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THE TALON

TENNESSEE CHRISTIAN



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JUST ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL PLAY

FROM THE HEAD

Every morning at Tennessee Christian, a young student in our Learning Cottage looks forward to seeing something rather extraordinary. It is not a lesson, a classroom activity, or even a favorite toy. It is a Ford F-350. More specifically, it is the F-350 belonging to Mr. Ben Sluder, Tennessee Christian's Director of Operations.

To many of our younger students, Mr. Ben's truck is something to admire. But for one particular student, Waylon, the arrival of that truck means something more. It means an opportunity to see Mr. Ben, exchange a greeting, and share a moment of excitement before the school day begins. It is a simple interaction, easily overlooked amid the business of a school morning. Yet, in many ways, it captures something essential about who we are and what we hope to accomplish at Tennessee Christian.

Our mission is not simply about what happens within the walls of a classroom. It is about the relationships that shape lives, the connections that bridge generations. This year, Tennessee Christian welcomed four former students back to campus as members of our faculty and staff. These individuals once walked our hallways as students, sat in our classrooms, and experienced firsthand this institution's mission. Today, they have returned not merely to work at a familiar school but to help carry forward the very mission that helped shape them.

There is something profoundly meaningful about that cycle. Students who were once the recipients of a Christian education have now become the individuals entrusted with providing it. Those who were once encouraged, challenged, mentored, and guided are now doing the same for another generation.



Ben Sluder represents this beautifully. As a former student and now Director of Operations, he handles the practical, often unseen work of keeping a school functioning. Yet his influence extends beyond those responsibilities. To a young boy in the Learning Cottage, he is simply Mr. Ben, the man with the remarkable truck who takes time to connect with him. That relationship may seem small, but small moments are often where the most meaningful work of education takes place.

At Tennessee Christian, we believe education is fundamentally relational. Knowledge matters. Academic excellence matters. But these pursuits are strengthened by a community in which students are known and valued.

The truck may be what first brings them together, but the mission is what gives their connection meaning.

Biology







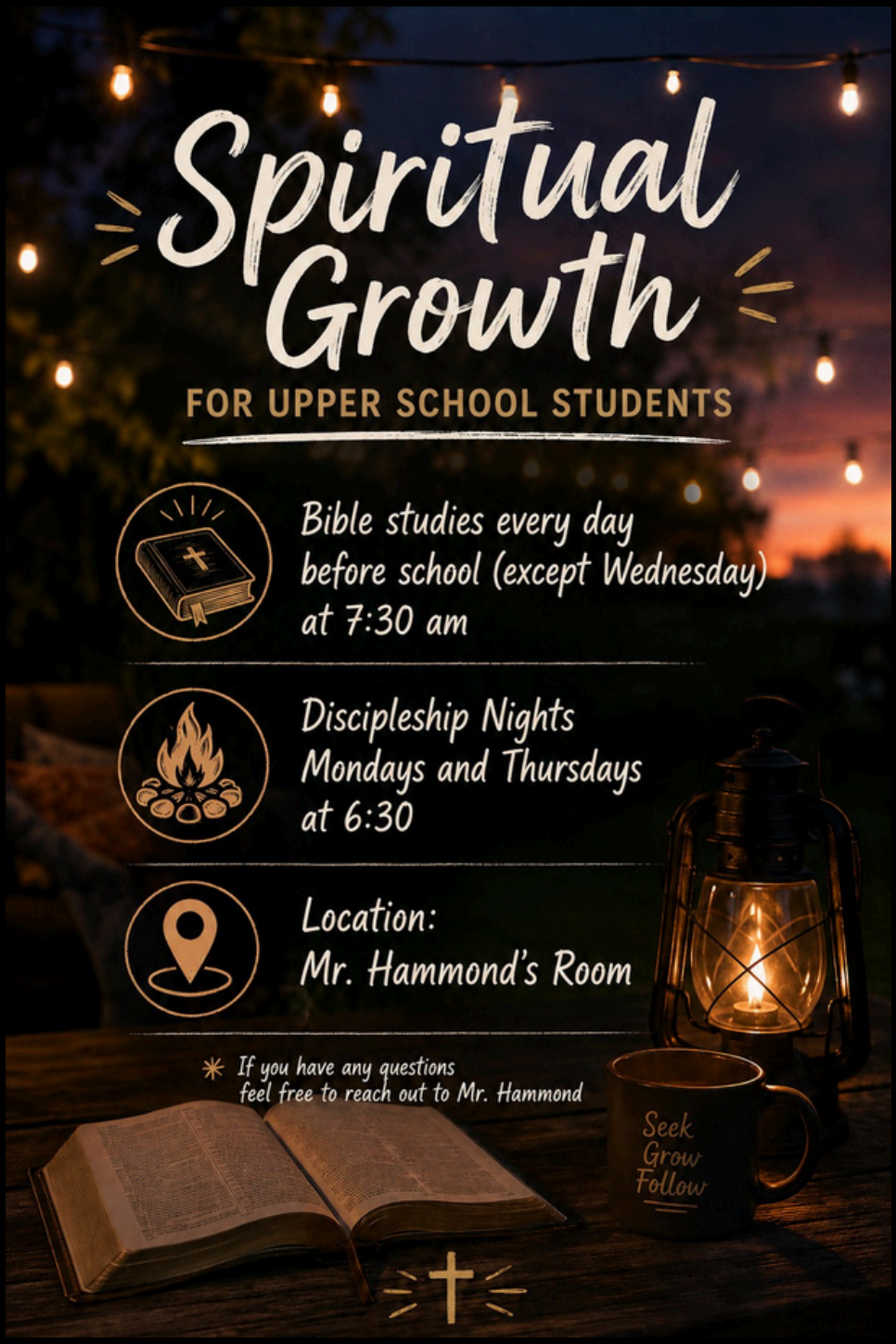




The 10th-grade biology class got a taste of college life, and game-day energy, with a field trip to the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville. We arrived on Friday, October 16, just hours before SEC Nation went live on the front lawn of Ayres Hall, in anticipation of the biggest game of the year - the Tennessee Alabama game on Saturday the 17th. So, as we made our way across campus, of course we stopped by the iconic Neyland Stadium for a photo op.

From there, it was time to experience a real college environment. We joined about 200 UTK students for a university-level lecture on cell biology and mitosis. (We had just finished our unit on cells and mitosis so it was just a review for us ;) Next, we headed to the Student Union for a delicious lunch before making our way to Strong Hall. There, Dr. Randy Small, Director of Biology teaching and learning, gave the class a personal tour of the state-of-the-art labs and classrooms and explained why so many students choose UTK's prestigious science programs as he highlighted the incredible opportunities waiting for future science majors.

It's safe to say our students were impressed by the beautiful campus, the massive Student Union, and the high-tech equipment available to undergraduates. Overall, it was an incredibly educational day that started with cell division and ended with holding the science department's pet snake, Edward, which was easily the highlight of the trip for students Maddox Mullins and Cove Nelson.









Last school year we began having "Discipleship Nights" for upper school students. The heart behind this is to create a space for students who want to go deeper in their relationship with God and each other. One of my personal goals has been to create an environment where students can know they are seen, known, and heard by both God and others and that they have a group that they can count on to go through life with.

From doing Bible studies, to discussing different religions and how to reach them, praying for each other, making blessing bags to give to people in need, and so much more, we are growing together and experiencing a glimpse of Heaven on Earth! This has personally been one of my favorite parts about being a teacher at TCPS and there's nothing more rewarding than to see these students grow!

3rd

Third grade has had a wonderful start to the year! The students have been learning new skills, exploring exciting stories, and making sweet memories along the way. In math, they have been strengthening their multiplication skills and recently started learning long division. Their novel study of *The Cricket in Times Square* has also been a hit, and the students are loving the story! During morning journals, they write about a variety of topics and share their thoughts with the class. It has been wonderful to see their writing improve and their personalities shine through on the page.

Outside of the classroom, the students recently celebrated a birthday and had the exciting opportunity to see the fire department's awesome truck!

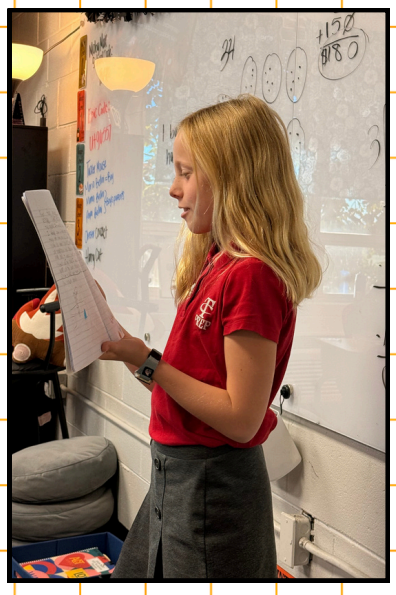
One of my favorite things about Tennessee Christian is the close-knit community it provides. The third-grade class has really become like a little family, and I love watching the students build friendships and get to know one another so well.

I am so proud of this group and thankful for the opportunity to be their teacher. It is a blessing to watch them learn and grow, both academically and in their knowledge of our Heavenly Father.









honesty.

Esther Award

"If I perish, I perish." – Esther 4:16



Nehemiah Plummer (K4)

"I chose Nehemiah for this award because of his courage to tell the truth, even when it may be difficult. He speaks up when he doesn't know an answer in class, and he works hard to communicate his feelings kindly and honestly with friends on the playground. He shows integrity by taking responsibility for his actions and an eagerness to learn from his mistakes. His willingness to be truthful reflects a heart that desires to do what is right and honors God through his words and actions." -Hannah Bullington



Tucker Workman (K4)

"I chose Tucker Workman for our Honesty award. Tucker works hard using his own brain to complete his work daily. He is honest with his teacher and his friends. We love having Tucker as our friend."
-Jen Winner



Indie Green (1st Grade)

" Indie does a wonderful job of choosing to be honest even when it might seem difficult in the moment. He is quick to tell the truth and to encourage his classmates to also be honest and to live out our Christ like actions. I am proud of Indie for understanding at such a young age that honesty is an important trait to have in our hearts and to shine that light on others. Great job, Indie!" -Rebecca Hake



Amos Rebenstorff (2nd Grade)

"Amos is always making sure he is doing the right thing, as well as his peers. He always leads with 100% honesty, and sets a great example for his classmates!"
-Rachel Leslie

honesty.

Esther Award

"If I perish, I perish." – Esther 4:16

Emilia Rodriguez (5th Grade)

"Emilia recently had the opportunity to practice honesty in our class, choosing to tell the truth in a difficult situation. Emilia demonstrated that she can be counted on to do the right thing and can be seen as trustworthy, which is a reflection of the Lord's character. Emilia's commitment to honesty is a blessing to all who know her!" -Sarah Van Dyke



Olivia Maslov (Middle School)

"Olivia is the perfect example of the Esther Award for honesty because she is very true to her word. Olivia is honest with her friends in her words and her actions. She is honest with her teachers when she truthfully answers what is asked by them. Olivia is also honest in her faith. Like Esther in the bible, she portrays patience and sincerity in her daily life." -Kelly Owens



Elijah Smith (Upper School)

"Elijah exhibits honesty and transparency in all interactions. From conversations with friends to communication with teachers, he exemplifies truth and what it looks like to be honest on all occasions. He truly values truth as evidenced by his integrity and character." - Kylie Machacek



JUST ANOTHER HIGH SCHOOL PLAY



Our talented upper school students took the stage this past weekend for *Just Another High School Play*, delivering another witty and entertaining fall production!

Unlike our spring musicals, our fall plays feature only upper school students, who begin rehearsing shortly after the school year starts. These students dedicate countless hours to learning lines, perfecting scenes, and bringing their characters to life, often sacrificing evenings and weekends along the way.

While the audience enjoys the finished performance, it's the students' dedication, teamwork, and creativity behind the scenes that make these productions so special. We are incredibly proud of the talent they share and the confidence they build each time they step on stage. A special thank-you to Mr. Mullins for his time, dedication, and leadership in directing this production!

We hope you'll join us this spring for our production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream!*

FINE ARTS - THEATRE

Athletics
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High School Volleyball

The High School Volleyball team has accomplished a remarkable season. They finished the season by being named the SCAA Regular Season Champions, with an undefeated record, as well as placing 2nd overall in the end of season tournament. Not only did they accomplish this feat, but we also had two of our very own named to the All Tournament Team (Frannie McPherson and Amelia Shepherd). These two seniors, alongside Maggie Botts, Reagan Hartline, and Isabelle McKeown, led their team throughout the entire season. They showed tenacity and perseverance all the way to the end and we cannot be more proud of each of these seniors.

There is one word that comes to mind when looking back on this season and that word is "excellence." Excellence, as described in Biblical passages, is giving your best effort to reflect God's nature by practicing moral integrity and being disciplined in service. That is not only what is asked, but expected by us as the people of God. This volleyball team showed their most excellent effort in everything they accomplished this year. We congratulate them in their undefeated season and placing second overall in the SCAA.

Athletics
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3rd-8th Cross Country

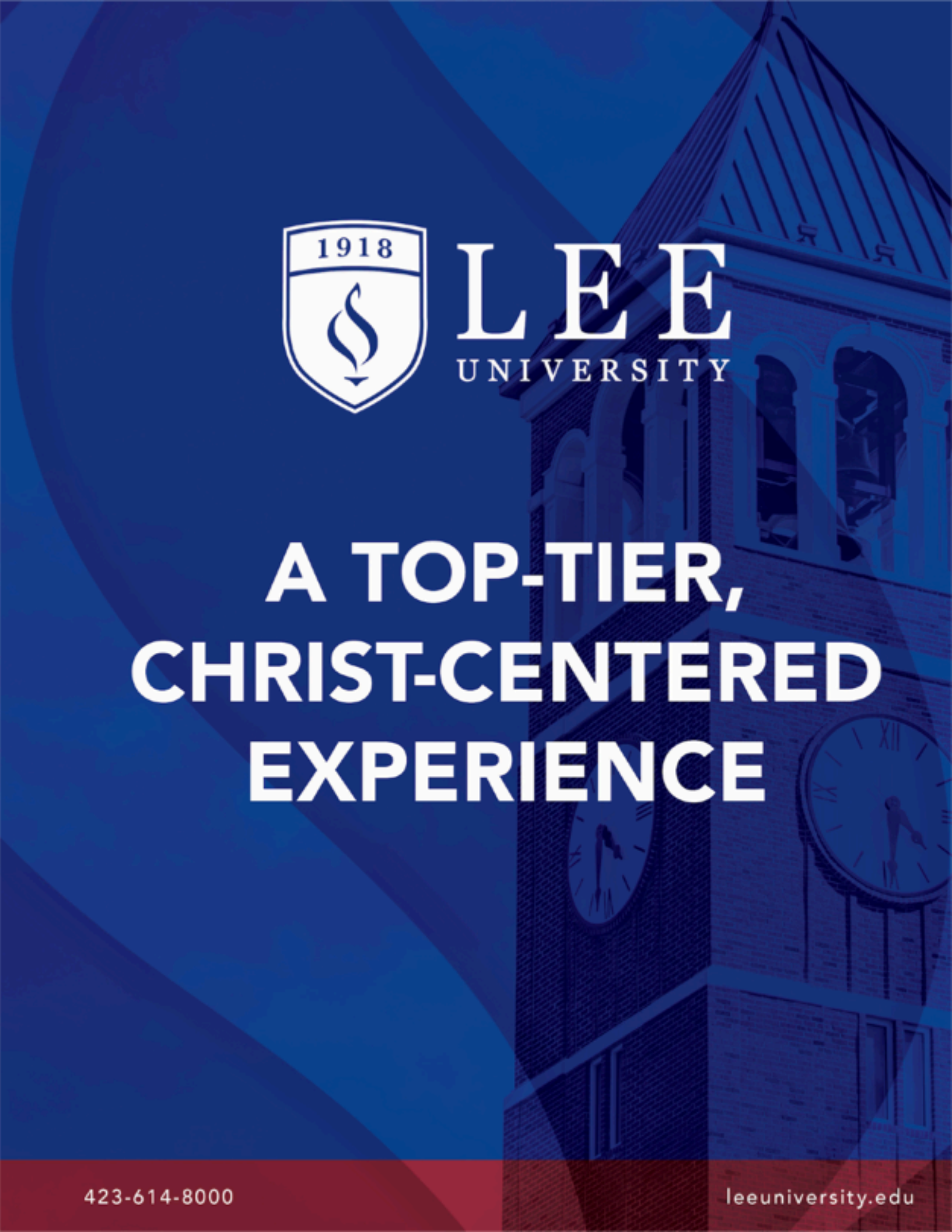
State XC Championship

Part of the Cross Country team had a chance to compete at the State level in Knoxville and came back with wonderful results. Kai Ahlers and Henry Sluder, representing our middle school boys, had “impressive finishes” per Coach Kelly Ahlers. They competed against over 350 other runners and pushed themselves to the best of their abilities. Representing our Lower School Girls were Daisy Sluder, Millie Canfield, Julieth Fowler, Zoe Debord, and Zara Debord. They had many accomplishments including Millie and Julieth placing in the top 15, Daisy and Zoe matching and improving previous pr’s, and Zara excelling all the way to the end.

Cleveland Half Marathon

We had a couple runners participate in the Cleveland Half Marathon, to which they competed against runners in and around the Cleveland area. They, too, had accomplishments including Graham Osbourne finishing his first 10k, and Greyson Laws finishing the 5k with an outstanding time. We even had Lincoln Osbourne step up to the challenge and finish his own 5k, alongside Adam and Amanda Osbourne, finishing 10k’s.

As Cross Country has officially wrapped up, we cannot be more proud of our runners who not only represented the school, but also represented Christ by giving their excellent effort and portraying a positive attitude.


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Tennessee Christian Preparatory School *provides* a quality college preparatory education, from a **Biblical worldview**, and *equips* students for tomorrow's challenges by educating the *mind* and the *soul*.