



Tolle Lege

by Principal Melodie McKenzie

Dear Saints at Providence, Augustine calls to you: "Take up and read." What should I read? In classical circles, we are urged to read books that are over 100 years old. This will allow us to read outside of our own timeframe and current views.

Well, I guess I should have waited four more years, but this year I took up *Christianity and Liberalism* by J. Gresham Machen, published in 1923. He is the father of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. While taking his doctoral studies at Marburg in Germany, he encountered some of the leading liberals of his day. He grew to love and respect them for their passion for Jesus while he was turning away from some of the dispassionate conservatives that he knew from America. Although he found more joy in the liberals, he eventually had to deny them because of their denial of the orthodox understanding of Christ. Machen used the remainder of his life to take up the cause of the defense of the Gospel against the religion of liberalism.

The premise of Machen's book can be found in chapter 2 on Doctrine. "Here is found the most fundamental difference between liberalism and Christianity—liberalism is altogether in the imperative mood, while Christianity begins with a triumphant indicative; liberalism appeals to man's will, while Christianity announces, first, a gracious act of God." (p.47) One way we teach this at Providence is in the 5th/6th grade Bible class. The students study the book of Ephesians looking at who we are in Christ and then what He calls us to do in response to who He's made us to be.

Machen has a very interesting point about how we cannot use the Sermon on the Mount as a moralistic teaching (pp.36–38). The example he gives concerns the use of the Golden Rule. Applied by any random person in a neutral setting, it would look like this: a drunkard wants to do for a friend what he wishes someone would do for him, so he buys him a drink. The folly here is clear. Instead, the Golden Rule must be applied by a thoughtful Christian prayerfully considering how best to help someone in need in a manner in keeping with all of God's laws and in such a way to push that person to further dependence upon the Lord and obedience to His Word. We see again how the Sermon on the Mount is meant to be taken as indicative: be who you already are.



History Project Review

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Have you ever wondered about the Seven Ancient Wonders of the Ancient World, the Boston Tea Party, or how fast a Clipper Ship was? Those are just a couple of topics presented by our 6th-8th graders for their History Projects. The students each chose and researched a topic, created a tri-fold board, and presented a 5-minute speech on their research.

Teacher Feature

By Valerie Knoll



The word “kindergarten” is of German origin and it means “children's garden”. This is exactly what I see as each year begins – tender little plants, eager to grow but needing constant sun, water, fertilizer and weeding. These little plants need to be taught to withstand the wind, and to enjoy soaking up the sun, rain, and fertilizer. The growth that is seen from August to the following May is truly amazing.

This is where I am so thankful for the Reformed faith and the classical model of education. The Reformed faith instructs us that the sovereignty of God and the providence of God rule over every area of life. It helps us understand that each of these little ones is an image-bearer of God, uniquely made, and blessedly different in abilities and approaches to learning. They have been sovereignly placed in home, church and school. God rules and reigns over it all and all of life belongs to Him. I love this quote from Charlotte Mason – all education “springs from and rests upon our relation to Almighty God... We hold that all education is divine, that every good gift of knowledge and insight comes from above, that the Lord the Holy Spirit is the supreme educator of mankind, and the culmination of all education...is that personal knowledge of and intimacy with God in which our being finds its fullest perfection.”

The classical model then teaches to the “bents” given by God to each age of student. It helps us to understand the ways and interests of these little plants. They are eager to soak up information, facts, descriptions without needing to know how it all fits together. Also, the classical model integrates time and place and space, however minimally at the kindergarten level, so that they can see God's plan and purpose in all things learned. In Geography, we are learning the continents and oceans, so here they see where it all began and how God has expanded the globe from the creation of Adam and Eve (where our first Bible lesson begins) to the creation of multitudes of people all across the world. They see God's patterns played out in their math lessons as we learn to count by 2s, 5s, 10s. Those patterns continue in phonics when they learn to put sounds together to make words and words together to make sentences.

It is a joy to teach these little ones and see their enthusiasm, not only for the world that they are learning about, but, more importantly, for the God that put this world together and gives knowledge of this wonderful world to us.

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In the chapter on Salvation, I found something that I'm still pondering months later. Machen says that, “to deny the necessity of atonement is to deny the existence of a real moral order.” (p.131) Most readers of the Bible agree that God is love, but it is equally clear in Scripture that God is just. It is not for us to pick and choose which of His attributes we find palatable. “The truth is that the modern rejection of the doctrine of God's wrath proceeds from a light view of sin which is totally at variance with the teaching of the whole New Testament and of Jesus Himself.” (p.131) At Providence, we carefully teach students that when they sin they must depend upon the atonement of Christ to wash them clean.

Continuing on salvation, Machen discusses how some come to Christ through an experience that dramatically changes them as they pass from death unto life while others come to Christ “in the quietness of God.” (p.141) Most children growing up in the Covenant cannot point to one specific time but rather to a continual drawing toward the things of Christ. “But however it be manifested, the beginning of the Christian life is an act of God. It is an act of God and not an act of man.” (p.141) We encourage the students to stand firm upon their baptism into the Covenant, and we urge them to continue upon the path God has placed them. Machen has encouraged my faith, and I commend his works to you.

Farewell Ms. Haveman

Lorissa Haveman is leaving her position as 1st/2nd grade teacher at the end of this school year. Lorissa and her fiancé Jon Key are getting married and moving this summer to Ohio for his pastoral internship. We are grateful for Lorissa's years of dedicated service to PCA and wish Lorissa and Jon all the best as they begin life together.



AUGUST 13 – Ice Cream Social

AUGUST 15 – First Day of School

OCTOBER 24-25 – Fall Break

OCTOBER 30 – Parent/Teacher Conferences

NOVEMBER 7 – Evening of Thanksgiving

NOVEMBER 8 – Grandparent's Day

Recitation Night

by Kim Darling

Unique to classical education, public recitations give students the opportunity to present some of the poems, songs, chants, and Scripture they are learning in their classes. But Providence's annual spring Recitation Night is more than a school program, it is an important part of training our students how to present the knowledge they are learning in a large group setting. The students not only learn what to say, they also learn how to say it with poise, focus, and confidence.

As a small sampling of the selections at this year's Recitation Night, the Kindergarten class recited Psalm 23, the 1st and 2nd graders presented an animated recitation of the poem "Dancing," the 3rd and 4th graders impressively recited all of Hebrews 11, the 5th and 6th graders proudly recited selections from *The Declaration of Independence*, the 6th-8th grade science class sang all the elements of the periodic table, the 7th-8th grade drama class performed selections from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the 5th-8th grade choir sang a beautiful arrangement of "Bless the Lord" in 3-part harmony. Recitation Night concluded with the whole student body singing all four verses of "Come, Thou Almighty King." Afterward, everyone enjoyed fellowship and the opportunity

to view the students' work displayed in the classrooms and hallways. As usual, it was an inspiring evening!



Class of 2019

Becky Ortiz

Favorite PCA memory?

No single memory stands out to me, but I really enjoyed going on class trips. There have been so many fun memories for me at PCA.

Future plans after graduation?

I want to go to college and one day become an author. Eventually I hope to get married and start a family of my own.

Clarissa Ortiz

Favorite PCA memory?

I loved it when we had tea with Mrs. McKenzie and loved when the 5th and 6th graders read in the parlor at FUMC. There are so many good and funny memories to choose from.

Future plans after graduation?

It would be really nice to get a job related to music, but I also would love to help others long-term to be more useful.

Luke Bakker

Favorite PCA memory?

When we heard the news that we got our new school.

Future plans after graduation?

I want to be a track teacher and run in the Olympics. I would also like to start a lawn care company.



Becky Ortiz



Clarissa Ortiz



Luke Bakker



Theater Field Trips



GRADES 3-4 saw *Stuart Little*



GRADES 5-6 saw *A Christmas Carol*



GRADES K-2 saw *The Cat in the Hat*



GRADES 7-8 saw *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Class Trip

The 7th-8th graders went to Springfield, Illinois for their annual class trip. Highlights of the trip were seeing the Old State Capitol, taking tours of Abraham Lincoln's homes, and jumping at SkyZone.



2019 End of Year Awards

Congratulations to the following Providence students who were the top finalists and award winners in this year's Geography Bee, Young Authors Contest, and National Latin Exam. Our students' success in these academic contests can be attributed to the students' hard work as well as the challenging geography, composition, and Latin curriculum here at Providence.

Geography Bee: Lucas Vander Woude (1st place), Clarissa Ortiz (2nd place), and Logan Darling (3rd place)

Young Authors Winners: Cally Hoekstra and Liam Vander Woude

National Latin Exam Awards (*based upon the annual, national average for each exam*): Abbey Helmus (silver medal, maxima cum laude in Latin II), Lucas Vander Woude (magna cum laude in Latin II), Nolan Regnerus (magna cum laude in Latin I), Selah Boer and Liam Vander Woude (achievement certificate in Introduction to Latin).



Geography Bee – Left to right: Logan Darling (6th), Lucas Vander Woude (7th), Clarissa Ortiz (8th)
Young Authors – (L) Liam Vander Woude (5th), (R) Cally Hoekstra (5th)

Latin Awards – Left to right: Mrs. Wright, Abbey Helmus (7th), Lucas Vander Woude (7th), Nolan Regnerus (6th), Liam Vander Woude (5th), Selah Boer (5th)



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"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

--Proverbs 22:6 ESV



"Eastern Bluebirds" by Audrey Darling (4th grade)



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**If you would like information about
setting up a classroom visit, please
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