

the talon

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TENNESSEE CHRISTIAN
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from the Head

Looking at the cover of this issue's Talon prompted reflection on the purpose behind our work. Before moving forward, I want to thank the teachers who make our educational journey possible each day. Your dedication, time, and passion for educating the students of Tennessee Christian do not go unnoticed.

At the heart of our school lies a mission that goes beyond textbooks, tests, and transcripts. It is a mission rooted in shaping thoughtful individuals, engaged citizens, and lifelong learners. At Tennessee Christian, we desire to prepare students not only for college and careers, but for meaningful lives. This mission comes to life most clearly through a Liberal Arts education.

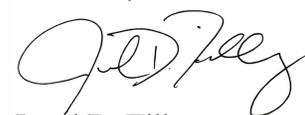
A Liberal Arts education is often misunderstood as simply learning a little bit of everything. In reality, it is a deliberate and powerful approach to learning that emphasizes critical thinking, effective communication, moral reasoning, and intellectual curiosity. Through subjects such as literature, history, science, mathematics, the arts, and philosophy, students are challenged to see the world from multiple perspectives and to ask more profound questions about it.

Liberal Arts learning supports this by encouraging students to connect ideas across disciplines rather than viewing knowledge in isolated silos. A history lesson becomes more meaningful when paired with literature from the same era. A science course gains depth when students consider its ethical implications. This interconnected learning reflects the complexity of the world God created, where ideas rarely fit neatly into one subject area.

Several aspects make a Liberal Arts education necessary on our campus, but perhaps most importantly, it teaches students how to learn. It instills curiosity and love of discovery that extends far beyond graduation, emphasizing the importance of growth over grades. Students are encouraged to ask "why," to challenge assumptions, and to seek knowledge for its own sake.

In a world increasingly focused on speed and specialization, Tennessee Christian remains committed to an educational mission with lasting impact. By embracing the values of a Liberal Arts education, rooted in a Biblical foundation, we ensure that students leave not only well-informed but also ethically and integrity-driven.

In Christ,



Jared D. Tilley

Mosaic Art *Grant Workshops*

Thanks to the generous support of the Allied Arts Council of the Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce, we at Tennessee Christian were awarded an Arts in Education Grant. This year, one of the exciting projects funded by these grants was a Mosaic Workshop with talented local artist Jackie Cory. Jackie, known for her beautiful and intricate printmaking work, quilting, watercolor, mosaics, and a variety of mixed media and fiber arts, graciously offered her time and expertise to teach our students the art of mosaics.



The last two weeks, our lower school students had the incredible opportunity to learn from Jackie and create their own pieces of art using stained glass and other inspired materials. The students were introduced to a variety of stained glass methods, from gluing to grouting and using real stained glass and cardboard cutouts and everything in between. As Jackie demonstrated each technique, the students were captivated by the creative possibilities that mosaics offered. The classroom was filled with excitement as students eagerly experimented with the beautiful glass.



Though each class had only an hour to explore mosaics, the results were impressive. Many students expressed interest in continuing the art form on their own, eager to create more pieces. Each student walked away with a unique printed piece, showcasing their new skills and creativity. The workshop continued with our middle and upper school students later in the week, where they had the opportunity to dive deeper into mosaics with more time and focus on advanced techniques, the upper school students created intricate and detailed projects that highlighted their growing understanding of



the medium. We are incredibly grateful to Jackie Cory for sharing her time and talent with our students. The workshop was a wonderful success, and we look forward to future opportunities for our students to explore the arts through these grants.

-Chloe Hinchcliff

RISE & THRIVE

(Prek4-5th Grade Move-Up Day)



Lower School ended the last Friday of January on an exciting note with Move Up Day, giving our students a special opportunity to preview what lies ahead in the 2026-2027 school year. Students across all lower grades stepped into their next classrooms to experience what's coming next year.

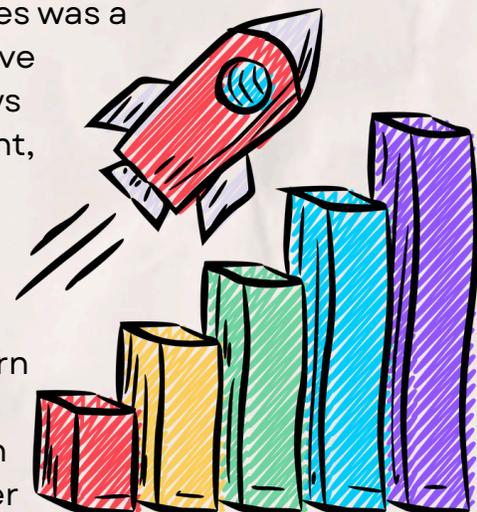


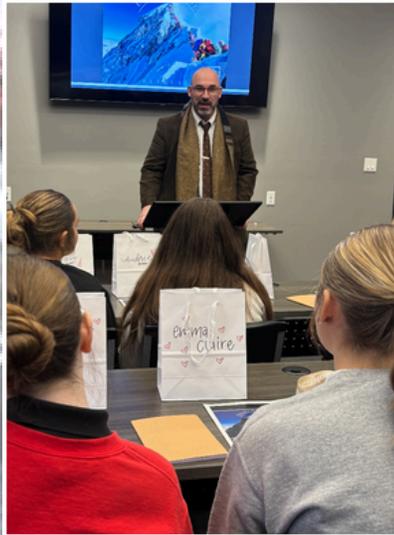
Pre-kindergarten students from The Learning Cottage visited kindergarten to get a taste of being in Mrs. Dodson and Mrs. Hope's class, while kindergarten moved to first grade and the progression continued up through fifth grade. Each group enjoyed time in a new classroom, meeting future teachers and engaging in age-appropriate lessons. Fifth graders wrapped up their experience with a logic lesson led by Ms. Kesley, offering a glimpse into the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they'll continue to build as they move forward.



Seeing our students walk into their next classrooms with confidence, curiosity, and big smiles was a sweet reminder of how much they've grown this year. Move Up Day always helps ease nerves, spark excitement, and build anticipation for what's ahead. We are so proud of our students and can't wait to walk alongside them in the 2026-2027 school year as they continue to learn and grow in their education, and most importantly, in their walk with the Lord.

-Lindsay Sluder





THE 8TH GRADE RETREAT IS A SPECIAL DAY FOR A SPECIAL GROUP OF STUDENTS. WE TAKE OUR CURRENT 8TH GRADERS OFF CAMPUS TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD - UPPER SCHOOL. THROUGHOUT THE DAY, WE FRAMED THIS JOURNEY AS A CLIMB UP MOUNT EVEREST, WITH GRADUATION STANDING TALL AS THE SUMMIT. LIKE ANY GREAT ASCENT, THE PATH AHEAD WILL REQUIRE FOCUS, PREPARATION, SKILL, AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, SUPPORT. STUDENTS SPENT TIME LEARNING THE PRACTICALITIES OF THE TREK, FROM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND SCHEDULES TO OPPORTUNITIES LIKE DUAL ENROLLMENT, WHILE ALSO REFLECTING ON THE VOICES THEY CHOOSE TO LISTEN TO AND HOW TO PACE AND PLAN THEIR ROUTES WISELY. JUST AS IMPORTANT (AND FAR MORE FUN), WE DISCUSSED HIGHLIGHTS LIKE UPPER SCHOOL AND ONE RETREATS, TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES, AND THE COMMUNITY AND GROWTH FOUND THROUGH ATHLETICS AND SHARED EXPERIENCES. THERE WAS A SHARED EXCITEMENT IN REALIZING THAT WHILE THE CLIMB WILL BE CHALLENGING, IT WILL ALSO BE FILLED WITH AMAZING MOMENTS THAT BECOME LASTING MEMORIES. WE'RE EXCITED TO WATCH THIS TALENTED GROUP SET THEIR FEET ON THE TREK OF UPPER SCHOOL AND CAN'T WAIT TO WITNESS THEM STANDING AT THE PEAK OF GRADUATION FOUR SHORT YEARS FROM NOW. SPECIAL THANKS TO VICTORIA TILLEY AND KELLER WILLIAMS FOR HOSTING US AGAIN THIS YEAR.

-KYLIE MACHACEK



faithfulness.

Ruth Award

“Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” – Ruth 1:16

Leighton Spencer (PreK4)

Leighton shows faithfulness in her daily actions. She likes to do her very best even if it means taking a few extra minutes to complete a task correctly. Her eyes get big and light up every time she says Jesus or talks about him. As a classroom, we all know we can count on Leighton to do the right thing.

-Jen Roe



Sutton Dysart (Kindergarten)

Sutton is a reliable and loyal friend to all. He strives to follow the rules and always uses his manners. He is a great example of what faithfulness looks like in the classroom!

-Ashley Dodson & Phyllis Hope



Daisy Sluder (2nd Grade)

Daisy shows the trait of faithfulness to her friends, always willing to stand by their side when they need it. She is always willing to give a helping hand to them, and to me! She also shows the trait of faithfulness to her work, always trying her best no matter what.

-Rachel Arms





faithfulness.

Ruth Award

“Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.” – Ruth 1:16



Thomas Yang (4th Grade)

Thomas exemplifies faithfulness in many ways. He is reliable by faithfully completing all assignments in a timely manner, giving his best effort. He faithfully notices what is to be done and begins it without having to be reminded. He is a faithful reader who rarely misses a night to read. He is a faithful and loyal friend, honoring God with his words and actions.

-Donna McKee



Mason Davis (Middle School)

Mason is the perfect example of the character trait of faithfulness. He is reliable, steadfast, and loyal. He is always reliable to his schoolwork and responsibilities. He is steadfast in his faith to Jesus and worships him to the fullest. He is loyal to his classmates, friends, and family. When God created a faithful servant, he created Mason Davis.

-Kelly Owens



Caleb Cigliano (Upper School)

Caleb is faithful with the responsibilities he has been given. He puts in the extra time and work necessary to succeed and excel in both academics and athletics. He is also a faithful servant - he serves every week in chapel and is usually the first to volunteer when help is needed. Caleb is a wonderful example of faithfulness to his peers and the entire Tennessee Christian community. -Kylie Machacek



HAWK HIGHLIGHTS

High School Boys Basketball

The Hawks opened the stretch with a hard-fought overtime loss at Paideia Academy, falling 55-52 despite multiple chances to win. Caleb Cigliano led with 12 points and 5 steals Elijah Smith added 10 points and 8 rebounds, and Thomas Nicolaus contributed 9 points, 5 steals, and strong floor leadership. TCPS then faced first-place Apostolic Christian(Knoxville) and dropped a tough road contest 72-26, playing without starting point guard Nicolaus. The Hawks responded with a strong 60-52 road win over Shenandoah, led by Nicolaus' 20 points, Eli Ahlers' 14 points and 13 rebounds, and a key bench performance from Jonathon Adams, who knocked down four three-pointers for 12 points.

Due to weather, the Hawks played just one game the following week but turned in perhaps their most complete performance of the season, defeating Knoxville Christian 64-35 on the road. Nicolaus and Cigliano led with 12 points apiece, while Elijah Smith and Ben Slocumb added 10 points each. Smith, Slocumb, and Ahlers controlled the glass, and Joey Meir delivered an outstanding all-around performance that proved to be a key factor in the dominant win. The Hawks enter the final regular season week at 11-6 overall and 6-5 in SCAA play.

Middle School Boys Basketball

The Middle School Hawks split two road games, falling to Knoxville Apostolic Christian 43-22 behind 12 points from Elliott Tilley, before rebounding with a 35-21 victory at Shenandoah. In the Shenandoah win, a combined JV/Middle School lineup was led by Tilley with 8 points, followed by Jonathan Adams and Holden Hartline with 6 points each.

Postseason Outlook

The regular season concludes February 5, after which both the High School and Middle School Hawks will learn their seeding for the SCAA Tournament. Tournament play begins February 7 for High School and February 9 for Middle School at Fairview Christian.

Lower School Basketball

Friday night's final home game against Belvoir Christian was extra special as we celebrated 5th Grade Night. Our 5th graders were recognized on the court, surrounded by cheering families and friends, for the leadership spirit they bring to our Lower School. To top it all off, the evening ended with a big home win, making it a memorable night for everyone as our 5th graders head into their final months of Lower School.



LEARNING COTTAGE AND LOWER SCHOOL



**WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 4, 2026**



TENNESSEE CHRISTIAN
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2026-2027

RE-ENROLLMENT

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BEGINNING FEBRUARY 2, 2026

**FOR WAITLISTED STUDENTS OR SIBLINGS
NOT CURRENTLY ENROLLED:** This offer is subject to our availability and pre-screening for admission.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

OPENING FEBRUARY 16, 2026

**FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS SEEKING
ENROLLMENT:** This offer is subject to our availability and admission eligibility.



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JUNE 15-19: CHEER CAMP

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