

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS CHURCH SCHOOLS

## FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

of  
Cornerstone Christian Academy (K-6)  
and  
Pusch Ridge Christian Academy (6-12)



*“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘See I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.’ –Isaiah 28:16*

***Soli Deo Gloria!***

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# **I. Ministry of Catalina Foothills Church (Presbyterian Church in America)**

## **Mission**

The mission of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) is to reach Tucson, the Southwest, and North America in order to reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). The Great Commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is to “*Go and make disciples of all nations*” (Matthew 28:18-20). We take our Lord’s command seriously and want to do our part in reaching the world with the Gospel.

## **Vision**

Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) exists to glorify God by exalting the Lord in our corporate worship and our individual lives, by edifying God’s people in their faith, and by equipping God’s people to take the transforming power of the Gospel into every area of society - the arts, athletics, business, education, law, medicine, the military, politics, and others.

## **Catalina Foothills Church Schools (CFCS) Directives**

CFCS has been a ministry of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) since 1998. The purpose of CFCS is to assist the families of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) and the greater Tucson evangelical community in their God-ordained responsibility to raise their covenant children in the fullness of Christian discipleship by providing a Biblical education with a classical curricula emphasis and methodology in kindergarten through 12th grade. CFCS does not seek to replace or duplicate the unique roles and responsibilities of the home or the church, but rather to partner with these spheres, offering a challenging academic, college-preparatory course of learning whereby the learner will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, character, and biblical worldview to meet the complex challenges of our ever-changing world.

# **II. Mission of CFCS (K-12)**

## **Mission statement**

Catalina Foothills Church Schools (CFCS), a covenantal Christian school system, exists to glorify God and to partner with the Christian home in discipling young men and women in their relationships with Christ and the Scriptures, unfolding to them a unified and biblical world-and-life view, equipping them with the tools necessary to pursue a lifestyle and love of learning, exposing them to the classical ideas from our Western cultural heritage, and challenging them to pursue academic excellence.

We desire to see our young men and women, “increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men,” in order to live out their faith as servant-leaders in every area of society (Luke 2:52).

## **Mottos**

*Soli Deo Gloria*—Glory to God alone.

*Credo Ut Intelligam*—I believe in order to understand. –St. Augustine

### **III. Statements of Ministry, Faith, and Philosophy**

#### **Statement of Ministry**

CFCS is a ministry of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) , operating directly under the CFC session of elders and the governing board of CFCS. While families and faculty members of CFCS may come from diverse orthodox evangelical backgrounds, the schools are guided by the theological statements and doctrines of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA).

#### **Statement of Faith**

- 1. We believe that the Bible, as comprised by the Old and New Testaments, is the only written Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit and without error in the original manuscripts. The Bible is our infallible and divine authority in all matters of faith and life.**
- 2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one God, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory.**
- 3. We believe in the deity and humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory. Jesus Christ is the sole mediator between God and man.**
- 4. We believe that salvation is by God alone as He sovereignly chooses those He will save. We believe His choice is based on his grace, not on any human individual merit or foreseen faith.**
- 5. We believe that salvation is by grace, through faith alone.**
- 6. We believe that faith without works is dead.**
- 7. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.**
- 8. We believe that at death, the souls of believers pass immediately into glory, and that their bodies rest in the grave until the resurrection, when these bodies will be glorified and reunited with the souls, in the presence of the Lord forever. Unbelievers will be eternally separated from God in the judgment.**
- 9. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 10. We believe that God is gracious and faithful to His people not simply as individuals but as families in successive generations according to His Covenant promises.**

#### **Role of the Christian School**

**“Q. What is the chief end of man?**

**A. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!”**

**—Westminster Catechism**

Scripture makes it clear that Christian parents bear the primary responsibility for educating covenant children. Parents are to keep God’s commands and statutes, teaching them diligently to their children, and talking about them “when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deut. 6:7). Given this parental mandate, it is important to clarify the

role of the Christian school. The home, school, and church can be seen as comprising a “three-legged stool” in which each serves a vital function in a child’s education. The school is a ministry of the church created to assist Christian parents in bringing up their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). CFCS exists to support, but not replace, the role of Christian parents as the primary educators of their children.

Schools must guard against usurping the role of the parents, but also must carefully avoid encroaching upon the domain of the church. In the words of Robert Littlejohn, in his book *Wisdom and Eloquence*, “The mission of the school, in short, is not to evangelize, not to parent, not to generate revenue, but to *educate*. As such, every school exists as a community of people who pursue the twin purposes of teaching and learning; so schools are communities of teaching and learning.” This is not to say that students in the Christian school cannot worship together in school chapels or collaborate on community outreach events or mission trips during school breaks. These activities are a vital part of the mission of CFCS in fostering servant-leadership. However, it is through discipling children primarily in academics, as well as in areas such as the arts and sports, that the Christian school seeks to integrate teaching and learning with faith.

Here, it should be mentioned that in the Reformed view, there is no dichotomy between the secular and sacred. Therefore, the school’s role in educating covenant children is no less spiritual than activities generally associated with the church, such as mission trips and evangelistic outreach. Critically analyzing themes in literature, making connections in the sweep and scope of world history, exploring the complexity of design in science, and even competing cooperatively and passionately as part of a sports team are all sacred pursuits if done to the glory of God in the Christian school.

## The Nature of the Learner

**“A child is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.” – Plutarch**

In integrating faith and learning, CFCS believes it is essential to incorporate a biblical worldview not only in the curricula, but also in the Christian school’s view of the learner. Therefore, we deliberately start at the foundation, rejecting secular views of the child that undergird many modern educational methods and practices. According to Scripture, man is made in God’s image. He is a unique and individual creation of God. He was given authority over God’s creation and was called to be a responsible steward of God’s creation, but man’s sin has caused a separation from God and a fall from the original position of authority. He is marred by this sin.

As a believer, the learner is a new creation reconciled to God. The learner has been created to reflect the communicable attributes of God; he is rational, creative, spiritual, interactive, and purposeful, to name several. He is a relational being, interactive and curious, born with a natural desire for knowledge and learning. He is not a “tabula rasa,” in the thinking of John Locke, but is a “reasoning, developing person building a conceptual framework to make sense of the universe” (*Arche*). He is born in a natural relationship with many ideas, thoughts, and people, and the job of the educator is to provide opportunities for the learner to build connections in science, history, literature, and other disciplines. Contemporary educational methods based on behaviorism are anathema to our view of the learner: he is not a passive recipient of knowledge at the mercy of his environment, as the behaviorist believes, and he should not be subjected to systems of extrinsic manipulation or control in the name of learning or classroom management. Biblical educational methods affirm the image-bearer in the learner, allowing for his natural inclination to be purposeful and active in learning, and providing him with opportunities to interact with ideas and truth. The educator should lay before the learner a curriculum of nobility, an “abundant feast” of content, of the best in living books and ideas.

Additionally, as an image-bearer and heir of the covenant, a covenant child is a person now, not one merely in process. He is able to worship and glorify God now in his life through pursuing truth, goodness, and beauty. He was created for God’s pleasure and glory, so that he may learn of God and enjoy him forever.

Children of believers are secure in the same promises given to their believing parents or guardians. Covenant children are worthy of respect and “must therefore be regarded as entitled to all blessings that the benevolent Father has promised them” (*Principles of Education*).

## Theory of Learning

Learning affects the whole person: the intellect, the emotions, and the spirit. The learner has a God-given thirst for knowledge, and it is incumbent upon the educator not to fill the learner with facts, but to equip him with the tools of learning so that he can teach himself and can continue learning for the rest of his life. The job of the educator is not to motivate children to learn, but to set up the conditions that make learning possible, to tap into the learner’s natural inclination to question, explore, and make connections. It is to guide students in finding the Spirit-led motivation within themselves, as God works in their lives. In this process learning should be unfragmented, relational, and purposeful.

Real learning acknowledges the nature of the learner as an image-bearer, rather than as a passive receptacle for knowledge; real learning equips students in how to think, rather than telling them what to think. In areas such as language, literature, and history, “the implementation of a theme immersion model of learning helps the student begin to ‘get at’ living ideas, allows for his natural inclination to be purposeful and active in learning, and brings a unified and holistic view of knowledge” (*Arche*). The teacher allows for learner choices and individualization in learning styles, relates to the life experiences of the learner, and encourages student autonomy in developing lifelong learners. The theory of learning of CFCS rejects the dishonesty of egalitarianism, which seeks a false uniformity among students with diverse gifts (see, e.g. “Egalitarianism: The Great Enemy,” in *Repairing the Ruins* by Douglas Wilson; “Screwtape Proposes a Toast” in *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis). CFCS’s learning theory also avoids motivating students merely by a system of external rewards and punishments.

As for biblical motivation, Christian writer and educator Donovan Graham provides an instructive model in his book *Teaching Redemptively*. According to Graham, “*the heart [which in the biblical view includes the intellect] is the source of our behavior. In order to affect behavior, learning must touch the learners’ hearts. Learning is accepting something as the truth, making a heart-level commitment to it, and acting on it.*” (Graham 154). Ultimately, true learning—like true biblical obedience—is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. To again quote Graham, “Learning [should be] characterized by open discussion, bold questioning, fearless exploration, humility in arriving at conclusions, acceptance of failure in the process, and faithful attempts at loving others through what is learned.” (Graham 237).

## The Nature of Teaching

**“A true education, a Christian education...is giving the tools in...opening the doors to all human knowledge, in the Christian framework so (students) will know what is truth and what is untruth, so they can keep learning as long as they live, and they can enjoy, they can really enjoy, the whole wrestling through field after field of knowledge.” – Francis Schaeffer**

The gifts of teaching and administration are noted in Scripture as spiritual gifts given by God (I Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 4:11). The Apostle Paul challenges his readers to be followers of him as he is of Christ. This must also characterize teachers for “the student will become like the teacher” (Luke 6:40). Christian teachers should be competent, caring, consistent individuals, who imitate their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Most importantly, Christian teachers and staff must understand, embrace, and live out the doctrines of grace, in order to teach redemptively and to bring the gospel of grace to bear in every aspect of the school. As Donovan Graham writes in *Teaching Redemptively*, “if our students are to live by the gospel, they must experience it in their learning environment... We must examine our personal relationships with the students, attitudes toward the students, classroom management practices,

grading and measurement practices, the structure of our curriculum and daily learning activities—every part of our learning atmosphere—to see whether our students are breathing the fresh air of the gospel that leads to life or the toxic fumes of legalism that lead to death.” (Graham 39). The redemptive teacher avoids the traps of legalism and behaviorism in motivating students; rather, the teacher who is a recipient of grace understands that biblical obedience is the fruit of experiencing the inward reality of God’s transforming grace in the believer’s life. Biblical obedience in the Christian school is not outward conformity to rules and expectations, and it does not emanate from a desire to earn God’s favor or to impress others with our spirituality; instead, it is the powerful, Spirit-led response to the work of the gospel of grace in our inner being.

A biblical culture established by redemptive teaching is not one of perfectionism. As Graham says, “As the world watches us teach redemptively, they should not see a people finally ‘getting it right.’ Rather, they should see a band of sinners, broken and fallen but healed, who now live freely and explore eagerly in the hope, grace, forgiveness, and righteousness of Christ.” (Graham 41).

Simply put, redemptive teachers are facilitators of grace, discipling their students and allowing God’s mercy and justice to permeate the atmosphere of the school. Teachers are to come alongside students as Jesus did with His disciples, mentoring and tutoring them, as well as cultivating in them a passion for learning and excellence. The redemptive teacher does not avoid discipline, but prayerfully and purposefully focuses on fostering the redeemed nature of students, rather than on punishing them in their fallenness.

In his article titled, “A Christian Philosophy of Education,” Dr. Paul Cates states the following: *“The Christian educator or teacher is to be a guide or resource person in the wonderful experience of learning. He is to be neither a drill sergeant nor a manipulator, but rather a facilitator of learning. His learners must know that he cares about them. The educator must have experienced the reality of what he is attempting to teach or else he is just a blind man leading blind men. The nature of the teaching process gives us some clues as to the function of the teacher. As a Christian educator the teacher must be both a Christian and an educator. As a Christian he has experienced the reality of God’s truth, and he has God’s spirit to empower him and his teaching. As an educator he functions in accordance with the mandate of God to teach in accord with the educational principles contained in the word of God.”*

In order to be effective in this calling it follows that Christian teachers should understand, embrace, and live out the following mandates:

- To fulfill the Cultural Mandate in which God gives man his first job description: “to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.” (Genesis 1:28).
- To live out the doctrines of grace through the summation of the law given by Christ in Matthew 22:39-40, to love God and love our neighbor.
- To fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)
- To deliberately and continually develop their personal knowledge of the Bible.
- To actively and continually develop the knowledge of their subject area and/or expertise.
- To integrate God’s Truth into every aspect of the learning process and across the disciplines.
- To seek excellence in the area of pedagogy and professional development.
- To teach redemptively, modeling a true and genuine love for the students seeking their highest good even when this is difficult.

The calling to the vocation of Christian schooling is a weighty matter. The Apostle James warns, *“Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly”* (James 3:1).

## IV. Defining our School Culture

### What do we mean by biblical worldview?

A worldview is the lens through which we view all that goes on in and around us. A biblical worldview is shaped by the revelation of Almighty God through His logos (Living Word), the Lord Jesus Christ, and through His other logos (revealed Word), the Holy Scriptures. We believe that knowledge finds meaning in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Christ came to bring redemption and wholeness to all the created order, we see great opportunity in applying this in our curriculum and methods of teaching. We seek to bring this wholeness to scholastic endeavors by implementing a multi-disciplinary, integrated approach to learning. Our study of literature, science, writing, history, and geography are all part of a great unified worldview that is unfolding before all of us as learners, adults and children alike.

Integrating a biblical worldview does not mean forcing God into the study of a particular discipline by merely adding on Scripture or engaging in a superficial or tangential discussion of biblical principles loosely relevant to an academic subject. We acknowledge that God is already at the center of all knowledge; therefore our study is concerned with guiding students to see God's sovereignty, centrality, and purpose in every area of learning.

### What do we mean by Reformed?

The word Reformed comes from the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation and the Reformers who followed. Reformed Christians hold to the doctrines characteristic of all Christians, including the Trinity, the true deity and true humanity of Jesus Christ, the necessity of Jesus' atonement for sin, the church as a divinely ordained institution, the inspiration of the Bible, the requirement that Christians live moral lives, and the resurrection of the body. They hold other doctrines in common with evangelical Christians, such as justification by faith alone, the need for the new birth, the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ, and the Great Commission (James Montgomery Boice).

### Reformed theology emphasizes the following:

1. **The Doctrine of Scripture (Sola Scriptura) as authoritative,**
2. **The Sovereignty of God (Sola Gratia and Sola Fide),**
3. **The Doctrines of Grace (as opposed to human efficacy),**
4. **And The Cultural Mandate (being "in the world" as opposed to withdrawing from it).**

**The Doctrine of Scripture:** The Reformed commitment to Scripture stresses the Bible's inspiration, authority, and sufficiency. Since the Bible is the Word of God and so has the authority of God Himself, Reformed theologians affirm that this authority is superior to that of all governments and all church hierarchies (James Montgomery Boice).

**The Sovereignty of God:** For most Reformed believers the chief and most distinctive article of the creed is God's sovereignty. Sovereignty means rule, and the sovereignty of God means that God rules over His creation with absolute power and authority. He determines what is going to happen, and it does happen. God is not alarmed, frustrated, or defeated by circumstances, by sin, or by the rebellion of His creatures. (James Montgomery Boice)

This presupposition says much about how we relate to each other in the school community. With the recognition of God's sovereignty, we place ourselves under the authority of finite human authorities trusting that God will divinely protect us from the willful mistreatment of sinful flesh. We also recognize His sovereign role in human history, the revelation of knowledge, and the wisdom by

which we can live successfully. It is our goal to project the Triune God as present in a lively manner in all the affairs of this earth.

**The Doctrines of Grace:** We view the entire scope of man’s history and interactions through these Scriptural realities:

- a. Man is sinful.
- b. God has extended grace toward us, even though we do not deserve it.
- c. God’s grace is able to rescue the faithful from the consequences of their sinful lives.
- d. God seeks and saves those who are lost.
- e. The just shall live by faith.

Nothing we teach can violate the veracity of these presuppositions. In fact, we attempt to find ways to emphasize them.

**The Cultural Mandate:** This is the obligation of Christians to live actively in society and work for the transformation of the world and its cultures. (James Montgomery Boice). We are not monastic, but we have chosen to live “in” the world. We also believe the power of the gospel is transformative, and errors in our culture can be corrected by proper application of gospel principles. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the prisoner. But the chief needs of people are still spiritual, and social work is no adequate substitute for evangelism.

## What do we mean by Covenantal?

**“In the sight of God, parents and children are one...when parents enter into covenant with God, they bring their children with them...” —Charles Hodge**

The children of Christian parents are “*holy to the Lord*” (1 Cor. 7:14-15). The promises to those who believe the Gospel and are members of the covenant community of believers apply to their children as well (Acts 2:38-39). This has always been the understanding of God’s people (Deut. 6:1ff). The local church congregation has the responsibility to assist in seeing that the covenant children receive a Christ-centered education (Psalm 78: 1ff). The Christian school is one way the local congregation works with believing parents in the awesome task of teaching the Biblical world-and-life view to their children.

CFCS continually seeks to assist parents and the local church in their efforts to bring up their children, God’s covenant children, “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). CFCS does not seek to replace the believing parents and local churches in the process of educating and discipling their covenant children, but rather to come alongside and partner with them in this essential task. Therefore, CFCS requires the regular involvement of parents in its programs. Parents must agree to support and comply with the requirements of the Family Commitment Form. Ongoing parent-teacher communication and cooperation are essential in the covenantal school.

## What do we mean by Classical?

Classical education is a conscious return to those academic disciplines and methodologies which helped spark the great cultural flowering of Western Christendom over the past 1000 years. It is the belief that true education emphasizes basic thinking and character skills and prepares children for a lifetime and lifestyle of learning. In 1991, Pastor Douglas Wilson published a book, entitled *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning*. This phrase, “the tools of learning” characterizes the classical approach, which goes beyond the mere learning of facts to teach students to think independently and critically, and to develop in them values, truth, discernment, and understanding.

We have chosen the time-honored method of the Trivium to best accomplish these learning objectives. The scholastic stages of the Trivium—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—are roughly

analogous to the Proverb writer's emphasis on knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. We seek to apply the Trivium in designing the most effective educational practices for each stage of a child's mental, spiritual, emotional, and social development.

And how are these lessons of the Trivium applied? The child in the grammar stage (basically grades one through five) must be concerned with the facts of learning in the content areas (reading, writing, arithmetic), as preparation for dealing with higher-level thinking. The most emphasized learning activity at this stage is memorization, both for purposes of cognitive recall and for building storage identities for future knowledge acquisition. However, appropriate attention is given to meaning and comprehension, even at this first stage. The next stage, logic (grades six through eight), sees the child as able to learn to argue his or her point, thus taking information, organizing it, and applying it in increasingly sophisticated forms. The child in the rhetoric stage has achieved the ability to communicate, synthesize, and generalize learning across a range of disciplines.

The curriculum and methods are founded on the best of literature, the broad sweep of history and geography, the enrichment of art and music, the trained observation of nature, the exploration and discovery encouraged by science, and the understanding and wonder of numbers in mathematics. We believe that all students must be fed a steady diet of worthy ideas, and that these ideas are found mainly in books - the best books. The curriculum is wide and demanding. Of necessity, the classical curriculum approach is characterized by the highest academic standard and by rigor on the part of the student and faculty. Students are trained in habits of heart, mind, and spirit - attention, respect, responsibility, reverence - so as to bring focus to the art and craft of their own learning.

## V. Curriculum and Instruction—a K-12 Overview

We strive to provide a Christian environment where all students can discover and explore their God-given talents and gifts, where they will make lifelong friendships, and where they will be disciplined and challenged in their walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. CFCS is a comprehensive program that utilizes a variety of classical approaches to learning and instruction (K-12). Those approaches lead to a strong college preparatory curriculum in high school. The K-12 program also utilizes competitive sports programs (K-6, 6-8, 9-12) and a significant emphasis on fine arts, in order to accomplish its mission and ministry purposes. The most succinct statement of our core curricular values can be found in this quotation by 18<sup>th</sup>-century British educator Charlotte Mason, *“Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life, and a science of relations.”*

### Our Values

**TRUTH** We believe that there is no neutral viewpoint from which we can arrive at truth in all subject disciplines. Therefore we are committed to seeking God's perspective in presenting these disciplines to our covenant students.

**BEAUTY** We are committed to exposing our students to the best in our cultural heritage in terms of art, literature, and music, knowing that they can not only be taught to appreciate the classical standard of beauty, but can also be led to emulate it in their own creativity.

**GOODNESS** We teach the timeless ethical standards of Scripture. We can expose our students to the critical moral processes of correction, reproof, repentance, confession, reconciliation, and forgiveness.

### AN ATMOSPHERE

- A literacy that comes from being immersed in “living books.”
- An appreciation for the best in culture from being nurtured in great art and music.
- A predilection for wholesomeness which comes from participating in a culture which honors God verbally, in the contents of our studies and our emphasis on the development of character.

- A proper orientation toward the Creator through an emphasis on nature studies on the Cornerstone campus and lab sciences on the Pusch Ridge campus.

#### **A DISCIPLINE**

- The recognition of the real benefits of studious habits by extolling the learning as the true reward as opposed to artificially contrived behavioral rewards.
- The development of skills through a participatory curriculum emphasizing narration, recitation, creativity, and resourcefulness.
- Affording abundant challenges through a wide variety of stimulating extra-curricular activities, including academic competitions, athletic competitions, and art programs.
- A disciplined emphasis on the “habits of the heart” which are essential to life success and spiritual formation.

#### **A LIFE**

- An understanding that this life is temporary and that eternity is our true destiny.
- A model for Christian living and future leadership that is born in the covenant community of the students’ school days.
- A zest for lifelong learning which is fostered by the role-modeling of dedicated teachers and parents.
- An expectation that students’ learning has immediate application in real life by not treating them as future people, but as real people right now.

#### **A SCIENCE OF RELATIONS**

- The development of integrated lessons.
- An emphasis on variety in the curriculum.
- The view of history in broad, unifying themes, so that students can connect new knowledge with already formed concepts as these ideas are introduced chronologically in the curriculum.
- An emphasis on living in reconciliation as a model for Scripture-based relationships for all individuals and groups here on earth.

## **VI. Foundations and Distinctives of CFCS**

### **Cornerstone Christian Academy (K-6)**

Almost from the church’s inception, Pastor Mark Roessler and his wife Norma knew that they wanted an excellent Christian education for their own daughters. After reading *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* by Douglas Wilson and speaking with friends in other cities whose children were benefiting from the recovery of classical learning, the Roesslers believed that other families in Tucson would want to join them in building a quality Christian school. In 1996, a steering committee comprised of church leaders, educators, and parents formed to explore the founding of Cornerstone Christian Academy (CCA).

Cornerstone’s original headmaster, Dr. Jack Beckman, came to us from In-town Community School in Atlanta, Georgia. Laying a careful foundation for Cornerstone’s future, Dr. Beckman inspired church leaders with the vision for a covenant school and the pedagogies and philosophy of Miss Charlotte Mason. Cornerstone Christian Academy opened in August of 1998 with twenty-seven children in grades one through four in a rented facility at the Church of the Brethren on Dodge Boulevard.

As Cornerstone has grown physically and numerically, traditions and standards established in the early years have been strengthened and expanded. It is a credit to the leadership and vision of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) that a firm foundation has been set for many future years of educational ministry to the covenant families of Tucson, Arizona.

## **CCA Historical Timeline**

- 1996 Cornerstone Christian Academy steering committee forms.
- 1998 Cornerstone Christian Academy opens.
- 1999 Cornerstone moves to the church campus at 2150 E. Orange Grove Road as Catalina Foothills Church occupies its new facilities. Enrollment expands to fifty-four students as grades kindergarten and five are added.
- 2000 Before departing for Oxford University in England, Headmaster Jack Beckman completes the original master plan for the CCA curriculum, the *Table of Studies*, and Cornerstone's philosophy document, *The Arché*.
- 2000 New headmaster Steve Sinclair oversees new block of classrooms. Enrollment increases to 132.
- 2001 First sixth-grade promotion in May 2001.
- 2001-08 Dr. Thomas Askew serves as CCA headmaster.
- 2002 Modular Classrooms are established east of Camino Miraval property.
- 2003 Catalina Foothills Church commits to the building of nine classrooms (Buildings 2 and 3) for school expansion on property east of Camino Miraval.
- 2004 The youngest of those original twenty-seven students complete sixth grade at CCA.
- 2005 CCA School Board launches Capstone Campaign to complete CCA Master Plan (Buildings 1 and 4).
- 2007 Final phases of construction are complete.
- 2008-10 Mr. John D. Saffold serves as CCA headmaster.
- 2011 Mr. Jeff D. Jones serves as CCA headmaster.

## **CCA an Overview: Grades Kindergarten through Sixth**

**“The dividing of knowledge into disciplines and subjects and studies is purely a human invention, a human construct. God’s knowledge is one, and is characterized by no divisions.”**  
—Norman De Jong, *Education in the Truth*

In our classical, Charlotte Mason-informed elementary program, we strive to integrate the content areas rather than treat them as separate subject matters. When Christian schools speak of integration, we are often talking about the infusion of Biblical wisdom into all the subject areas that we teach. Although we do have distinct Bible classes, we also reference Scriptural facts and principles in every academic area. Integrated learning is also about relationships, or connections, between the traditional

academic disciplines. Paraphrasing 19<sup>th</sup>-century British educator, Miss Charlotte Mason, our founding headmaster Dr. Beckman once wrote, "...we mean that the child has been born in a natural relationship with many things: people, God, objects, animals, nature, etc. Learning then becomes the art (and science) of making connections between those things that have meaning, whether in literature, mathematics, writing, music, or art, to name several." A great example of subject matter and Biblical integration would be our Shakespeare Festival, which integrates Biblical themes of good and evil in a Christian cultural context with literary devices, historical allusions, visual art in both costuming and stage décor, period background music, and oratorical skills with stagecraft.

## **Distinctives of Cornerstone Christian Academy**

**DISCIPLESHIP** We emphasize a one-to-one relationship. This necessitates smaller class sizes. A small class of students enables the teacher to engage in broader and deeper subject content dialogue with students, to improve thinking skills, and to provide for immediate assessment of the child's ability to assimilate and reproduce knowledge.

**HABITS OF THE HEART** Students are continually challenged to model habits that are extolled in the Holy Scriptures. Primary habits that are crucial for a lifetime of learning include the following: attentiveness, respect, responsibility, thinking, curiosity, creativity, remembering, neatness, orderliness, reverence, and punctuality.

**SHORT LESSONS** We practice spending short, focused periods of time on a wide variety of subjects.

**HISTORY and HUMANITIES INTEGRATION** The humanities program in Grades Four through Six is integrated with the thematic history. History sequence: fourth grade- the Antiquities; fifth grade- the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; sixth grade- the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Age of Discovery.

**SHAKESPEARE** The life and works of Shakespeare are taught throughout the entire K-6 program. The faculty, parents, and students produce a Shakespeare Festival each spring.

**LIVING BOOKS** These are the opposite of dull, dry textbooks. They are classic books which are excellently written, timeless, wide-ranging, and interest-holding to children. Living books touch one's mind, will, and emotions and are used along with the Scriptures by the teacher to stimulate imagination and obedience to the Truth. They are considered classics because their meaning is timeless, not classics because they are old.

**NARRATIONS** We use this tool to train a child for attention, reflection, and expression, capturing both the mind and imagination of the child. The tool of narration trains the reader to take an active role.

**RECITATIONS** We provide the opportunity for our students to commit to memory passages and poems of lasting value. In Grades Four through Six, the best of the Western Canon are used. These correlate to the time periods being studied in history.

**NATURE JOURNALS** These are artist sketchbooks containing pictures the children have personally drawn of plants, wildlife, or any other natural object found in their natural setting. These may also include nature-related poetry, prose, detailed descriptions, weather notes, Latin names, etc. These activities encourage scientific observations and inferences and foster a sense of awe and wonder for all things created.

**ART and MUSIC STUDIES** We bring the children into direct contact with works of art and music of enduring quality. Students develop an understanding of things that are worthy and timeless, and they build a mental inventory of many great works through the ages.

**COPYBOOKS** These provide children with an on-going opportunity to record timelines, to record information and research that may be used for study and reflection. Secondary is the practice of handwriting, spelling, grammar, etc. They are to be used to collect noteworthy poems, prose, quotes, historical facts, and illustrations that touch on the theme being studied by the class.

## The Meaning of the Logo for CCA

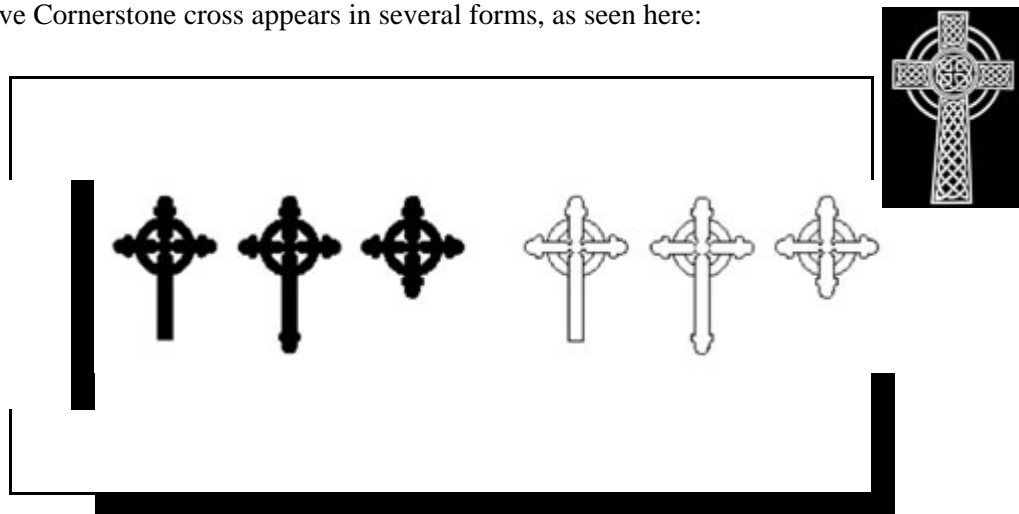
The dominant element is the stylized Celtic cross. The Celtic cross reminds us of our Scottish Presbyterian roots. The arms of the cross end with the Botonee cross trefoil, or triple scallops, symbolic of the Trinity. The Botonee Cross is also said to end with green buds, symbolic of youth and growth.

The theme of growth is continued in the vine-and-flower work surrounding the central elements of the logo box. Our desire at Cornerstone Christian Academy is to be a place where covenant children will grow and flourish.

The Cornerstone “C” surrounding the cross is in the Papyrus font to represent our commitment to history (including Egyptian history) as the central organizing theme of our classical curriculum. The “C” is the shade of blue Cornerstone shares with Pusch Ridge Christian Academy.

The box which encloses the elements of the logo is a conceptual representation of a cornerstone. *“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”* –Isaiah 28:16

The distinctive Cornerstone cross appears in several forms, as seen here:



The full logo also has several variants:



## **Pusch Ridge Christian Academy (6-12)**

In 1998, a group of families, working through the Catalina Foothills Church (PCA), came together to discuss their vision for a new Christian high school for the Tucson community. The school they envisioned would have its curricula based on sound Biblical principles and academic excellence. A complete complement of academic offerings would be augmented by college and career counseling, an interscholastic sports programs, an extensive fine arts program and social activities. Far from being limited to Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) families, the founding group cast the vision for a comprehensive Christian high school that would serve a large number of students throughout the greater Tucson community. It soon became clear that a school of 1,000-1,200 middle and high school students would offer the greatest possible educational opportunities to the greatest number of students.

The group from Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) set a sound course to make their vision a reality by purchasing property on River Road. In November of 1999, after much prayer regarding the future vision of their school, the board of Palo Verde Christian School asked the Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) steering committee to consider acquiring their school. After significant prayer, it was decided that the vision for a new Christian school for Tucson could be transferred intact to the campus of Palo Verde Christian School.

Thanks to the foresight of the dedicated founders of Palo Verde Christian School, there are 48 acres of land, which are more than enough to realize the ultimate vision. The campus is beautifully situated at the base of the Catalina Mountains at Pusch Ridge, adjoining the Coronado National Forest. Currently there are 55,000 square feet of existing buildings that accommodate 24 classrooms, science and computer labs, an expansive gymnasium, administrative offices, a kitchen and cafeteria serving area. The outdoor sports facilities include a number of first-rate sports fields for soccer, baseball and softball, a football field, and a running track.

In February of 2000, Catalina Foothills Church acquired the Palo Verde Christian School facility, established its first governing school board, and renamed the school, Pusch Ridge Christian Academy. With God's favor, under Catalina Foothills Church's leadership, a supportive board, and enthusiastic administrative team, Pusch Ridge Christian Academy has poised itself to faithfully bless the covenant students in its care for generations to come.

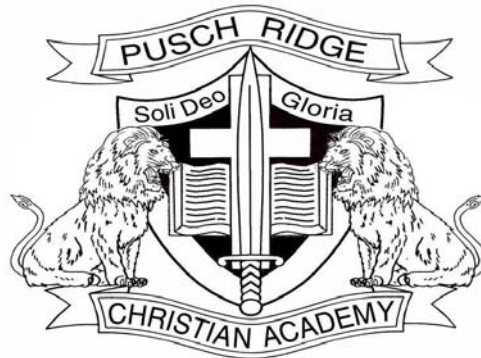
### **PRCA Historical Timeline**

- 2000 Pusch Ridge Christian Academy is established as an educational ministry of Catalina Foothills Church (PCA).
- 2000-08 Dr. Eric Abrams serves as principal of Pusch Ridge Christian Academy.
- 2006 PRCA embarks on its first public capital campaign, *Expand the Experience*, to raise funds for the new classroom building, student plaza, and amphitheater. This expansion allows for growth up to approximately 725 students and provides gathering and performance space for a variety of student programs.
- 2008 *Expand the Experience* building is complete
- 2008-10 Mr. Tony Bylenga serves as principal of PRCA.
- 2010 Mr. Dennis O'Reilly serves as head of schools for Catalina Foothills Church Schools and principal of Pusch Ridge Christian Academy

## **PRCA an Overview: Grades Sixth through Twelfth**

**“Education is the divinely instigated and humanly cooperating process whereby persons grow and develop in life, that is, in Godly knowledge, faith, hope and love, through Christ.” — Norman De Jong, *Education in the Truth*.**

### **Pusch Ridge Christian Academy Logo**



**“Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...has triumphed.” —Revelation 5:5**

PRCA desires students to be consistently engaged in the learning process. History, taught from a Biblical worldview provides the backbone of the middle school curriculum. This is the story of man’s progression from a beginning point to a final ending point as directed by Almighty God. Within each time period of history, students research and discover great ideas, people, works of art, music, science, mathematics, and literature. Our goal is to introduce the student to an abundance of true thoughts from a variety of great minds. These great thoughts will guide the individual learner in the development of his/her own personal character. In class sizes of 20-25 students, teachers work closely with students, developing relationships that create close fellowship as well as stimulate the learning environment.

PRCA students thrive in the High School’s comprehensive, college preparatory curriculum with a classical emphasis. Students take advantage of the wide range of offerings in the academic program, athletics, and extracurricular activities. The academic program builds in students a fundamental body of knowledge, coupled with a Biblical worldview that trains young people in critical thinking, and the discovery of their gifts, so as to be prepared to make a difference in the world for God’s kingdom. Classes of 15-25 students allow the school to better challenge students in their thinking, develop close relationships, disciple the student’s in their academic subjects, and encourage them as they grow in their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The core curriculum consists of courses in English, mathematics, social studies, science, Bible, and foreign languages. Honors and advanced placement courses challenge students who are able to work at an accelerated pace.

### **Distinctives of Pusch Ridge Christian Academy**

**WEEKLY CHAPELS & BIBLE STUDIES** Middle school and high school students gather each week for their own worship with student-led praise bands and biblical teachings from pastors and

spiritual leaders in our community. Teachers lead lunch hour Bible studies at various times throughout the week.

**DISCIPLESHIP TEACHING/COACHING** The administration continually challenges teachers and coaches to develop relationships with students that focus on their academic and spiritual growth and development.

**SERVANT LEADERSHIP** The administration encourages all students to serve their churches and communities. High school students complete 4 hours of volunteer service each quarter. Student leadership groups ranging from National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, Interact Club, and Student Leadership, in both middle school and high school, offer opportunities for individual, group, and school-wide service projects.

**EXTRACURRICULAR OFFERINGS** PRCA offers many fine art opportunities, including the B.O.W Company Theater, Introduction to Drama, Advanced Drama, Band, Orchestra, Voice of Praise Choir, Ensemble, Studio Art, and Media Art. Middle School athletics teams include soccer (coed), volleyball (G), football (B), baseball (B), softball (G), basketball (B/G), Tennis (B/G), Cross Country (B/G). High School athletics teams are members of the AIA and compete in Cross Country (B/G), Swimming (B/G), Football (B), Volleyball (G), Soccer (B/G), Basketball (B/G), Tennis (B/G), Track (B/G), Softball (G), Baseball (B).

**PARTNERING WITH PARENTS** PRCA purposes to foster the family/school relationship through good communication and parent involvement. The school uses back-to-school orientations, RENWEB, monthly newsletters, email alerts, college guidance presentations, and principal coffees to keep parents well-informed. Parents are encouraged to be involved in supporting fine arts performances, athletic booster clubs, middle school field day, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade etiquette dance and promotion, Senior High Graduation ceremonies, Senior Blessings, and many other corporate celebrations.

## **Pusch Ridge Christian Academy's Core Values**

**CHRIST-CENTERED ENVIRONMENT** *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* –Galatians 2:20

**TRUTH** *"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."* – John 1:17

**EXCELLENCE** *"Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy— think about such things."* –Philippians 4:8

**VIRTUE** *"May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you."* –Psalm 25:21

**COMMUNITY** *"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts, and though all its parts are many, they form one body."* –I Corinthians 12:12

*"A new commandment I give to you: Love one another; as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, If you love one another."* –John 13:34-35

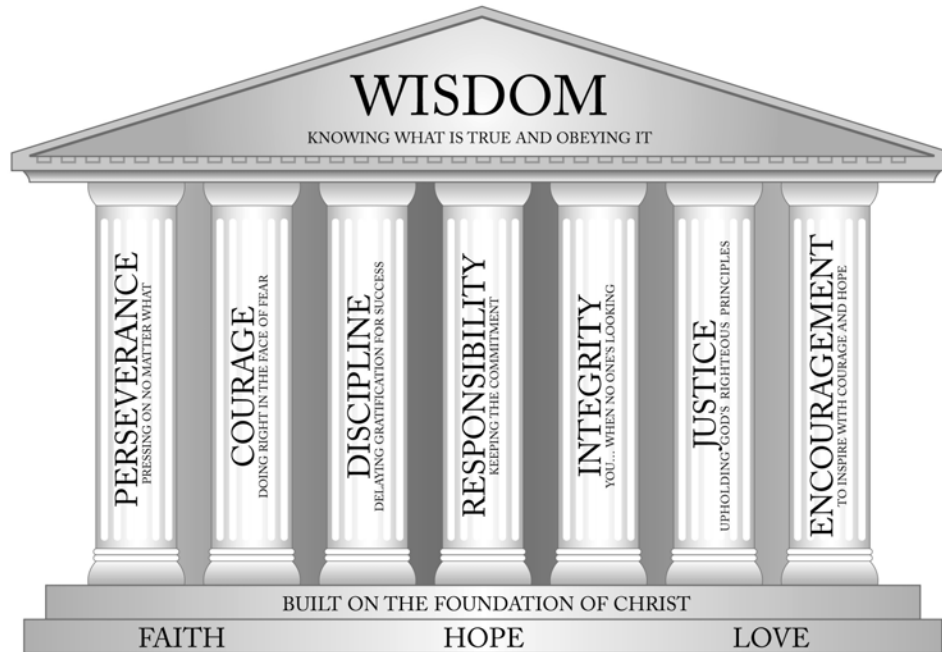
**STEWARDSHIP** *"If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"* –Luke 16:11

**SERVICE** *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* –Ephesians 2:10

*"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead."* –James 2:26

# Pusch Ridge Christian Academy's Seven Pillars of Virtue

Pusch Ridge Christian Academy



Wisdom has built a palace supported on seven pillars.  
Proverbs 9:1

## Catalina Foothills Church Schools (K-12)

In June of 2008, the Catalina Foothills Church (PCA) Session united the CCA and PRCA governing boards, the missions, the governing policies, school's philosophy, and school structure. The name of the new K-12 school system was adopted: *Catalina Foothills Church Schools*. In 2009, the board adopted a new single Governing Board Policy (K-12), a Mission Statement (K-12), a Philosophy document (K-12), and restructured the administrative authority to include a Head of Schools.

The vision continues....

**“May the favor of the LORD our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes—establish the work of our hands” –Psalm 90:17**

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