

CREAN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL  
LITERARY ARTS MAGAZINE | 6TH EDITION



THE *Mirror*

*Faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is **LOVE**.*  
1 Corinthians 13:13

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# Letter from the Editor

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. -Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Browning's words reflect our deep desire as human beings to express our love, to put into words our most cherished feelings for one another. We attempt to express appreciation, devotion, and care for those we love. Yet, how does one put into words the immense love our Savior Jesus Christ has for us? *How can we possibly count the ways we experience God's perfect love for us?* Through His Word, God reveals that "the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10). 1 John declares the Great News of the Gospel: that Christ died for us so that we may live with Him in eternal life. What a joyous promise of perfect love.

In this year's edition of *The Mirror*, our students reflect the gift of love in their pieces. Hailey Baik's Cover, *Swan* illustrates a beautiful image of God's creation: an elegant portrayal of a swan landing gracefully in the serene blue waters, symbolic of beauty and devotion. Helen Zhang shares her inspiration for the Back Cover, *Piecing the Lost Notes*. Helen's painting "explores love as a form of recognition of seeing and hearing every voice and fostering connections, reflecting how love can amplify voices often left unheard. The cello, tied to my own story, echoes how every note matters. By piecing together the lost notes and overlooked voices, they create an inclusive melody of love together."

Love pours out from these pages - in bursts of color and memory, in regret and longing, and in selfless love and compassion. Through these works of art, our students celebrate the beauty of nature and their unique identities (*Ten Longevity*, "Mirror Lies", "The Turtle and the Wave", *Winter*, *Squished*); reflect on lasting memories of friendship and belonging ("Our Tree", "Adventures to Jodie", "Somewhere in the Woods", "Freedom Feels Like Summer"); and dream of re-building connections after drifting apart ("I Find You in My Dreams", "Rediscovering Us"). Many pieces illustrate our students' love for family: a mother's safe and secure embrace (*Resonance*), an elder's sacrificial love for a family member ("First Born", "Dear Umma"), or the nostalgic moments shared with a sibling ("Bound by Memories").

After selecting these pieces this year, I am reminded of how God designed love. 1 Corinthians 13 gently proclaims, "Love is patient and kind, love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Love mends broken hearts, encompasses grief, patiently nurtures, forgives and restores. God's Word reminds us that God is strong when we are weak, God is powerful when we are powerless, and God endures when we falter. Incomparably, God loves us. I pray that this year's volume inspires you to reflect on your own memories of love, identity, and belonging.

When we ask ourselves, *how does God love us?*, let us remember His promises and assurances; and, as innumerable as they may be, let us try to count the ways.

In Christ,  
Jessica Jaeger

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**Back Cover:** Piecing the Lost Notes by Helen Zhang ('25)

## Special Thanks To:

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# Our Tree

by Samantha Agle '26

My favorite place was six hundred forty-seven, seven and a half feet from my house. It was a magnificent structure, but I wouldn't exactly call it a building. It was around twenty-five feet tall and made from wood and oak, but it did not have four walls. It had six large branches and thirteen smaller ones. My favorite place was a tree.

My tree was beautiful; the green and yellow tinted leaves arching over the branches during the summer and spring created the perfect sitting area. We could do anything there: sit down for a picnic, rehash our day with the other, or just lay there in silence when tired or bored. My tree's leaves hadn't been cut down in fourteen years; heavy leaves made the branches surround the arms of the tree in a cool shade.

My place was strong, with branches thicker than ten inches. My place could hold us up. My place didn't only feel sturdy; it felt safe. Thick branches curved in such a way that you could believe you were standing in a tree house. It was my home away from home. The crevices in the wood made great places to hold her phone or my pencil. My tree didn't have smooth timber, but it was never itchy, and there were never many bugs crawling around. The only etches in the wood were made by Mother Nature and us. My tree remained pure in urban, polluted Irvine.

The tree only smells particularly strongly, and some bark has snapped. My place smelled very little of anything. But, she did. She usually smelled like chlorine or perfume—my youth, my best friend. If I were to sum up my childhood, it would be her name. Like the tree, our friendship was unchanging, unmoveable, sturdy, and strong. She truly was my person. I spent more time with her than with my own family, and I spent almost half my nights at her house. I don't know if I was my person outside of her. When you think you know everything about someone, separating yourself from them is often difficult. We loved that tree.

We would sit up in the branches for hours, from when the sky was a bright piercing blue to a twinged orange and pink. We would sit there on days when the sky was a gradient of grey, we would sit there as the pattering rain would bounce off the leaves and onto the ground below, and we would sit as the sun peaked through the leaves, sprinkling our faces with its light. We sat when our airspace was a murky orange from fire, we sat when the tree was drenched of rain from days before, we sat when they sky had turned from pale orange to navy blue. We would peak behind the leaves and look up at murky grey blue and pretend that we could see more than ten stars.

In our tree, you could always hear something; on a summer day, rain or shine, you could always count on the shuttering sound of clumsy Junebugs flipping from surface to surface like they could see where they were going. In bright spring, you could hear the bright green and blue parrots squawking for no particular reason other than to listen to themselves screech. In Autumn, you could hear the crunching of orange and brown dead leaves under people's passing feet. In Winter, it was sprinkling rain, not too much to affect our body temperatures but enough to feel chilly from more than the breeze. If it wasn't raining, then the sound of choice would be the blaring bellows of nearby trees.

The tree had so much to offer and so little at the same time. It was gone in what felt like seconds, wisping through the wind; just like my youth, my friendship with the tree was brought down as time progressed. The fallen trunk etched with our initials, bright green leaves now crisp and brown, and birds that once sat there fly by to the next tree; just like life, we progressed. But my place will always be our tree.



Ten Longevity by Yewon Woo '25 | Mixed Media

# *I Find You in My Dreams*

by Celine Atoian '24

Although I silently wonder  
Beneath the moon's gentle glow and  
Crave the warmth that I feel in my  
Dreams of your company,  
Echoes of your name in the silent night  
Find a way to lull my longing.  
Gazing at my ceiling, an unspoken wish  
Hoping for you here, my heart's eternal longing.

In a quiet room, unaccepting, my mind  
Journeys through desires not yet confessed, and  
Keeps the secrets of my heart. A fleeting  
Longing for your whisker on my cheek that  
Merely draws me closer to my wish,  
No longer living a life full of yearning. My  
Open heart beats loudly while my  
Patient eyes seek out our crossroads.

Questioning my choice, my now unrestrained need,  
Restless do I search in uncharted lands  
Softly calling out in the still air; your  
Tender name lingers and fogs my vision.  
Under the same night sky, dreams no longer silent,  
Vividly call me in your direction.

Whispers of regret, a now silent agreement  
Xanadu before us, an unwavering sentiment  
Yearning always persists in the name of an unspoken plea, one that is  
Zealous for closure, and will set my spirit free.



*Twilight in the Red Light (District)* by Nate Leuteritz '25 | Photography







# *Bound by Memories*

by Amber Nguyen '25

Dear Joshua,

I remember when we were young and free,  
We'd dodge Mom's gaze, stifling our glee.  
Hoping not to get caught as we whispered secrets in the dead of night,  
We were conspirators in crime - just you and me.

Do you recall that night inside the car,  
We laughed so hard till tears blurred every star?  
Over a street name- so simple, so absurd-  
Yet it echoed with joy in each and every shared word.

And our fish,  
Our beloved fish who had endless lives,  
Each time we left, he somehow got revived.  
Until at last, we laid him down to rest,  
Invited neighbors to honor our guest.

Now, our last years in highschool and college,  
We drive aimlessly through the silent streets,  
Windows down, hearts syncing with the beats.  
We spoke of dreams beneath the moon,  
I will cherish those moments when time moved so smooth.

Now we're both leaving home, it's time to start,  
Leaving Mom and Dad, we're set apart.  
I want you to know these memories we sow  
Are seeds of love that in our hearts will grow.

Let's cherish these moments before we leave,  
No matter how far our journeys take,  
The bond we share no distance can break.  
Love you.



# *First Born*

by Grace Jin '25

The burden I hold  
I wish I could say  
But I would do anything  
To see your smile stay

Through ups and downs  
I want to hold your pain  
Make me feel numb  
Make me feel the drain

I want to see you succeed  
Even if that means holding myself back  
I want to see you happy  
Even if that means I have to be sad

Give me your burdens  
I feel that it's my job  
I hope you can pass them to me  
And not deal with any for long

I pray to God  
I hope and wish  
That you never have to feel the pain  
That I once did

Come to me  
I have open arms  
Transfer me your burdens  
Heart to heart

No matter how much pain  
No matter the hurt  
I am ready to face  
What you don't deserve

I will fight for you  
Until the very end  
Don't look down  
Don't fret

It's my job  
I was born to have this role  
Let me take all your hardships and toils  
Anything to see you smile

I love you  
More than words can describe  
I am willing to take the pain  
I am willing to make the sacrifice

Come to me  
I will shelter you close  
I promise to never let anything  
Hurt you most

# *Bushveld*

by Jacques Vlok '25

In the bushveld, the sunrise doesn't start when Helios ascends into the sky on his chariot, ready to bathe the world in his golden warmth. No, it starts before that, long before the rest of the world wakes up. Out here in the bush, the sunrise starts while it is still pitch black outside. It is during this time that the bush sends out a call to all in its vicinity, a call to awaken and summon a cacophony of life. It is rare that I am up by 4:30 am, but it is impossible to dismiss the bush's call. It cuts through the air like the savage teeth of a lioness and sweeps you up in its current. I can see it tickling the acacia trees, making them sway with laughter.

The crunching of my boots on the gravel serves as my sole companion as I strut further into the vast landscape that is slowly answering the call before me. With the sweet taste of condensed milk coffee dancing on my tongue as it wakes me up, I follow the steady rustling of the leaves, guiding me to my destination. Suddenly, from behind me, the squeal of a warthog rings out as he scampers to cross the road, kicking up a trail of dust, and dashing back into the bush. The impossibly dry smell of barren dust permeates the air while it spirals before the light of my headlamp and disguises the fright I just experienced. In my unease, the first instrument of the Bushveld Orchestra decides to join in. As if directed by a conductor, the Red-Chested Cuckoo and the African Fish Eagle puff out their chests as their piercing goodmorning cries echo across the valley below, captivating me in its resonance. Taking a deep breath, the unmistakable homey peppermint smell of the capparitis bush wafts up to my olfactory nerve, flooding me with childhood memories of my dad and me tracking gazelle over the plains.

As I continue my trek, the first rays of sunlight shyly peek over the horizon, reflecting on the fresh dew drops that rest on the spider webs. Looking to my right, I see a Baobab tree standing tall and proud as its long shadow is slowly casted over the ground. In the midst of being enthralled with the magnificent giant before me, I hear the groggy grunts and bellows from the wildebeest and zebra to my left. Further adding to the orchestra, the Bat-eared Jackal gives a sly high pitched howl in response, ready to join in on the gossip with the obnoxious Hyenas. At last, I find my refuge in a Rocky outcrop in the mountainside as I gaze down below at the hyper impala jumping and running in a see-saw formation, eager to start his day.

Taking a sip of my overly sweet coffee, I pull my jacket closer, trying to hide from the sharp claws of the wind. My shivers beckon the impending rays of warmth closer, eagerly awaiting Helios' forgiving embrace. Just as his fingertips reach out to me, the orchestra abruptly goes quiet. This is the moment I have been dreaming about since my last time in the bush. I hold my breath in anticipation with the

rest of the bushveld, when at last, the mighty roar of the lion erupts across the savannah, ending the symphony with a booming declaration. The new day has begun. On cue, Helios slings his chariot out behind the horizon, flooding the bush with a sea of colors, ranging from an energetic orange, to a bloody red. It is at this moment that I am blinded by the glare of the scarlet light mirrored in the Kudu's regal crown of spiraling horns. Blinking the light out of my eyes, I turn to see that the Ghost of Africa has disappeared just as fast as he had appeared, his image imprinted in my retinas, serving as the only proof that I had seen him. No matter how many times the Winter Sun pours out its colors to complete its daily masterpiece, it never fails to amaze me. This is where I come to forget about the world, and experience the wonder of God's creation. This is where I grew up. This is my home.





*Plans for Hope and a Future* by Ellie Hordyk '27 | Photography

# *Comprehensive Love*

by Christine Oh '27

They said hopes and dreams come true,  
Telling me to look at the sky,  
Its hue so blue.

I said Faith comes forth, a gentle guide  
The silent strength I hold inside.

But no one knew the secret truth:  
Every problem could melt away  
If love for God was all involved.

So let me reiterate;  
In the world so hectic,  
I will walk the path where faith leads on,  
Where hope is bright, and fear is gone.



# *To be a Burning Rose in Frozen Winds*

by Qiwen Wu '27

Once upon a time,  
It was snowing.

The wind billows.  
Under the shadowy blanket of night,  
There stands no life but a burning rose;  
Proudly in Nature's frozen hands,  
Devoutly before sharp knives,  
There she stands.

The wind blusters.  
Flames coil like snakes around prey;  
Snowflakes fall like eiderdown,  
Searing, burning, freezing, biting.  
There stands no life but a burning rose.  
Spiritedly in Nature's frozen hands,  
Dedicatedly before piercing daggers,  
There she stands.

Nature brews a blizzard.  
Snow falls harder,  
Layers of pearly plumes descend.  
Flames blaze brighter,  
Sheets of coral feathers flare.  
Vermilion blazes contrast ivory snowdrifts,  
They dance and make iridescent shades.  
Fiercely twirling, they sway and oscillate,  
Exhibiting scintillating hues.  
Belatedly, they depart the stage,  
After the ferocious battle,  
There she stands.

At present,  
The rose retreats to a withered guise,  
Petals fall,  
Singed, Hushed, Ashen, Charred.  
To be a burning rose in frozen winds,  
In the midst of the tempest's dance,  
Where winter's breath intertwines with fire's embrace,  
She stood resolute  
Leaving behind a memory etched in snow,  
A fleeting moment of beauty  
In the heart of a raging storm,  
Forever engraved in the tapestry of time,  
In the tender embrace of a snow-kissed farewell.

# *Graveyard of Memories*

by Jasmine Lee '25

Footsteps along the muddy soil  
The dust and shadows swirl in suspense  
Pained cries for loved ones  
Hang in the air of silence  
The shovel plunges into the earth

Lips pulled taut with shattered thoughts  
The air is thick with rumination  
With lingering past regrets and disappointments  
And so the burial begins

Guilt-ridden and repentant flashbacks  
Concealed and locked away like unspoken secrets  
The hole of sorrows is sealed

Clocks tick, time smiles  
Grass grows and flowers bloom  
Over the graveyard  
Of memories



*Barbs* by Jonathon DiPinto '24 | Photography

# *Take a Deep Breath*

by David Roche Jr. '27

It'll come soon, you just have to wait.

The world still goes on.

It doesn't stop, no matter what.

The birds will continue to sing

The trees will continue to grow

There's no need to rush

Take a deep breath

Take it all in

It's stressful sometimes, isn't it?

Don't get caught up on the little things

Focus on the big picture instead

Before it's gone

The grass will always be green

Just as the sun will always shine

Day after day

Take a deep breath

Take it all in

It's going to be okay, isn't it?

Time will pass

Lives will change

But the flowers won't stop growing

The winds will never stop blowing

They'll keep going on

Far after us

Take a deep breath

Take it all in

It's all so beautiful, isn't it?



*Rays of Light* by Chloe Robinson '24 | Watercolor







# *The Turtle and the Wave*

by Jasmine Lee '25

A roaring wave overcomes the turtle  
Bested by the ocean, the turtle encroaches into its shell  
Clinging to its shelter for  
Dear life. The ocean draws back, ready for more,  
Electrified with the need to erode the shell of the turtle  
Fixed upon the sand. The turtle refuses to  
Give up, yet continues to  
Hide and cower in fear of the  
Insistent, domineering ocean.  
Jolted by the rushing sound of seawater, the turtle  
Kisses the sand, reemerges from its shell, and begins to  
Limp its way away from the wave.  
My little turtle, why do you hide? Why must you cower in  
Neglect from the ocean waves, hidden beneath your shell? The shell that  
Ostentatiously covers your true self.  
Paddling from the shore, hiding from the salty sea  
Quietly subdued by the  
Roaring waters.  
Strength will come when your shell comes off  
The wave will stop and pause when the  
Umbrella encasing your body retracts. Do not be afraid, for the  
Vast ocean crinkles its brows and  
Watches you with hesitancy, scared of the new turtle. The turtle whose  
X-ray is not a shell, but the true turtle underneath, ready to  
Yell in defiance and take back its territory on the sand.  
Zealous with its newfound courage, the turtle defeats the wave.

# Rediscovering Us

by Marissa May '28

The storm clouds roll in slowly, threatening to ruin our day with every passing minute. I shove my notebook into my backpack and force the door open, an inch away from slamming it on the person behind me, hoping I can beat the rain home. I hear my name being called a thousand times, but I don't bother to look back, until I hear her voice. *Jessica?* I whip around, my heart racing with hope. There she is, clutching an envelope, staring at the floor. She looks just like I remember her, in the same blue sweater we bought together, as if nothing has changed since then.

All our memories together come flooding back like the rain, now falling in sheets. Riding our new bikes down the big hill for the first time, screaming at each other to turn before we crash. Wandering off on a field trip together, watching in horror as the bus began to take off, we sprinted after it, waving our arms wildly to get the bus driver's attention. Finally, shouting goodbye to her from my window as her bright red car turned the corner for the very last time, only I didn't know it then. Jessica hands the envelope to me before taking off. *Wait! Where are you going?* I watch her descend down the stairs, past the picnic tables, through the field of dandelions we used to pick together.

It has been two years since then. Two years since I spent an hour waiting for her under the dark oak tree after school in the rain, tears mixing with the relentless raindrops. Two years since she blocked my number, even though all I wanted to know was if she was okay. She was with someone else the next time I saw her under that tree, laughing and taking photos in the autumn leaves together, just like we used to.

I stop as I approach that same oak tree. My head wants to move forward, but my feet are frozen in place. Instead, I open Jessica's letter, and I am greeted with two words I never thought I would hear from her: I'm sorry. The wind roars. I gaze up at the inconsolable storm clouds, weeping as Jessica slowly disappears. I don't want to spend another day avoiding her in the hallways, acting like strangers after everything we have been through together. I imagine running down the stairs after her, my heart pounding and hope dragging me forward. I imagine tentatively tapping her on the shoulder and getting to talk one last time, even if it doesn't work out.

I open my mouth to call out her name, but all that escapes is a whisper. I reach for the apology letter again, staring at the words "I'm sorry," letting them echo in my head over and over again. Holding on to the last memory I have of her. I try to slide the letter back into the envelope, but my fingers graze another piece of paper. *Huh?* I pull out a watercolor painting based on a photo I could have sworn we took just yesterday. The silence between us disappears as the brushstrokes tell me everything she wanted to say. So much more than "I'm sorry." All my anger washes away like water flooding down the drain. I stare at the paper, letting it transport me to the setting of the photo, captured perfectly in her painting.

Today's gloomy sky is replaced with a bright blue one. I can almost feel the scorching August heat, our new backpacks nearly dragging us to the ground, the "first day of middle school" sign between our hands. And just for a second, we are starting sixth grade again. Back when all we had was each other, and that was more than enough.



*Momentary Mirage* by Cici Pan '25 | Photography



*One Spring Day* by Kylee Lee '25 | Charcoal

# Dear Umma

by Justin Choi '25

Dear Umma (Mom in Korean),

Thank you Umma. I don't say it enough, but I love you too.

And I carry them, and you, with me every day.  
Your sacrifices, love, and selflessness shaped me  
To show them love, like you always showed me.  
I've learned to take care of others,  
And I do, even when it's difficult.  
You taught me to stand up for what's right,

Who love me for who I am.  
I've found friends who support me,  
(Even though, sometimes, I still crave my instant noodles.)  
I try to eat the foods you taught me to love,  
I'm becoming the young man you always hoped I'd be.  
I want you to know

Always strong, always so selfless.  
You were scared, though you never showed it—  
Carrying your hopes as your little boy seemed to grow distant.  
Crossed oceans from the bustling cities of Seoul, Korea to Irvine,  
You traded those precious dreams for me,

Of a strict, conservative household.  
A dream left behind, wrapped in expectations  
Your dream of becoming a news anchor.  
The bright flicker of camera flashes, the microphones,  
Mom, I remember the stories you used to tell me.

*Editor Note: After your initial reading of the poem, journey back through the poem in reverse, starting from the very last line and moving towards the first. Justin intended for the poem to be read both ways to reveal new connections and meaning.*

# *Adventures to Jodie*

by Sophia Williams '25

With my dearest,  
A celebration of double digits.  
There will be no other as special as that.

Challenging again and again that rush of adrenaline  
By dashing toward that Incredible ride.  
With frozen brains, we sprinted,  
Slurping yellow soft serves.

It ended too soon:  
Traversing through the air with cries of exhilaration  
As we twisted and tumbled,  
Facing that Incredible suspense.

With food and drinks galore,  
We walked through aromatic streets.  
Slipping off the raft, laughing deliriously with  
Soaking skirts and sopping strands.

As adrenaline and anticipation built  
So quickly we were falling and floating  
Through the long line that passed  
In the Galaxy, high on excitement together.

I am honored you selected me  
Of all people, for an Adventure on  
Your tenth birthday.



*Can We Share?* by Hailey Baik '27 | Watercolor

# *Somewhere in the Woods*

by Ethan Lee '25

Dear Sam,

It's been eight years,  
and I still can't leave that day  
when we were too young to ever realize time existed.

We ran through colossal trees,  
nets dangling over our heads,  
chasing summer dragonflies,  
to a beautiful place called The Enchanted Forest.  
Breathless days in our secret place,  
where giants grew out of the ground  
and the cerulean sky stood too far away, out of reach.

The sun would set, and we'd pursue the light  
until our little legs couldn't carry us.  
We lay beneath shade trees  
that danced in whispering zephyrs,  
telling each other stories of faraway lands,  
of worlds where we could be anything we wanted.

Then our moms called, marking the end of that day.  
Thinking I'd see you tomorrow, I waved goodbye.  
"Later," you said, but later never came.

Eight years gone, and do you still remember  
that day the way I do?  
Do you still think about the dragonflies?  
Do you still dream about the forest?  
Because sometimes, I still see the same two kids  
running through those same trees,  
chasing after something that was never quite there.

I wonder if you've found your way back to the forest,  
or if it's just a memory you've tucked away.  
But know that for me, I'm always there,  
like the trees that never stopped dancing,  
the me from yesterday, that never left.

Yours,  
The friend in the forest



*Winter* by Lucy Liu '26 | Oil

# *Mirror Lies*

by Bailey Wilcox '27

Bright yellow sunbeams shoot from my mother's complexion,  
Pink hues of joy beam from my friends' smiles,  
My brothers share a bright blue gleam that blinds my direction,  
Strangers shed kind and meek lights that spread beyond miles.

However, in the mirror, all I show is a dull and blank face,  
No light chose to bounce off dim and unusual features,  
"The mirror speaks devilish lies," says the pretty girls in bows and lace,  
It appears the fortunate are the self-proclaim preachers.

Who is speaking lies,  
A conflict oh my...

Suddenly, the sky turned gray, and people's faces started to fade,  
My hope drained and my love for others went away,  
The stab wounds of words failed to be my aid,  
And the love I had for others decayed,

My mother's complexion turned dark,  
My friends' smiles became frowns  
My brothers lost their irreplaceable spark,  
Those strangers' faces started to look down,

That mirror lies,  
So that joy may die.

I shattered that mirror, and broken glass slashed the floor,  
The dark skies became a pastel blue,  
I told those thoughts of hatred to get out the door,  
And in that moment I realized some self-love was due.

The mirror may lie,  
But the heart tells the truth!



*Crushed* by Keira Clineff '25 | Acrylic



*Shards of Change* by Cici Pan '25 | Watercolor

# *Crack and Fall*

by Boyan Chen '24

Anger is an egg,  
It is an egg that cracks and falls.  
Shell explodes into small tiny pieces,  
No one can glue them back together.  
A construction worker found the broken egg, she tried to fix it,  
She gave it a kiss.  
The egg did not feel better.  
An elementary school teacher found the broken egg, he tried to fix it,  
He gave it a hug.  
The egg did not say thank you.  
Sun heated the floor, egg started sizzling,  
Heat took over the floor, egg started boiling.  
The angry egg turned into a scrambled egg,  
It passed through puberty, menopause, and aging.  
It told itself, "It is not such a big mistake after all,  
It is all okay."

## *Freedom Feels Like Summer*

by Ally Hwang '25

I let the salt air soak into my sunburnt back  
Our legs race across the shore of elated ripples  
Shouts of all-time classics  
Our bodies hug  
like the seaweed that gets stuck  
between our toes when waves whoosh them to shore  
We slap sunblock on our cerulean-absorbed bodies  
Squinting eyes and inhaling the moment in  
knowing this is a gem we will later cherish



*Squished?* by Alexis Lee '25 | Acrylic



9<sup>th</sup> Let love be genuine. "Abhor what is evil: hate fast to what is good 10<sup>th</sup>"



# Letter from the Student Editors

Love comes in various forms—it can be found in relationships with others, in cherished memories, or even in life’s mundane, ephemeral moments. In this year’s edition of *The Mirror*, our students reflect on the theme of love in their pieces.

The theme verse for this edition is “Faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). God pours His love into crafting the earth (*The Earth Takes Shape*) and everything within, from the towering mountains (*Winter*), to the rivers (*Ten Longevity*), to His creation of us. We can feel and experience His love in the seasonal memento (“Freedom Feels Like Summer”), or in the happiness of our childhoods (“Adventures to Jodie”).

Countless pieces featured in this edition highlight the complexity that love can bring. It can be moments of joy in simple gestures, or gaining a fresh insight from an unexpected loss; in either experience, the feelings that linger remind us of the love that never fades.

Love surrounds us and empowers us; it can tear us down, yet also free us in innumerable ways. Through these beautiful, symbolic pieces of literature and art, we hope you feel inspired to embrace and reflect on what love brings to your life.

Love,  
Ally Hwang ('25), Alexis Lee ('25),  
Helen Zhang ('25), Jasmine Lee ('25)



*Torso* by Keira Clineff '25 | Sculpture

*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part;  
then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

1 Corinthians 13:12



**CREAN LUTHERAN  
HIGH SCHOOL**

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