



# COLLEGE *of* ATHENS

## CoA Winter 2023 Newsletter

*Equipping the next generation of Christian leaders to transform the world in Jesus' Name*



### Like Nehemiah

As Christ-followers, we are called to be people of prayer. Surveying recent world and national cultural trends, clearly, there is no shortage of things to pray about. Confronted by challenges, let's consider our Old Testament brother, Nehemiah, as a stunning example of a heart surrendered to God in all matters.

Although in captivity, Nehemiah lived comfortably in the presence of the king he served. However, when his brother and others visited him with news from Judah, Nehemiah inquired about the people and the state of Jerusalem. When he heard the disheartening news, he wept.

When was the last time you or I wept in God's presence over the state of world affairs? Surrounded by our own cares and comforts, do we pray mostly about sustaining our personal wants and wishes? The substance of our prayers shows what matters most to us. Philippians 2:3-4 tells us to value others above ourselves, in humility, and to consider others' interests above our own.

Nehemiah was willing to be inconvenienced by spending time in prayer on behalf of the Hebrew remnant in Jerusalem. He knew that prayer is our first and best weapon and not a last resort. He mourned, fasted, and knelt before God in prayer. Consider the substance of his prayer in Nehemiah 1:5-11.

First, he acknowledged who God is, praying, "*Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments... (v.5).*" Have we forgotten that our God Jehovah is sovereign, transcendent, powerful, able, good, faithful, and true to His Word?" That's where our prayers must begin! God calls out to us, "Seek My Kingdom. Seek My Face." We don't come before Him as paupers, begging for Him to FedEx a miracle from His Throne. Acknowledging who He is encourages our fearful hearts and emboldens our prayers. We remember His power to part the Red Sea and trust that His sovereign plans are victorious!

Second, Nehemiah invites God to draw near, "*Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night (v.6).*" One of God's names in Scripture is "El Roi," which means 'the God who sees me (Genesis 16:13).' James 4:8 says, "*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.*" What a promise! Asking God to hear and to see us is more about reminding ourselves that He already hears and sees all things. Plus, it's our humble recognition that we are unable to resolve the presenting circumstance without His mighty power.

You see, we have progressively distanced ourselves from the True Source of every good thing without even realizing it. Food comes from the store. Money resides in the bank. Everything else comes from Amazon. We have become accustomed to relying on human sources to meet our needs rather than the God who loves us best.

Next, Nehemiah's prayer turns to confession, "*I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you; we have not obeyed your commands.*" We are blessed to live under God's grace, knowing that He is compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love for us (Exodus 34:6). However, His heart is grieved when we willfully drag our sin habits into His

Kingdom where they don't belong. Paul strongly encouraged that we don't hide our sins behind the grace of God (Romans 6:1). Nehemiah recognized that the Israelites' exiled condition was the result of their own rebellion despite God's warnings.

As prayer warriors, it's vital that we confess our sins as well as the sins of our generation and our culture before the God who loves us. You see, the sins that one generation tolerates, the next generation celebrates. Then we invite God to transform every desire into agreement with His will and His better ways.

Ultimately, Nehemiah made his request to God— "Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man (v.11)." The man he referred to was the king he served. Nehemiah understood that in God's eyes, every person—including the most powerful leader—is subject to almighty God.

In light of God's sovereignty, He takes into account our petitions regarding *how* He fulfills His plans and purposes. But ultimately, it's *His* plan and *His* story! God's ways are perfect, and He shields all who take refuge in Him (Psalm 18:30).

Will our country continue to be known as "one nation under God," or as a people driven to fulfill self-serving desires and pursue personal gain? May that which breaks God's heart break ours, too. May we be known by the watching world as a people who pray to the One, True Living God—people who, like Nehemiah, are willing to be inconvenienced in service of those things that matter for eternity. Let's be a people who gladly respond to the gentle nudges of the Holy Spirit to pray, serve, and act in agreement with God!

***By Marcia Wilbur, CoA President***

## CoA Upcoming Opportunities

Make plans now to go deeper in your faith. CoA always has ways to connect you with others who share your passion for life in Christ!



### **New Year - New Heart 2024** **Saturday, January 20** **9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

During the month of January, the College of Athens celebrates the new year as we turn to our Creator in adoration. **New Year-New Heart** is the College of Athens' annual prayer conference that takes place during this time of renewal. [Come join us](#) on Saturday, January 20th for this day of worship, praise, prayer, and healing. Discover how to truly live from your whole heart! [Register Now!](#)

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL

# 2024 President's Gala

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2024**

WELCOME & COCKTAILS 5:30 – 6:30 PM  
DINNER, SPECIAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER, & DANCING 6:30 – 9:30 PM

*at*

Trump's Catering  
2026 S. Milledge Ave B, Athens, Georgia 30605

*Semi-formal Attire*



COLLEGE of ATHENS

*Featuring Special Keynote Speaker,*  
Mr. Joel Manby

## 2024 President's Gala

**Saturday, February 24th**

**5:30-9:30 PM**

Please join us for an evening of cocktails, dinner, and dancing at the annual President's Gala on Saturday, February 24th! The featured keynote speaker for this year will be Mr. Joel Manby, former CEO of SeaWorld, Herschend Enterprises, and SAAB Automobile, and author of *Love Works: Seven Timeless Principles for Effective Leaders*. Joel currently serves as a Thought Leader for John Maxwell Leadership, where he consults and speaks on leadership lessons drawn from his successful career. [Click here](#) for gala sponsorship and tickets!

## Fresh Discipleship Opportunities in January

Look ahead to our upcoming opportunities in the new year and our Spring semester!



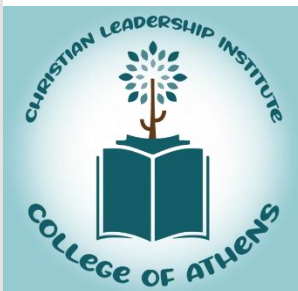
### Coaching 4 Christlikeness (C4C)

Would you like to develop the skills that will equip you to restore and build up other people to live from a place of wholeness in Christ, empowered for their personal journey through all aspects of who they are? Are you interested in becoming more effective in explaining to unbelievers who God created them to be and their place in His larger story? Do you value application and experience as key components for growing in Christ? We hope you will consider Coaching 4 Christlikeness! This 18-month training begins on Friday, January 12th. For more information and to register, please contact [Dr. Marcia Wilbur](#).

Coaching  
C4C  
Christlikeness

### Christian Leadership Institute (CLI)

Beyond a basic Bible study, this 18-month program will prepare and restore you to teach, reach, lead, and minister to others out of your identity in Christ through relational, hands-on training for life and leadership on the home front, in the church, in the marketplace, and across the globe. The new cohort kicks off



January 2024 and is limited to 20 participants. [Click here for more info and to apply!](#)



## Audit a Class

Enjoy our courses throughout the year without the pressure of earning a degree! CoA courses are available to the public when you enroll as an auditing student! [See what classes are available and register today!](#)

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## Spotlight on CoA

Fall is always a busy time here at the College of Athens, and fall semester 2023 was no exception! Here is a brief roundup of just some of the many events that took place.



## 2023 Pastor's Appreciation

On October 4th, CoA gathered 20 area pastors and ministry leaders for our annual Pastor's Appreciation event! It was a great time of refreshment, connection, and good food. Thank you to our guest speaker, Dr. Tracy Reynolds, for an inspiring message about church leadership, to Alps Road Presbyterian Church for hosting, and to Newk's for the tasty food!



## ServeAthens ICN 2023

Every year the faculty, staff, students and families of the college come together to [serve the Athens community in Christ's name](#). This year's event took place on Saturday, October 14th, and was an opportunity for Christians to unify as a representation of Christ to the world. We had over 80 volunteers from 18 different churches serving at seven different project sites across the Athens area! We give all praise to God for the blessing we were able to be to individuals, ministries, and organizations through our service. Thank you to everyone who helped make the event possible, from hosting to sponsoring to volunteering!





### **Atlanta Cultural Immersion Trip**

On September 22, a group of CoA staff and students had the opportunity to spend the day in Atlanta learning more about Islam and visiting a local mosque, experiencing other cultures, and discussing God's heart for the nations and ways they can partner with God in his global purposes. A big thank you to our partners at Cafe 1040 for hosting us for the day!

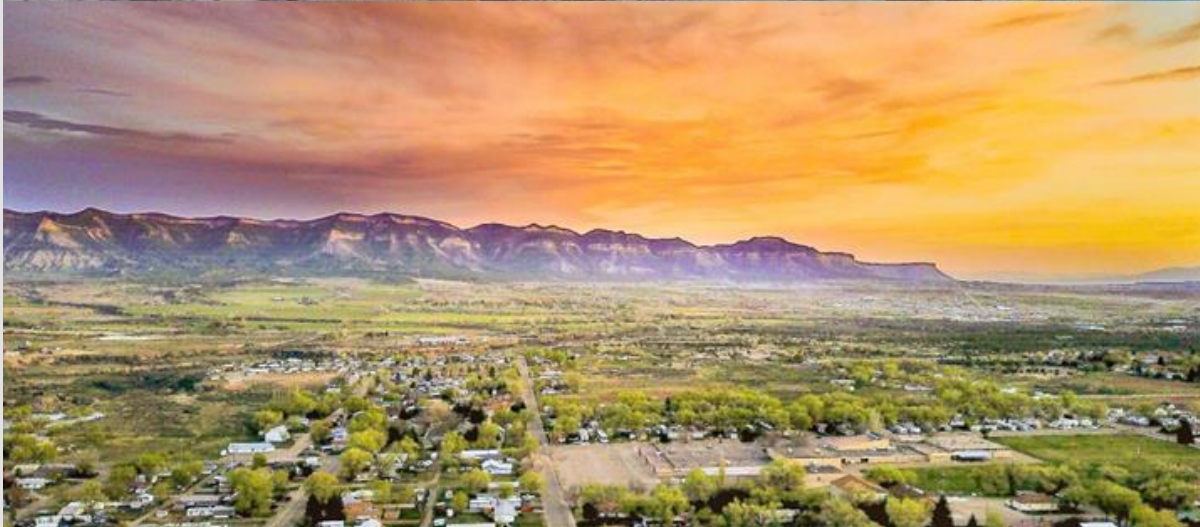


## Great Exchange @ UNG-Watkinsville

CoA staff and students recently spent some time on the University of North Georgia-Watkinsville campus interacting with UNG students as a part of the Great Exchange evangelism outreach. As a result, CoA volunteers:

- Had 23 spiritual conversations with UNG students
  - Got 12 opportunities to share the gospel
  - handed out 5 Bibles
  - gave out 6 "Twenty-One Day Challenge" pamphlets and 8 *More Than a Carpenter* books
  - and most importantly, prayed with a student to receive Christ!
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## 2024 CoA Mission Trip Opportunities



We are excited to announce that the College of Athens has plans to host two mission trips in 2024! **Please contact Mr. Alex Fields for more information.** Participation is open to all!

### **Boston, MA May 4-11, 2024**

We will once again be partnering with Beacon Community Church in helping reach their area for Jesus! Participants can expect cultural immersion and church-planting in an unchurched context, evangelism, prayer walking, and more! Cost is \$700 all-inclusive (with a \$350 deposit due in spring).

### **Cortez, CO July 3-14, 2024**

CoA is partnering with Evangel Assembly of God as they seek to reach the city of Cortez with the love, light, and gospel of Jesus Christ! Participants will help with evangelism, children's activities, the local Feeding Program, prayer walking, and possibly a visit to a local reservation. Cost is \$1800 all-inclusive

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## Campus Development Update

# COLLEGE of ATHENS

IT'S TIME TO ENTER



*An Invitation to Plant and Grow!*

[collegeofathens.edu/promised-land/](https://collegeofathens.edu/promised-land/)

In 2017, CoA rezoned and purchased a stunning 114-acre parcel in Oconee County as the site of its permanent campus. We are ready to move some dirt and build a place for CoA to grow and to thrive! CoA is expanding its capacity to build a Christ-centered workforce through degree and non-degree programs and to serve our local community.

Student housing is now the greatest practical need for our full-time and international students. Completion of initial Phase I construction ensures that CoA will have residential space for 72 individual students as well as additional classrooms and better professional space for the growing number of staff and academic faculty.

In total, the CoA campus development effort needs \$45,000 per month in gifts and pledges for a 36-month period to provide for expenses during the building and lease-out phases.

**A generous donor has agreed to match up to \$200K** of all the gifts and pledges received towards our campus development by February 1, 2024. God has provided \$113K towards that match so far. Would you consider [setting up a monthly recurring gift](#) for the next 36 months so that CoA can receive every dollar of the matching gift?!

[Whatever way you prefer to support](#) the college's giant leap forward onto its Promised Land will be a tremendous blessing!

[Watch a short video that details the campus vision.](#)

[Learn more about the College of Athens' "Promised Land" campaign.](#)

## How Can You Pray for CoA?

When God's people pray, His Kingdom advances! Thank you for your continued prayers over:

- Every student and faculty member;
- God's abiding presence, favor, protection and grace in this place;
- Expedient cooperation from a variety of governmental agencies;
- the Hancock State Prison effort; and
- Everything we need to begin building our campus in 2024!



And let's always praise and thank Our God for the opportunity to co-labor with Him for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ! What a privilege!

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## CoA Helps Rebuild Lives @ Hancock State Prison

Our faculty continue to teach two days per week at our Hancock State Prison campus. Please continue to pray for the 50 men who are going deeper with the LORD through their CoA degree program.



One of the men wrote recently, "Mere words do an injustice for the boundless gratitude I have for the ones who have provided this opportunity. The Holy Spirit is feverishly at work through our professors. For me, a hard-time sentence has turned into a divinely-inspired calling through this opportunity."

Please consider **partnering with CoA** on the Hancock State Prison Initiative! Additionally, if your church is interested in providing hygiene kits for the men at HSP, please contact **Dr. Marcia Wilbur**, College of Athens President, at 706-769-1472.

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## The Holidays Can Be Hard



During this season, grief, anxiety, and strained relationships can stir up any number of conflicts in your heart. Remember that the CoA Prayer Ministry department stands ready to minister to you as needed. [Click here today to make your appointment!](#)

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## CoA Employment Opportunities

### Assistant Director of Admissions

The Assistant Director of Admissions will be responsible for recruiting students to enroll in the College and assisting them through the admissions process. Specific duties will include attending college recruiting fairs across northeast Georgia and surrounding areas, participating with the college's admissions and onboarding team in the overall admissions strategy, effectively and creatively utilizing social media and other marketing materials, and assisting with undergraduate Academic Advising.



COLLEGE of ATHENS

For more information and to see other available opportunities, please visit our [CoA Employment Listings!](#)

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## CoA Service Opportunities

### New Heart Thrift Store

Planning on doing some spring cleaning? Looking to refresh your home or closet? Be sure to stop by the **New Heart Thrift Store** and stock up for the new season! Located just outside of downtown Watkinsville at 1450 Greensboro Highway, New Heart is open Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00am until 5:00 pm.

Proceeds from purchases and donations will help fund the CoA student scholarship fund while also giving back to other community ministries. Additionally, volunteers are also always needed and appreciated! To volunteer, please call 706-705-1702 or email [info@newheartthriftstore.org](mailto:info@newheartthriftstore.org).



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# COLLEGE *of* ATHENS

## Core Values

IN THE CONTEXT OF CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM, WE VALUE:

- **A strong biblical foundation**
  - **An abiding relationship with the Trinity through prayer**
  - **Grounding each person's Identity in Christ**
  - **Practical, experiential learning**
  - **Every believer's calling to Christ-like love and service**
  - **Worship in Spirit and truth**
  - **Unity in the body of Christ**
  - **Faith and trust in God alone**
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## Thank You, CoA Business Sponsors!



## CoA Mission Statement

College of Athens is a biblically grounded, Holy Spirit-empowered, accredited Christian college that prepares and restores men and women who will teach, reach, lead, and minister to others out of their identity in Christ through relational, hands-on training for life and leadership in the church, in the marketplace, and across the globe.

### Our Contact Information

\*{{Organization Name}}\*  
\*{{Organization Address}}\*  
\*{{Organization Phone}}\*  
\*{{Organization Website}}\*

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### Follow Us To Stay Connected

