

# Letter From Pastor Alex

This year, our theme is the wisdom of God via the Book of James. James teaches that God gladly gives wisdom to those who ask, and that wisdom shows up in how we live. With so much happening in the world, it's easy to seek insight, direction, and understanding in many places. Yet when we look anywhere other than Jesus as our primary source of wisdom, we're left unsatisfied, empty and hungry for more.

During this OctoberFast, as we feel physical hunger, let it remind us to seek God for wisdom. Our regular events like Wednesday night bible study, Friday morning 4th Watch prayer, and Sunday worship will bring us together for encouragement as we fast and pray. The prayer room will also be open and I encourage you to schedule some time there to meet with God. We'll conclude our fast with a light meal and a special worship time during our "Lawd-Have-Mercy" week.\*

Let me tell you that the James offers direct and challenging words. If you're like me, you might read it and think, "Snap! James, you're not pulling any punches! How can I live this out?"

We'll walk through this together and learn from James about becoming not only hearers, but doers; people whose faith works through love; a community that learns to tame the tongue, resist double-mindedness, honor the poor, practice humility, and pray with persistence.

We are living in unstable times—rapid change, conflicts, financial worries, political anxiety, and injustice—and many of us carry personal concerns. James calls us to steadfastness under trial, to a single-hearted trust in God, and to a wisdom that is "pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruit." In other words, wisdom is not just what we know—it's who we become together. That's the kind of church we're fasting to be. I can't wait to be in these spaces with you and encourage you to lean in.

My prayers are that you will know God's love for you, and that this fast will root you in the Way of Jesus so you become a fountain of life that lives wisely. May our all-wise God guide our steps, fill our worship, and bless our unity as we enter to worship and exit to serve—together.

With love in Christ,

Pastor Alex

\* For years at FOL, this is what we've called the final and most challenging week of OctoberFast.