



CELEBRATE *the* HARVEST



Celebrate THE HARVEST

As we step into our 50th year, we invite you to join us on a journey of reflection, gratitude and joy as we **CELEBRATE THE HARVEST**. Since ancient times, harvest has been celebrated across cultures around the world. Bounty, feast, gathering, gratitude, community and tradition are common threads in harvest time rituals from the past and present, and ones we wish to embrace as we explore our harvest theme this year. Generally, the word “harvest” is synonymous with the concepts of hard work, planning and success and their respective seasons. Spiritually, it has even more significance, with well over 100 references in scripture. In Matthew 9:38, Jesus used the name “Lord of the Harvest” to emphasize God’s sovereignty over the spiritual harvest and to call on his followers to pray for more laborers to work in it. Since 1976, Lakewood Park Christian School has sought to cultivate leaders who are able to communicate a distinctly Christian worldview and live it out daily with character, integrity, and wisdom. This challenge requires digging in and doing the work. It means that a Christian education and academic rigor cannot be mutually exclusive. The shared nature of this work is obvious too. “It takes a village.” We applaud the role a community plays in a successful harvest just as we celebrate

our “village” of teachers, peers, coaches and parents who show up and cheer our students on whether they are taking their first steps on campus as preschoolers or walking across our stage as seniors, and all the moments in between. Having joined the LPCS community this past summer, it is evident to me already that this is a special place and a poignant point in our history. And I am thrilled to be here for it! This issue of Lakewood Life takes a trip down “Memory Lane,” highlighting the experiences of our community. We are thankful for this moment to reflect and rejoice, and we want to spend this year in a posture of gratitude, celebrating the bounty of stories of lives transformed, of growth nurtured through a caring community and of the fruit of five decades of Christ-centered education. And while our harvest celebrations will have us looking back to God’s provision over fifty years, they also prompt us to plan for the next five decades. We celebrate the truth found in Galatians 6:9: “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” We thank you for your partnership in this work and praise God for his goodness and faithfulness then, now and always.

DR. ROY ANDREWS
Head of School



SINCE 1976, LAKEWOOD PARK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HAS SOUGHT TO CULTIVATE LEADERS WHO ARE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE A DISTINCTLY CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW.



"4" THE WIN

THANK YOU, LPCS FAMILY

There are a lot of numbers adding up to make this one special year for our school and community: our 50th year, over 800 total students and 160 new students for a record enrollment, and for the 4th consecutive year, a clean sweep of the Reader's Choice awards in all nominated categories. Dr. Andrews notes, "I am beyond grateful to be joining the LPCS family in our 50th year, with our highest enrollment yet. God is doing great things here, and I want to personally thank all who voted and congratulate our principals, teachers and staff winners."

- 🏆 BEST PRIVATE SCHOOL
- 🏆 BEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 🏆 BEST ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL
AMY YODER
- 🏆 BEST ELEMENTARY TEACHER
BETH WILLETT
- 🏆 BEST MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 🏆 BEST MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
STEVE ORTH

- 🏆 BEST MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER
TONYA BORN
- 🏆 BEST HIGH SCHOOL
- 🏆 BEST HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
RANDA WITMER
- 🏆 BEST HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER
JEN BRANDENBERGER
- 🏆 BEST SCHOOL NURSE
ERIN CARPENTER

MEET MISS Maple



Photo by Lucy Dunn

Making maple syrup is a favorite LPCS tradition, and now we have another sweet reason to love all things "maple." We are thrilled to introduce our newest school support dog, Maple, who is living with Principal Witmer's family during her off-school hours. Maple has some big paw prints to fill: her big brother Blue is much missed though we are happy to hear how much he is enjoying his new home in Tennessee. Like Blue, Maple is a gift from Martin's Doodles, who are part of our Lakewood Park family. Thank you to the Martin and Witmer families for keeping this favorite furry tradition going.

TO GOOD *Beginnings*

This is my fifth year having children at LPCS and my third year on staff. LPCS has been a place where both my children and I have been able to grow in faith and relationships. Our strong Christian community stood out to me right away. Being surrounded by others who share the same hopes and goals, pursuing God and His kingdom first, is so encouraging. The way we are able to pray together, support one another, and continually point others back to Jesus makes this a special place to serve! Knowing that LPCS continues to provide a Christ-centered education for generation after generation is such a testimony of God's faithfulness, and I love knowing that my children and I are now part of the ongoing story, benefitting from the prayers, vision, and work of so many who came before us. I'm excited to see how God continues to grow and work through Lakewood, especially for our Early Education program, knowing how foundational those early years are as we work to prepare them academically while equipping them to know and love God. I look forward to continuing to serve and being part of LPCS as we work to raise up students who will impact the world for Christ!



KATY GEISLEMAN
Early Learning Director



Kindergarten graduation in the 1970s

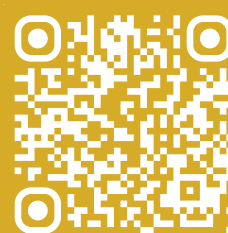


Our TREK10 summer camp experience for preschoolers through 12th graders offers Signature Camp, Specialty Camps, and Sports Camps within one dynamic program under the leadership of Hillary Straley. Signature Camp consists of weekly-themed programs filled with engaging activities, outdoor exploration, and hands-on learning. Each week offers a unique experience designed to foster friendships and fun. Specialty Camps led by Lakewood Park staff provides campers the opportunity to explore specific interests such as culinary arts, science, and theater. Sports Camps led by Lakewood Park coaches helps our young athletes develop skills, build confidence, and stay active in a fun, supportive environment.

After wrapping up this past summer, **Miss Straley** reflected, "I am grateful for the opportunity to see firsthand the ways God has shown up and provided for this ministry, both in times of uncertainty and in moments of joy in celebration. It is clear how deeply Christ's love is woven into the culture of our school. Having been in other environments where that foundation wasn't as evident, the contrast at Lakewood Park is unmistakable and refreshing. As I look to our future, my goal is to expand opportunities for students through our auxiliary programs by creating spaces where we can pour into kids in meaningful ways and by bringing in the right people to work with them. My desire is that these programs provide engaging experiences while also fostering strong relationships, encouragement, and mentorship that make a lasting impact on students' lives both now and in the future."



The Roses share a beautiful love story that started at Lakewood and inspired many through the decades they dedicated their talents to our students. Scan the QR code to watch a video highlighting their journey!



CHANGED *for* GOOD

While I haven't been at Lakewood Park for all of its fifty years, I have called this place home for most of my years. I graduated from Lakewood Park in 2003, and when I started kindergarten in 1990, our school was still named Faith Christian Academy. Our original mascot was an eagle, and our colors were green and gold. Over my years as a student and now in my current role as elementary principal, I find myself most grateful for the same things — the heart of our school ministry has always been discipleship. Upon returning to LPCS in 2015, I was thankful to see we remained constant in our discipleship mission and our commitment to understanding best practices in education. What struck me the most was the desire to understand current culture and how to best prepare our students to be agents for Christ in today's world. One of our goals is to engage families and support them in biblical parenting on the home front. We are also implementing strategic efforts to help our young students grow cognitively and spiritually, to establish, apply, discern, and defend a biblical worldview. This goes beyond knowledge of Bible stories to a deep and personal understanding of God's Word, His unchanging character, and the matchless beauty of the Gospel. How exciting to celebrate the milestone of 50 years as a Christian school!



AMY YODER
Elementary School Principal



GOD'S GOODNESS THROUGH THE *Generations*

While there is no shortage of things to celebrate at LPCS, I am most grateful for fifty years of faithful seed planting — generation after generation hearing the Gospel and being discipled in the truth of God's Word. It's a blessing to see former students who once said "yes" to a lifelong relationship with Jesus now raising their own children in the same Christ-centered environment. These stories are a living testimony to Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." When I first joined our community, I was immediately struck by the genuine willingness of our staff to invest deeply in the spiritual lives of students. This investment isn't limited to classroom teachers — it extends to support staff, coaches, and every adult who interacts with our students. I see the truth of Colossians 3:23 lived out daily: "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men." There is a shared understanding here that every role is a ministry, and every interaction is an opportunity to point students to Christ.



STEVE ORTH Middle School Principal





High school students in the 1980s

DECADES *of* DISCIPLESHIP



As I reflect on our school's golden anniversary, I'm grateful to have experienced this place full circle - as a student, a staff member, and a parent. Experiencing a community from various perspectives is a cherished, unique journey; and each role I've held has deepened my appreciation for what makes LPCS special. As a student, I was shaped and influenced by the values, care, and love that sets our school apart. As a staff member, I see the dedication, heart, and passion that goes into everyday moments. Finally, as a parent, I watch those same values shape my own child's heart and mind. It's rare to be part of a place that consistently lives out its mission across generations - being a part of that experience is something for which I'll always be grateful. LPCS isn't just a place where students come to learn - it's a place where they're known, genuinely cared for, and prayed over often. The number of families who seek out this level of commitment and choose to partner with us each year is both humbling and exciting. God continues to bless and expand this community and His kingdom in ways that go far beyond what we could "ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20-21). As I look ahead, academic rigor and excellence, course offerings, and program development are always at the forefront of our minds. As we accomplish this work, staying steadfast to who we are called to be as a discipleship Christian school is vital. In a world where close, interpersonal relationships are struggling to thrive, we strive to be a place where a strong, multi-aged community is seen, felt, and experienced within our student body by fostering relationships built on trust, compassion, and a shared hope in Jesus Christ.



RANDA WITMER High School Principal



IN A WORLD WHERE CLOSE, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE STRUGGLING TO THRIVE, WE STRIVE TO BE A PLACE WHERE A STRONG, MULTI-AGED COMMUNITY IS SEEN, FELT, AND EXPERIENCED WITHIN OUR STUDENT BODY BY FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS BUILT ON TRUST, COMPASSION, AND A SHARED HOPE IN JESUS CHRIST.

SENIOR *Spotlight*

Congratulations to the LPCS Class of 2025 Valedictorian, Campbell Warner, and Salutatorian, Ava Staker. We honor your hard work and hearts for Jesus, which will shine brightly as you pursue your next steps at Butler University and Spring Arbor University, respectively. Well done!



Campbell Warner

Ava Staker

Boomerang Bunch



Boomerang Bunch left to right: Josh Pike, Cassondra Johnson, Chelsea Reichard, Jordan Placencia, Randa Witmer, Amanda Stine, Amy Yoder, Brian Rayle, Ranetta Wiley

Customer loyalty is one of the hallmarks of a brand's strength, indicating a customer's commitment to a particular brand or company, leading to repeat purchases and a willingness to stay with that company. And it's not so different for private schools. LPCS families have a choice when it comes to educating their children, and one of the most encouraging endorsements of our efforts is when we see former students, now parents themselves, sending their children to walk the same hallways they did. And we are also blessed that many former students come back to our halls as teachers, leaders and staff. In fact, we have nine former LPCS students who are part of our "Boomerang Bunch" (we sent them out into the world and are so blessed they came back to share their talents in shaping a new generation of Christian leaders in our community). Here are some of their thoughts on belonging to this special group:

AMY YODER CLASS OF 2003 Elementary Principal

"My favorite thing about my job is being in Christian community with my coworkers and to be on a team of people I know are so passionate about the same thing — and it's leading kids in Christ so they understand they don't have to wait to be older to be on mission for the Lord. It's been a really sweet thing."



JOSH PIKE CLASS OF 2020

Physical Education Teacher | Varsity Boys Soccer Coach
 "I thought it was never in the cards for me to come back here and work, but I always had a gut feeling I wanted to contribute to Lakewood in some way or form. It was just a God thing. I wanted to come here because I knew I would be able to make an impact and influence kids' lives not just in their faith journey but also as human beings."



BRIAN RAYLE CLASS OF 2004

5th/6th Science Teacher | 8th Grade Boys Basketball Coach
 "I love that I get to work here. It's cool to be back where I graduated from to see relationships grow and that our passion as a school is still the same."



CHELSEA REICHARD CLASS OF 2021

High School English Teacher
 "I love that I get to spend all day with students talking about the things I love. But I really, really love that Lakewood is a Christian school that has a faith foundation. Lakewood was the number one place on my (job search) list. It felt like securing my dream job because there's not another school that is like Lakewood."



JORDAN PLACENCIA CLASS OF 2011

Student Life Director | Assistant Varsity Girls Basketball Coach
 "If people ask me how I'm doing, I say, 'I'm living my dream' and it's not just a saying. This really is everything I wanted to do. One of the values we have here is 'Truth wrapped in relationships,' and I think that really sums up my role and what I do here. I get to create and foster spaces where students are having relationship. A highlight is getting to walk alongside them through the years and see how they change and come to understand more about Jesus and who He says they are, and how that propels them to new places when they leave here."



Scan the QR Code to watch the full interviews with the Boomerang Bunch

MORE THAN *Gold*

“A golden opportunity,” “striking gold,” “a heart of gold,” “worth its weight in gold,” “The Golden Rule,” and “going for the gold” — there is no shortage of sayings when it comes to this precious metal. Gold signifies something special, costly and rare. Accordingly, it is appropriate that a 50th anniversary is known as a golden one. Gold was chosen for the 50th anniversary because it symbolizes a marriage’s timeless beauty, strength, and enduring value, much like the precious metal itself. The tradition dates back to Germanic countries in the 1500s, where husbands would give wives a gold wreath to commemorate 50 years of marriage. Gold’s resistance to tarnish and corrosion also represents how a long-lasting marriage can withstand life’s challenges, shining through with continued strength and brilliance. Much the same can be said of our journey as a school. We have weathered the refinement of five decades, thanks to God’s goodness and the investment of many: principals, teachers, coaches, students, parents, pastors, and school board members. And we are so grateful for all of this support over the years.

As we reflect on our 50 years, countless reasons for our longevity come to mind, but the most important characteristic that has allowed us to grow and thrive has been our unapologetic commitment to God’s Word and teaching through a Biblical lens. We know the promise of Psalm 19 to be true: “...the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold.” What’s better than celebrating a golden anniversary? It is the legacy of 50 years’ worth of moments and milestones that have led to lives transformed and generations of Christian leaders being brought up to change our world for God’s glory. Truly, this legacy is worth more than gold.

YEARS

Pastor Wayne Smith (left)
Founder of Faith Christian Academy

**FCA moved to our
current property in 1981**



1976 ★

Faith Christian Academy

Total student enrollment: 113
Number of students in graduating class: 0
Total number of teachers/principals: 8
Number of sports teams: 3



Faculty & Staff
1977-1978



First Administrator
Roger Gafken



Recess in the 1970s



1993

**NAME CHANGED TO
LAKEWOOD PARK
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**



1995

Lakewood Park Christian School

Total student enrollment: 198
Number of students in graduating class: 7
Total number of teachers/principals: 13
Number of sports teams: 12



1985

Faith Christian Academy

Total student enrollment: 157
Number of students in graduating class: 6
Total number of teachers/principals: 11
Number of sports teams: 11



New addition built in 2000

2005

Lakewood Park Christian School

Total student enrollment: 548
Number of students in graduating class: 12
Total number of teachers/principals: 33
Number of sports teams: 15



2015

Lakewood Park Christian School

Total student enrollment: 613
Number of students in graduating class: 42
Total number of teachers/principals: 41
Number of sports teams: 17



2025

Lakewood Park Christian School

Total student enrollment: 812
Number of students in graduating class: 56
Total number of teachers/principals: 57
Number of sports teams: 32



CHRIST *and* COMPETITION COM

Achieving fifty years as an organization is a major win by most standards. And it is not achieved without effort or intention. When I reflect on our history at LPCS, I am most grateful for the community of people who have done a lot of hard work for students and their families such as building or expanding facilities, focusing on new academic opportunities, giving generously or leading spiritually. Many people have helped to create a great community at LPCS — one that attracts people to stay. When I first joined LPCS, I noticed this was a place where teachers and staff had been for many years (decade plus) and some for their whole careers. The investment and care our staff pours into our school is deep. That type of consistency creates a dynamic culture that has impact far into the future, beyond when our athletes compete on our courts and fields. I am proud of the number of student athletes we have prepared for college athletics, the number of championships won over our first 50 years, and most importantly, the growing number of graduates who have gone on to impact their community and the world (some even coming back to LPCS to be leaders). For the next 50 years, I want to focus on improving our facilities, looking at new sports to add, and giving our teams the resources that they need to succeed.



BOBBY CHILDS
High School Athletic Director

1980s cheerleading



**GO
EAGLES!**



BINE *for* CULTURE WIN



LPCS fans in the 2000s

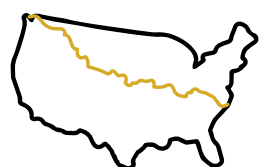
ZANDER RITENOUR
2024-25 TOP 10 RUNNERS
IN THE STATE

SOPHIA HASLETT
2024-25 RUNNER OF THE YEAR



A BIG DREAM'S JOURNEY

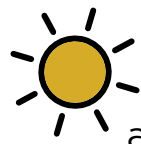
Ralph Waldo Emerson captured the potential of a little acorn quite beautifully when he wrote, "The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn." In the same way, sometimes a single thought or question can be the genesis of something much larger. That was the case for Track Coach Daron White and his son Colton (LPCS Class of 2021). One day last year, Coach White casually asked Colton, "What do you think about biking across the US?" And from there, a tremendous journey beginning in La Push, Washington, and finishing in Virginia Beach, Virginia, became a reality this past summer with the goal of helping build a new running track on our campus (a \$250,000 match is still in place for donations).



3,932
miles



59
days



66
avg. miles
per day



5
flat tires in 1 day

\$500,000
fundraising
goal



"We wanted to do more than just bike across America and have a purpose to it. The father-son bonding, it's just it's been incredible, probably more than I expected. It's just been a lot of fun," Daron said. "Number one, it's just been a great blessing knowing that, you know, this is going beyond myself," Colton said. "But also, you know, just being on this trip alone has been such a huge blessing, getting to see some beautiful country and just meeting a lot of awesome people." Both Daron and Colton White are recipients of this year's Golden Acorn award, demonstrating an exceptional commitment to Lakewood Park Christian School. We are inspired by their dedication and shared passion for Christian education and our track program. The path to a new track is happening one mile and donation at a time, and we look forward to seeing the Whites' vision fully achieved, benefiting future generations of LPCS runners.



ONE FINE DAY *in the* FINE ARTS



NATHAN HAMILTON Middle & High School Band Director

Over the years, the Fine Arts department at Lakewood Park has produced one fine day after another filled with the voices, harmonies, and artistry of our talented students. And while a concert, musical, play or exhibit may only last a matter of hours, the work to get there is measured in weeks, months, and years, even. It's one of the best examples we have of a collaborative environment on our campus. I am most thankful for the supportive work environment here at Lakewood Park that encourages and supports professional growth.

I loved how many resources I had as the band teacher when first arriving at LPCS. We had just built a new band room two years earlier, complete with new technology and equipment. That investment has paid off in developing our student population overall and our student performers. Seeing how much our student population has grown in the seven years I have worked here is a huge milestone. I think it speaks to the quality, passion, and care of our school staff and community. As I look to the future; my goal is to build a program where students and I are encouraged to be the best musicians we can be, to the glory of God.

LPCS Fine Arts through the years...





DEAR MOM,
I LOVE YOU. You're
an amazing Mom.
Happy Mothers Day
from Jake.

have a
great day



DEAR MOM, thanks
for being the best

Dear
mom,
happy

THE NEXT FIFTY...

Our golden anniversary has provided a perfect opportunity to reflect, remember and reminisce. We are so grateful for God's provision and all the moments that have brought us to this one. We wonder what others will say of this point in our history fifty years from today. And while it's difficult to imagine what things might look like for the 2075-76 school year, we expect God's faithfulness to be present, shaping the steps of our future leaders. It's reasonable to think they might look back on this golden anniversary year with many of the same observations we have of those who founded our school fifty years ago. They had a clear mission. They were trusting God to guide their steps and wished to use their resources as fully as possible for the benefit of the Kingdom. And here we are, full circle, ready to take the next steps to expand our campus and by extension, our ability to bring more kids to Christ. Careful planning and collaboration by our leadership, LPBC elder board and LPCS school board has led to an approved campus Master Plan that will serve as our map for fundraising efforts and future growth. A track, tennis courts, and additional entrance to campus will be the first projects, with a significant portion of funding already received. We hope to break ground on these projects as soon as full funding is achieved. Beyond that, we know that additional school space is needed, and those plans are underway as well. We are trusting in God's provision to bring in the funds for these initiatives and ask for your prayers as fundraising and work begins. We benefit daily from the fruits of the labor started fifty years ago. We celebrate that harvest today, while knowing that it's planting season again. What an exciting time to be a part of this community — here's to the next fifty!



 **Lakewood Park**
BAPTIST CHURCH | CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

 **MARTIN RILEY**
architects • engineers

AS WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE OF LPCS,
WE RECOGNIZE THE INCREDIBLE GIFT
WE'VE BEEN GIVEN — 180 ACRES FULL
OF POTENTIAL AND PROMISE.

OUR GROWTH, HIS GLORY

I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for the privilege of being part of this incredible community for the past 12 years. I'm especially thankful for the opportunity to be part of raising up the next generation of disciples. I truly believe that each student is here at LPCS for "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). During my 11 years as a teacher here, I was deeply grateful for the chance to speak truth into students' lives—truth grounded in God's Word. Previously having taught in a public school, I cherished the freedom to get to the heart of meaningful learning. There is an overwhelming sense of family and Christ-centered atmosphere here. From the moment I stepped on campus, I could feel it. At the time, I was also a parent looking for the right school for my daughter, who was about to start Pre-K. I toured several schools, but when I visited LPCS, I immediately felt the Lord's presence through the warm, welcoming staff and the intentionality of the teachers. I left that visit thinking, "This is where my children need to be — and this is where I need to be." The rest is history. That following year, I stepped into the classroom as a teacher, and my daughter began her journey at LPCS in Pre-K. Now, in my second year as the Director of Admissions, I have the joy of sharing the beauty of this place and our community with prospective families. It's easy to come alongside them when there is so much to celebrate here. With an enrollment over 800 students, we've expanded by adding preschool classes at our Lakewood North Campus, opening three sections per grade level from K-12, and offering even greater diversity in athletics and the arts. Praise God for His continued growth and glory in this place! As we look to the future of LPCS, we recognize the incredible gift we've been given — 180 acres full of potential and promise. As we step into the next 50 years, it is our desire to follow the Lord's leading, trusting His plans as we continue building a place where students can thrive in every way.

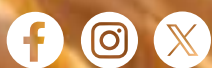
MEREDITH GAINES Director of Admissions



Give to Lakewood Park Christian School

Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest
if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:9



Lakewood Park Christian School
260.925.1393

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5555 CR 29 | Auburn, IN 46706

Early Education (North Campus)
1600 S Grandstaff Dr | Auburn, IN 46706

