

The LCF Connection

November 2016

Generous Giving

by Levi Miller



At the Conservative Mennonite Conference that was held in Delaware this past August, Mark Yoder related a story of a fast-growing denomination in Tanzania, a Seventh-day Adventist group. Mark is an ordained minister in the CMC Conference and owner and administrator of a nursing home in Greenwood, Delaware. He is also a board member of Rosedale Mennonite Missions. I was both challenged and impressed by what Mark had to say and have been wondering what would happen to LCF and other CMC churches if we would follow such a pattern?

On one of Mark's overseas missions travels he met a delegation of Seventh-day Adventists at the Amsterdam Airport. In their visit together, they talked about the rapid church growth taking place in their country of Tanzania. They reported that 90% of their people were giving 20% of their income. 10% of what is given goes to the local church for its programs and the other 10% is used for evangelistic endeavors. What could happen if 90% of our LCFers decided to give 20% of their income to the church? I don't know what our current level of giving is at LCF. Is it 5%, 10%, 15%? I don't know. Some statistics regarding giving of Evangelical Christian Churches, in the past, reported it to be in the 5 - 7% range. I doubt it has increased since then. I would like to think that the giving level at LCF would be higher than the average church. I know our church has some very generous givers. I don't recall LCF ever coming in under budget or even making special appeals for operating funds.

One question that is often asked concerning giving is, "How do I calculate my tithe? Is it on my net income (income after expenses) or on the gross (including all income and benefits)?" For me, the tithe involves all of my total income, which includes investment earnings.

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What A Difference A Shoebox Can Make!

by Pam Shay

November is the time people pack shoeboxes with toiletries, school supplies, clothing, toys, and gifts to participate in the Samaritan's Purse ministry called Operation Christmas Child. The boxes, once packed, are shipped around the world with the desire to share God's love with children who have very little.



LCF works together in various ways for this ministry project—collecting items throughout the year, making craft projects to include, and then getting together on a Saturday in November to pack lots of shoe boxes. Last year LCF packed 200 boxes. This year our goal is 250 boxes.

The older children's age group, 10-14 years, receives the fewest number of boxes every year. Therefore, that is the age group that LCF packs for, both for boys and girls.

The shoeboxes not only provide a gift for the child, but also include "The Greatest Gift" Gospel booklet and the opportunity to attend "The Greatest Journey" multi-week class offered through local churches in their area.

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London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

I Always Thank God for You

A Message from the Pastor

by Rob Swartz



*"I thank my God always
when I remember you in my prayers..."*
Philippians 1:4

The apostle Paul says this over ten times, referring to different parts of the church. Is that how you feel about the church? Is Paul being realistic? We know that they caused him all kinds of trouble, and yet he always gives thanks for them.

I'm with Paul. I thank God often for all of you at London Christian Fellowship. Oh, I know we have our problems. I know we get on each other's nerves sometimes. I know we offend each other. I know that I don't always lead the way you would like me to as a pastor, and I get frustrated with the church, sometimes, as well, but...I love this church! I love the larger church as well, but you all are special! ☺

I love your "partnership in the gospel" as Paul says in Philippians 1:5. I love to see you growing in your faith. I love to see you praying and caring for one another. I love to see you working together well. I love to see you taking leadership and responsibility in our ministry at LCF. I love to see your gifts being used and the blessing they are to the church. I love the diversity of people in our fellowship from different backgrounds, cultures, families, education, occupations, etc. I love seeing people saved and lives being transformed by Jesus! I love watching you share your faith with others and discipling others in their walk with Christ.

It is an amazing thing to be a part of the body of Christ. I know sometimes things are rocky and bumpy, and may even feel discouraging—but I see God's hand at work in you, and I am so grateful. It is beautiful to observe! Would you celebrate it with me?

Here's a challenge. Each Sunday morning, seek out someone in the church and tell them how thankful you are for them and how you see the work of Christ in them. Many of you have expressed your thanks recently to us as pastors. Those words and gifts were such a blessing and encouragement. May our love and thankfulness spread and touch each person in our congregation!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Elders' Notes

We, as an Elders Team, will be having our annual retreat November 4-5. We ask that you pray for us over that time. Pray that God would give us wisdom and unity, that we would be guided by his Holy Spirit, and that we would each be refreshed during our time together. Our overseer, Roger Hazen, and his wife, Sharon, will be coming from Vassar, MI, to join us for the retreat. Roger will bring the morning message at LCF on Sunday, November 6.

A Note of Thanks from Reuben and Rob



Reuben and Rob with the cake from LCF at the potluck on October 16.

Thanks so much for the many ways you have shown your love and appreciation to us over the past month. We are humbled by your generosity and touched by your encouraging words. We count it a privilege to work together here at LCF, and to serve as your pastors.

Council Update

by Pam Shay

The Council welcomes Lyndon Miller as the new leader of LCF's Buildings and Grounds Team as of November 1.

We are working with our Treasurers Phil Hostelter and Tasha Slaughbaugh to begin preparation for next year's church budget. The Team leaders will submit budget info in the next few weeks. Our goal is to bring it to the congregation for approval in December or January.

The Council is also looking for nominations for a new Council member to fill the seat soon to be vacated by Pam Shay.

The construction of the coffee bar will soon be underway, thanks to everyone's generous support.

Please share your thoughts and questions with any of the Council members: David Perkins, Dave Stewart, Pam Shay, and Pastor Rob Swartz.

Upcoming Activities



- Nov. 4 Night of Worship at LCF, 7 - 8 p.m.
- Nov. 4 - 5 Elders Retreat at the Procter Center
- Nov. 11-12 Marriage Workshop at LCF. Please register online.
- Nov. 19 Operation Christmas Child shoebox packing party, 9 a.m.
- Nov. 28 Caroling at London's Old Fashioned Christmas, 6:30 p.m.

- Dec. 2 - 4 *A Christmas Carol* at Rosedale Bible College
- Dec. 4 Rosedale Bible College Chorus at LCF 10 a.m.
- Dec. 11 LCF Christmas Program, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 25 LCF Family Christmas, 10 a.m.
- Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Celebration and Night of Worship, 7:30 p.m.



Getting to Know Russ & Sandy Hauge

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Please meet Russ and Sandy Hauge (Pronounced How Gee—hard g, as in girl). We're happy they are part of our LCF family, and we want to help you get to know them better. Thanks for sharing a little bit of your story, Russ and Sandy!

Where are you both from, originally?

We are both from a small town in northern Wisconsin called Antigo.

How did you meet, and when? And when were you married and where? Any funny/cute/special story about your wedding day?

Russ: We went to high school together. I saw her at the county fair the summer between our junior and senior year of high school and asked a friend who she was. We soon began dating. After high school, Sandy went to nursing school and I joined the Navy. We had a long-term relationship for 4 years....without computers or cell phones!!!! Sandy graduated and I began college. We got married in 1982 in our hometown of Antigo. It just happened to be the weekend of the county fair, so we took the whole wedding party to the fair before the reception started, and we all rode the merry-go-round. It seemed like the appropriate thing to do. Sandy had a little black grease on her dress when we got to the reception.

Do you have any children, and what are their names and ages?

We have 3 sons: Jonathan, 30, who lives in Dayton with his wife Collette and their 2 sons, Lucas 2 ½, and Lincoln, 15 months. Ben is 28 and lives in Columbus, and Nate is 25 and lives in New York City.



Do you have pets, and what kind are they and what are their names? We have an 11-year-old Golden Doodle named Maddie.

Where do you both work?

Russ: I work for IBM. Sandy: I am a retired nurse.

What is your favorite hobby/hobbies, food, music?

Sandy: I like to quilt, knit, crochet, and read. There is no food I don't like.

Russ: I like to golf, boat, putter in my workshop, and just be outside. And, of course, we both love to spoil our grandsons!!

Who has inspired/influenced you most in your life?

We both have great admiration for our parents. They instilled solid values and work ethic in us. We were fortunate to have such great examples on how to raise our children.

What is your favorite scripture, and what is your favorite way to study the Bible?

Sandy: My favorite scripture is Psalm 46:10. "Be still and know that I am God." That verse got me through a very serious illness a few years ago and is my mantra whenever I feel anxious about anything. I love to do bible studies and have been doing Bible Study Fellowship for the past 2 1/2 years.

What is one thing you think people don't know about you that you think is interesting/different?

Russ: I have traveled completely around the world in one trip while in the Navy, and my helicopter squadron was involved with the Iranian Hostage Rescue in 1980.

Sandy: I'm not very interesting!!! (Sandy, we find you to be very interesting!)

What is a dream you have that you have accomplished or would like to see come true?

We have been very happily married for 34 years, have raised 3 great sons, have a fantastic daughter-in-law, and 2 adorable grandsons!!! Life is good, and we feel very blessed.

Where do you like to go to get away from it all?

We love the beach and being around water. We live on Choctaw Lake, so we get to enjoy it every day.

What is a ministry/passion you have that you are involved in or want to see fulfilled?

Our son Jonathan was part of a small team that started a Christian nonprofit organization in Dayton called Shoes 4 the Shoeless. They go to schools and give very needy kids brand new shoes, socks, underwear, and a Bible. They have given thousands of shoes to these kids. I started an offshoot of this organization to give kids hats, mostly handmade, over the winter months. What started as a few hats that I made myself has grown to over a thousand a year the last couple years. I recruit everyone I can to help out with this mission. SO—if anyone is a knitter or crocheter and would like to make hats for a very worthwhile cause, let me know!!!

Members of One Another

It is a joy to continue to see our LCF family grow and develop! On Friday evening, October 28, there were nine newcomers who attended the LCF 101 class. We welcome each of them to LCF and are encouraged as we see their desire to plug-in and participate!



Clockwise from left: Dusty Humm, Grace & Ray Raber, Sandy & Russ Hauge, Rob Swartz, Jerry & Donna Sauder, Dana Humm, and Sarah Landis

Please mark your 2017 calendars for Sunday, January 15, when we will be bringing in new members at LCF and having all current members reflect on and renew their membership. There will be a potluck afterwards.

LCF Digital Library

Have you gotten your new library card and tried it out yet? There are over 2,000 items waiting for you to explore and check out! For your convenience, we have added a library tab on LCF's website that includes the link to the digital library where you can go to search for and reserve items. Don't delay, get started today! If you have any questions, contact our librarian, Linda Schlabach or Sammy Waweru.



Generous Giving...Continued

We hear much about discipling and accountability, but I wonder how much of it includes money matters? The American people hold our politicians to a standard that I doubt many of us would want to adhere to ourselves – revealing our Federal Tax returns to the general public. I'm not sure that having the church ask people to be that transparent would serve a good purpose, but it does give us something to think about. I suspect that such transparency would increase our giving. Our finances are a very private matter, but we need to remember that the Lord knows everything about them, and we are accountable to him. In Luke 21 we have the story of the widow giving her two mites while Jesus was watching people give their alms. Jesus is still watching our giving and our spending.

35 years ago, Billy Graham wrote, "In the past few years, people have spent ten times as much for luxury and non-essentials as they have for charitable and religious purposes." Is that any different today? If you are not a tither and would like to become one, you may need to start by reviewing your spending habits. Billy Graham also said, "The tithe is the Lord's. If you use it for yourself you are robbing God." If churches today would receive a tithe (10%) from each attendee, I'm guessing that most churches would experience a significant increase in income.

We will be held accountable for how we manage our finances and how much we contribute to God's kingdom-building purposes. Jesus commended the widow in Luke 21 for her generosity, saying that she gave out of her living, by giving all, whereas others merely gave of their extras. The point can be made that Jesus is still watching as we give our tithes and offerings. What might Jesus say about what I put in the offering? I hear the phrase, "Give as the Lord has blessed you." Perhaps it would be more appropriate to say, "Give so the Lord can bless you." Remember, God loves a cheerful giver.

Operation Christmas Child...Continued



This is the story of one recipient, Shukuran Banda. He loved the items in the shoebox he received but was more interested in what he read in the booklet and learned in the classes at a church in his Malawi village. That is where he gave his heart to Christ after the second week of the class. He then invited his mother and siblings to attend church with him, where they also became Christians. His father left his family because of their new faith. But the tool set provided in his Shoebox allowed Shukuran to do odd jobs for others to help earn income to support their now Christian family.



We hope that all of you will join us for this year's Operation Christmas Child packing party on Saturday, November 19th. We will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will work until all 250 boxes are packed (hopefully around noon). The more people who come, the quicker we will get done. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to help share God's love with children all over the world!

The LCF Connection

A monthly newsletter designed to enhance communication at London Christian Fellowship

What did you think? If any of the stories in this Connection sparked an idea or opinion you'd like to share, email us at secretary@lcfweb.org. Editors: Trish Eaton, Theresa Hennis, Amie Smith, and Doris Swartz. If you prefer that we do not use photos of you in the Connection, you may opt out by emailing us at connection@lcfweb.org.

