



**COVENANT**  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

*~ 1 Peter 1:3*

April 7, 2020

Greetings Covenant Community,

As we embrace one of the most important weeks in the Christian calendar, now is a worthy time for us to be contemplative, grateful, and ready to rejoice. As your families acknowledge Holy Week, contemplate Christ's sacrifice on Good Friday, and celebrate His resurrection on Easter Sunday, I want to acknowledge and celebrate how God is at work in our community. I couldn't be more proud of our faculty, staff, students, and parents as we have navigated the uncharted waters of the last several weeks together. You are an amazing community, ready and willing to encourage your teachers and administrators and, receive with grace, our best efforts to keep educating your children. I look forward to one day celebrating how God delivered us from this trial, strengthening our community in the midst of unthinkable challenges. Thank you for your support, commitment, and positive attitudes, which mean more to us than you may ever know.

The administration, faculty, and staff of Covenant Christian Academy are committed to providing the best possible remote learning experience for all of our students, while maintaining our high standards of excellence. While we know it cannot replicate the experience of being at school, we want to maintain the joy of learning in the strongest ways we can during these difficult times. Our remote learning endeavor is a partnership, dependent on the purposeful planning of our dedicated teachers, student motivation and engagement, and strong parent support and communication.

In keeping with our mission, we will continue to do all we can to deliver an education that prepares our students well for what lies ahead, while recognizing that their spiritual and emotional health is of the utmost importance at this time. Finding opportunities for connection, belonging, and social bonding will be an ongoing part of this mission even in its remote form.

While we celebrate our successes thus far, we also recognize the transition to remote learning has not been without frustrations. Not only do we hear you, we share many of these frustrations with you! We remain open and available to hear your suggestions and concerns, answer your questions, and provide support in any way that we can.

Here's what I have concluded as we finish our first month with our Covenant@Home program:

**1. CCA is delivering an excellent remote schooling product consistent with the finest independent schools in our area.** We understand that progress is inherent in the journey, and we will continually work to improve our *Covenant@Home* model. But by all measures available to me at this time, I couldn't be more proud of our faculty and staff and the product they are

delivering. Their collective commitment to re-invent the way they teach, revise their curriculums to maintain excellence, and dig in to whatever is required of them to allow learning to continue for our students has been remarkable.

**2. A combination of synchronous (real time with a teacher), asynchronous (video-guided instruction), and independent self /parent guided learning is the best approach for the majority of students and families.** This model is being supported by thousands of schools all over our country, both public and independent, and is clearly emerging as the “best practice” for education during this situation. My Administrative Cabinet and I have sat in on no less than 50 virtual sessions on all manner of issues related to the transition to remote learning over the past 3 weeks. These sessions, sponsored by leading educational organizations focused on Private Schooling, Christian Schooling, Classical Schooling, and School Management have provided valuable input from experts in the field and have helped us strategically shape our approach to Covenant@Home.

**3. Our approach in each division (Early Childhood, Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric) will be determined by developmentally appropriate means of instruction, which means our approach will vary by age and grade.** Older students will receive a greater percentage of synchronous and self-guided learning, while younger students will receive a greater percentage of asynchronous video and parent-guided instruction. Because all students and families are different, we will continue to provide a varied approach of best practices in an attempt to best meet the needs of a wide range of learners and families.

**4. We continue to be “Dedicated to Excellence, Anchored in Truth”, and will set goals for continuous progress by:**

- **Implementing organized, predictable patterns of learning for our students at all grade levels.** The research indicates this is of the utmost importance. Each week we will work towards a more organized, predictable, and repeatable pattern of remote learning instruction, ensuring a better learning experience each week that this continues.
- **Researching emerging best practices in the field of remote learning.** We commit to assessing and implementing practices that will enhance the learning experience for both students and parents.
- **Prioritizing our Community, our most valuable asset.** We will creatively find ways for our students, parents, faculty and staff to stay connected, feel supported, and find strength in our common faith and mission.
- **Maintaining excellent communication with all constituencies.** Transparency, responsiveness, and the freedom to share both our successes and struggles will empower us all to boldly move forward together during unprecedented circumstances.
- **Celebrating the important milestones and events that are always a part of our Spring semester.** We will prioritize important rites of passage and acknowledge the grief that the loss of normality has caused for many of our students and families. Our celebrations will undoubtedly look different, but they will not lack enthusiasm or sincerity.
- **Praising our Lord together through whatever challenges we are called to face.** We commit to continue the vitally important practice of communal prayer and worship (socially distant, yet spiritually close), together seeking God’s will for our future. We will hang onto his promises together.

*"Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character, and character produces hope"*

*~Romans 5:3-4*

I wanted to take just a moment to address the concerns I've received regarding the use of Zoom video for synchronous learning. My team and I share your concerns, and have been carefully monitoring all of the news reports of ZoomBombing. We have sought the expert advice of our IT Support company as well as reviewed the guidelines provided by the FBI and Zoom, itself. It is very clear that in the horrible circumstances reported by the news, **security best practices were not being followed**. While no technology or platform will ever be 100% safe, we are confident that the myriad safety precautions we have implemented make Zoom Meeting a safe platform for us to continue to use judiciously, along with thousands of other schools around the country. Please know that student safety is of the utmost importance to us. We will continue to monitor developments and will make any adjustments necessary, should they arise. *One way you can help us keep our students safe is by refraining from posting any invitation links and photos of Zoom sessions, which may draw undue attention, on social media or other public forums.*

On behalf of my entire team of administrators, faculty, and staff, I would like to thank you, our AWESOME community, for your support, partnership, and commitment to finding Christ's purpose in all circumstances. This has been a challenging season for all of us, one that none of us wanted, or asked for. But Covenant has always been more than a brick and mortar building and it is times like these that our very best is on display!

May God's grace fill you with peace and hope as we look forward together to celebrating Christ's victory over sin and the day to come when He will make all things new. I wish you a blessed and celebratory Easter!

In Christ Alone,

Andrea Bergstrom