



Michelle's Message



Our Calling as OWFCA

We are at our five-year anniversary for Okaloosa/Walton FCA. Wow! God has really blessed the growth of FCA for His Glory. Please enjoy this inspiring devotion, written from the devotion, "The Call to Create".

"What I owe to [the Inklings] is incalculable. Is there any pleasure on earth as great as a circle of Christian friends by a good fire?" - C. S. Lewis

The Bible offers a tremendous amount of insight into how we as Christians should work: We should work with excellence, integrity, diligence, and graciousness. But what's often overlooked is the need to create in community with other believers. For those of us who choose to follow the call to create, we must surround ourselves with fellow Christian creators who can help "renew our minds" (Romans 12:2) with eternal perspective as we create.

This inspiring devotion reminds me of how Great our GOD is! We would have never been able to create the network of relationships through all who support FCA without His calling for us to unite in relationship to create what he has called for us to be and do, by the spirit of Jesus Christ, his Holy Spirit.

Again, C. S. Lewis provides a model for what this looks like. During the 1930s and 1940s, Oxford was home to some of the world's greatest Christian minds, including Charles Williams, Hugo Dyson, Owen Barfield, and most famously, J. R. R. Tolkien, C.

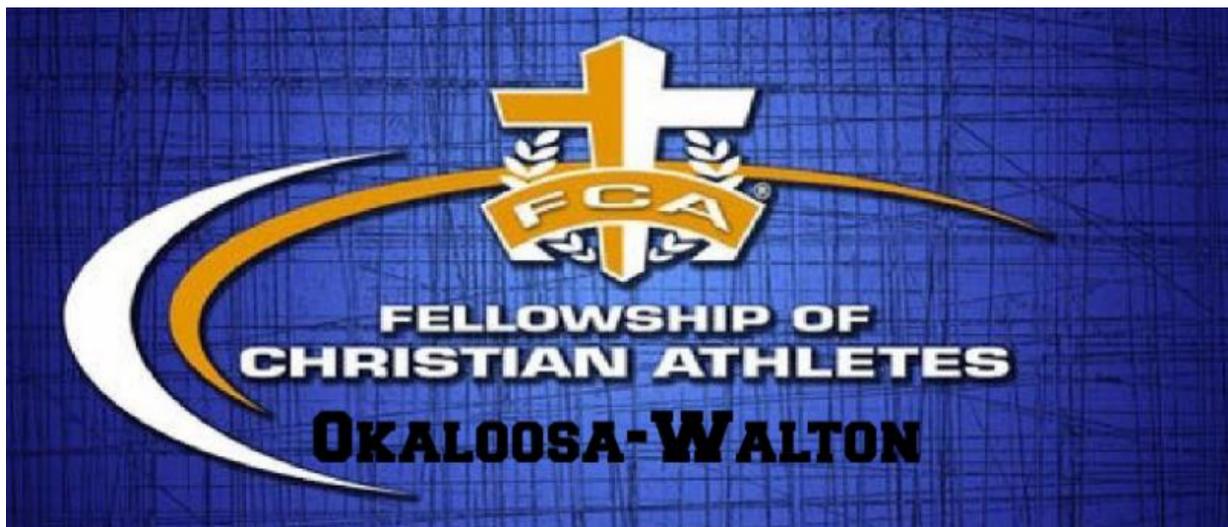
S. Lewis, and his brother Warnie Lewis. This group of friends, known simply as the Inklings, shared a love of the Lord and literature, each of them following God's call to create through their writings. But they did not create in isolation. For nearly two decades, the group met on a near-weekly basis to read aloud their latest writings, get feedback from the other members of the group, drink a pint of beer, and help renew each other's minds with regards to their Christian faith.

Without constant communion with other believers to refresh their eternal perspectives, Tolkien may have never completed *The Lord of the Rings* and Lewis may have never finished *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Like these creators before us, we need regular communion with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to renew our minds and refresh the lenses through which we view the world as we create.

If our work is to feel like a vocation—a true calling on our lives—we must be willing to follow the example of C. S. Lewis and reimagine our work as service to God and others. When we do, we will find the lordship of the True Aslan, Jesus Christ, changing our motivations for creating, the products we choose to create, and how we go about creating them, in community with others following the call to create.

As we've seen this modeled in the life of C. S. Lewis, reimagining our work as a calling from God changes our motivations for creating and the products we choose to create. As we'll see today, following God's call to create also changes how we create. Throughout the newsletter, I pray you see how blessed we are to have each other and the Christian friends that desire to continue growing OWFCA in the full vision of our calling to create, for God's Glory and His Kingdom. Enjoy the readings of our teammates. God Bless.

Michelle Carmical
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5 YEAR anniversary

Kim Pennington

OWFCA Board

Greetings! My name is Kim Pennington and I am a member of the Okaloosa Walton FCA Board of Directors. OWFCA was formed five years ago this March. At the time the idea was presented to me I was first asked if my husband and I would like to make a donation and support this ministry. As we talked further I was asked to be a part of the board. I wasn't sure what I could bring to the table or what to expect. I was not raised in a Christian home, in fact I did not know Jesus until I met my husband!! As a youth I did not get to experience FCA, so while I was familiar with it, I didn't have personal experience with it until my children started attending Meigs Middle School. As my children grew up in the Church and attended FCA I started to understand what an incredible opportunity this was. I still remember vividly the first time I went to the Buck Smith All Sports Association FCA breakfast. To see almost 1,000 students gathered for one purpose, Him, was something I would never forget and I knew I wanted to be a part of helping this ministry grow.

Fast forward five years and here I am still a proud member of the Board of Directors and thanking the Lord everyday for the blessings he has bestowed upon FCA and the children of our community through our ministry, through our director Michelle, and through the generous donations of our community. Our recent 2018 FCA Breakfast had 1,700+ in attendance. We also just completed our 3rd Annual Coaches Clinic where I got the chance to spend the weekend with the wives of coaches from around the South. I was blessed to listen to these ladies and truly amazed at the ever-increasing pressure that's put on these coaches to not only coach but also be a role model for our athletes. There is more need than ever to support our local coaches along with our athletes!!

Children today are experiencing an increased amount of stress, anxiety, and fear as our society changes. They are living their lives under a microscope through social media. It's more important than ever that we equip them to handle these things by showing them the love of Jesus Christ. We can all help by shining our lights on these children by volunteering with FCA, working with a youth group, mentoring a child, and donating to

OWFCA!

What a blessing it has been to watch FCA grow over the last five years. Our youth are doing amazing things!! My prayer is that each of you will continue to support this ministry and find others who will join us!

*God Bless,
Kim Pennington
FCA Board*

Scott Michie
Campus Sponsor
Student Leadership Board Sponsor
South Walton High School Sponsor

Paul says in 2 Timothy 1:14, "Guard the good deposit entrusted to you."

As the adult leaders of OWFCA, it's our Biblical duty to see to it that the next generation hears about the mighty acts of God. We've taken a huge step in doing this by establishing a Student Leaders Board to help organize and direct the student activities of the OWFCA.

I sit with Michelle Carmichael on this Student Leader Board, and it's been exciting to see God work through these young people. They put together our Fields of Faith event in October and organized and led the student portion of the recent FCA Buck Smith Breakfast.

But importantly, they are doing ministry. Ministry at their schools and now in their region. Having worked with students in ministry for over 40 years, I've seen that students who do ministry become the "ministers" of the future.

You probably heard the joke: "Be nice to your kids...they'll be picking your nursing home." Well, by encouraging and allowing students to do ministry in FCAs, the futures of our churches and ministries are likely to be more successful.

If you know an outstanding sophomore or junior in our FCAs, encourage them to become a leader in their school and now the OWFCA Student Leaders Board.

*Scott Michie
South Walton High School
FCA Huddle Leader*

Logan Lawrence
Student Leadership Board
South Walton FCA President

My name is Logan Lawrence. I go to South Walton High School, and I have been a part of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Student Board for the entirety of my senior year. When I first heard about the opportunity to become a part of the board, I was reluctant because of my busy schedule. However, I have loved being on the board and have found that the Saturdays I was planning and practicing for FCA events with my fellow student board members became the days I looked forward to most throughout this year. Many of my experiences have been encouraging and challenging as I have been impacted by this leadership position and have grown in my understanding of walking through life with God.

At the beginning of the year, I was introduced to the other board members, and it was exciting because I was meeting high school students who had the same goals and hearts as my co-president, Joel Wildes, and I did. We were expected to help plan some of the yearly events such as Fields of Faith and the FCA Breakfast. For me, this required repressing my desire for control and instead trusting the wonderful ideas of the other board members. I have planned other things in my life and found that trusting the people I was working with was difficult, but the students on the board presented amazing leadership that taught me more about what it means to be a good leader and a good follower than any other activity. In addition, the students were filled with the love of Jesus Christ and encouraged me in my spiritual life by living as examples. Every meeting began and ended with prayer that was uplifting and promoted dependence on God instead of ourselves within our lives and FCA. The characteristics of each person and the student board were constant throughout the year, and we were able to accomplish so much as a group of spiritual leaders.

Further, I adore leading worship, and the FCA student board has given me wonderful opportunities to do so. In my huddle at FCA, I lead worship along with other high school students every week. It has encouraged many of the students at South Walton High School in miraculous ways. I was also given the opportunity to lead at the FCA Breakfast. This was the largest crowd I have ever played for, and it offered an incredible worship experience for me. In preparation, the band and myself met a couple times before the breakfast. Here, I made amazing relationships and learned about worship from the other musicians who, like me, have led worship at church and in FCA. It was an abundant blessing to meet these people and lead worship with them in front of thousands of students. Because of their journeys of faith, they were able to strengthen my understanding of depending more on God in my worship than myself. This will follow me in my future worship leadership positions.

I am extremely grateful for the FCA student board and the ways it has impacted me. I have been challenged, encouraged, and taught by my peers in unexpected circumstances and areas of my life. Seeing the faith of each student and learning about never going through life alone is my greatest take away from the experience. What a blessing! I look forward to future successes of FCA and thank God for the way it has impacted my this year in my leadership, worship, and journey of faith.

-Logan

Bernard Johnson

Community and Board Member

Growing up an Air Force military brat, I was 14 years old when I attended my first FCA Camp while living in southern California. Attending it with church friends and school classmates made it that much more memorable as this was an opportunity for me to learn more about the FCA mission, the impact Christ would have on my life, and the thrill to enjoy all the things about the camping experience of food, fun, and fellowship. I was an active participant for the next two years until we moved - again. Due to unavailability and the entrance of other life events, I was not around the FCA fellowship for the next 35 years.

When learning of the FCA reignite here locally, I was encouraged. When asked of the opportunity to serve on the board, I was honored. When my boys expressed an interest in joining the FCA huddle in middle school, I was gratified. Gratified in the sense that they also had a relationship with Christ and wanted to take theirs to the next level of growth and spiritual development.

The FCA sowed a spiritual seed in me years ago. I've also been given the opportunity to sow seed into others' lives and to see God's work bear fruit in many impactful ways. It's been a blessing to financially support the FCA mission. As with most other things, it takes this kind of support to spread the Gospel and to allow other seeds to be sewn to continue spreading the faith. With the many distractions available to our young people, giving to the FCA helps to support the cause of influencing lives to Christ. Michelle Carmical has done an outstanding job inspiring and motivating our middle and high school students. We stand with her as she has done a lot of praying and heavy lifting to encourage our young people to join and be active participants in the FCA Huddle Groups.

The mission of FCA is simple - leading others into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. The Great Commission of Christ to the disciples was to spread His teachings to all the nations of the world. As we spend time with God, His word will abide within to direct us how we also can influence others and harvest the fields to grow His church.

*-Bernard H. Johnson Jr.
All Sports Association
President 2017/18*

Gator Heath Board, Coach

FCA: A Ministry of Opening Doors

Matthew 7:7 assures us, in Jesus' own words, that if we are looking for Him, we will find Him. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches multitudes of people who had followed Him and His disciples. He assured those that had followed Him, **"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you."** To me, this is what we as His

faithful servants through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes can provide...a safe place where people can ask, seek, and knock. Our *duty* is to provide this opportunity to those who are searching. Our *challenge* is to reach the people who may not know or understand this truth that Jesus shared.

The Good Lord has blessed me with the opportunity to serve Him through teaching math, coaching football, and as an FCA Huddle Leader/Sponsor at Meigs Middle School, as well as one of the original board members from the development of the Okaloosa/Walton FCA. My availability, NOT my ability, has allowed God to reach many people, not just the students and athletes I have contact with. Through these venues, God has increased His outreach through His Ministry of Multiplication (an endearing phrase for a math teacher!). His ministry reaches far beyond the walls of our school and the sidelines of Pope Field, our gridiron.

Through the expanded ministries of our Okaloosa/Walton FCA, I have experienced many new opportunities to serve...the door I have been knocking on has been opened! Personally, the FCA Football Coaches Clinic has been an amazing vehicle God has used to reveal how faith and football go hand-in-hand with successful football programs. There were many great sessions of Xs and Os, but each of them was intertwined with how faith was an integral part of their program...a witness to the success of the national championship contenders of both the Division I and II levels for the last 3 years! This year my perspective on the clinic was different. I am transitioning from a position coach to our team's Character Coach...another door opened! The development of faith and character in our players is now the strategy of my coaching.

With the development of a new semi-pro football team in the panhandle area (the Gulf Coast Gators), another door was opened when the owner/head coach invited me to be their Team Chaplain/Character Coach. God's new ministry for me is to share His messages with men from all walks of life! It is amazing to be in the midst of hearts and minds that are being exposed to, and some changed by, a message from God that is meant specifically for them! The challenge I spoke of at the beginning of this testimony is being met head-on through the face-to-face ministry of Jesus Christ in the locker room! This locker room door was opened by the availability granted to me by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the grace of God. His ministry is being multiplied and I am anxious to see new doors opening in the future! All power and glory go to Him!

-Gator Heath

Noah Lleva

Student Leadership Chair

Choctaw Athlete and President of FCA

"Huddling up with God in the game of life..."

Hi! My name is Noah Lleva and it's an honor to serve as Chairman of the Student Leadership Board for Okaloosa/Walton County FCA for the 2017-2018 school year. I'm a senior at Choctawhatchee High School and I also serve as President of FCA in my

school. This year, Ms. Michelle Carmical (Area Director of OWFCA) constructed a student leadership board that represents unity within our schools and community as the body of Christ. The board is a culmination of student leaders in their school's FCA program who are juniors and seniors. Our mission is to establish a vision for Okaloosa/Walton County FCA and determine countywide events.

Personally, the Student Leadership Board for OWFCA is one of the highlights for my senior year. It has been a pleasure to be working with student leaders from all across the Panhandle who are focused on the mission and will do whatever it takes to accomplish our goal. The commitment each representative displays is contagious, and allows us to work together in unity as the body of Christ. This year, we were given the responsibility to plan and organize big events such as Fields of Faith and the FCA Breakfast sponsored by All Sports Association. With a school of typical teenagers, this may be a task that rings "IMPOSSIBLE." But quite frankly, I was surrounded by young men and women that radiated a "WE CAN DO IT" attitude. Our experiences of gaining knowledge and wisdom from God have allowed us to fulfill our calling as leaders in our school and beyond. No doubt about it that He was in our midst.

As a senior who is about to graduate, it's unfortunate that I will no longer be a part of the Student Leadership Board. I'm grateful for Michelle Carmical and the other positive role models that have helped groom and shape my character as a young leader. But I'm also very excited for this organization and am looking forward to seeing where God will be taking it.

-Noah

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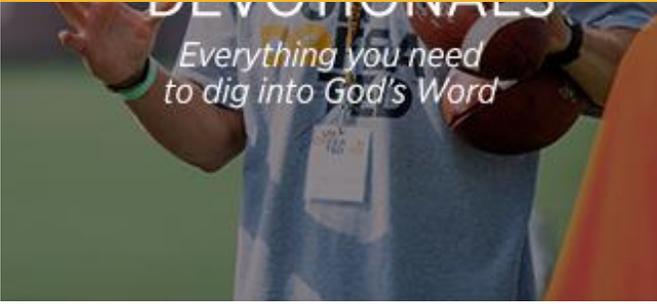


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