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ARTIFACT

from latin, *arte* + *factum*, a thing made by skill



A NEW COLLEGE FRANKLIN PUBLICATION

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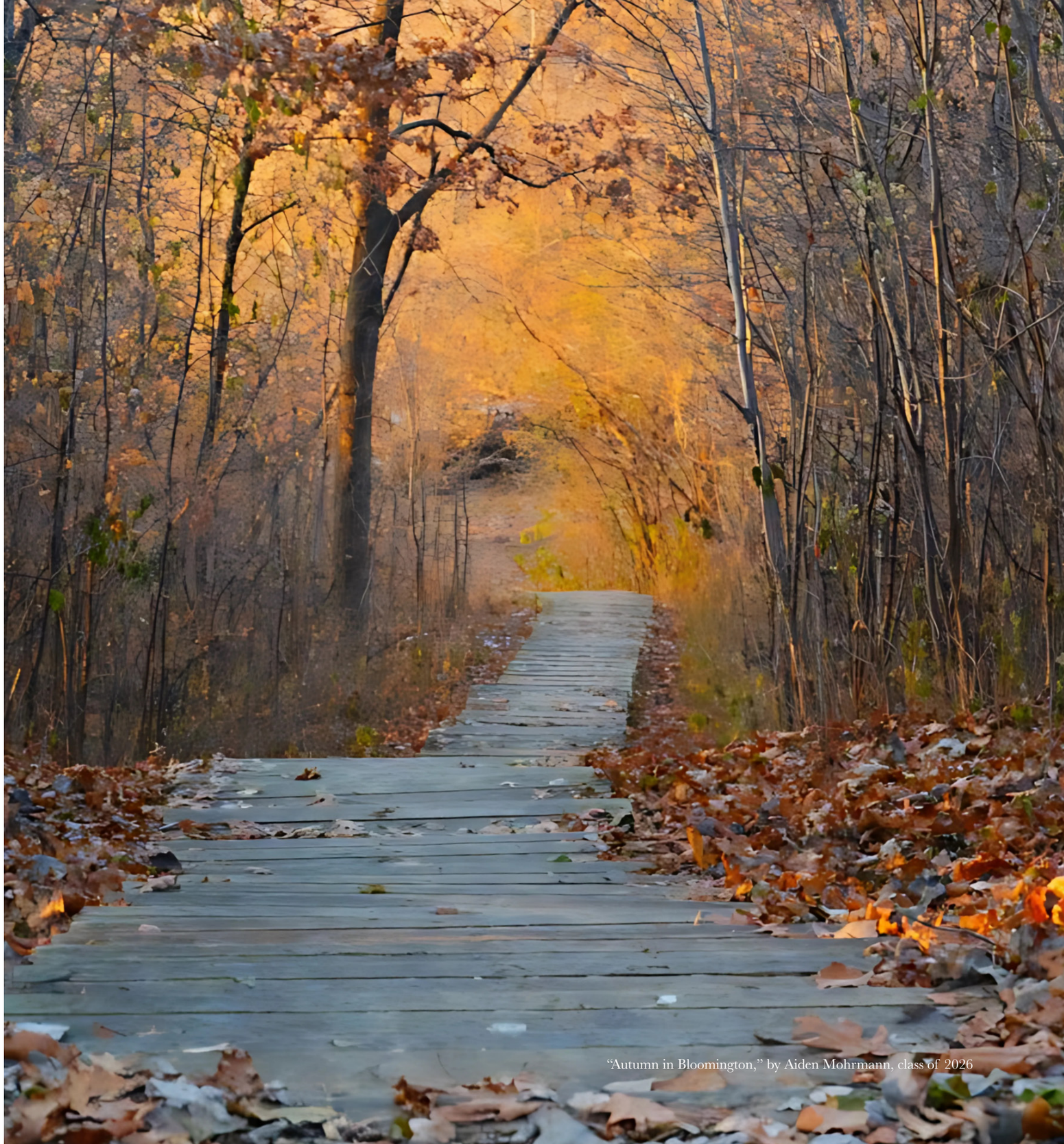
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"Autumn in Bloomington," by Aiden Mohrmann, class of 2026



"Welcome," by Elijah Crouch, class of 2027

Dear Reader,

At New College Franklin, we begin our year by reading Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Life Together. This book marks the entrance to what is, for most of us, a new stage of life; one in which we live very closely with people we've hardly met. It is a season of much potential—many heads are butted, toes are stepped on, and many many dishes are left undone (to the chagrin of many a roommate). But through all of the possible unpleasantries, we make the best friends we've ever had—we encounter ideas and create things that we never could have alone. This—life together—is the very purpose of Artifact. Here, we hope to highlight many of the beautiful things that surround, and are born from, a life deeply centered in community. We hope in these pages that you may enter in to the life we have here at New College Franklin. Please enjoy the fruit of our labors, and the fruit of our own little life together.

Emma Claire Luaghlin, Editor in Chief

Selena Brown, Design Director

A Thanksgiving Reflection



BY MARGARET HOLBROOK

CLASS OF 2025

"Autumn Flowers," by Annabelle Taylor, class of 2028

You never notice when things stay the same until they change. Throughout my childhood, my family's Thanksgiving traditions remained the same. We usually spent two days fixing up a glorious feast complete with stuffing, sparkling grape juice, turkey cookies, and every now and then my fake uncle Steven's famous mashed potatoes. We sat around the table—me, my siblings, and my parents—and listened to the thanksgiving address, and prayed a historic prayer over our meal. Then we'd eat, all voicing our gratitude throughout dinner.

Not too long after the meal, pie drew us around the table once more. We would settle down to bed looking forward to blasting the Christmas music the next morning. These things brought us together in meaningful ways; they still do. But nothing stays the same forever. The last few years, I've had two Thanksgiving dinners over two days, one with my family and one with my in-laws. I've come to cherish this change, especially the people and conversations that accompany it.

Remember that the things around us—though they aren't guaranteed to last forever—have shaped us and made us more of who we are supposed to be. Hundreds of thousands of little changes happen in every lifetime. One thing which always stays the same is that we were meant to be in community. Man is not an island. Homes, jobs, hobbies, and even friends can change, but still we seek the other without which we are incomplete and alone. We can forget to be thankful for these things away from the prompting of family around a bountiful table.

Remember, and be thankful. It's easy to underappreciate things until they disappear. It's a good practice to try and be thankful for the here and now. What can you see right now for which you are thankful? Who in your community blesses you? What circumstance can you be thankful for in the last year? Traditions and situations change, but gratitude remains *something*...life together.

Home Keeping

by Professor Nathan Johnson



"Autumnal Picnic," by Abi Pattison, class of 2021

Below is a fragment of a novel that has barely sprung to life.

I don't remember much about Christmases growing up. Neither do my brothers and sister, Ellie Grace. Like most things from our past, Christmas memories are more like misassembled snap shots. I squint my mind's eye in hope of seeing a moving picture, but I merely zoom in on the still, small frames to see in greater detail the only things my mind will allow me to recollect. I see the screen door banging shut and hear that muffled snap it always made as the whitewashed wood hit against the doorframe. The door is chipped near the edges and dappled with the brown hue of the unfinished wood underneath. I see my father's large back, hunched and enormous, heaving like bellows as he feeds the flames of his anger toward mother or us or whoever decided to be born two thousand years prior. He mumbles something as he starts to lumber toward the shed at the edge of the backyard where we all knew he would swallow his own wrath like a drunk would guzzle beer. He would always return, a half hour later perhaps: he would be quiet with a look of embarrassment in his fallen eyes, and armed with a banal observation or a lame joke told quickly as if he didn't really need you to understand what he said. The twins would always ignore him, but I always found myself keenly attentive to my father's sense of prideful regret.

Grandmother would come to visit during

Christmas. She'd stay for a week or two at a time, traveling from Iowa with rolls of yarn and a stack of magazines. She would sit in our living room reading or knitting, humming Amazing Grace or Come Thou Fount to the rhythm of her rocking. In the evenings, she liked to turn off the lights and light a single candle, illuminating the darkness in a faint glow like a gentle whisper in the lingering quiet of an empty church. The house was dark and quiet as the twins went upstairs to play and Ellie Grace went to bed, and I'd shuffle into the living room and sit next to Grandmother on the couch. She'd talk and I'd listen and we shared grief and loneliness, although I couldn't put words to it at the time. She would tell me stories about her husband and about her daughter, my Father's sister, who died young in Grandmother's old age. She was a woman of sorrows, acquainted with grief.

John Wesley and John Henry were twins and the oldest. My father's name was John, too. He never told us why he named both my brothers John, but I suppose he always wanted to name his first son after himself, and he didn't want to be so cruel as to withhold his name from an infant who couldn't quite make it out of the womb on time. Perhaps he thought so highly of his name, he felt he needed two sons to carry the weight of it. Or perhaps he wanted to increase the odds that a son named after him would make him proud.

Pride is a word he uttered often. Along with family, respect, honor, and Jesus Christ.

Ellie Grace was the youngest, although you wouldn't know it from the way she talked. She talked older than all of us. And she talked enough for all of us, too. I didn't mind it much, growing up. I was three years younger than the twins but only fourteen months older than Ellie Grace, and I think I often assumed our ages were reversed. Perhaps I was carried away by how self-assured and confident she sounded about almost everything; I was never very assured about much of anything, particularly my voice, and I didn't use it much. God gave me two ears and one mouth, so I assumed I was made to listen quite more than I was made to talk. Ellie Grace didn't seem to mind my silence, either, probably because it meant she'd always have someone who would listen to her.

The twins didn't listen to anybody. Once during family dinner, Ellie Grace, who wasn't much older than 9 at the time, was declaring how immoral it was for babies to get circumcised. She must have recently learned about circumcision because generally her moral diatribes were directed at whatever atrocity she most recently became aware of. The twins started giggling and grabbing vvveach other beneath the table, and suddenly John Wesley let out a howl and fell backward off the bench. They each were cackling as John Wesley lay on the floor rocking from side to side. Ellie Grace was on the other side, sitting next to Dad as she always did, so she couldn't see why John Wesley had fallen over or why they were cackling. But she assumed they were laughing at her. Or if they weren't laughing at her, they were laughing at something else, which was just as bad, because it meant they hadn't been paying attention.

She stood up, her fists clenched and brow furrowed like a girl out of a caricature drawing at the county fair.

She stomped off without saying a word. Mother got up and called after her as the twins stopped laughing and looked guiltily at each other and our father. The only time they cared much for what Ellie Grace was saying was when she stopped speaking. For them, her voice was like the hum of the refrigerator, a background noise always going that you never notice or care about until the power shuts off and you can't hear it anymore. Father didn't say much when these things happened, even though they happened at the dinner table often. But we never really considered it much, growing up. As a child, the actions of parents always seem to have an inner, unspoken logic that you never think to question, much like saying grace before a meal or taking baths on Saturday nights. It seemed reasonable that Father remained silent at the table, only speaking to say the prayer and to tell us to keep our elbows off the table. And between Ellie Grace's monologues and the twins' mischief, there was always enough to keep everyone distracted during those twenty minutes. They seemed so long back then. But now as I eat dinner with my own children who are always clamoring to be done so that they can play outside or watch television, I wish this meal was my entire life, and I could slow down every bite and absorb in silence the sipping and slurping and swallow-

ing that makes up the memories of a family. "Those who share the same name, must share the same table," my father would say. He reminded us of this often whenever we'd ask to have dinner at a friend's house or eat dinner early so that we could go out. He would refuse and we would act upset, but I think we all found safety in knowing that we not only had a place at our family's table, but that it would not be the same table without us. And we wouldn't be the same people without that table. For that table became the binding force of our family, even during our most divided years. Often we children would yell words like "hate," "kill," and "bastard," but when we sat down at that table and shared the meat and drink, we were one.



"Dog Days," by Hannah Johnson



photo by Elijah Crouch, class of 2027

> WHAT ABOUT THE CITY YOU'RE FOUNDING? IT IS GREEK, ISN'T IT?
>
> IT HAS TO BE.
>
> THEN WON'T THEY LOVE GREECE? WON'T THEY CONSIDER GREECE AS THEIR OWN AND SHARE THE RELIGION OF THE OTHER GREEKS?
>
> YES, INDEED.
>
> THEN WON'T THEY CONSIDER THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH GREEKS — PEOPLE WHO ARE THEIR OWN — NOT AS WAR BUT AS CIVIL WAR?
>
> OF COURSE.
>
> AND WON'T THEY QUARREL LIKE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THAT ONE DAY THEY'LL BE RECONCILED?
>
> *Plato's Republic*

AN ESSAY BY CALEB STROVEN, CLASS OF 2027

Quarelling Like those Who Will Be Reconciled

This discussion from Plato's Republic strikes a chord of the power and strength of national bonds, of collective identity. This theme is poignant in today's society, where we too often see ourselves defined solely in terms of self-actualization. But the last line quoted here provokes our thoughts most sharply. It's a rather bold assumption that the shared Grecian bonds will inevitably lead warring cities back towards unity, which on a familial level rings true. Growing up close to my brother, I relate to the certainty of reconciliation present in this quotation. My siblings had no shortage of conflict. But though tempers were high and fury intensified, ultimately brotherhood remained and enmity dissipated. The normal conflict of family life: quickly kindled, more speedily ended. All of that conflict was under a surety that at the end of the day, you're stuck with each other, and you really wouldn't have it any other way.

But deeper than this image of familial conflict—which is not universally applicable—this quote evokes the surety of Christian eternity. This is an eternity

where all is united in purpose and the scourge of evil will be purged from our bodies and our hearts. In short, we will be one people and without enmity. As Christians, how ought we to quarrel as those who know that we will be reconciled? We should see eternity in our relationships. The church triumphant will be reconciled, and this balances us between the ditch of apathy and desperation for unity. On the one hand, it reminds us of how wrong our feelings of spite and terseness towards our fellow Christians are. We feel how wrong such feelings are by comparing our clashing wills to the chorus of the saints in Heaven. How can we stir up separation between one another when we know we ought to be one? On the other hand, this view prevents us from seeing complete unity in this life as the goal, providing hope and comfort as we wrestle with our current pain of division and disunity. Although there may arise sharp disagreements and contentions among each other, we know that even if our fleshly dispositions veil us from ever seeing eye to eye in this life, this veil will surely be lifted. It's in this confidence that we can place unity in its proper place: not desiring it for its own sake or on our own time, but for its completion in Christ.



photo by Elijah Crouch, class of 2027

Ms. Mabel's Apple Pie

by Eleanor Wilbur, Class of 2027

There are probably tens of thousands of apple pie recipes in the world. Some old, some new, some meticulously crafted with artisan ingredients, others improvised from what's available in the pantry. And some, like this recipe, that have been shared through generations of a community and become legendary in their own right. Some apple pies have a story to tell. My grandfather grew up in a small town in Middle-Of-Nowhere Mississippi, his childhood memories defined in part by eating the best apple pies in the world, made by a woman named Miss Mable. Years later, after my grandparents were married, my grandmother began a quest to re-create my grandfather's favorite pie. She made a dozen variations, each one received with "this is a really good pie... but it's not Miss Mable's." Eventually, my grandmother found a way to contact Miss Mable and asked for her famous recipe. She responded with a letter containing the apple pie recipe and two notes to my grandmother. The first, that the pie tastes best when baked in a beat up old pie tin, and the second; "Remind your husband that we often remember things from our childhoods differently than they were, and this pie will probably not live up to his memory." With these words in mind, my grandmother made the apple pie.

When my grandfather took the first bite, he knew. This was Miss Mable's recipe, just as good as when he was a boy. Since then, it has been shared through our family, and we were even able to pass it on to some of my grandfather's childhood friends who also had fond memories of it. The recipe printed on the card here is exactly the same, in every respect. However, the original pie contains no seasonings, but my mom and I found that it is slightly improved by the addition of cinnamon. Don't tell Pop-Pop.

A recipe from us to you.

Enjoy.

"Not quite VanGogh," photo of textile by Maebree Wylie,

BARING SOULS AND BEARING BURDENS

Capstone Essay by Katie Jo Groves, Class of 2023



"Dinosaur Valley," by Aiden Mohrmann, class of 2026

“Haven't you heard it said that we ought to bear one another's burdens?"

"But that means—" she began, and stopped.

"I know," Stanhope said. "It means listening sympathetically, and thinking unselfishly, and being anxious about, and so on. Well, I don't say a word against all that; no doubt it helps. But I think when Christ or St. Paul, or whoever said bear…meant something much more like carrying a parcel instead of someone else. To bear a burden is precisely to carry it instead of.

If you're still carrying yours, I'm not carrying it for you—however sympathetic I may be.”

Charles Williams (Descent Into Hell)

Among the many Scriptural commands to love one another, encourage one another, offer sympathy and wisdom, and live together in unity, there is a short sentence in Galatians that says, “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” It reminds me of two other well-known verses about burdens. David first said it in the Psalms: “Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you,” and Christ Himself echoes him, saying, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest… For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11: 28-30)

I don’t often hear the word “burden” apart from someone referencing the Bible, though it is by no means archaic. A burden is an easy thing to picture. We have all carried literal burdens: moving a piano or a sofa, struggling to balance a toddler on each hip, or carrying a backpack filled with textbooks and a heavy laptop. We all know the strain it puts on our muscles and the ache it puts in our backs. Many of us know the pain of straining, crumpling, or breaking under a heavy physical weight.

Understanding a physical burden helps us to understand the implications of an emotional, mental, or spiritual burden. It can be easy to dismiss these as foolish, irrational, or even nonexistent—they are a result of not getting enough sleep or of maintaining a poor diet. And while it is true that one’s physicality affects one’s spirituality and vice-versa, carrying a burden in the heart or soul is a real weight, and is real pain.

This is the kind of burden Christ speaks of; he wants to give us “rest for our souls.” A soul-burden can be a variety of things, but we all have them. We are filled with worry for the future; we are anxious about a relationship failing; some mornings the depression is so heavy on our souls we aren’t strong enough to even get out of bed. We are rendered helpless by so much in this earthly life. We lose control quickly and are left grasping at anything we might be able to do to ease the pain. How do you endure when the one you love doesn’t love you enough to stick it out? How can you shake your fear when the pregnancy test comes back positive after the third miscarriage? And where else can you go when, in spite of weeping and imploring, God is still silent?

I am constantly left with empty hands and unanswered questions. I have gone through seasons of great loneliness and heartache when the only person there to comfort me has been the Lord. I have felt him lift the weight of that burden, giving me the capacity to live in his love in spite of my aloneness. There have also been times when my relationships are rich and full, but God seems so absent I fear that perhaps he isn’t a good God after all. What do I do then? How can I cast my burdens on someone I can’t find, or worse, who might be ignoring me? The thought that he is ignoring me reveals more about my lack of faith than it does about his character. In those times, though I haven’t had the perspective in the moment, he has given me a godly friend to remind me that his faithfulness isn’t dependent on my faithfulness—he can never not love me, because God is Love. In the times when I struggle to let go of my burdens, Christ provides.

There is not a single moment when the Father does not see me.

Christ comes to us to relieve us of our burdens in a myriad of ways. One of those ways is through the community of other believers. Even just one person can make all the difference in my walk, if I will let them join me and help me with my burden.

Burden-bearing is hospitality for the soul. I have not experienced the heartbreak of a broken engagement or the loss of a family member, so I cannot bear that burden with you or for you, but I can give you a house key. I can make meals for you, easing your day-to-day responsibilities. When Christ calls us to bear one another’s burdens, he doesn’t expect us to carry or lift the entire weight. I can’t carry your whole backpack, but I can take some of the rocks out of it and carry them for you. Now it is lighter for you, and we can walk together.

Our hearts carry heavy things. These are things we break under, things that strain our souls for years at a time. Often one doesn’t fully recover from a death or divorce. The scars on a person’s arms will remind them of a past pain for a long time. But these dark, unbearable burdens were never supposed to be ours alone. We are not meant to walk through anything alone. God became man so that we wouldn’t be alone. He took the world’s pain so that he could carry our pain, our sin. He gave us one another to help push back the darkness in small finite ways, but he is the only one who can conquer the darkness. His yoke is easy, and ours are not.

Though most of us have never hitched up a yoke, we un-

derstand the metaphor. A yoke is a heavy wooden beam that an ox wears on his shoulders, attaching him to a plow so that he can pull the plow and sow the field. Not only is the yoke heavy by itself, but everything attached to it slows the oxen down and is a dragging weight. That is the point if you are plowing a field, but it is backbreaking and miserable if you are just trying to walk down the street and all the weight of this massive machinery is dragging behind you and pulling on your shoulders. Our burdens often come with their own burdens. We often carry baggage that is pulling more baggage, but we are too weak. When we insist on lifting a weight that is too heavy, we break. There is nothing that Christ is too weak to bear, and he wants to make us whole.

This weight is not something we throw off by our own strength, for we have been clearly caught in our weakness. Christ, having seen every time we have stumbled and fallen, wants to come alongside us and make a proposal. "Listen," he says, "my pack is much lighter than yours. It is okay that yours is too heavy for you; you were never meant to carry it alone. Let me carry it instead. I'll walk with you and I can carry both." Sometimes, in his limitless grace, he lifts it completely, and it is a miracle. More often, he surrounds us with bearers of his love, to relieve the weight in different ways.

When we practice hospitality, we open ourselves to the opportunity of taking a person's burden as well as their coat. With the opening of the door there comes a baring of the soul. Bearing the burden of another requires listening and sympathy, but I am not lifting anything myself if that's where my help ends. Taking a weight off of another puts a weight on me. I open myself to pain when I open myself to people, whether it is the shame of my own vulnerability, or the pain of seeing the tears of someone I love.

Hospitality is messy. Burden-bearing is heavy. Baring my soul is about as pretty as showing my face stained with tears and nights of grief. Sharing my burden and bearing yours is hard, but God gives us the grace and the strength to do both. He doesn't call us to serve with the intention of leaving us to figure it out alone, and he doesn't want to us muster up the strength and courage to do it apart from him. Our hospitality and love are to be reflections of his, and he is with us—as the burdened and the burden-lifters—every step of the way.



"OUR HOSPITALITY AND LOVE
ARE TO BE REFLECTIONS OF HIS,
AND HE IS WITH US—
AS THE BURDENED
AND THE BURDEN-LIFTERS—
EVERY STEP OF THE WAY."

photo by Elijah Crouch, class of 2027



"Purple Mountains Majesty," by Annabelle Taylor, class of 2028

†

Maundy Thursday

by Emma Claire Laughlin

class of 2026

Messiah cleansed his own betrayer's feet,
The one who would inflict the lethal kiss.
And yet, his face foreshadowed not defeat,
But love—and resolute obedience.
They feasted not on lamb that hallowed night.
His slaughter was appointed for the day.
He wept as golden beams turned darkness bright.
"You cannot follow when I go away.
My body broken is this very bread;
Eat. And drink my blood, this very wine.
I'll love you best by going in your stead.
In three days' time, on spotless lamb you'll dine."
They feasted on His love in upper room.
The lamb knew he must die to be consumed.

"Ovis Aires," by Aiden Mohrmann, class of 2026



"Lonely Cow," by Aiden Mohrmann, class of 2026



"The North Shore," by Aiden Mohrmann, class of 2026

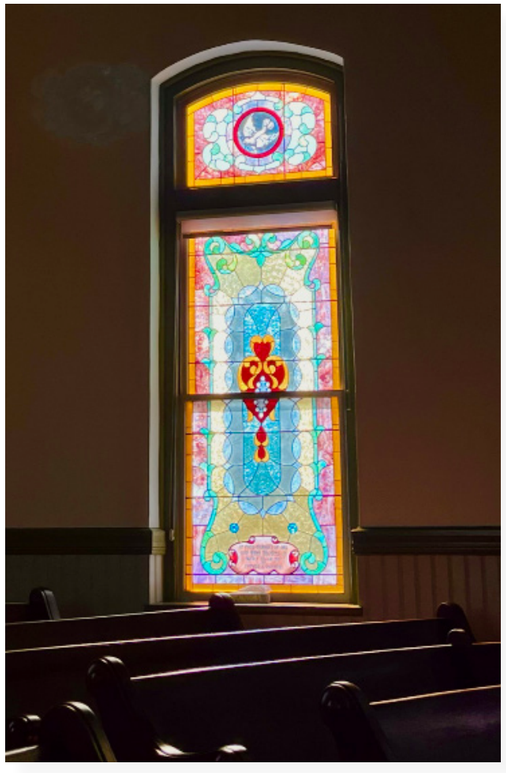
The Grail

by Aiden Mohrmann

Before thy gates am I: weak impoverished self
Before the great I AM: my soul all empty of good
God to me—dry lips prayed, and dumb I stood.
God to me—my Lord, my strength and wealth
Longsuffering and tender and my only good
My poor soul, you have restored to health
A dry and thirsty land, you water
And nourish with your blood
Unmoving, empty, nothing
You filled me
Where I stood.
I with fear
In Faith
In Love
Draw near.
With this love
I know my God
I no longer fear God
But with boldness I approach,
I am loved with love surpassing holy fear.

The Kindness of Kindred Spirits

by Maebree Wylie, Class of 2027



"Stained Glass", by Annabelle Taylor, Class of 2028

"Without friends,
no one would choose to live,
though he had all
other goods."

Aristotle,
Nicomachean Ethics

Friendship. This is a word we're all familiar with, hopefully a word that we all have excellent examples of. But what does friendship really mean? Friendship is defined as, "The state of being friends." This seems like a straightforward answer, but it only defines the very basic sense of the relationship. 'Friendship' holds a deeper meaning than simply the state of being friends. Friendship used to hold the idea of a deep love. Not a romantic love, but a very similar one. It implied a deep connection between the hearts of those involved in the friendship. This idea is described by the term "Bosom friend" some of you may know from L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables. Anne expresses her desire for a "bosom friend" to Marilla shortly after she arrives at Green Gables:

"'Marilla,' Anne demanded presently, 'do you think that I shall ever have a bosom friend in Avonlea?' 'A—a what kind of friend?' Marilla said. 'A bosom friend—an intimate friend, you know—a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my innermost soul.

I've dreamed of meeting her all my life.'"

While this term may seem archaic, it really captures the meaning of true friendship. Friendship means to truly know someone; to know their heart and their soul and for yours to be known in turn. This is necessary as humans, for we are made for relationship. As Christians, this idea is not a novel one. We are commanded to love one another with a brotherly love and as Christ loved the church. That phrase is often used regarding marriage, but it also applies to friendship. Regardless of our romantic relationship, we are to love one another unconditionally and with a self-sacrificial love. True friendship embodies this, with each person willing to sacrifice their desires for the other.

Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is made for adversity." We are meant to be in relationship. We are meant to work, and to have communion with one another. Friendship is to be a support through the easy times and the hard ones. This is a way God cares for his people. To put it in Anne's terms, we are meant to find "kindred spirits." But how does one find "kindred spirits?"

These relationships are brought about by God, and we do not know when or with whom he will bring them about. It often seems that we develop friendships based on our own abilities, or simply by chance, but this is not the case. As C.S. Lewis said in his book, The Four Loves,

[F]or a Christian, there are, strictly speaking no chances. A secret master of ceremonies has been at work. Christ, who said to the disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," can truly say to every group of Christian friends, "Ye have not chosen one another but I have chosen you for one another." The friendship is not a reward for our discriminating and good taste in finding one another out. It is the instrument by which God reveals to each of us the beauties of others. -C.S. Lewis

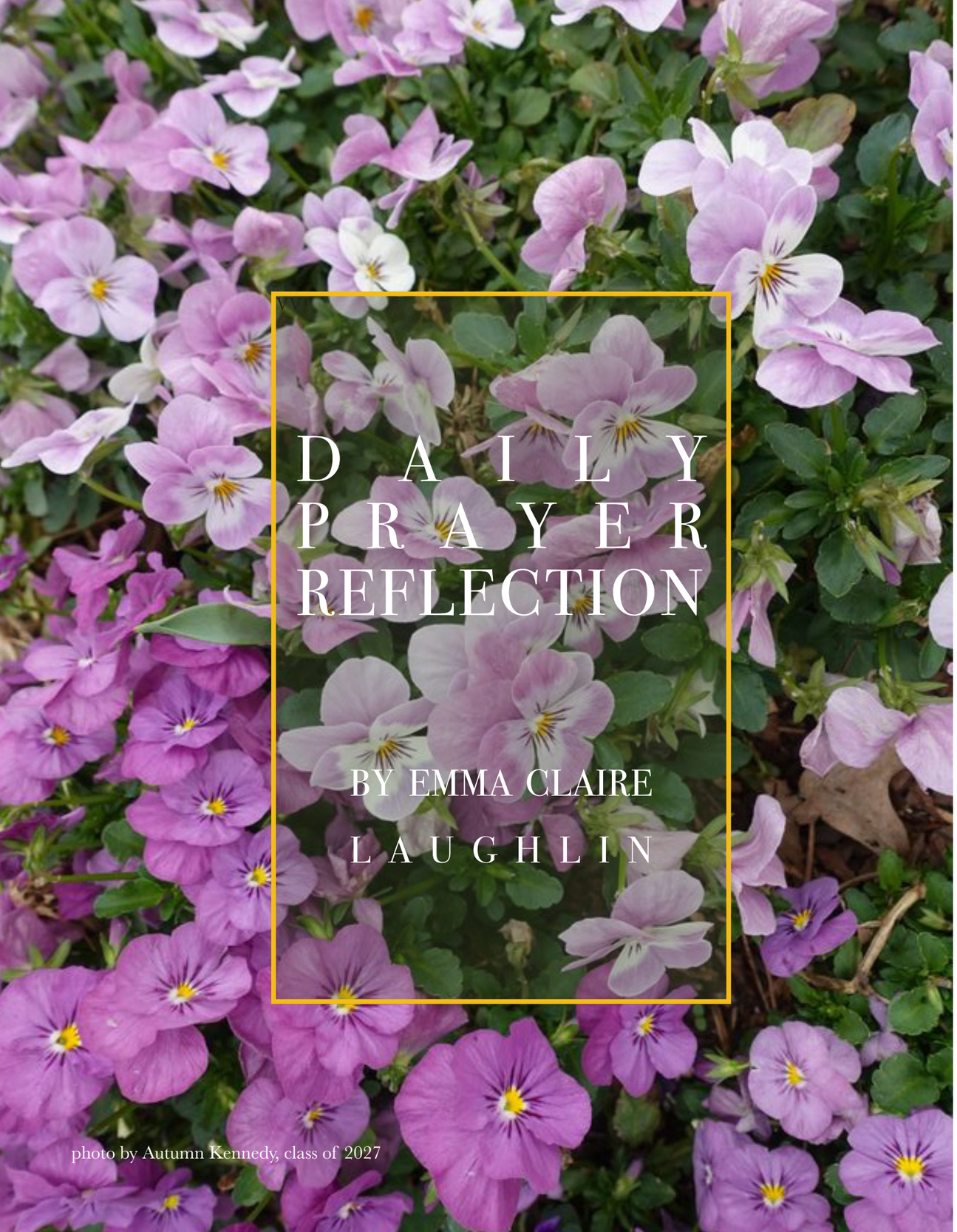
True Friendship is a gift of God. It is a way in which his love is revealed to us, and the blessing of his church is shown. He provides for those he loves, and this includes friendship, true friendship, and He gives this in abundance. As Anne said, "Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world." There are many kindred spirits to be found, for our God is a God of love and "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (Ps.84:11)

Nagymama Love
(Grandmother Love)

WRITTEN BY VICTORIA WEBER, CLASS OF 2028

The prayers of a grandmother
Are worth double, I am told.
They cocoon around
In sheltering sound
And will forever, in love enfold.
Before I came to be,
In spiced mother-tongue lilts,
Your prayers, so apt,
With love enwrapped
Me in goose-down, love-sewn quilts.
I grew amidst your stories
And though your hair turns gray,
Your stories gold
I'll ever hold
For they colour my being today.
Your words show greatest kindness
In the deep down, smallest things.
Like your seed for birds,
Your feathered words
Are the reason I grow wings.
So as I learn and ponder,
And leave my childhood nest
I need not fear.
Your prayers are near.
Like you, they hold me best.
Though from you I gather much
One thing shines bright above –
From actions small,
To word
As, in all –
You have shown me greatest love.

PHOTO BY VICTORIA WEBER, CLASS OF 2028



DAILY PRAYER REFLECTION

BY EMMA CLAIRE LAUGHLIN

photo by Autumn Kennedy, class of 2027

O Lord,
You have taught us that without love,
Whatever we do is worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit and pour into my heart your greatest gift
Which is love:
The true bond of peace and of all virtue,
Without which whoever lives is accounted dead before you.
Grant this for the sake of your only son, Jesus Christ,
Who lives and reigns with you
And the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever,
Amen.

If I were to name only one way in which New College Franklin has changed my life, it would be how my time here has influenced my perspective on liturgy and prayer. I remember the first day I visited New College joining in the daily prayer service and feeling utterly out of my depth. My church upbringing was far from "liturgical," so antiphonal psalms left me feeling uncertain to say the least. And the part labeled "The Gloria" (with no further text) left me flushed with embarrassment as I hoped my neighbors wouldn't notice my ignorance or my silence. It was all foreign and unfamiliar, dangerously far from my comfort zone.

The same feelings followed me for the early days of my time at New College. I bought a book of daily liturgy for freshman Theology class, as well as Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Life Together for a pre-class discussion. I felt fear and confusion mingled together as I read these texts; I had no lense to understand them through.

But over time my fear and uncertainty about daily liturgies dissolved. Every weekday morning at 10:05 AM we chanted psalms, read scripture, prayed, and sang hymns as a body. Prayer became routine, and liturgy began to penetrate. The words then came easily: I was no longer silent for the Gloria, and by the time my first year had ended, I no longer needed to read the pages with the "prayer appointed for the day," for I knew them. They had all subtly crept into my mind and were working their way towards my heart.

In truth, my former unsettled feelings had not been mistaken. I was being unsettled–I was being broken from the mold in which I so comfortably lived. The words I repeated so often began to sink in and to penetrate the self-centered way in which I approached my days. Unbeknownst to me, my conscience was being equipped with the tools of conviction and comfort, which would find me when I needed them most. And now, in moments when my heart is troubled, these prayers return to me. I feel ungrounded when I miss 10:05 prayer, and it has become a joy to my heart. This is certainly not to say that I'm cured of my pride or selfishness, but I have learned to see things differently. I understand a little better now what Scripture means when it says to "bind the word around your neck, and to write it on the tablet of your heart" (Proverbs 3:3).

When we return to school at the end of summer there is always a fresh set of faces in the pews. These are the people we are called to live life with; among them are dear friends we have yet to make; personalities that will clash with our own; future roommates; even future spouses. At 10:05, we gather to pray. I open my eyes to see many eyes closed, reciting the prayers that have clung to their hearts as well. The freshmen shuffle with pamphlets and papers, furiously finding the correct pages and fumbling over the (sometimes unintuitive) pauses we have learned to take together. But by the end of the year, they too have been formed by the words recited that have begun to cling to them. Without fail, they find their place within the body. They learn the prayers, and the pauses, and enter into the life of this body. We practice "Life Together," centered around Christ, uplifted and united by prayer as we endeavor to plumb the depths of the glory of our God. This joy is one that I wouldn't have known without my time at New College. And, just maybe, it is a joy He has in mind for you.



The God Who Sings

By Micah Courser, class of 2025

To magnify the glorious God who sings,

We laud His mighty works and gifts untold,

While men and all the earth stand round in rings.

The angels bear the news on gilded wings

Of him whose birth the prophets long foretold,

To magnify the glorious God who sings.

Poor shepherds play upon their humble strings,

And Magi leave their gifts of myrrh and gold,

While men and all the earth stand round in rings.

“Hosanna, Son of David, King of Kings!”

Sang crowds in jubilee while praises rolled

To magnify the glorious God who sings.

Behold the Son who shines upon all things

Transfixed and pierced,

His garments sold,

While men and all the earth stand round in rings.

Behold the Son shines upon all things,

Risen out of death, that broken mold,

To magnify the glorious God who sings,

While men and all the earth stand round in rings.

made with ♥ by the

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We hope you enjoyed this issue of

ARTIFACT

Vol. 2 No. 4 will focus on **CHILDHOOD** as its theme. Look for it in December 2025!

We welcome submissions from students, faculty, and alumni! Submissions for Vol. 2, No. 4 will be accepted until **November 1, 2025.**

Artifact Submission Guidelines

- The piece is well-crafted, polished, and professional.
- The content is relevant to New College Franklin course material. It doesn't have to be directly about a class, but it should carry beauty and meaning.
- The content is appropriate for a broad audience, not divisive or offensive.
- Written work should be no more than 3 pages.
- Accepted forms of written art: poetry, short stories, short essays (creative nonfiction preferred over academic).
- Accepted forms of visual art: traditional art, digital art, photography, illustration.

Please submit all work at newcollegefranklin.org/artifact. Attach written work as a Google Doc. Attach photos in highest quality form possible, as an iCloud link, or as a Google Drive folder. For all submissions, written and visual please include your name as you wish for it to appear, your graduation year, and **the title of your work.**

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