



Bio | President Mark Louis Johnson Sr.



From the basketball courts of Europe and South America to the boardrooms of higher education and the pulpits of America's churches, Dr. Mark Louis Johnson, Sr. has built a life around one driving belief, *when faith and purpose align, anything is possible*. Today he serves as the 10th President of Louisiana Christian University (LCU), leading the historic Pineville institution through a bold season of renewal rooted in Worship, Scholarship, Stewardship, and Leadership. His presidency radiates energy, creativity, and conviction as he guides LCU to Restore, Rebuild, and Reimagine the future of Louisiana Christian University.

A third-generation minister, Dr. Johnson grew up surrounded by faith, service, and basketball. In 1994 he became the first African American Senior Class Commencement Speaker in the 244-year history of Washington & Jefferson College (PA), where he now serves as Trustee, former Chairman of the Student Success Committee, Enrollment and Admissions, and Campaign Steering Committees. Following a successful professional basketball career overseas, Johnson sensed a higher calling and pursued graduate study at Princeton Theological Seminary (NJ), earning both a Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology in Christian Education. While at Princeton he served as Executive Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at the 7,000-member Metropolitan Baptist Church in Newark, New Jersey, where his transformational leadership earned him recognition as one of the "100 Positive Men of New Jersey."

After productive years in New Jersey, he joined the nonprofit sector as National Best Men Program Director for the Best Friends Youth Foundation in Washington, D.C. where he advocated for character-based curriculum to leaders on Capitol Hill. In 2009, Johnson became the eighth Pastor of Liberty Hill Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Under his leadership, the congregation experienced remarkable growth and historic change as it entered the Southern Baptist Convention, a move that bridged racial and denominational divides. That journey became the foundation of his acclaimed book, *Black Church White Convention: A Pastor's Story of Hope*, an honest and hopeful reflection on unity.

Dr. Johnson earned his Doctor of Ministry from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS), where he later joined the faculty of NOBTS and Leavell College as Assistant Professor of Evangelism and Pastoral Ministries and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Division. In these roles, he has mentored countless students, pastors, and ministry leaders, equipping them to lead with vision, conviction, and compassion. He is also completing his Ph.D. in Evangelism and Leadership, continuing his lifelong pursuit of academic excellence and spiritual growth. Dr. Johnson's influence extends far beyond the classroom. He has served as Chaplains for the Cleveland Guardians (formerly Indians), led devotions for multiple NFL teams, and ministered to the Tulane University Men's Basketball Team, offering spiritual guidance and encouragement to athletes and families at the highest levels of competition.

At Louisiana Christian University, President Johnson is leading with contagious enthusiasm and clear direction. His *LCU Together* Strategic Plan unites students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners around a shared mission to prepare graduates who live out their faith in every field of influence. Under his leadership, LCU is boldly preparing for its 120th Anniversary Campaign, forging new partnerships, expanding scholarships, and strengthening its spiritual and academic foundations. Married to his college sweetheart, Heather, for 30 years, the Johnsons are the proud parents of Mark Jr., Jonathan, Victoria, and Benjamin.