

# September 2025



Sr. Pastor Colson show us how to be a beacon for God this fall. See Page 2



Elder Chairman, John Gingrich, discsuses servant leadership and the roles of leaders in our Church.

See Page 4

Sr. Assoc. Pastor Medas correlates the



Stones from the Jordan River from Joshua 4 to the stones of our Church.

See Page 6



See the update on Church Staff assignments. see page 8



Learn what our Mission Partner of the Month, FCA, is doing in Virgina.

See page 10



# Support our Youth Mission Activities

This summer, our youth participated in an impactful missions program, which began with their attendance at the Kingdom Builders camp. There, they received training in teaching and sharing the Gospel with children. These newly acquired skills were then put into practice as the youth served as camp counselors in Maine, as leaders at Vacation Bible School, Good News Across Sports, and during the Navajo Mission trip. All of these outreach opportunities were made possible by the generous financial support of our church community.

To sustain and expand these programs, we organize three main fundraising events throughout the year: the Go Ye Therefore Banquet, the Fall Golf Classic, and the Holiday Craft Bazaar. The funds raised through these events are critical in supporting the ongoing work of our youth missions.

Our upcoming major fundraiser on **September 15 is the Fall Golf Classic**, and we invite your participation. There are multiple ways you can support our youth through this event:

• Participate as a golfer or invite a golfer you know: \$125 per golfer

Sponsor a hole: \$150Sponsor a green: \$250

• Sponsor the driving range: \$500

• Mission Partner: \$1,000

• Benefactor: \$2,500

• Mission Sponsor: \$5,000

• Tournament Sponsor: \$7,500

For more information or to register, visit the church's website at **www.lowchurch.** org. Click on Events, select Fall Golf Classic, and use the Registration button to support any of the above options online. Your support is essential in continuing our youth mission efforts.







# From our Senior Pastor

# When the Days Grow Shorter, Shine Brighter: Being Light-Bearers This Fall



Rev. Adam Colson

As summer fades and the Virginia evenings come a little earlier, Scripture hands us a timely reminder: "You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in

heaven." (Matthew 5:14–16) Autumn's shorter days become a living parable—a season for the Church to burn steadily, not with bluster, but with the warm, steady glow of Christlike presence.

# The Bible's Fall Vocabulary: Light, Harvest, and Hope

The biblical imagination ties light to witness and harvest to mission. Jesus says the fields are already white for harvest (John 4:35), while Paul promises that "in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9) The prophet Isaiah links justice and mercy to brightness: "If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry... then your light will rise in the darkness." (Isaiah 58:10) And in a world that can feel dim, John's Gospel anchors our hope: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

This fall, then, the Church is called to be both lamp and laborer—people whose illuminated lives make the gospel plausible and whose faithful work gathers a harvest for the Lord.

### How the Early Church Shone

History reminds us that the Church's brightest hours often came in society's dimmest. During the third-century plagues, many believers stayed to nurse the sick. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria described Christians who cared for the ill "with great love," often at great cost. Even the Roman emperor Julian—no friend to Christians—begrudgingly noted how believers not only cared for their own poor, but for pagan neighbors as

well. Their witness wasn't loud; it was luminous.

The missionary bishop Lesslie Newbigin later captured this dynamic in one sentence: "The Church is the hermeneutic of the gospel." In other words, people interpret the good news by watching the people who claim it. Dietrich Bonhoeffer agreed: "The Church is the Church only when it exists for others." When our calendars, conversations, and checkbooks align with God's heart, our neighbors can "read" the gospel right off our lives.

### What Shining Looks Like—Here and Now

Peter urges believers to "always be ready to give an answer... with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15) Paul adds, "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt." (Colossians 4:6) In an election season, school routines, and busy schedules, that kind of witness is both rare and needed.

At The Lake of the Woods Church, the Lord has given us many "lamps on stands" where His light can be seen:

Living Water Community Clinics: Offer compassionate care to the uninsured and underinsured; share the hope that Christ sees and heals.

Mechanics Ministry & Home Repair: Turn wrenches and hammers into instruments of mercy for single parents, seniors, and neighbors in need.

**Special Needs & RISE Ministries:** Declare the gospel's dignity and delight over every person made in God's image.

**Foster & Homeless Outreach:** Practice Isaiah 58 compassion that makes light "rise in the darkness."

**Bible Clubs in Public Schools:** Plant gospel seeds in hearts during a season when learning is already front-and-center.



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Each of these ministries is more than "doing good." They are living parables—visible explanations of the grace we proclaim on Sundays.

### **Everyday Practices that Carry the Gospel**

Not every lamp is a program. Most of the Church's shining happens in ordinary places where you already stand:

- 1. **Set an Open Table**. Share a fall meal with a neighbor, teammate's family, or co-worker. Hospitality is mission in slow motion (Luke 14:12–14).
- 2. **Bless a School.** Write thank-you notes to teachers, donate supplies, or volunteer. Pray by name for the students and staff you know (Jeremiah 29:7).
- 3. **Practice Gospel Speech.** In tense conversations, especially about civic life, be the calm, respectful voice (1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:6).
- 4. Carry a Small Mercy. Keep gift cards, socks, or care kits in your car to share with those in need (Proverbs 19:17).
- 5. Form a Habit of Presence. Join a small group, serve on a team, or begin a simple daily prayer rhythm. Abiding precedes shining (John 15:4–5).

"Christ has no body now but yours... yours are the hands, yours are the feet." —a prayer often attributed to Teresa of Ávila

This autumn, let's offer Him our calendars, tables, and tongues.

### A Gentle Courage

Being a light does not mean being loud. Lamps don't argue; they illuminate. You don't have to have all the answers to be faithful. You do need to stay close to the Source. As Philippians puts it, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing... among

whom you shine like stars in the world." (Philippians 2:14–15) Stars don't strive to be seen—they simply burn from what fuels them. Our fuel is the risen Christ and the indwelling Spirit.

### "Try This Week"

Name three people you'll intentionally encourage—one note, one prayer, one tangible act.

Choose one ministry at church to explore or reengage before October.

Fast from one complaint a day and replace it with a blessing spoken out loud.

Invite one household to your table before the leaves finish turning.

### A Fall Prayer

Lord Jesus, Light of the World, as the days grow shorter, make our love burn brighter.

Fill us with Your Spirit so that our lives interpret Your gospel clearly—

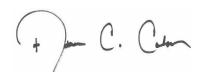
in our homes, classrooms, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

Give us gentle courage, joyful perseverance, and generous hands.

Let our good deeds lead many to glorify our Father in heaven.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

May this fall be a harvest of goodness, truth, and beauty—seen in a people whose ordinary faithfulness makes an extraordinary Savior visible.



### From our Board of Elders

# Answering the Call: Servant Leadership in the Church

We've been asking for volunteers to step into servant leadership roles in our church. Recently, someone asked me, "What would I do?" That's a good question—and the answer depends on the position. But before we get into logistics, let's talk about the heart of the matter.

Servant leadership is not about titles or tasks. It's about surrender. It's about saying, "Here I am, Lord. Send me" (Isaiah 6:8). It's about trusting that God equips those He calls—not the other way around.

### What Are the Roles?

Our church constitution and by-laws establish the offices of Elders, Trustees, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurers. These positions are filled by members of the congregation, elected to serve in partnership with pastors, staff, fellow members—and most importantly—under the leadership of Christ.

- Elders oversee ministries, committees, services, and the business aspects of the church. They license pastors and ministers and guide the spiritual and operational direction of our community.
- **Trustees** handle legal responsibilities, including signing documents and holding title to church property.
- **Treasurers** manage financial accounts, stewarding resources with integrity and transparency.
- **Ministry Stewards**, established by the Board of Elders, coordinate volunteer support to help ministries carry out their functions.

These may sound like formal roles, but at their core, they are spiritual assignments. Each one is a sacred trust—a chance to serve the body of Christ in unity and humility. "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord" (Colossians 3:23).

### **How Much Time Is Involved?**

Another great question. But let me gently challenge the premise: is the call to serve measured in hours—or in obedience?

The truth is, the time required is what the Holy Spirit and the servant leader discern together. And when we serve with joy, the burden becomes light. Jesus said, "Take

my yoke upon you and learn from me... For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29–30).

### "I'm Not Equipped..."

Perfect. That's exactly where God begins.

When the priests stepped into the Jordan River, the waters didn't part until their feet touched the edge (Joshua 3:15–16). God equips us as we step out—not before, not after, but right in the moment of trust.

When I was asked to be an Elder, my stomach tightened and anxiety gripped me. I saw my shortcomings more clearly than my strengths. I wondered, "Am I ready? Do I have what it takes?" The answer was no. And that was the point.

God wasn't asking for my résumé. He was asking for my surrender.

"For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). That's the paradox of servant leadership. It's not about what we bring—it's about what we lay down.

### A Final Invitation

So, before you decide you're not going to answer the call, pause and consider this: how much must God love you to invite you into His work? To bless you with the joy of serving? To shape you through surrender?

The rewards of service are His to give. And they are beautiful.

Let's walk forward together—not in fear, but in faith. Not in our own strength, but in His. The church needs you. The body needs you. And the Lord is calling. Samuel's response "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:10)

### Will you answer? Have Questions?

We would be happy to answer your questions, contact **Bob Harbick** at elder.adulted@lowchurch.org, Chair of the Nominating Committee or me at elder.chair@lowchurch.org.

John R Gingrich Chairman, Board of Elders

### MomCo Returns This Fall

We're thrilled to announce that MomCo resumes Wednesday, September 3, meeting from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. This cherished gathering will continue on the first and third Wednesday of each month through May, offering moms a muchneeded space for peace, friendship, and Biblical encouragement.

This year, we'll be meeting in the Discovery Zone downstairs, so please use the lower parking lot and enter through the downstairs doors. Our team will be ready to greet you, guide you to Room 508, and help sign your children into our childcare program.

Whether you're returning or joining us for the first time, we look forward to renewing friendships and welcoming new faces. Come be refreshed, inspired, and connected—we can't wait to see you there! If you are interested, contact Donna Blackistone, dblacki@verizon.net.



# Wednesday Family Night Returns — A Place for Everyone

Beginning Wednesday, September 3, our church family will once again gather for a midweek evening of connection, growth, and renewal. Wednesday Family Night is more than something to do on Wednesday nights, it's a space where we connect and are strengthened in fellowship.

**Family Dinner**: We begin at 6:00 PM with a shared family dinner—open to everyone. It's a time to pause, enjoy a meal together, and reconnect across generations.

**Communion** for those seeking a moment of quiet reverence, our Communion Service is held at 6:00 PM in the Sanctuary.

### Breakout Groups at 6:30 PM

After dinner, we transition into a variety of breakout groups designed to meet people where they are:

- Youth Program Engaging, Christcentered activities and teaching for teens
- **Kid's Club** Fun, faith-filled learning for our youngest generation. Also, nursery care is available.
- **Men's Bible Study** A deep dive into 1 Timothy, exploring leadership and godly character
- Women's Bible Study A thoughtful journey through Revelation, uncovering hope and truth
- Celebrate Recovery (CR) Meeting in the Worship Center, offering healing and support for those navigating life's challenges

Whether you're seeking fellowship, spiritual growth, or a place to serve, Wednesday nights offer something for everyone. Come as you are, bring a friend, and discover the joy of midweek community.

# If These Stones Could Speak Senior Associate Pastor, Jordan Medas

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits." — Psalm 103:2 (NRSV)

In Joshua 4, God commanded the Israelites to take twelve stones from the Jordan River after He miraculously stopped the waters so the nation could cross into the Promised Land. These stones were to be set up at Gilgal as a visible reminder for future generations. "When your children ask... 'What do these stones mean?'...you shall tell them," Joshua said.

Those stones were a testimony. They told a story. They declared God's power, His provision, and His faithfulness. If those stones could speak, they would say, "God keeps His promises."

Every tribe was represented in that crossing — no one was left out of God's story. Even the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, who would live on the far side of the Jordan, obeyed God's Word and took part in this defining moment. It was a reminder that God's work is for all His people, no matter where they live or what their role is.

When the Israelites camped at Gilgal, the name itself carried a message. Gilgal means "roll," and it became a place where the reproach of Egypt — the guilt and shame of their past — was rolled away. For us as Christians, that rolling away is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Through Him, guilt has a healthy purpose — it calls us to repentance. But shame? Shame has no place in the life of a child of God. In Christ, we are forgiven, washed, and made new.

This summer, our church has seen God at work in ways worth remembering. Like those stones by the Jordan, we have moments that will stand as testimony for years to come:

- Vacation Bible School Children learning that Jesus is always their friend.
- Good News Across Sports The gospel shared through sports and art.
- **Maine Mission Trip** Sharing the gospel and serving children from underprivileged homes.
- **Stuff the Bus** Providing school supplies to families in our community.
- Navajo Nation Mission Trip Bringing hope and help to brothers and sisters of the Navajo Nation.

Each of these is a "stone" in The Lake of the Woods Church's story — a reminder that God is still moving in and through His people.

And on Sunday, August 17, we added another stone of remembrance: the first use of our new baptism pool. Just as the Jordan crossing marked a new beginning for Israel, baptism marks a new beginning for every believer. It is an outward sign of an inward reality — that through Christ's death and resurrection, our sin is washed away, our shame is rolled away, and we rise to walk in newness of life.

Luke 19:37-40 tells us that when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds praised God loudly for all the deeds of power they had seen. When the Pharisees told Him to quiet the crowd, Jesus replied, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out." Baptism is our shout — a bold declaration that we belong to Jesus.

And in Matthew 28:16-20, Jesus gives us our mission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit…"

Continued on page 7

# If These Stones Could Speak

This new baptism pool is more than a piece of equipment. It will be the place where many will declare their faith, where the church will rejoice, and where generations will be reminded of God's saving power.

If these stones could speak — the ones from the Jordan, the ones from Gilgal, and yes, even the smooth walls of this baptism pool — they would tell the story of a faithful God. And it's our job to make sure that story is never forgotten.









### Staff Announcements

### Farewell to Christian Jones

Christian Jones will be leaving to start a new

career as an Aircraft Airframe Inspector, serving as a contractor for the United States Air Force in Maryland. Christian has recently completed two bachelor's degrees, one in Physics and one in Computer Science, while also serving in the United States Air Force Reserve.



Having been deeply involved with the church from a young age, Christian has taken part in Youth programs, Vacation Bible School, mission trips to Maine and Navajo communities, and, most recently, served as the Senior Pastor's Administrative Assistant. Christian has truly embodied the spirit of servant leadership, always ready to lend a hand wherever and whenever he is needed. While his presence will be greatly missed, we wish him every success in his new endeavors.

The Staff and Church Leadership expressed their gratitude to Christian with a farewell luncheon, sharing memorable and amusing stories, and reflecting on the meaningful contributions he has made to the many ministries within the church.



### Welcome Tonia Woodard

Congratulations to Tonia Woodard on her promotion as the Senior Pastor's Administrative Assistant. Tonia is no stranger to the Church, having served as the Church's Morning Receptionist.



For over 20 years, Tonia has enjoyed a fulfilling career in the Real Estate industry with diverse knowledge of Commercial, Industrial, Residential, & Mixed-Use Property Management. Tonia and her husband are both military veterans and Virginia natives.

Although Tonia is a familiar face to both the staff and congregation, she will be taking on new responsibilities in her role. Prayers and support are requested as she adapts to these new duties.







Calendar for church activites for the next 90 days...See lowchurch.org for latest information

# September

- Labor Day Church
   Office Closed
- 3 Weds. Family Night Dinners & Worship Resume 6:00 pm
- 3 MomCo Resumes 1st & 3d Weds
- 4 Life Line Screening 7:30 am
- 13 Mechanics Ministry 9 am LWOC
- 15 Youth Fall Golf Classic Fawn Lake CC
- 19-20 Father Son Grandson Camp Out

# October

- Women's Ministry
  Luncheon
- 4 Lake of Woods Fall Festival
- 11 Mechanics' Ministry 9am LWOC
- 13 OFFICE CLOSED

17&18 Home Helps Work Days

17&18SLUG Fest

- 19 Scout's Pancake Breakfast
- 31 Trunk or Treat

# November

- 6 & 7 Craft Bazaar Set up
- 8&9 Craft Bazaar
- 20 Thanksgiving Basket Distribution
- 21 Living Water
  Community Clinic Gala
- 24-26 Greening of the Church
- 26 NO Weds Night Family Activities
- 27&28 Church Office Closed Thanksgiving

# Mission Partner of the Month: Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

### Fellowship of Christian Athletes – God at Work in Our Communities

A few years ago, our region experienced tragedy when a 17-year-old baseball player lost his life in a car accident. In response, I had the privilege of helping coordinate a county-wide prayer gathering, bringing together clergy, students, coaches, and families. Over 500 people came, surrounding the family and community with prayer and reminding us of the hope we share in Christ. Orange County showed up strong that night, and God's presence was undeniable.

My name is Jeff Alston, and I serve as the Piedmont Area Director of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). I oversee ministry in Orange, Greene, Madison, Louisa, Fluvanna, Albemarle, and Nelson counties, and I also serve as Associate Football Director for FCA's Virginia State Camp each summer at Liberty University, where nearly 1,200 student-athletes gather to grow in faith and fellowship.

God is opening new doors for ministry! FCA "huddles" are launching and thriving in schools across the region, including Locust Grove Middle School and Orange County High School, where new student leaders are stepping up. Three years ago, at Prospect Middle School's first FCA huddle, 14 young men gave their lives to Christ. These stories remind us of FCA's mission: "to lead every coach and every athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church."

This fall brings exciting opportunities, including Fields of Faith at Fork Union Military Academy (October 9), the Mid-Atlantic FCA Conference (September 22–24), and the Wengrich Leadership Conference (October 22–24), where I am humbled to be one of 25 leaders chosen from seven states to attend.

Thank you, Lake of the Woods Church, for your faithful support. Together, we are equipping coaches, reaching athletes, and fulfilling the Great Commission—on the fields, in the schools, and to the nations.

—Jeff Alston, Piedmont Area Director, FCA

### **Prayer for FCA**

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Bless the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, especially the middle and high school ministries we support, that through coaches and student athletes Your gospel may be made known. Prosper the ministry with revival and salvation, and strengthen our area director, Jeff Alston; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.





Help us provide great medical, dental, and counseling care to eligible people in your community. We are growing. Our patients need you. We are looking for MDs, NPs, PAs, Dentists, Hygienists, Assistants.

Can you give just 3 hours a month?

### We provide free:

- Primary Care
- Chronic Care Management
- Dental Care only free dental clinic in region
- Counseling
- Diagnostic tests
- Medicine
- Referrals to specialists



Helping to Build a Healthier Community www.livingwaterclinic.life 540-854-5922

# Pancake Breakfast Sunday, Oct. 19 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Join us after each Scout Sunday service!

# Discovering the Quiet Voice of the Divine

In a world overflowing with noise and constant distractions, listening has become a rare treasure, and listening to God—rarer still. Yet all throughout Scripture, God invites us not just to speak, but to be still and attentive. In Psalm 46:10, He gently commands, "Be still, and know that I am God." This stillness is not just the absence of noise but an active posture of expectation and openness to the divine whisper.

The prophet Elijah experienced God's presence not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire, but in a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:11-13). So too in our lives, God often speaks in ways that require us to quiet our hearts, lay aside our agendas, and truly listen. It is in these moments of surrender that wisdom, comfort, and direction are most profoundly received.

Jesus himself modeled this. Again and again in the Gospels, he withdrew to lonely places to pray and commune with the Father (Luke 5:16). Through intentional solitude and prayer, he heard God's guidance and walked in obedience.

Let us therefore cultivate a habit of listening. Set aside a moment today—turn off the noise, silence your phone, and invite God to speak. Pray for ears that are open and hearts that are soft. For in listening, we find not only direction but the extraordinary peace of knowing we are held by a God who speaks.



# September Birthdays

	o op comme
1	Audrey BargeJones
	Bud Lewis
	Ann Turner
2	Betty Gosnell
	Margie Lee
	Barbara Love
	Al Rico
	Sarah Setlock
	Barbara Strain
	Landon Williams
3	Tara Spindle
	Denise Thompson
4	Janet Davis
	John H. Kelley
	Brenda Lackey
	Jennifer Poe
	Samantha Sears
5	Larry Graves
6	Barbara McWhirt
	Tione Rivera
	Jan Simons
7	George Breuninger
	Belinda Divelbiss
	Lois Ferguson
8	Gideon Abasontey
	Luke Zello
9	Cathy Allarie
	Sparkle Capitano
	Melissa Daly
	Kristen Evans
	Stacy Kalder
	Daphne Klein
	Alexis Lee
	Kristen Maris
10	Janite Hamilton
	Vivien Woofter
11	Jerry Romine
	Daniel Schofield
12	Beth Worrell
12	Brooke Wilson
14	Jenny Chinault
	Rebecca Leitz
	Raymond Massie Linda Peterson
15	
15	Ralph Ericksen

Walter Gregg

oirtí	ıaays
16	Tina Sw

- 16 Tina Sweet17 Sandra Foutz
- 18 Mary K. Altman Dawn Leighty Rose Raguckas Michelle Sjolinder
- 19 Luke RossiKevin Ward
- Sarah BerndSusan DyerLiz McFaddenBarbara Robinson
- 21 Stephanie Austin Audrey Borja Jim Lamb Patrick Rave Timothy Zello
- 22 Corrado Apostolakis Frank Kalder Nancy Matteson Alexander Stump
- 23 Elaine Shirkey
- 24 Ben Miller
- 25 Shawn DeSpain
  Bonnie Martin
  Cherie Flaten
  Laura Saathoff
  Graeme Tidman
  26 Patricia Cetrone
- 27 Amanda Alessandra Justin Conway Christine Leitz Sandra Pounsberry
- 28 Dennis V. DeLongis Mary Szadvari
- 29 Jack Stratford
- 30 Michael Benner Carla Everhart Deborah Keene

# September Anniversaries

- 5 Darrow & Barbara Strain
- 9 Jack & Marjorie Stratford

16 Al & Eva Rico



Please pray for members of our church family who are grieving, ill, hospitalized, or undergoing treatment:

Heather Austin	Silvana Babikow
Janet Bocook	Laurel Buongiavanni
George Chapin	Luanne Coffee
Lindsay Cole	Carl Cornwell
Millie Davis	Danny DeLongis
Jim Divelbiss	Nancy Doseff
Susan Dyer	John Eckman
Sandi Foutz	Warren Gage
Steve Gaines	John Hines
Andres Idrovo	Olivia Knights
Carol Lee	Greg Leitz
David McCune	Herbert McKittrick
Lee & Nancy Moore	Ann Nadwodny
Rick Nelson	Normajean Solebello
Tom & Lois Northam	Mary & Lonnie Paxton
Noah & Barbara Rakes	Selena Rave
John & Ann Sawyer	Bob & Ellen Schwartz
Shelly Seymour	Martha Somerville
Beth Sundberg	Henrick Thode
Pat Watterworth	Tiffany & Clay Williams