

PHC Student Hallie Skansi at last year's March for Life. Photo courtesy of Skanski

PHC to Lead the March For Life

| by Becca Samelson |

Every January, thousands of pro-life Christians and Americans march the streets of D.C. in recognition of the sanctity of human life. This year, Patrick Henry College students, staff, and faculty will lead those thousands in The March for Life.

March for Life organizers name two "lead colleges" each year, one Protestant and one Catholic, and chose PHC this year. "It is a great honor for us," said PHC President Jack Haye. In recognition of this honor and to encourage students' to attend, the school has canceled classes on Jan. 19. Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and all of their families, as well as prospective students, may participate with PHC during the march. Over 100 people have already reserved a PHC spot.

"During the summer, Bethany Goodman from March for Life contacted me... and they made the offer to us," said Michael Haynes, head of the APP department. "I took it to the administration and said that as far as the APP

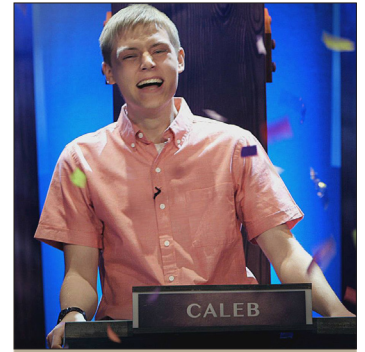
program, we were looking to go ahead with this. Would the administration want to be a part of being the lead college? They were excited about it, and now it's blown into this bigger than life thing."

After hearing that the school wanted to increase student involvement, a donor provided luxury buses for 300 people and boxed lunches for any students who attended.

"So much is different [than past marches]," junior Michael Patton said. "In the past, a few PHC students would get together and go. This year, the whole school is being shut down. We are getting free food and transportation for everyone, donors have provided us with luxury buses, we are literally going to be leading The March for Life by carrying the banner at the front of the march. We are going to be meeting with elected officials after The March for Life at the Capitol Hill Club."

Haynes explained that Generation Joshua

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Hoverson, courtesy of National Bible Bee

Sharing Christ in Purcellville

| by Leo Briceno |

Freshman Caleb Hoverson gathered students with an interest in evangelism to spread the Gospel door to door in Purcellville and the surrounding area.

Hoverson and five other students began evangelizing about a month ago. After selecting an area to witness, the group drove to the location, split into pairs, and spent the next hour sharing the Gospel from one house to the next. While the group has only left campus to evangelize three times, Hoverson plans to continue the practice and make evangelism a regularly scheduled event, occurring every other week. He believes that spreading the Gospel is a practical way to apply the mission of Patrick Henry College, to shape the culture, on an

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the **H**erald: *informing, engaging, preparing, and celebrating*

informing

this week's stories

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engaging

reader participation

Interested in submitting an editorial?
Notice an error?
Have an event we should know about?
If so, contact Becca Samelson at:
theherald@phc.edu

preparing

the ink-stained wretches

Editor Becca Samelson
Copy Editor Vienna Jacobson
Backpage Editor Marjorie Pratt
Social Media Editor Carrie Durning

celebrating

shared successes

We've got more stories for you online!
Here's a sneak peek of this week's
#HeraldOnline

- **Mock Trial Kick Off**

Two mock trial teams left yesterday for an invitational tournament in Williamsburg. Watch for an update on Twitter.

- **Humans of Halloween**

We loved gathering pictures and quotes of the best costumes at the freshman dance. This time, we'll be on the lookout for costumes at the D1 Halloween Party on Tuesday! Look for the photos on our Facebook page.

Find the full stories online!
Facebook: Herald Media
Instagram: @heraldmedia
Twitter: @phcheraldmedia

Note: Due to Fall Break, next week's Herald will be distributed on Thursday, November 2 instead of Friday, November 3. Copies of The Herald will be available in the Dining Hall, coffeeshop, library, and on our social media pages as usual.

PHC Chosen to Lead the March For Life

continued from cover helped secure a spot at the Capitol Hill Club for students who finished the march. There, they will partake in refreshments and “hobnob with officials after leading the march to the Supreme Court,” Haynes said.

While PHC students will ride luxury buses and lead the parade, Haynes says that life should be the reason for students to come. “It’s not just that it’s exciting that we get to be up front and those things, we are talking about life. There’s not an issue more important than this one,” he said.”

“Life is not an issue of debate or politics,” Patton said. “The murder of 60 million innocent human beings is something that must be confronted. This year, PHC has an opportunity like never before to lead the pro-life movement in standing against abortion... I think this is a fundamental part of how we can practically carry out our charter to: ‘Influence the culture for Christ and for Liberty.’”

“I think it certainly gives our students an opportunity to participate in a very a large event,” Haye said, “which can be very encouraging to see [that] there’s a lot of other people who believe strongly in the value of human life.”

“We have all these discussions in the lunch room, but if we don’t do anything with it, what good is that? We want to take our faith and actually put it into action,” Haynes said. Students and faculty will debate about abortion and defend life in the dining hall, he added, “but if we don’t do anything with it, what good is that? We want to take our faith and actually put it into action.”

Those interested in attending the march can sign up at www.phc.edu/the-march. To reserve a spot at the Capitol Hill Club reception, visit www.generationjoshua.org/GenJ/M4LReception. For any questions email themarch@phc.edu. 📧



Above: photo courtesy of Gibbons. Below: photo courtesy of Hallie Skanski





The US Airforce Academy. Photographer: Olivia Bowers

Air Force, Altitude, and Academic Assembly

Students travel to Colorado for an academic defense conference

| by Becca Samelson |

Eight SI students braved high altitude, hot temperatures, and bad WiFi to participate in the 2017 Academic Assembly at the US Airforce Academy in Colorado Springs.

Students Claire Atwood, William Bock, Olivia Bowers, Caleb Engle, Adam Johnson, Spencer Kolssak, David Poythress, and Maren Sekerak, accompanied by Col. Middleton, traveled to Colorado Springs last week. The conference's topic was, "The Future of Defense Policy." "It was a four-day conference that included guest speakers, panels, and group 'tabletop' exercises on hypothetical US national security scenarios," Kolssak explained.

"We listened to a handful of keynote addresses on defense policy and strategy, including a 3rd offset strategy, reforming NATO and key US foreign policy assumptions," Bowers said. "We attended panels which focused on regional areas of importance, cyber and technology developments, offset strategy, and the costs of war."

Both Bowers and Kolssak enjoyed the

roundtable exercises. "We were broken up into roundtable groups where we were given a scenario to develop policy and defense recommendations for," Bowers said. "In these roundtables, we worked as teams with other cadets and college students to write national strategy for US action in a scenario involving fake countries, (who were representing India, China, and Pakistan)."

Bowers' group, including PHC students Atwood and Bock, developed a US response to a territorial/border and water access dispute between countries representing Pakistan, India, and China. "We participated in a Murder Board, which is remarkably similar to Moot Court, with judges interrupting and asking you questions about your strategy," Bowers said. "We had really incredible cadets leading our group and working together. Team Bravo got third." Other PHC students' teams placed in the top five, including Kolssak's group, which received second place.

"The best part was the new perspective the conference brought to us,"



Students who attended the Academic Assembly

Kolssak said. "The new ideas and questioning of our fundamental assumptions regarding US security were enlightening."

Not only did the students like the competitive and academic aspects of the conference, but they also enjoyed their stay in Colorado. "We sort of had the full Air Force Academy experience," Kolssak said.

During the four-day conference, the students continued on next page

stayed in the dorms with cadets, ate in the cadet dining hall, and toured the Airforce Academy campus, including its airfield and air lab. "It was also good to make friends with cadets and the guest speakers," Kolssak said. "Academy life is very different from PHC. It is always helpful to get outside of the PHC bub-

ble and see how other institutions do things and realize that we really don't have all the answers."

"Probably the coolest thing we did was walk through the air gardens with Cadet Brian Poythress (Poythress's younger brother) at night," Bowers said. Cadet Poythress led the students

through the gardens while describing the wall of graduates who were killed in combat and other memorials, including the plaque of the airman's creed. "Brian challenged us to embrace the airman's creed as our own," Bowers said. "The walk was by far the most incredible and moving moment of the trip." 🏠



| by Carrie Durning |

You're officially too old for trick-or-treating.

When committing to a college, you said goodbye to plodding door to door dressed in ridiculous costumes in search of king-sized Kit Kats. Or maybe you don't believe in growing up, or that activities such as trick-or-treating having an age limit. Good for you. I hope you find Neverland.

If you grew up in a household that is anything like mine and were never allowed to partake in such "debauchery" while living "under my roof" (insert image of parent stopping a foot and wagging a finger at you) – my apologies, you've officially lost your chance to partake in such activities.

So how will you spend Halloween, if trick-or-treating is no longer an option? How will you juggle studying, sleep, and celebrating this national holiday? Put down your books and hang out with friends somewhere other than the Purcellville McDonalds for one night as you partake in one (or all) of the following local Halloween festivities.

D1's Annual Halloween Party

8-11pm, D1 lobby/lounge

If you find yourself feeling festive and alone- or in a crowd of friends you're bored with- on October 31 from 8-11 p.m., dress in your best costume and head on over to Mount Vernon for a good time at the annual Halloween Party hosted by the women of D1. Enter in the costume contest, enjoy yummy festive snacks, and drift in and out of the party between 8 and 11 p.m.

Purcellville Halloween Block Party

Old Town Purcellville, 138 N 21st Street, Purcellville

Perhaps you would like to get off campus, mingle with strangers that do not attend PHC or have a night out on the town. If so, grab some friends, dress in your spookiest costumes, pile into a vehicle, and make your way downtown to Old Town Purcellville between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. For free admission, enter into the costume contest for a cash prize, enjoy food from vendors such as Magnolias and La Dolce Vita Gelato, and enjoy an exciting night out.

Cozy Celebration for the Introvert

Your Dorm Room

Maybe you are neither a small party-goer nor adventurous enough for a block party. Purchase delicious festive snacks of your liking, turn your bed into a cozy couch with an excess number of blankets and pillows, invite close friends, choose a movie or show, and enjoy a night in. Watch anything from a festive Gilmore Girls episode, a Charlie Brown Thanksgiving, or- my personal favorite for Halloween- Over the Garden Wall, a delightful series of short episodes filled with two brothers lost in the woods on an adventure, finding their way home through the comedic horrors of the woods. Spice up your night with a hot drink such as chai tea or coffee, sit back, and enjoy a night.

It is possible you have a different activity in mind for the night of the 31st; whether you plan on listening to Christmas music while drinking festive coffee with friends or going for a walk through surrounding neighborhoods to observe the decorations, make a night of it and do something different. McDonalds will still be there on Nov. 1st. 🏠



Should Christians Watch Horror?

| by Marjorie Pratt |

The horror movie *It* broke records when it hit theatres last month. The movie proved to be the biggest September premier ever and boasted the most successful launch of any horror movie to date. Based on Stephen King's novel of the same name, the story is about a group of kids who are forced to face their biggest fears.

In 1999, *The Blair Witch Project* became the first movie ever to go viral. Rather than traditional advertising, producers spread out missing person fliers for the three main characters. America became convinced that these fake people went missing in the woods of a small town in Maryland. People genuinely believed that the producers had real footage from real college students who went missing while researching local lore. The film spawned a new method of marketing.

The horror genre has had a huge effect on civilization. But how do these movies align with a biblical worldview? As Christians, can we partake in the craze with a clear conscience? Can these films good and pleasing to God?

Sarah Jacob, a PHC senior, does not enjoy horror movies. She will only watch

them if her friends want to watch them, but often she will hide her face behind a pillow. "I can think of so many better ways to spend my time that doesn't get me scared and freaked out," Jacob said. She explained that horror movies have a very negative effect on her, that she is often scared for weeks after watching movies about the demonic realm.

Jacob also described the time she saw *The Conjuring* with a group of friends. The movie tells the story of a couple, two paranormal investigators, who examine a home that had been affected by a supernatural presence. After watching the movie, Jacob fell asleep on her friends' couch. "There was a doll that [my friends] called Rory, and Rory had been in one place like in the closet or on the bookshelf or wherever when I went to sleep, but when I woke up, and he was in a completely different place." She screamed loud enough to wake up the house, and could not fall back to sleep. She read C.S. Lewis instead of sleeping that night.

Ever since seeing *The Conjuring*, Jacob has found herself a little more frightened of everything, admitting too that had the movie not begun with the

phrase, "Based on a true story," she may not have been so scared. "Horror movies that deal with real demonic realms and things that are actually dangerous are things I try to stay away from," Jacob said. "I think it can have a negative impact on your psyche, but it is just the resilience of your personality and what you can handle." She does not believe that all Christians should stay away from horror, but that every Christian has different convictions on the subject.

Christian McGuire, PHC senior, believes that horror movies can be a way to explore the spiritual realm. He quotes Ephesians 6:12: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"I think that there's an appropriate way of dealing with that battle and fleshing it out without buying into enemy messaging. I think that there are also very good ways to explore that," McGuire said. He believes *The Conjuring* showed how dangerous the supernatural realm can be.

"Even though I was really scared by,

The Conjuring, something that gave me peace was the fact that these things were eradicated through prayer," Jacob added. "In that sense, the conjuring was very beneficial. Again, it's just too real for me."

Senior Jared Midwood is a fan of movies in general, but horror is one of his favorite genres. He said that horror movies are more likely to have strong female leads than movies from other genres, and believes they have the potential to tell stories, approach social issues, and entertain very creatively. He cited *Get Out*, a film based on an interracial relationship, as an example of the way horror movies can approach social issues. "It managed to tackle casual racism in America and even more systemic racism with humor but also with horror," Midwood said.

He noted that horror movies can go too far, but he also believes that all genres can go too far. "There are some horror movies that I think it would be hard to justify watching for Christians to enjoy," Midwood said. "It is important for Christians to understand that there's not just one side to spirituality." He also referenced Ephesians 6:12, saying that horror movies can help Christians be more aware of the dangers of the supernatural.

Midwood admitted that films sometimes tend to give too much power to evil without acknowledging the truth: that God has the ultimate power. "A lot of times horror movies will have evil as



Leah Widener, Madison Crawley, and Marjorie Pratt pose in front of horror posters. Courtesy Widener

this kind of insurmountable force that is just destined to ruin people's lives, and I don't think that's necessarily accurate," Midwood said. "I think it is accurate how [the supernatural in horror movies] interacts with people's psychological states, and how it affects their lives, how it affects relationships."

He believes it is important for Christians to be able to see the devastation evil can cause. "I don't think we do ourselves any favors by watering down evil in our minds or softening the impact or lessening how we view them," Midwood

said. Movies can cross the line from being realistic to glorifying the demonic. He takes each movie on a case by case basis, however, unwilling to condemn the whole genre.

He asked that everyone experience films from the genre, before judging the whole category. What anyone consumes will affect them, but Midwood believes that each is free to have different convictions. "Across the genre of horror, there's a lot of lessons that can be learned, and I think it's just a really effective way of storytelling," he said. ■



Navier-Stokes Equations and New PHC Professor

Dr. Tracey McGrath set to start teaching at PHC in Spring of 2018

| by Kara Brown |

PHC welcomes their newest faculty member Dr. Tracey McGrath as the Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Science. Next semester, she will teach discrete math, econometrics, linear algebra, and real analysis.

McGrath received her undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago in physics and applied math and her masters in biogeochemistry. She also has a Ph.D. from Princeton University in geophysical fluid dynamics and did a graduate fellowship with NASA.

Learning has been an integral part of McGrath's life. Both of her parents graduated from the University of California Berkeley. Her mother has a Ph.D. in psychology, and her father has a Ph.D. in math and was involved in the early space missions.

McGrath knew she wanted to do something different than her father but still wanted to work in the math and science realm. She found her niche after watching a lecture on glaciology (the study of the internal dynamics and effects of glaciers).

"The professor who gave the talk got to go out and sit on a glacier for three months and when you're 20 that sounds pretty great," McGrath said.

The program combined her love for the outdoors with her love of science. In her junior year of undergrad, she started taking graduate level fluid mechanics classes.

"It was the first time I took a class and realized it was for me," McGrath said. "All the graduate students were having a really hard time, and for me it was obvious."

McGrath does not consider herself a genius, but thanks God for her gift

to understand fluid dynamics. "That was God's one gift to me, [understanding] the Navier-Stokes equations," McGrath said.

McGrath speaks French, German, Hebrew, English, and Dutch. In college, she took Hebrew because she was left-handed and wanted a language that wouldn't smudge marks on her hand. Later, a professor heard she studied Hebrew and asked if she could be a field assistant for a project in Israel.

McGrath encourages students to take opportunities to learn even if the knowledge seems pointless. "Throughout the research in my career, I can't tell you how many times things that seemed worthless to learn came back and were very useful."

Though there have been fads for scientists to call themselves atheist, McGrath believes many scientists are agnostic or deist. At the same time, she says openly saying you are a Christian can be a career killer. McGrath remembers a professor at Princeton who was openly a Christian and was openly denigrated because of his faith.

She also notes that it can be difficult to be a woman in a predominately male field. After noticing the overwhelming decline of women dropping out of Ph.D. programs, the program surveyed women who had finished to understand the reason they left. The results were that many women felt like they had to do ten times better than their male colleagues to prove themselves. Because there were so few women in the program, they were looked at to represent all women in science.

McGrath noted that when you are in the minority (in her case by being a Christian and a woman), people point to

you as the spokesperson for the entire group. If you mess up, it can be easy for people to generalize the entire group.

McGrath formerly taught at the California Institute of Technology and Harvard University, before deciding to come back to Virginia to spend more time with her parents and take care of her father who has dementia. She knew PHC had been successful in the humanities and was surprised to see it had an opening for a math professor. She applied immediately.

"It was completely on a whim. I don't even know why I looked. Clearly, the Lord works in mysterious ways," McGrath said. "When I came and met with everyone, I knew this was the right place, and I needed to be here."

McGrath says PHC hopes to expand into other majors and programs like physics, computer science, and pre-med.

McGrath believes many people are turned off to math because of setbacks that can happen in formative years like middle or high school. Either by having a bad teacher or trouble understanding a concept, students believe they are "bad at math" and accept that as reality.

"I've heard a couple of Patrick Henry students say, 'I'm not good at math' but I would argue everyone here is good at math because they are able to do the logical and rigorous thinking that is needed," McGrath said. She says learning math is like studying a language.

"If you were asked to give a philosophical argument in French you would probably feel uncomfortable if it was not your native language, the same applies to math, if you learn the language you are able to use it." McGrath said. ■

Student Coordinates Evangelism Opportunities

continued from cover

individual level. Hoverson hopes the practice of evangelism will bring even more students together for a common goal.

But a culture will not live for Christ and for liberty if its citizens don't know who Christ is or what he has done for them, Hoverson said. Evangelism plays an inherently crucial role in the mission of PHC. "Evangelism's not optional," Hoverson said. "The truth of the matter is that there are so many people out there who have never been reached by the gospel."

At the outset of the semester, Hoverson knew he wanted to take part in some form of outreach. Encouraged by the recent emphasis placed on evangelism by Professor Steven Hake and Daniel Thetford, Hoverson decided get the ball rolling. He found a number of peers who expressed a similar interest.

Evangelism's call resonated with Jo-

seph Chinn. Chinn and Hoverson talked about avenues for evangelism as early as the first week of freshman orientation. Chinn said evangelism compelled him to take his convictions into serious deliberation, forcing him to ask himself what he was willing to do in the name of the Gospel. "It's scary," Chinn said. "Knocking on random people's doors takes guts."

PHC student's have a wide range of differing Christian beliefs, but the common struggle to take the Gospel to the surrounding community can unite them.

In the interest of reaching the lost, the fundamental foundation of the Gospel transcends the lines which would otherwise spur divisions in the campus' community.

Hoverson sees a major opportunity for PHC students to minister here in Virginia, where there are so many people compared to his home in North Da-

kota, where 700,000 people are spread across the state.

When he reads Matthew 9:35-38, Hoverson believes the Word when it says the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. There is no opportunity crisis; there is an absence of people willing to live out the Great Commission, he said.

"You can't fail when you do evangelism," Hoverson said. "If you're obedient even in an imperfect way—God's word doesn't return void. As long as we do our part of the work, God will bring his will to completion."

Hoverson is surprised at how well the group has taken off and sees the group expanding in the future. He hopes to integrate regular participants as well as spontaneous volunteers, and someday hopes to expand their area of outreach—maybe even to D.C. ■

Let's Talk with President Haye about Sex

| by Morgan Conliffe |

President Jack Haye addressed in chapel last Friday one of the biggest elephants in the room for a millennial Christian: biblical sexuality.

"How do you begin to develop your sexual ethic? What are you gonna base it on?" Haye said, speaking on 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. The passage says, in part: "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality ..."

"Paul is writing very specifically to a [church] that is being called out and called up to live life that's very different than their culture is all around them," Haye said.

Haye then invited all interested students to his home for a discussion last Sunday; about 15 attended.

He opened the evening with prayer, then dove right in, focusing on the idea of sanctification. "Further up and fur-

ther in in our understanding of who God is," he said, echoing C.S. Lewis. "[Paul] says that God's will for them is holiness. He wants us to be growing more and more into the image of his son," he added.

Haye ended the evening by describing, "The Road Home," or how we reconcile sexual sins with God's grace to us. "The four steps are conviction, confession, repentance, and restoration."

"Are you really being challenged by the Gospel?" Haye concluded, "or are you making the Gospel convenient? [It] should be confronting you everyday and leading you to call upon the Lord."

After, some students stayed for another hour and a half to talk. "Being able to fellowship with the Hayes and all of our friends who were there really [made it] a special atmosphere," said freshman Grace Roberts. "Having such a godly

man as president Haye lead us that type of discussion, he always pointed it back to the Bible in an encouraging way."

Roberts's main takeaway was "how to examine your own heart in situations, whether it be on the internet or with a future relationship."

Haye told The Herald that the talk wasn't aimed at a specific problem, but he felt convicted to hold the discussion to help "equip students to engage their neighbors, and challenge themselves with the question, 'have I settled [these questions] for myself?'"

"It's so important for conversation to continue," Haye added, suggesting that students form their own groups to wrestle with these issues.

The discussion at the Haye residence is set for Sunday, Oct. 29. The topic is "gender identity." ■

The Unsung Heroes of the PHC Tech Department

The professionals that keep PHC online

| by Vienna Jacobson |

Down in the basement of BHC, a collective of six technological professionals and one to two student workers are busy at their desks. These quiet professionals, in their basement offices are the unsung heroes of PHC.

Two weeks ago, an email scam started with a hacked student account and ended up compromising an alumni and professor's emails as well. After student alerted the staff to the hack, the tech department all tackled the issue to solve the problem before it was able to do any damage.

"If something blows up I might be over here at nine in the evening trying to fix something," said Samantha Watkins, a PHC alumna, and current Computer Support Technician. During her time at PHC as a student, Watkins was the first female help desk worker and has worked full time for the college since November of 2016.

Jeff Good, director of information technology, drove past PHC to his job in downtown D.C. for two years before an opening became available at the college. "For two years I prayed about it. First that I would be able to do something that was worthwhile and mean-

ingful and a job came open," Good said. "It was a hefty pay cut, but I really felt this was where the Lord really wanted me to be."

Now, twelve years later, Good oversees the department as its head. "We are a support role. The primary mission of the college is to educate students and to ensure the students succeed," Good said. "Technology is obviously very important and is a tool that we all use."

For the department, IT is much more than just a faceless service.

"I am not providing you internet access because it is my job to provide you internet access," Watkins said. "I am providing internet access because I understand that that is key to the way the community operates, how your education moves. It is just doing technological things, but it is a means to an end."

"At the heart of it, we are here to serve and support the students so that they can get the education they need," said IT support supervisor, Timothy Dunlap. "That is kind of what we are here for. To make sure you all [the students] have the tools you need and so that we can make the experience as easy as possible."

Dunlap came on part-time in fall 2006 from HSLDA before coming on full time the following spring.

The IT department also fosters close relationships between its staff members and student workers

"We directly interface with the students as a customer service. So, you learn and develop a lot of customer service skills as well as a lot of business environment skills," Dunlap said.

Watkins sees great potential for students who decide to work with the department. "I see the ability for tech workers to go to whatever environment they are going to; a law office, a school,



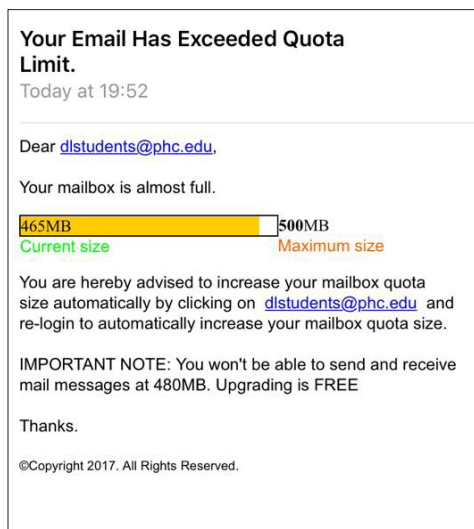
Jeff Good. Photo Courtesy of PHC Communications

anything like that," Watkins said. "And if they understand the basics they are actually going to be a lot more help than they realize."

These professionals work tirelessly to provide a seamless as possible experience for the students at PHC. "If something is not working please let us know. Or if there is something that you would like to see done differently. Come see me," Good said.

Watkins feels that perhaps not all the students realize that when their request is denied, or it takes a while to fix, it isn't because the department is stonewalling them. "The rules and the patterns of things aren't there because we are trying to make things difficult," Watkins said. "They are there because we are trying to make things easier for everyone."

All of this, however does not come without a warning, "If I find your wireless printer, I'm throwing it in Lake Bob," Watkins said. 🖨️



Screen shot of the recent email hack

Table Talks with Dan and Matt

| by Matt Hoke |

“Am I as successful, talented, or intelligent as x person?” “What does that person think of me?”

This week, I want to talk about some practical, biblical principles and solutions I have found to combat the first type of self-centered thought that I mentioned in week 1: comparison. Both questions above are a type of comparison. The first question is focused on comparing myself against the abilities and attributes of another. The second is focused on whether I will measure up under someone else’s standard of excellence or acceptability. Both are equally self-centered. Both are equally rooted in fear. Both are equally joy-killing. And, both equally enslave one’s life.

To clarify, when I refer to the first question above I do not mean comparing yourself to another individual with the goal of emulating their admirable character traits. I mean comparing yourself with the mindset of domination, you cannot stand someone being better than you, or with a heart of discontent at your own abilities.

So, what are the solutions to this particular type of thought? The first solution is the following: God gives each individual different gifts, abilities, talents, etc. The Bible explicitly teaches me this in relation to service in the church, how each believer is equipped differently for service (Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 1 Peter 4:10-11). However, this unique equipping does not only extend into each believer’s service in the body of Christ. God also has a specific purpose for me (Jeremiah 1:4-5, Psalm 139:16) and has uniquely created me (Psalm 139:13-15). As a result, I believe that everyone is individually equipped for the tasks that God has prepared for him or her.

An illustration that I think is helpful is that people have certain levels of characteristics (raw intelligence, inter-

personal skills, physical attractiveness, athleticism, physical strength, the ability to communicate, kindness, artistic ability, musical ability, analytical ability, leadership traits, etc, etc.). I imagine God pouring a certain amount of these characteristics into a human’s being at conception. No person has an absolute maximum of each of these characteristics. God has created some individuals with a more balanced portfolio of characteristics than others. However, the point is that He has created each individual to serve Him particularly and to magnify His Name on the earth.

The implication of this Biblical truth is that I cannot know how God has uniquely equipped everyone I compare myself to. I have often thought myself better than someone else because I was more successful at a certain skill. But, then I found that this person had hidden abilities that were different from mine, ones that I could not even begin to attempt. This realization is humbling and helps to disarm the first comparative thought.

However, even if I would never see another’s abilities, another biblical principle helps to check this self-centered thought. The truth is that none of the abilities I may be better at or hope to be better at than another person are from me. They are ultimately from God (James 1:17, 1 Corinthians 4:7, and John 3:27). This truth gives me perspective when attempting to outperform or best another with an ability I have. When I do this or have this thought, I am using the gifts God has given me for dishonorable and self-exalting purposes. In addition, when I engage in this comparative thought I am essentially telling God that the abilities He has given me are not good enough, that He made a mistake when He created me. As the verses above illustrate, this belief could not be further from the truth.

I also have found two principles that help me to combat the second comparative thought. The first comes from my Mom and, ultimately, from the Scripture. When I used to talk to my Mom about how I was concerned about what others thought of me, she would say, “Matthew, you need to run your own race.” What she meant is that, similarly to God giving each of us different abilities, He has prepared a path that we each are to follow for His glory until we enter Paradise (Hebrews 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27). This means that I am to strive along my own path and not look to those in the lanes next to me. If I do, I will become needlessly distracted from the work that God has for me.

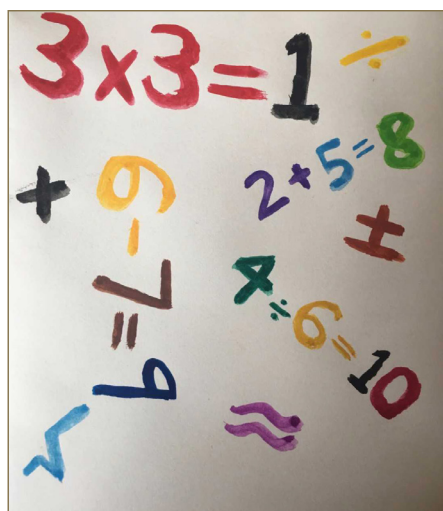
The second principle to fight this comparative thought stems from my identity as a Child of God (Galatians 4:4-7). My record of sin has been exchanged for the glories and status of Christ through His free gift of salvation. As a result, I can say along with Martin Luther ““When the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this: ‘I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it? For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where He is there I shall be also!’”

Because of these powerful truths, who cares what people think of me? The most important and ultimate opinion of me that matters in the universe is that of my Father, who loves, leads, and lavishes His grace on me continually.

Next week I hope to address some principles that address the second self-centered thought, fear about my future. If you have any questions or would like to talk about these ideas, please shoot me an email at mlhoke945@students.phc.edu. ☒

Creative Corner

EVENTS



A painting by
Leah Widener

"This is an interpretative work. It depicts the effect that physics homework has on your mind."
- Widener

APP Seminar
Oct. 28th @ 12 p.m.
Nash

Halloween Block Party
Oct. 28th @ 5 p.m.
21st St. Purcellville

Nightmare at D1
Oct. 31st
@ 8 p.m.

Seek & Hide

This week's hiding place:

Humpback Rocks

"Humpback Rocks is a short hike with a beautiful view. It's located in Afton, Virginia, a little over 2 hours away from campus. There are two ways to the summit: a one mile trail that is a little steep, and goes straight to the top, or a longer loop that involves more switchbacks through some lovely woods. After you hike, check out any of the nearby wineries or take a quick drive into the Charlottesville for a great meal to make your adventure complete."
- Hallie Skansi

