

The LCF Connection

March 2014



Called to Be Sent

By Tom Mast

I recently had the opportunity to spend some time studying the book of Mark with a group of missionaries in the Middle East. One part of Jesus' story that impressed me in a new way was his interaction with his disciples – the way that he called them and what he called them to. In chapter 1, as he walked beside a lake he saw Simon and Andrew. "Come follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people" (v. 17). Later, when he specifically picked out the twelve disciples from the larger crowd that had begun to follow him, Mark writes that "He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (3:14-15).

I think that it's appropriate – and important – for us to think about our relationship in that same way. He calls us in order to send us out to fish for people. He wants us to be with him AND he wants to send us out to preach (and have authority over demons!) We're called to follow Jesus and be with him. But we're also called in order to be sent out "into the world" – whatever that means for each one of us.

Continued on page 3...



Inside this Issue

Called to Be Sent	1
Evangelism Adventure Ahead	1
Seize the Opportunity	2
Library Link	2
Getting to Know the LeGrands	3
Valentine Dinner Pictures	4
Xenos & Other Upcoming Events	4

Evangelism Adventure Ahead

By Brenda Perkins

As the newly formed Outreach Team has begun to take shape, many different ideas and goals have emerged. One goal of the outreach team is to encourage people at LCF to grow in their own personal outreach training and experiences so that together, we can grow in knowledge and confidence as we faithfully fulfill the great commission.

Xenos Christian Fellowship (located in the north part of Columbus) hosts Xenos Summer Institute (XSI) each July. They bring in great speakers from all over the country to train, motivate, and encourage believers in their spiritual growth. This year the theme of the Conference is "*Evangelism, the Great Adventure*". There will be many great speakers and workshops to learn from.

We all experience challenges when sharing the Gospel, but being surrounded by others that share similar stories of success or failure can be a great encouragement. Learning from the different workshops and the main sessions can motivate us and equip us to reach out more effectively.

The past several years I have attended XSI with a group from LCF. It's always a blessing to share the experience together and encourage one another. We have many good discussions together as we travel there and back, eat our packed lunches on the Xenos patio, and go out to eat at various local restaurants.

This year XSI will be held July 9 - 11. It begins on Wednesday evening and goes all day Thursday and Friday; thus, you will probably have to take a couple of days off work, but I assure you, it will be well worth your time. I hope to see you there!

(Note: You can find Xenos 2014 registration details on page 4.)



255 US 42 NE London, OH 43140
(740) 490-2121

www.LCFweb.org

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



Seize the Opportunity

A Message
from the Pastor
by Rob Swartz

I remember riding my bike up the driveway and introducing myself, as the neighbor eyed me suspiciously. I'm sure he was wondering if I was a salesman or maybe a Mormon who forgot his suit and tie. "Hi, I'm Rob. I live just a few houses down. Welcome to the neighborhood." He relaxed a little and we chit-chatted about our families, jobs, and interests. When he found out I was a Michigan fan, he looked me in the eye and soberly said, "I hate Michigan fans." I wasn't sure how to take it and he never let on that he was kidding.

I'm not sure if it was then or a day or two later, but Doris and I invited him and his wife to a "Bible Discussion Group" we were starting up in a couple weeks. They came...and they kept coming. They listened, they studied, they discussed the Bible, and we watched them grow. Later the wife told me, "I don't know if we would have come to a Bible Study or a church meeting, but a Bible Discussion Group seemed pretty safe to us."

They soon became fast friends and took advantage of many opportunities to grow at our discussion group, attending our church, and just hanging out and talking about what it looks like to live for God. They have since moved away and we miss them. We miss their friendship, but we also miss walking closely with them as they grow in their relationship with God.

A few weeks ago I got an email from the husband thanking us for showing them the way. They were going through a very difficult time and he said, "I don't know how we would be getting through this without our faith." It brought tears to my eyes. The truth is that God was drawing them to himself and they responded. All I had to do was walk up that driveway and introduce myself to be drawn into a work God had begun before we met them, and is continuing without much help from us.

Who benefited the most? It's hard to say but I'm looking forward to riding up another driveway, bumping into someone at Kroger, hanging out at baseball games, or doing neighborhood cookouts even though I'm not a "people" person. I know God has someone new for me to walk with in our journey towards him. Oh, the story isn't always as rosy as this, but God is drawing many people to himself and I'm excited to be in on it.

What's your story? We'd love to hear it!

Library Link

By Linda Schlabach, Assistant Librarian

What are the first words you think of when you hear or see the word "evangelism"? Are they positive? Negative? Or do you draw a blank? Be inspired and challenged as you learn about inviting people to come to know Jesus. We invite you to take home and read some of the following books.

You will find the books listed below conveniently located in the foyer (on the pub table closest to the library). Instructions for checking out a library book are posted in the library (or check with Linda or Audrey).

- 1. Irresistible Evangelism: Natural Ways to Open Others to Jesus**, by Steve Sjogren, Dave Ping, Doug Pollock. Consider learning a friendship approach to sharing with others about Jesus. What's your faith story?
- 2. Speaking of Jesus: How to Tell Your Friends the Best News**, by J. Mack Stiles. Take a look at Jesus' and Apostle Paul's examples of sharing Christ's good news. How does this apply to you?
- 3. Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry & Mary: How to Reach Friends and Family Who Avoid God & the Church**, by Lee Strobel. Written in an engaging style as if the author is talking one-on-one with the reader. Is this an area in which you need better understanding and encouragement?
- 4. Life-Style Evangelism: Crossing Traditional Boundaries to Reach the Unbelieving World**, by Joseph C. Aldrich. Aldrich declares that "A well-taught, fellowshiping, worshiping person serves automatically. Evangelism for him is not a Tuesday night event; he is on duty twenty-four hours a day" (p.116). Explore the interaction of the individual & church body in learning, healing, responding, and deploying. What does that all mean & how does that apply to evangelism?
- 5. A Time to Pray**, by Evelyn Christenson. Intertwine prayer and evangelism as you are led in a thoughtful and Biblically-based journey. Are you praying for the heart and salvation of people?
- 6. That None Should Perish: How to Reach Entire Cities for Christ Through Prayer Evangelism**, by Ed Silvano. Brother-in-law of evangelist Luis Palau introduces us to his book: "I trust as you read this book, the two-part message of prayer and evangelism being spoken by the Spirit to the Church today will become even more clear to you as you begin to see it in a tangible context" (p. 18). Are you ready to be challenged spiritually as you pray others to Christ?
- 7. Becoming a Contagious Christian** by Bill Hybel & Mark Mittelberg. Hybel & Mittelberg write in a conversational, non-threatening manner as they guide us in practical ways to become "Contagious Christians." Do you need help to be "real" as you invite others to Christ? (Note: Mark Mittelberg will be one of the speakers at Xenos in July.)

Watch for new resources related to evangelism to appear in the basket! After reading from LCF's resources, I wonder if the words you think of when you hear the word "evangelism" will change at all?



Getting to Know...

Chris and Ashlie LeGrand and family

Interview by Candice Mast

Where did you both grow up?

Chris grew up in Shepherdsville, Kentucky. It was a small town then but has since grown quite large. He lived there until he joined the Marine Corps in 2001. I grew up in Georgetown, California, which is up in the foothills almost an hour north of Sacramento. Georgetown is really close to Coloma where gold was first discovered in 1848. I lived there for most of my childhood until my parents moved us to Pataskala, Ohio, when I was sixteen.

What do you do for a living?

Chris is a police officer here in London. I'm a stay at home mom and I babysit my nephew, Jaxson, while my sister, Avynlee (who also lives with us), is at work. Avy is a home health aid. She takes care of a disabled boy in Hilliard.

So what brought you guys to London?

We moved back to Pataskala when Chris got out of the Marine Corps in 2005. In 2010 we decided to move down to Louisville. Within about a year we wanted to move back to Ohio. We knew we wanted to be west of Columbus. It took a long time to find the right house for us all (about a year). We were so excited to find a house here in London that worked for us all! I was looking up churches in the area on the internet, when I came across LCF's website. We decided to come check it out. We loved it! After one Sunday, we knew we had found our church home. 😊

Tell us about the members of your household!

Chris has a big heart and is quick to help someone when he can. He is funny and adventurous. He loves to hunt and fish. Ashlie is compassionate and generous. She likes to read and play with the kids. Skotti is 9 ½ years old and in the 4th grade. She is funny and loves to make us laugh. She likes reading, swimming, and music. She is currently taking violin lessons from Andrea Biscup. Alaia is 4 ½ years old. She is sweet and tenderhearted. She is very energetic and loves to jump on the trampoline and do just about anything outside. Avynlee is very caring and is there for any of us when we need it. She is very health conscious. She likes to dance and write poetry. Jaxson's eighteen months old. He is a ball of energy and quite curious all the time. He loves playing with his cousins and doing things outside. He is the cutest little dancer!

Skotti, I understand you are a big reader. What's one of your very favorite books right now?

Sage Paints the Sky. It's an American Girl book. I love it! 😊

What are some of the things you like doing together as a family?

We like to go fishing and camping. We love doing outdoor activities together. We are currently doing the "Bible in a Year" plan together as a family. We have fun going on little out of town trips when we can.

What is something each of you have never done but would like to do some day?

Chris and I have always wanted to visit Hawaii. Skotti would like to ride a horse in a rodeo. Alaia would like to ride in a hot air balloon. Avy would like to go skydiving someday.

Called to Be Sent...continued

When we were living in Thailand it was easy to sense the "sending" part of Jesus' call. We were always surrounded by people who didn't know about Jesus. We knew that interactions with our friends, students, and neighbors were opportunities for the Holy Spirit to speak to them.

As we've partially settled in life in Columbus I've found it more difficult to remember to live out my calling to go, to be sent out. Here where the church is larger, where the opportunities to gather with other followers of Jesus are much more plentiful, it's tempting to focus on the first half of Jesus' commission ("be with him") and forget the last half. But I don't think that we can do that. The movement – the following and being sent is important. If we're not moving in our spiritual lives and if we're not in some way being sent, I'm not sure that we're living up to our calling as disciples of Jesus.

All of us are being sent – and I think all of us are being called to "preach" the good news, to declare that the kingdom of God is near! How we do that will vary - and not many of us will be doing it from a pulpit. But that's fine because most of our not-yet-believing friends, neighbors, and co-workers aren't coming to church anyway. For me, being "sent" to Columbus for these two years means intentionally looking for ways to relate to international students (something that's more comfortable for me since we've lived in Thailand), talking to other parents at our kids' school (something that's not natural for an introvert), and trusting that God will use those interactions. Where is He sending you?





The 2014 Xenos Summer Institute



WHAT: A practical, affordable and motivating conference on Evangelism. Keynote speakers this year include: Lee Strobel, Mark Mittelberg and Randy Newman.



WHEN: July 9 -11, 2014; Wednesday evening, Thursday and Friday

WHERE: At Xenos Christian Fellowship (1340 Community Park Drive) - right here in Columbus, Ohio!



COST: With the early bird discount and a group of five or more, the cost is only **\$50 per adult and \$16 per student** for the whole conference (or \$25 per adult and \$8 per student for one day).

If you would like to attend with a group from LCF, please give your registration fee to Doris Swartz by Sunday, June 15.

Looking Ahead...

March 8 - **LCF 101** will be held from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lunch will be provided so please RSVP to Doris if you plan to attend.

March 7-9 - Rosedale Bible College will present the drama, "**The Importance of Being Ernest**", at 7 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday.

March 14 (6:30 - 9 p.m.) and 15 (9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) **The Art of Marriage** Video Conference will be held at LCF. Contact Pam Shay for details or to register.

March 16 - A **Hymn sing** will be held at Shiloh Mennonite Church at 7 p.m.

March 23 - **New members** will be received at LCF; there will be a potluck meal following the morning service.

April 11 & 12 - The **CMC Prayer Gathering** will be held at the Rosedale International Center in Columbus.

LCF's Valentine's Dinner - Saturday, February 15th



The evening included a delicious lasagna meal, followed by awesome dessert, interspersed with good conversation and laughter. Entertainment for the evening included watching the three couples pictured above play the Love and Marriage game. Thank you to the Fellowship Team for planning such a fun night of togetherness for all of us, and to Sammy Waweru for capturing the evening in pictures!



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 connection@lcfweb.org. Editors: Doris Swartz, Trish Eaton and Candice Mast

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.