



# From our Senior Pastor: From Ashes to an Empty Tomb

Dear Church Family,

Each year, the season of Lent invites us to step away from the noise of everyday life and walk more intentionally with Jesus on His journey to the cross, and ultimately, to the empty tomb. Lent is not about gloom or obligation; it is about renewal, reflection, and returning our hearts to the One who first gave His heart for us.

We begin this holy season with **Ash Wednesday** February 18, at 7:00 pm, a sacred moment when we hear the ancient words spoken over us: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19). These words are not meant to discourage us, but to ground us. They remind us of our deep need for God’s grace and mercy. As the prophet Joel calls, “*Return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning*” (Joel 2:12). Ash Wednesday opens the door to a season of honest repentance and hopeful restoration.

## What Is Lent?

Lent is a 40-day journey (not counting Sundays) that mirrors Jesus’ time in the wilderness, where He fasted, prayed, and prepared for His ministry and sacrifice (Matthew 4:1-11). It is a season of intentional discipleship, an invitation to examine our lives, deepen our prayers, and realign our hearts with Christ. As C.S. Lewis once wrote, “Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ, and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in.”

## The Gift of Fasting and Letting Go

Many of us choose to “give something up” during Lent (not as a religious performance) but as a spiritual practice. When we fast from something that distracts, comforts, or consumes us, we create space for God to fill us instead. Jesus reminds us, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*” (Matthew 4:4). Fasting teaches us that our deepest hunger is not for what we can hold in our hands, but for the presence of God in our hearts.

## The Sights and Sounds of the Season

Lent is also a season we see and feel. The colors in the sanctuary, the stoles worn by our clergy, and the paraments that adorn the altar all point us toward repentance, humility, and hope. These visual reminders quietly preach to us, calling us to slow down, to listen, and to prepare our souls for the joy of Easter morning. As the psalmist prays, “*Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law*” (Psalm 119:18).

## Gathering at the Table and in Prayer

Throughout Lent, we invite you to join us on **WEDNESDAY EVENINGS** for simple fellowship and sacred worship. Our **Soup Suppers** are more than a meal, they are a reminder that Christian community is built around tables, conversations, and shared lives. The early church devoted themselves to “*the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*” (Acts 2:42), and we continue that beautiful rhythm today.

At 5:00 PM, we gather for Vespers, a quiet service of prayer and Scripture, where we pause in



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the middle of the week to rest in God’s presence. At 6:00 PM, we come together again for our Wednesday Night Eucharist, receiving the grace of Christ at His table, remembering His promise: “*This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me*” (Luke 22:19).

## Growing in Our Faith and Witness

At 7:00 PM in the Worship Center, we will host our Lenten series on Sharing Your Faith, equipping believers of all ages to speak about Christ with humility, love, and confidence. (More details about this series can be found in this newsletter.) As the apostle Peter encourages us, “*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have—but do this with gentleness and respect*” (1 Peter 3:15).

## An Invitation to Be Changed

Lent is not just a season we observe; it is a journey we enter. God does not call us into these 40 days to remain the same, but to be transformed. “*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me*” (Psalm 51:10). Whether through prayer, fasting, worship, study, or service, may this Lent become a holy turning point in your walk with Christ.

We invite you to walk this road with us—toward the cross, toward the empty tomb, and toward a deeper, truer, more joy-filled life in Jesus.

With prayer and hope,

Rev. Adam Colson  
Senior Pastor  
The Lake of the Woods Church

THE LAKE OF  
THE WOODS  
CHURCH

# MEET THE PASTOR

FOR VISITORS AND THOSE CONSIDERING  
BECOMING MEMBERS OF LOWC

FEB 15, AFTER THE 11:00 SERVICE  
FRIENDSHIP HALL

# DISCOVERY CLASS



SUN @ 9:45 A.M.  
MAR 1 - MAR 22

register at [lowchurch.org](http://lowchurch.org)

# Meet Your Board of Trustees

## Meet Your Board of Trustees and Treasurer: Stewardship, Accountability, and Faithful Oversight

As we continue introducing the leadership of our church, this month we highlight a group whose work is often behind the scenes but essential to our health, stability, and integrity: the Board of Trustees and the Treasurer. Their ministry centers on stewardship, legal responsibility, and financial oversight—quiet but vital work that allows our church to carry out its mission with confidence and clarity. Though their efforts may not always be visible, they provide the structure that supports every ministry and outreach of our church family.

### The Role of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees serves as the legal and financial guardian of the church. The Trustees ensure that the church's legal and financial affairs are handled with integrity, transparency, and full compliance with church policy and Virginia law. Their work protects the church's resources and helps ensure that ministry decisions are supported by responsible stewardship.

### Key Responsibilities of the Trustees

- Legal Representation:** Trustees sign legal documents involving the sale, purchase, mortgage, or rental of real property, as required by law or church policy. They hold legal title to all church property and carry out legal functions required by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

- Congregational Accountability:** Trustees may not buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer real property without the specific approval of the Congregation.

- Financial Oversight:** Trustees maintain cognizance over the church's financial operations, ensuring that all financial activity is prudent, transparent, and aligned with established policies.

They oversee the Treasurer's work and arrange for the church's annual audit.

- Advisors to the Elders:** Trustees serve as financial advisors to the Board of Elders, helping ensure that ministry decisions are supported by sound stewardship.

- Contracts and Obligations:** Trustees sign all written contracts and may obligate the church for necessary legal and financial expenses such as payroll, insurance, taxes, benefits, legal fees, and other required expenditures. Verbal agreements must be confirmed by an authorizing email.

### Composition of the Board

The Board of Trustees is composed of three members, each elected by the Congregation for a three year term. One Trustee is elected each year, creating three rotating classes. Trustees may be reelected without limitation. To avoid conflicts of interest, no one may serve as a Trustee if an immediate family member is currently serving as a church officer or staff member.

Newly elected Trustees are formally appointed by the Circuit Court of Orange County, as required for churches in Virginia. If a vacancy occurs, the Board of Elders appoints a Trustee to serve until the next Congregational Meeting.

### Our Trustees are:

- Dan Porter** – trustee.chair@lowchurch.org
- Vijay Paul** – trustee.1@lowchurch.org
- Jim Nellis** – trustee.2@lowchurch.org

### The Role of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer(s)

The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer(s) serve under the oversight of the Board of Trustees and play a crucial role in maintaining the financial health and accountability of the church. Their

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# Trustees

work ensures that every dollar entrusted to the church is handled with care and accuracy.

### Key Responsibilities

- Manage day to day financial operations
- Ensure accurate accounting, reporting, and record keeping
- Support the Trustees in maintaining fiscal integrity
- Assist with budgeting, planning, and stewardship processes
- Serve as a resource to ministry leaders and staff

Treasurers are elected for two year terms beginning January 1 and may be reelected without limitation. If a vacancy occurs, the Board of Elders appoints a Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer to serve until the next Congregational Meeting.

### Our Treasurers are:

- Treasurer: Tom Tower** – treasurer@lowchurch.org
- Assistant Treasurers: Donna Valentine, Olin Greene, Bobbie Fetzer**

### Working Together for the Good of the Church

The Trustees and Treasurer form a partnership grounded in stewardship, accountability, and service. Their ministry ensures that every outreach effort and ministry initiative rests on strong financial and legal foundations. We are deeply grateful for their dedication and the wisdom they bring to this essential area of church leadership.

John R Gingrich  
Chairman, Board of Elders  
elder.chair@lowchurch.org

**Baptism**  
Join us for Baptism Sunday on March 29th as we celebrate the sacred act of baptism together as a community of believers. Baptism holds deep significance in the Christian faith, symbolizing our union with Christ and our commitment to follow Him.

Why should we be baptized? Firstly, Jesus Himself set the example by being baptized (Mark 1:9), and He also commanded His followers to baptize others (Matthew 28:19-20). Furthermore, baptism is a public declaration of our faith and obedience to Christ (Acts 2:41).

At The Lake of the Woods Church, we embrace both infant and adult baptism, recognizing the diverse spiritual journeys of our congregation. Infant baptism reflects God's covenant with families, while adult baptism symbolizes God's saving grace and a personal decision to follow Christ (Acts 2:39).

Regardless of the method—whether by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring—the essence of baptism remains the same: a demonstration of God's mercy and our response of faith (Titus 3:4-5). As a church for all believers, we honor various traditions and backgrounds while emphasizing our common faith in Jesus.

Whether you're considering baptism for yourself or your child, we invite you to participate in this special service. Baptism is a one-time event, signifying our initiation into the body of Christ, but we are always here to support believers in their ongoing journey of faith.

We look forward to sharing in this meaningful experience with you on March 29th. Join us as we celebrate God's grace and the new life found in Christ through baptism. For more information or to inquire about being baptized, visit [lowchurch.org](http://lowchurch.org) or call the church office at 540-972-9060.

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## Mission Partner for February Mission Week 2026

Our Mission Partner for February is our Mission Week 2026, taking place Sunday, February 1–Sunday, February 8. This year's theme, Serving Beyond Our Walls, calls us to step beyond comfort and routine so that Christ's love is seen in our homes, our community, and the world.

Through prayer, teaching, missionary visits, and opportunities to connect with our mission partners, Mission Week helps us rediscover the joy of serving with the gifts God has entrusted to us.

As we approach these days together, let's ask the Lord to open our eyes to the needs around us and to lead us in serving with compassion, courage, and joy.

### Mission Partners & Associates

- Missions of the Church: Living Water Community Clinic and Good News Club – Navajo Nation
- Partners: Brisben Center, Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) Virginia, Teen Challenge Beauty for Ashes Fredericksburg, LifeSpring Pregnancy Centers, India National Inland Mission, Mission to World, Youth With A Mission.
- Associates: Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Campus Outreach DC, CEF Philippines, Services to Abused Families, Serge, Victory 1:27, Beautiful Brokenness, Cybermissions, Creative Reflections



**Prayer for Mission Week**  
Sending God,  
You call Your people to go, to give, and to bear witness to Your love in the world.  
As we celebrate Missions this month, open our hearts to the work You are doing near and far. Bless those who are sent, strengthen those who serve, and shape us into a people ready to participate in Your reconciling mission; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Personal Invitation from Sr. Pastor Colson

### Sharing Your Faith

**A 5-Week Lenten Training in Personal Evangelism**  
**Wednesdays During Lent |**  
**Beginning February 25**  
**7:00 PM | Worship Center**  
**For Teens & Adults**

How do we talk about Jesus in a world that is often tired of arguments and pressure, but still deeply hungry for hope?

This Lent, we invite you to join us for Sharing Your Faith, a five-week training designed to help believers share their faith with humility, clarity, and love. This is not a program about scripts, salesmanship, or winning debates. Instead, it is a relational, conversational, and Spirit-led approach to evangelism rooted in listening, compassion, and genuine care for people.

As the saying goes, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." This training begins right there.

Each week, participants will grow in confidence as they learn how to listen well, speak truth with grace, and keep Jesus at the center of everyday conversations.

We will explore God's love, our shared brokenness, the hope of the cross and resurrection, the gift of forgiveness and new identity, and the lifelong journey of growing in grace, all in a way that is practical, biblical, and deeply encouraging.

Whether you come on your own or with others, this training is meant to be experienced in community. Individuals, small groups, Bible study groups, and Sunday School classes are encouraged to attend together. You are also invited to bring family members, friends, or neighbors who may want to grow in confidence and compassion as they learn how to share their faith in everyday life.

Lent reminds us that the way of Christ is not rushed or forced, it is shaped by love, repentance, grace, and transformation. In the same way, evangelism is not loud or pressured. It is patient, relational, and always led by the Spirit.

Come and be equipped to share the hope you carry, with gentleness, clarity, and love.

Rev. Adam Colson  
Senior Pastor  
**The Lake of the Woods Church**

### **Wednesday Night Soup Supper Schedule (Feb. 25 - Apr. 1)**

**5:30 p.m. - Soup Supper (Friendship Hall)**  
**6 p.m. - Communion (Sanctuary)**  
**6:30 p.m. - Worship (Worship Center)**  
**7 p.m. - Lenten Study (Worship Center)**  
**CR (as usual)**

*If you are willing to provide soup for a Wednesday night during Lent sign up in the Gathering Place.*



## An Invitation to Participate in Studying God's Word

There are several standing weekly Bible Study groups that meet at the Church throughout the week to study the Bible. All groups are welcoming new participants and if you have been considering joining a regular weekly bible study and would like to know more about them this column is for you. We have invited each group to write about their group and their studies. We will add their description each month as space allows.

### REFLECTORS ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Sundays at 8:30am

Meets in Charter Room

(across from Worship Center)

The Reflectors class meets at 8:30am every Sunday. The class is led by **Emeritus Pastor Tom Schafer and Elder of Outreach Bill Frazer**. Pastor Schafer draws upon 45 years of preaching and teaching the Bible with emphasis on its relevance for daily living. He also draws upon 10 years of professional counseling through WorthMore Counseling, Inc., Applying godly wisdom to life's difficulties. He is a Nationally Certified Counselor.

Elder for Outreach Bill Frazer has taught adult Christian education courses for many years prior to coming to LOWC. He has served as a missionary for 31/2 years in Russia and Kazakhstan.

The goal of the class is not simply knowledge of the Bible. The goal is Godly wisdom.

**Wisdom is the effective application of Biblical truth to daily life and matters of the heart.**

The class has lively discussion based on Biblical insights. Questions are welcomed. Spiritual struggles and victories are shared. You will be welcomed. Expect spiritual growth and understanding. People leave each Sunday with joyful hope.

Come and see!



Calendar for church activities for the next 90 days...See [lowchurch.org](http://lowchurch.org) for latest information

### February

1-8 Mission Week  
14-15 Winter Mission Retreat  
16 Presidents' Day  
Office Closed  
19 Women's Gathering  
21 Women's Ministry  
Event  
21 Men's Qtrly Breakfast  
LWOC  
24 5pm Sewing Class  
28 Scouts Pinewood Derby

### March

14 - Church Beautification Day  
19 - Women's Gathering  
28 - Easter Egg Hunt  
29 - Palm Sunday

### April

1- Spy Wednesday 6:00pm  
2 - Maundy Thursday 7pm  
3 - Good Friday 7pm  
4 - Silent Saturday 8am  
5 - Easter Sunrise Svc 7am  
6 - Easter Observed OFFICE  
CLOSED  
9 - OCPS Spring Break No Family  
Night  
18 - Go Ye Therefore Banquet  
24-25 Home Helps  
29 - TRIAD Conference



Cross Currents is published monthly. Comments, suggestions, interests in helping with content should be directed to:  
Elder of Communications  
email: [elder.comm@lowc.org](mailto:elder.comm@lowc.org)

## CHURCH VIDEO CAMERAS

There has been growing interest and many questions about the video cameras around the church.

Previously, we discussed the purpose and vision behind the upgraded access control and camera systems across our facilities.

This is a multi-phase project focused on replacing the current access control systems—covering exterior doors and key interior entry points—with integrated software that enhances accountability for after-hours access.

It also allows us to connect to live video feeds, quickly secure the building if necessary (note that it cannot prevent people from exiting), and remotely operate doors when we're not physically present, enabling us to respond swiftly to unexpected situations.

Additionally, we can share live video footage with the Orange County Sheriff's 911 center in case of emergencies.

Right now, the cameras primarily monitor the church's exterior and key interior areas, including the Discovery Zone, Children's classrooms, the approach pathways to the Discovery Zone and Fellowship Hall.

These cameras are visual-only and do not have sound, except for the two doorbell cameras at the Discovery Zone Entrance from the lower parking lot and the hallway outside the elevator door.

These two devices can communicate with the control room or an on-call administrator when the control room isn't actively staffed, helping us determine whether access should be granted.

We are also expanding this access control and surveillance package to the Living Water Outreach Center.

As its usage grows, it became clear that relying solely on physical keys and limited camera coverage was no longer practical. The new systems are designed to improve safety and convenience.

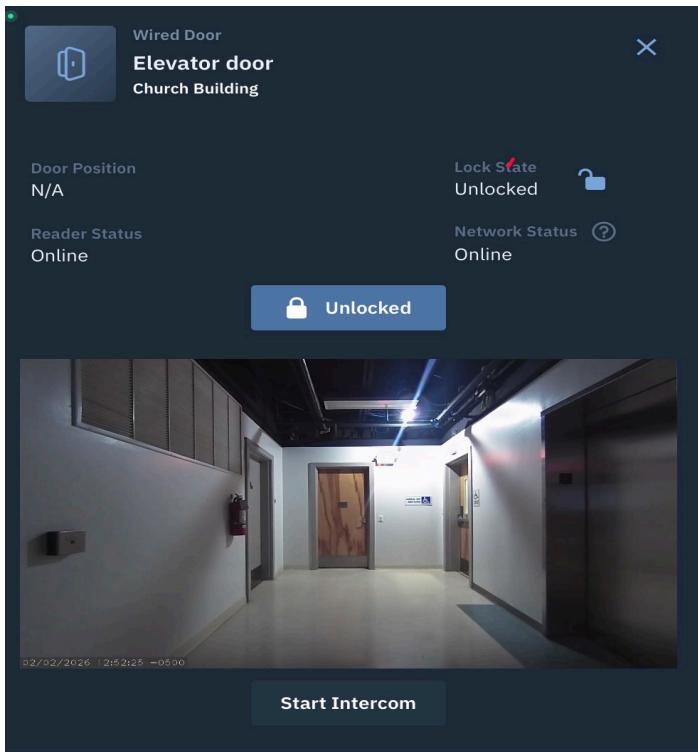
While the cameras are continuously recording, they are actively monitored during major church events, including Sunday worship, Wednesday night family activities, and other community events.

A dedicated team of control-room volunteers monitors all cameras and maintains radio contact with safety team volunteers, who can request assistance or coordinate responses.

If you're interested in helping monitor the cameras or joining the safety team, we'd welcome you!

Please reach out to Lee Merrell, Elder of Building and Grounds, email: [elder.bg@lowchurch.org](mailto:elder.bg@lowchurch.org), who would be happy to discuss how you can be involved.

If you have any additional questions, feel free to reach out to any Elder.



DOOR BELL CAMERA INTO THE DISCOVERY ZONE FROM THE ELEVATOR WITH INTERCOM

*see sample camera on page 11*

*continued from page 10*

## SAMPLE CAMERA SHOTS



DISCOVERY ZONE ROOM 504



DISCOVERY ZONE NURSERY



UPPER PARKING LOT FRONT ENTRANCE



UPPER PARKING LOT

## February Birthdays

Roger Anderson  
John Bowles  
Christian Colson  
Barbara Consentino  
Mildred Davis  
Joyce Davis  
Jeannie Dietz  
Minda Edmiston  
Nancy Edwards  
Mark Everhart  
Linda Green  
Allen Gwaltney  
Wendy Gwaltney  
Deo Hardman  
Deanna Jones  
Frances Lynch  
Jordan Medas  
John Nash  
Kathleen Olmstead  
Dan Porter  
Jody Puckett  
Barbara Rakes  
Eva Rico  
Michael Rieley  
Irene Robinson  
Sandy Roth  
Michael Rugless  
Krista Simpson  
Don Smith  
Marsha Stumpf  
Judy Swarthout  
Alexandra Wile

## February Anniversaries

Ed & Jennifer Suche  
Jack & Antoinette Ruther  
Jim & Faith Quiroga  
Kevin & Kristen Maris  
Kyle & Susanne Helsel  
Randal & Susan Whtehead



Please pray for members of our church family who are ill, recovering, or grieving:

Heather Austin	Silvana Babikow
Janet Bocook	Laurel Buongiavanni
Luanne Coffee	Lindsay Cole
Millie Davis	Danny DeLongis
Jim Divelbiss	Nancy Doseff
Susan Dyer	John Eckman
Warren Gage	Steve Gaines
Phil Harris	John Hines
Andres Idrovo	Olivia Knights
David McCune	Herbert McKittrick
Lee & Nancy Moore	Ann Nadwodny
Tom & Lois Northam	Barbara Rakes
Selena Rave	John & Ann Sawyer
Bob & Ellen Schwartz	Shelly Seymour
Normajean Solebello	Martha Somerville
Greg Soukenik	Bobbie Stone
Beth Sundberg	Darrell Turner
Pat Watterworth	Newt Wilson
Kay & Mike Zello	