

The LCF Connection

September 2014



LCF Camp-Out 2014

by Candice Mast

The annual church campout is always a great time to reconnect, have fun, and relax as a church family. It was great to see all the little clusters of kids running back and forth from stream to trampoline, enjoying all the outside space and getting nice and dirty. The adults were having fun too, sitting and chatting, catching crayfish and trying to talk people into eating them (Ryan), playing cornhole, spikeball, soccer and football. There were group games involving water balloons and speed eating (dry Ramen noodles looked like the biggest challenge!) that drew the big and little together. There was late night giggle-sleeping on the trampoline, campfires, music, lots of creek splashing and kayaking, and varying amounts of sleep going on in our tents.



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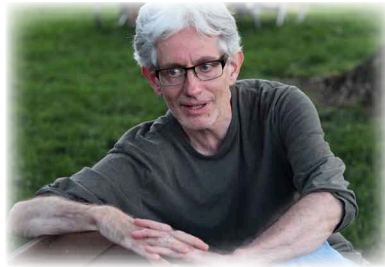
London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

On Sunday, we enjoyed worship in the fresh air with a sermon by Rob and sharing from Thailand mission workers, Nixson and Rhonda Jarquin. Thanks so much, Fellowship Team for again hosting this bunch, and Amie for planning games! We are grateful!



Drifting From the Church or From God?

A Message from the Pastor
by Reuben Sairs



As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. (Psalm 16:3)

That verse is an unlikely place to introduce thoughts about Christians drifting away, but that is where my thoughts took me last night when I read it devotionally. I could prepare a long list of Christian friends who have drifted far from church. The million-dollar-very-unsettling question is: have they also drifted far from Christ? I resist a firm conclusion since the stories are all slightly different. Some of them would defend themselves by saying it is all part of their spiritual development, but probably most would be embarrassed or annoyed if I probed. My concern for my friends hasn't led me, as it might have in younger days, to judgmental thoughts. I sympathize with all their various biographies and the struggles that led them to fade away. Church can hurt; the broad portrayal of faith in the evangelical world can be juvenile, shallow and consumeristic. The programs can be a slog through the mostly irrelevant. It can lack spiritual vitality. Add to this, we have a natural tendency to cool off as Christians at different times.

As much as I sympathize with my friends, I also am repelled. I don't want to make the same move. It seems to me that what has replaced church for them has not been a vibrant spiritual life, but rather a drift into shopping, recreation, and a life in which our Lord Jesus Christ is less and less pertinent. I doubt very much that their drift from church has corresponded to a red hot private spiritual intensity. My guess is that intensity in the spiritual department is what they don't want. I have to confess, though, some of them seem pretty happy in their new church-free lifestyle.

Be that as it may, it looks like defeat to me. I considered other passages in the Old Testament about defeat. "And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, 'What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Each of you to your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David.' So all Israel went to their tents"(2 Chronicles 10:16). It reminds me of a short sad verse in the New Testament "And they all left him and fled" (Mark 14:50).

I console myself about my friends when I consider that the final chapters are not yet written. I don't know where they will end up on all this. Right now I don't see much evidence of a return to Christian congregations, or what would give evidence of a hunger for God in their lives. It is as if they passed through a religious/spiritual period in their life, it only worked for them in part, and now they have other interests. I wonder if they think of their previous lives as slightly delusional.

I have no strong answer for any of this. I pray for my friends--what seems an ever-growing list. Those statements in the Bible that encourage us not to fade away, give up gathering, of thorns that choke and roots that dry, of friends having loved "this present world" all seem very real to me right now. But I insist: "You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11).

Parenting in Process

by Molly Rosati

Doris requested an article reflecting on releasing a child into adulthood, I resisted. I put off writing because, don't you need to "have it all together" to write with some authority? Well, I'm in the throes of wrestling with resting and releasing. Going from recalling what it was like to be twenty-something without a glance back, trusting God's plan for my child's journey, and entertaining anxious "what ifs" at 3:00 am.

I am also sandwiched between supporting my children's transition into adulthood and my mother and mother-in-law as they transition into supported living situations. Another article topic for another time and yet, I think it is worth us recognizing the BIG changes that we work through at the same time.

Back to children-to-adults.....Have you known someone who seems directionless after their children leave? The children were the only commonality in their marriage? Here have been some of my philosophies so I avoid becoming that person:

Because I'm an occupational therapist, my children's independence has been my mind-set. By 9 years old they had mastered hygiene, by 14 household chores, and then we were on to vocational skills (volunteering, banking, advocating for themselves with teachers and doctors, etc.). I feel good that the girls are prepared.

Another Occupational Therapy philosophy: A healthy life is a balance of work, play, and self care. Facilitating this for all family members, including myself has been invaluable. Playing together-Girl Scouts, 4H clubs, vacations, weekly hikes in the parks (Amy called them "forced marches") kept us in touch. Jack and I make time for each other. Pursuing fitness together (we changed an unused dining room into a small home gym) has been so good!

Keeping in fellowship with God has been my salvation as a wife and mother. Regular quiet times, listening to praise music, and talking with God re-calibrate my mind and emotions. The Beth Moore bible studies we've done at church have kept me in God's presence.

Transitioning from parent to friend is a working hypothesis. This is what I wanted as a young adult - my parents to recognize my abilities, my calling, and my choices; and to interact with me with mutual dignity and friendship. Although our daughters good naturedly

Continued on page 4...

Getting to Know...*Jim and Annette Jones*

Interview with Candice Mast



Where are each of you from and what brought you to this area?

Jim: My dad retired from the Army in 1961 in the D.C. area and was led to become a Lutheran Pastor. We moved to Ohio so he could attend Seminary at Capital University. I have been in Ohio ever since.

Annette: My dad and mom became American citizens from Mexico and raised four girls in Los Angeles. I moved to Ohio in the late 1980's due to a military assignment. We all speak Spanish fluently in my family.

How did you guys originally connect with LCF?

Jim: I started coming just over 20 years ago. Annette is Catholic and sometimes I would attend Mass with her and sometimes she would come to Shalom (LCF). About ten years ago she started to attend regularly with me at LCF.

What do you each of you do for a living? What is your favorite part of your job?

Jim: I'm the Wing Commander of an Air National Guard flying unit; responsible for 1,200 Airmen. We provide daily worldwide air refueling/combat support and also answer our nation's call for disaster response. I'm humbled to serve such a professional group of Airmen.

Annette: I work for the Air Force reserves at WPAFB in the Communications Flight. The most rewarding part of my job is when we deployed down to Honduras and did medical humanitarian work in the small villages. Because I'm fluent in Spanish I also served as an interpreter.

How many kids/grandkids do you have and where do they live?

We love to talk about our kids...

- Antoinette: 37, married to Paul who is stationed at Edwards AFB, CA. They have one daughter age 8, and twin sons age 7.
- Nicole: 33, is in the Air Force at McConnell AFB, KS is married to Ralph and they have two daughters, 9 and 6.
- Ben: 29, is finishing his PhD and is working for an organization to abolish the death penalty in the state of Kansas. He is married to MacKenzie and they live in Lawrence, KS.
- Josh: 25, is finishing his Masters, lives in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He is an incredible marathon runner (finished 204th in the Boston marathon) and has a passion for raising money for the disadvantaged.



Do you have any pets?

We had a wonderful dog and a cat a few years ago, and are in the process of getting a new dog.

What are your favorite things to do when you have spare time?

Jim: Hiking, biking, kayaking, reloading, and fishing.

Annette: Kayaking, exercising/running, biking, reading.



Any fun travel plans coming up?

We plan on going out west this fall and hiking in some colorful canyons.

What is a favorite verse of yours and something God is teaching you right now?

Jim: Lamentations 3:22-23 - "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." When I look back on my life at the many doors that were closed-for example with a job or some sort of opportunity, I was often disappointed at the time. Looking back I can see the closed door at the time was his will and it worked out better than I could have ever imagined. In this sense, the Lord protected me from myself; I just did not know it at the time. He continues to teach me not to get in his way (not my will but his). It's hard to imagine how many times he has protected me from myself since I'm only aware of the few.

Anything else you'd like to share with LCF friends?

What a unique body to be a part of. The humility and genuineness of everyone continues to be a powerful witness to both members and visitors. Growing up, I would often hear my father (who was a Pastor) remark "you can tell how healthy a church is by the kids/youth." That is certainly the case here at LCF! They are inspiring and a blessing.



A Shower of Love

by Doris Swartz

On Sunday afternoon, August 17, about 47 ladies and girls met at LCF to "shower" Jennifer Cooper with all kinds of useful baby items and adorable little girl shoes, socks, outfits, etc. You should have heard the repeated chorus of "Awww..." as Jennifer opened one adorable gift after another. 😊



A Mother's Love Song

Paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13 by Martha Stoltzfus

If I sing beautiful lullabies and give eloquent advice;
If I teach the Bible to my child and help him memorize scripture,
But have no love, I am only an irritating talker.
If I have a degree in child psychology
And understand and interpret my child's temperament
So that I can aid his emotional, psychological,
Spiritual and physical growth;
If I can help him excel in all his education,
But have no love, I am a failure.
If I work my fingers to the bone to provide for his every need;
If I lose sleep because of colic, and later because of wheels;
If I garden, can and cook from scratch so that my child can have
A chemical-free, sodium-free, sugar-free, additive-free diet
But have no love, I am a frenzied hag.
Love helps with homework without quarreling,
It does not scream at unruly kids,
Does not selfishly watch soaps while they say,
"I'm hungry, Mom, what's to eat?"
Love covers with a quilt,
Says a bedtime prayer again and again and again.
Love says, "It's been a rough day, tomorrow we'll do better."
Love never ends.
My child will grow up and leave me.
His toys will stay neatly put away all week,
And who is going to consume all this food I'm cooking?
But love follows him, even then.

Lisa Miller shared a short devotional challenging us to love our children like God loves us. On the left is her mother's paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 13 that she shared with us.



The afternoon also included some fun games, good food, and time to relax and enjoy each other's company. We all look forward to meeting Baby Cooper sometime this month!



Parenting...continued

call us out on this point, respecting their boundaries and acting like a good friend works! I say acting because Jack and I do a lot of processing of situations between ourselves and working through parental feelings. While on vacation at a restaurant, Amy witnessed Jack and I discussing what to say to Anna when we would see her later that day. Amy said, "Is this what you guys do?" She was surprised that we rehearsed topics and bounced ideas off each other. Yeah, this is what we do as we continue the transition process.



Looking Ahead...

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| Sept. 6 | Craft Day at LCF, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. |
| Sept. 13 | Shekinah Festival in Plain City |
| Sept. 16-18 | Farm Science Review |
| Sept. 21 | Our Adult Discipleship Class, "Kingdom Come", begins |
| Sept. 26-27 | Rosedale Bible College Inauguration Celebration |

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, Candice Mast, and Amie Smith
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.