record.



'22

Luke Bequette is currently studying abroad for a semester at sea, traveling on a ship from Thailand, going through 10 different countries, and ending in Germany.



Sterling Webb is joining a very talented Mizzou football team after two seasons at New Mexico State, where he accumulated 47 tackles, 8.5 tackles for loss, 2 forced fumbles, and 6 sacks.



'23

Emily Griega has had an amazing year as goalie for the University of Wisconsin–Steven's Point women's hockey team. She has had 2 shut-out games and set a record on January 13 with 59 saves in a game versus the University of Wisconsin–River Falls.

IN MEMORIAM

Christopher Boyd '05 passed away on February 24, 2024. He was a boy scout who loved the outdoors and was a loyal employee and, later, manager of Dewey's Pizza for many years. We pray that God provides His comfort and grace for his parents, Jim and Kathy, and his sisters, Stephanie '07 and Adrienne '10.

Adam Farquhar '07 passed away on December 13, 2023, after a 12-month battle with lymphoma. He enjoyed a celebrated career in the Aerospace industry with Boeing and Lockheed-Martin. Adam will be missed dearly by those whose lives he impacted.

James Zandstra '13 passed away on September 24, 2023. His parents, Peter and Cathy, are grateful for the impact so many had on James' life and career, specifically the WCA teachers, mentors, classmates, and international students who were a huge part of his life.

SPIRIT WEEK ALUMNI JUDGES



Boys Poms

Danielle Gilbert Krause '03, Luke Matheny '15, Becca Davis Castaneda '02, Bria Witherspoon '23, Angie Wall Kimmel '90, Josh Berglar '17, Hannah Sabadell '17, Justin DeRosa '04



Lip Sync

Christine Yu Thomson '07, Katie Corder Ward '07, Natalie Bell '13, Ginny Greenplate Kruta '97, Hannah Rupprecht '19, Mary Grace Fellows '19, Annie Wood '23, and Amanda Ahlbrand Pottebaum '17

ALUMNI EVENTS



Alumni Hockey Game



Class of 2018, 5 Year Reunion

Planting in Good Soil

INVESTING IN WESTMINSTER STUDENTS

BY SHANNON KEKHAEV, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS

My father-in-law, Vasily, was a master gardener. He earned a PhD in agriculture and spent his career planting vineyards across Eastern Europe. His backyard in Krasnodar, Russia, was a produce-lover's dream, bursting with berries, peppers, plums, dill, watermelon, cucumbers, and more. What a treat (literally!) to step outside in the morning and pluck a sweet, juicy apple for breakfast.

If you've ever attempted to keep anything green alive, you know Vasily's gardening success wasn't happenstance. He studied seeds, and he examined soil. He understood what, where, and when he was planting. He knew which herbs needed shade near the fence and which vegetables required more water.

When Vasily came to St. Louis in 2015 to meet his grandson, my Lukas, he shared his green thumb with us. He visited local nurseries to learn about Missouri's soil (and heavy clay) and decided our yard could handle a couple of pecan trees. He got to work, digging and planting two pecan saplings, entrusting them to our care. In 2020, we enjoyed our first harvest of fresh pecans... better than anything you'll buy in a bag!

Sadly, Vasily passed away in April. I never realized how thankful I'd be for our pecan trees. They're our reminder of Vasily's love for us, his joy for God's creation, and his thoughtful provision. What he planted years ago bears fruit his children and grandchildren enjoy today. Amen.

Serving in advancement at Westminster is much like enjoying Vasily's beautiful gardening. I recognize that the Westminster of

2024 is strong and flourishing because of the seeds of faith and generosity planted nearly 50 years ago.

The gratitude that continues to flow from parents, teachers, founders, alumni, grandparents, and friends is abundant. This community eagerly serves, joyfully gives, and faithfully prays. And the kindness and faith sown into Westminster every day take root!

In the coming year, you'll learn more about *Our Faith. Our Future. Our Time. The Campaign for Westminster*—a plan to strengthen Westminster for current and future generations. It's exciting to think that what we plant now not only blesses students here today...and it will! It will also impact the students who will sit in our classrooms, sing on our stages, and play on our fields in the years to come.

As you consider your role in cultivating this school, be assured that supporting Westminster is like planting in nutrient-rich soil. Principals, senior leaders, and board members prayerfully craft plans that are Spirit-led and God-honoring. Teachers infuse the Word of God into every class. Coaches remind athletes that "winning" means honoring Christ in how you play the game.

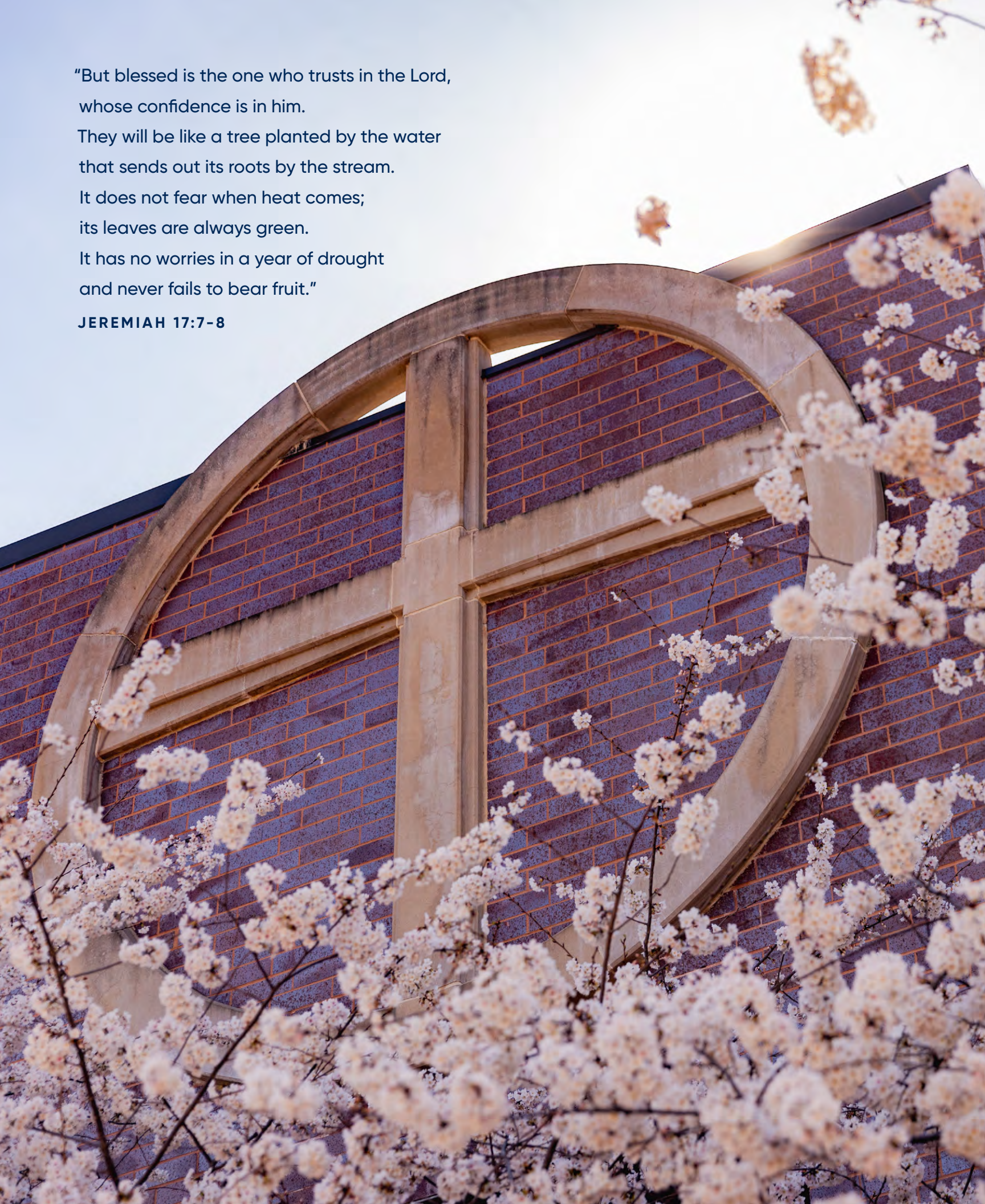
Just like Vasily's garden, Westminster's growth isn't happenstance. It's the result of God taking the seeds you've planted and watered and making them grow.

Sometimes, the fruit comes quickly. Other times, it takes years to sprout. But when the sun sets and our work is done, we can entrust the yield to the Master Gardener...more young men and women prepared and equipped to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory. •

Shannon Kekhaev serves as Director of Development Operations. She is grateful to serve on the advancement team and enjoys connecting a donor's heart to give with the work God is doing at Westminster. You can contact Shannon at skekhaev@wcastl.org or 314.997.2901 ext. 6424.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit."

JEREMIAH 17:7-8





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Town & Country, MO 63017
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CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS
OF
2024

