



CROSS CURRENTS

July 2026



Our VBS Volunteers - In total over 100 Volunteers Participated to Make VBS Happen

Vacation Bible School 2026: Rainforest Falls

This year, our children embarked on an exciting adventure to Rainforest Falls during Vacation Bible School. Throughout the week, they discovered important truths about God: He is our Creator, He knows everything, He is our safe place, He is love, and He is forever.

Using lessons and memory verses from the book of Psalms, the children grew in their understanding of God's character while enjoying a fun-filled week of worship, Bible study, games, imagination station (science experiments that help the children make connections with what they are learning), and fellowship. The Rainforest Falls adventure also featured several memorable animal Bible buddies—Tango the quetzal, Seymour the reticulated glass frog, Dottie the ocelot, Toothless Tia the anteater, and Howie the howler monkey—who helped bring each day's lesson to life.

From our Senior Pastor: Walking in Hope: Why We Continue To Go

Dear Church Family,



Rev. Adam Colson

Each summer, as our mission team prepares to travel west to New Mexico, many people ask the same question: “Why do we keep going back to the Navajo Nation?”

The answer is simple. Because God loves the Diné people, and so do we.

The Navajo people, who often call themselves Diné (meaning “The People”), have a history marked by remarkable resilience, deep faith, enduring family bonds, and tremendous perseverance. Yet their story is also marked by suffering that many Americans know little about.

Between 1863 and 1866, more than 10,000 Navajo men, women, and children were forcibly removed from their homeland and marched hundreds of miles to Bosque Redondo in what became known as The Long Walk. Families suffered hunger, disease, exposure, and death along the way. Many never returned. Even today, the memory of this event remains a living part of Navajo identity and history. And yet, their story is not ultimately one of defeat. It is a story of survival, endurance, and hope.

After years of suffering, the Navajo people were allowed to return to their homeland under the Treaty of 1868. Though they returned with little and faced enormous challenges, they rebuilt their communities, preserved their language, protected their culture, and continued forward. Their story reminds me of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“Those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” — Isaiah 40:31

That verse could almost serve as a summary of the Navajo story. One of the most beautiful concepts in Navajo culture is the idea of Hózhó (living in harmony, beauty, peace, and right relationship). Traditional Navajo prayers often include the phrase: “In beauty may I walk.”

As Christians, we recognize in that longing a deeper desire that is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the One who restores broken relationships, heals wounded hearts, and brings peace between God and humanity. This is one reason our church continues to go.

We do not go because we have all the answers, nor do we go as heroes. We do not go to “fix” people. We go as servants of Jesus, willing to listen and to learn. We go to build friendships. We go to share the hope of Christ. We go because every person we meet bears the image of God.

As Mother Teresa once said, *“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”*

That is exactly what missions often look like. A conversation, a prayer, a game with a child, a shared meal, a hug, a Bible lesson, a listening ear, a simple act of kindness offered in the name of Jesus.

Continued on page 3



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Continued from page 2 Walking in Hope: Why We Continue to Go

Over the years, our church has witnessed God doing wonderful things through these relationships. We have seen children hear the Gospel, families encouraged, churches strengthened, and friendships formed that span thousands of miles. Most importantly, we have seen the love of Christ at work. Jesus told His disciples:

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” - John 13:35

That love is what compels us to return year after year. Today, many families in the Navajo Nation continue to face challenges, including poverty, limited access to services, inadequate housing, and infrastructure needs that most Americans rarely encounter. Yet alongside these hardships are extraordinary strength, hospitality, generosity, and faith. When our team arrives, we are often reminded that ministry is never a one-way street.

We may go intending to be a blessing, but we frequently return having been blessed ourselves. We learn that God’s family is much bigger than our own community. Most of all, we are reminded that the Gospel is for every tribe, every tongue, every people, and every nation.

As we prepare for Good News Camp Living Water this summer, I invite you to pray.

- Pray for the children who will attend.
- Pray for the families we will meet.
- Pray for the churches serving faithfully year-round.
- Pray for our volunteers and leaders.
- Pray that many hearts would encounter the love of Jesus Christ.
- And pray that God would continue to knit together friendships that reflect His Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”
— Galatians 6:9

Church family, thank you for being a congregation that has chosen not to give up. Thank you for praying, giving, and for serving.

Thank you for loving people whom God deeply loves.

And thank you for helping carry the hope of Christ to the Navajo Nation. May we continue to walk in faith, serve with humility, and share the Good News wherever God leads us.

In Christ’s Service,

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

Prayer for Navajo Mission Trip

Holy and Faithful God, bless our mission team as they serve alongside Southwest Indian Ministries, sharing the love of Christ through Good News Camp: Living Water and construction projects. Strengthen their witness, deepen their relationships, and reveal Your grace to all they meet, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Amen.

Board of Elders, A Summer of Gospel Momentum

JULY MINISTRY UPDATE — A SUMMER OF GOSPEL MOMENTUM

Last month, I wrote about Kingdom Builders, Teen Camp, and the anticipation of VBS. Wow—did God ever bless us through VBS! Our volunteers turned out, the children showed up, and the Holy Spirit was clearly present. Thank you for your prayers and for the time you invested in supporting this ministry. God is moving among us.

“This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” — Psalm 118:23

This month, I want to give you a glimpse of the July events so you can see the full picture of what your church is joyfully stepping into.

Good News Across Sports — July 6–10

Good News Across Sports is one of our major outreaches to the children of our community. We expect more than 50 children to join over 20 volunteers for sports and other activities. Once again, the halls of the church will ring with laughter, energy, and excitement as children in grades K–5 learn not only the basics and skills of a sport or activity, but they are also introduced to Jesus and learn how to develop character that counts.

Pray for the children and volunteers as the Gospel of our Lord is shared.

“Let the little children come to Me... for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” — Matthew 19:14

Good News Camp – Living Water (Gallup, NM) — July 20–24

On Friday, July 17, our advance party will depart to set up the camp. This five day camp is our outreach to Navajo and other children, offering sports, crafts, Bible lessons, and fellowship during meals. A second team will be improving the facilities. Twenty eight volunteers are traveling on this mission adventure.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us in oneness in Christ,

that our witness will be marked by love, and that the children will not simply enjoy camp—but truly see Jesus.

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.” — Romans 10:15

Stuff the Bus — July 30

School in Orange County resumes in just five short weeks. We are assembling items for Stuff the Bus, preparing to distribute 250 backpacks filled with much needed school supplies and information about our children’s programs. This is a wonderful opportunity to bless families and children at the primary, elementary, and middle schools.

Pray for the team assembling and distributing the backpacks, and for the families who will receive them. May the Lord bless each one.

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need.” — Romans 12:13

Looking Ahead to August and September

We are in the final stages of planning for the kickoff of our children’s programs, especially Good News Clubs, which begin again on Monday, September 14. I would say we need volunteers—but the Holy Spirit is already calling people to step forward. I pray you will hear the call and respond.

Stay tuned for training opportunities for Good News Clubs and other children’s ministries.

Our Wednesday night programs—children, youth, family dinner, and men’s and women’s Bible studies—kick off on September 9.

Please check the Events page of the church website for the latest information.

John R Gingrich
Chairman, Board of Elders

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

July	August	September
3 - OFFICE CLOSED Independence Day	1 - Tables oif Eight	9 - Weds Night Family Activities Resume
5 - 12:30 GNAS Training	5 - First Day of School for Orange County	13 - Discovery Class Begins
6-10 - GNAS	8 - Mechanics’ Ministry LWOC	26 - Youth Golf Tournament LOW Golf Club
11 - Mechanic’s Ministry LWOC	30 - Church Picnic	29 - Life Line Screening
19-26 Navajo Mission Trip		
30 - Stuff the Bus Distribution		



THE LAKE OF THE WOODS CHURCH

FALL CLASSIC

GOLF TOURNAMENT BENEFITING LOWC YOUTH
AT LAKE OF THE WOODS GOLF COURSE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

SPONSORSHIP INQUIRIES: CONTACT JORDAN.MEDAS@LOWCHURCH.ORG

Teen Camp 2026: A Week to Build a Faith That Lasts

Teen Camp 2026 was an unforgettable week of worship, teaching, laughter, late night conversations, and powerful moments where God met our teens in real and lasting ways. From the first gathering to the final closing program, the Lord wove together a week that strengthened faith, deepened friendships, and reminded every student that following Jesus is worth their whole life.

We were blessed to have Greg Fletcher serve as our Camp Pastor this year. Greg works with Pioneers as a Church Partnership Facilitator, helping churches engage in global missions. He brought a deep love for the local church and a passion for grounding teens in a faith that endures.

As Greg prepared for camp, the Lord impressed on his heart a burden many of us share: too many teens graduate high school and “deconstruct” their faith because they never truly understood what they believed. They followed the practices, but the foundational truths never settled into their hearts. This week was designed to help them connect belief to practice — to understand why they believe, not just what they do.

Biblical Themes That Shaped the Week

Greg led students through rich, foundational truths:

- What is faith? (Hebrews 11)
- “You just gotta believe!” — Believe what? (Romans 10)
- Why the resurrection matters
- He deserves our worship (Isaiah 6)
- “But I’m not called...”
- You can trust Him (Hebrews 11)
- Live your life to serve Him (Romans 12)
- What difference will your life make?

These messages anchored the week and sparked meaningful conversations in cabins, around campfires, and during quiet moments with leaders.

Voices That Encouraged and Challenged

In addition to Greg’s teaching, teens heard heartfelt testimonies from:

- Elders Mike Phillips, Bill Frazer, Kristen Ulrey
- Youth Leader Stone Leighty

Each shared honestly about navigating life transitions and staying rooted in Christ rather than drifting or deconstructing.

Mission Moments were another highlight:

- Interns Jonah Medas, Abby Medas, and Connor Hall shared about life after high school and being Christ’s witness in new environments.
- Nolan DeFour, coach and FCA representative, taught a powerful session on Identity in Christ.

Continued on page 7

Teen Camp 2026

Continued from page 6

Worship That Lifted Hearts

Worship throughout the week was a deeply meaningful part of camp life. Music was led by Kate Slagle, Stephanie Austin, and contributions from June, Ella, and others. Their leadership helped create an atmosphere where students could respond to God with sincerity and joy.

Camp Life: Fun, Fellowship, and Growth

The week was packed with activities that brought our teens together:

- Archery, horseback riding, camp cooking, VBS games, corn hole, volleyball
- Lake time every afternoon
- Big Events: Leader Hide, Knocker Balls, Mission Impossible, Talent/Untalent Night, Scavenger Hunt
- Cabin devotions each night

Under the steady leadership of Eugene Slagle and Malia Dates, and with a full team of dedicated volunteers, camp ran smoothly and joyfully. Their work behind the scenes allowed leaders and teens to focus on what mattered most — hearing God’s voice and responding to Him.

A Foundation for the Future

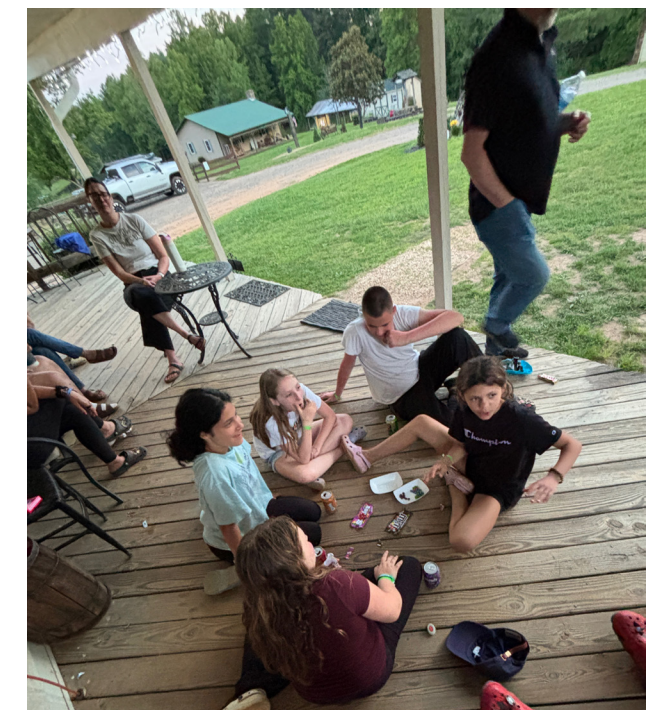
Teen Camp 2026 was more than a program — it was a spiritual investment. Students encountered Christ, wrestled with truth, asked good questions, and built a foundation that will carry them far beyond camp.

We praise God for every moment, every conversation, every decision, and every step of growth. May the seeds planted this week bear fruit for years to come.



Above: Teen Camp Nightly Worship

Right: Gotta have snacks at camp!



VBS 2026

God's blessings were evident throughout the week. We were thrilled to welcome 133 children, ages 4-12, who participated in VBS activities. One of the greatest highlights came at the end of the week when 19 children made professions of faith in Jesus Christ. We rejoice in these life-changing decisions and give all glory to God. Please continue to pray that the families and children will be receptive to the follow-up communications they are receiving.

This ministry would not have been possible without the dedication of close to 100 volunteers who generously gave their time, energy, and talent. Their commitment helped create a safe, welcoming, and memorable experience for every child.

We are grateful for all that God accomplished during our week at Rainforest Falls and look forward to seeing how He continues to work in the hearts and lives of these children and their families.



Above - Imagination Station- Children were organized in mixed age groups with adult leaders



Left - Registration Desk
Responsible for checking in and checking out all the children with their families.

More Pictures on page 9

VBS 2026



Left: Keeping the Discovery Zone Safe



Above: Jungle Characters



Above: Getting everyone fired up for the day!
Lower Left: Outdoor Games Lower right: Music & Dance



The Paw Paws Are Here!

The 4-year-old boy looked out of the window, ran excitedly to his mother and exclaimed, “The Paw Paws are here.”

The little boy was living with his mother at the Beauty for Ashes (BfA) home for mothers recovering from addiction; the Paw Paws were men from Lake of the Woods Church coming to mow the fields around the home.

For 11 years, a team of 5-6 men from our church has mowed the 20 acres of field surrounding the BfA house using a tractor, 2 riding mowers, and a push mower. They have also repaired the fence and removed downed trees.

Their value goes beyond the physical work. Most of the women have been used or abused by men. Our presence shows them there are men who just want to support them and share Christ’s love.

The Beauty for Ashes Home for Mothers and Children is a ministry of Teen Challenge of North Central Virginia and opened in 2015. It provides parenting, vocational, and home management skills but, most importantly, spiritual discipleship. Lives are truly transformed – families reunited, women and children baptized, GEDs earned, nursing school completed, jobs secured and more new starts.

Our team is looking for a few more “Lawn Enforcement Officers”. We mow every 2 or 3 weeks, and a mowing takes half a day. The season is climaxed by a wonderful appreciation lunch where we meet and share with the residents. If you are interested, please contact Bill Frazer, Elder for Community Outreach (elder.co@lowchurch.org), or David Blackistone.



MUSICAL NOTES: America the Beautiful

PS 33:12, PS 65:9, PS 72:8 and 16

The music was written in 1882 by Newark, NJ, choirmaster and organist, Samuel Augustus Ward. He was returning home on a ferry after a visit to Coney Island (a popular amusement center at the time) when he was struck by inspiration. He jotted down the notes to a melody he called “Materna”. He intended the melody to accompany a 16th-century hymn called “O Mother, Dear Jerusalem”.



In the summer of 1893, Katherine Lee Bates, a poet and English professor at Wellesley, visited Colorado Springs. She was impressed by traveling across the American plains. Her ultimate inspiration was at the top of Pike’s Peak, where she was struck by the “sea-like expanse of fertile country” stretching under the big sky.

They were living in an era much like ours-rapid technological changes and political tensions. Her poem was meant to challenge us to match physical grandeur with moral integrity. It was published on July 4, 1895.

Her poem and his melody came together in 1910. An unknown publisher saw that Ward’s soaring melody perfectly matched Bates’ broad cadence. She lived to see the hymn widely performed. Ward died in 1903, never knowing that his ferryboat melody would become one of America’s most loved anthems.

Donna Chernowetz.

Stuff the Bus
July 12-26

Donations can be made by visiting the table in the Gathering Place!
\$25 = One backpack

A graphic for "Stuff the Bus" featuring school supplies and a backpack. The background is teal. The text "Stuff the Bus" is in large white letters, and "July 12-26" is in smaller white letters below it. Below the text, there is an illustration of a yellow backpack, a stack of books, a red apple, an orange alarm clock, and a pencil holder with pens and pencils. The text "Donations can be made by visiting the table in the Gathering Place!" and "\$25 = One backpack" is in white at the bottom.

July Birthdays

Gail Atkinson	Jean Lemay
John Beisheim	Lisa Medas
Susan Bhuller	Lee Merrell
Marc Birdsong	Kip Metzger
George Chapin	Tonya Miller
Johanna Colson	Julie Phend
Calvin Davis	Beth Richards
Hazel DeLongis	Susan Richards
Lucia DeSocio	Ann Sawyer
Susan Doubet	Beth Sundberg
Betty Jo Elvgren	Paulette
Jacklyn Gill	Tantlinger
Janet Glidden	Samuel Thomsen
Cathy Gnik	George Ulrey
Renee Graves	Patricia Unkle
Antionette Hamblet	Henny Van Der
Mary Hamilton	Vliet
Linda Harrington	Ray White
Loren Lauber	Gloria Whitmore
Gregory Leitz	

July Anniversaries

Charles & Melissa DeLeon
 Ralph & Patricia Ericksen
 Allen & Wendy Gwaltney
 Tim & Tanya Hall
 Michael & Jean Lemay
 Raymond & Theda Massie
 Lyle & Barbara McWhirt
 Garland & Tonya Miller
 Ralph & Linda Rupard
 John & Ann Sawyer
 Daniel & Judy Schofield
 Don & Kathleen Smith
 Dwight & Barbara Squires
 Kevin & Karlee Thomson



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

Heather Austin	Silvana Babikow
Janet Bocook	Laurel Buongiavanni
Lindsay Cole	Millie Davis
Danny DeLongis	Jim Divelbiss
Nancy Doseff	Susan Dyer
John Eckman	Steve Gaines
Phil Harris	Betty Herron
Andres Idrovo	Olivia Knights
David McCune	Herbert McKittrick
Lee Moore	Ann Nadwodny
Tom & Lois Northam	Barbara Rakes
Selena Rave	John & Ann Sawyer
Bob & Ellen Schwartz	Wes Seaman

Shelly Seymour
 Martha Somerville
 Greg Soukenik
 Darrell Turner
 Newt Wilson

Normajean Solebello
 Bobbie Stone
 Beth Sundberg
 Pat Watterworth

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