

# The LCF Connection

October 2015



Pictured from left: Amie & Nathaniel with Lizzie, Joe & Tasha with Lydia and Hannah, Reggie & Jennifer with Alexandria, and Pastor Rob at the Child Dedication on September 20th.

## Pondering What is Most Important

by Tasha Slaubaugh

Sometimes it is difficult to view our young children with an eternal perspective. We get caught up with their FIRST everything, with making sure they eat something more than candy, with potty training, and with taking a million pictures of "how cute they are!" Participating in LCF's recent child dedication helped me to pause and remember that this baby stage, and this entire earthly life, is but a moment. What is MOST important is that we instill in our children a knowledge of God's Word, His love for them, their need for salvation, and His plan for redeeming them. We promise to do our best in these areas, and welcome your help along the way!

## Elders' Notes

by Vicki Sairs

LCF's elders met as a team on September 8; they met again on September 20 with the Church Council to discuss the elders' vision for the church.

### First, highlights from the meeting on September 8<sup>th</sup> (just the elders' team):

Rob reported on Benji Martin's internship, which has just begun. It's going well! Benji is helping Rob with visitation, preaching, and other tasks; he's also helping Reggie Cooper with the youth group and Rosanna Miller with Crossroads.

We're looking forward to our elders' retreat November 6-7, and hope to have one or two new elders to meet with us by then. A number of people have declined this position, but Rob will be contacting others in the next few weeks. Our overseer Roger Hazen will meet with us. He'll be preaching at LCF on Sunday, November 8, and will give the congregation an update on the pastoral reviews.

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## Combining Fellowship with Exercise

by Bob Zachrich

On Saturday, August 29th, the men and boys of LCF utilized one of London's greatest assets, the Rails To Trails bike path to South Charleston. Ten riders left from the Senior Center at about 8 a.m. Levi Miller provided support for the ride, meeting us in South Charleston with drinks and snacks. We arrived back at the Senior Center around 11:15 a.m. completing the nearly 24-mile ride. While there were a few tired legs the next day, the fellowship, exercise, and sense of accomplishment were worth it.

On September 26th there were five bikers who rode a little over 23 miles to Big Darby Park in West Jefferson and back. Again, Levi provided support, and the weather was beautiful.

Watch your LCF email and the bulletin for information about other upcoming rides and join us for the next one!



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# Feeling Flat?

## A Message from the Pastor

by Reuben Sairs

Does your life as a believer go flat sometimes? Saying something has gone flat gives me the mental picture of a sad can of Coca-Cola—gone flat, and probably warm, too. Where’s the joy in that? We all have times when our spiritual life is anything but dynamic and alive and exciting. In fact, it becomes a burden. Sunday is the day you get a headache. You don’t give up, but you’re not exactly enjoying your faith. I think these periods are actually an important part of spiritual growth. We have to learn to believe in God and trust him, even when we’re just not feeling it. It doesn’t necessarily mean that something has gone wrong—it’s life! Looking back, we might find that a whole lot more was happening than we realized at the time. It might be preparation for something, or maybe something very deep inside of us is taking a while to emerge. Sometimes, of course, we are poisoning our own well by resisting God. More on wells in a moment.

Christian life can’t be reduced. It is not about soldiering through a rigorous course of morality and insisting others join you. It is not to be a pinched, self-denying life that is trying to occasionally get God’s attention for reward. It isn’t about going to church and exhausting yourself there. It is not about embracing any particular political position and identity. Christian life is about being touched by God—experiencing his power, presence, and glory in our lives. It happens first in salvation, but salvation in that sense is a starting place. That power that is introduced into our lives doesn’t stop there. Salvation is ongoing.

Modern Christians love the story of the Samaritan woman found in John 4. It has all the elements that press on our own world questions about sexual morality, marriage, gender, minority status, and ethnic tension. No wonder we love it. Here’s one of the sections I love most.

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

It’s just delightful that 14 verses later in the story, <sup>28</sup> The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, ...

She found the right water. Most of us think the water Jesus is talking about is the power of God in life, put there when The Holy Spirit comes into the inner being of every new believer. It satisfies the lasting and enduring thirst that is a part of every life—finally. But it looks forward. It is a fountain of fresh energy that springs up in us and gives us eternal life. Eternal life isn’t just off in the future, after we die. Eternal life is the real life that God restores to us when we “drink” his water. Believers are already experiencing their eternal life—the life God meant for the human race, unharmed by spiritual and physical death.

If you’re feeling a little dry, this message might be slightly annoying. You might be saying, “Why then am I feeling so depressed or upset right now?” I don’t know the answer, and suspect there could be many. I’ll simply remind you that the water inside of you is bubbling, springing up, refreshing, cooling and doing its work even though we sometimes don’t feel it. Take heart!

Elders' Notes...continued

## And now, highlights from the joint LCF elders/council meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>:

Pam Shay led the meeting, and provided a delicious lunch!

The goal was to have the elders share and discuss LCF’s vision. The council members wanted to have a clear idea of what the church leadership thinks about where the church is going, so the council can do its job better.

Rob (lead pastor), Reuben (associate pastor), and Bob (elder) shared their thoughts on this topic.

Reuben stressed that his job as associate pastor is to support Rob. He believes our Statement of Faith is primary because what we believe determines what we do. LCF’s leadership does not tell the congregation what they should do – the congregation has a voice in the direction of the church.

Reuben doesn’t believe churches should have mission statements. That’s good for a doughnut shop, but the church can’t choose which areas of God’s word it wants to specialize in. “Our ‘mission statement’ is the entire Bible.”

He also talked about Anabaptist views: we value the ethic of love and peace/nonresistance, but we have to sell it to our culture; we see the church as a community, not a hierarchy or a filling station; we follow Christ in life.

Bob seconded what Reuben said, and said he sees the Statement of Faith as our guiding principle.

Rob emphasized that our primary focus is feeding on God’s Word. We want to help people grow deep in the knowledge of God’s Word and see people’s lives transformed.

This includes encouraging discipleship: one-on-one in small groups, through leadership training, etc. Rob’s vision is to develop leaders from within the church, from elders to future pastors.

Rob says he used to think that you could figure out a magic formula for how to have a successful church; over the years, he’s learned there is no magic formula. We simply have to follow God, listen to his voice, and do what he tells us.

Rob’s role as pastor is to provide opportunity for people to be trained, developed, and given the chance to use their gifts.

We all spent time discussing the church and its needs, and we agreed that a healthy, active church is one whose vision and direction are constantly being guided by God, along with input from the congregation – as opposed to churches who try to write down all their goals for the next five to ten years and try to make them happen.

**Fun postscript:** *Do you have an idea for a new name for our adult discipleship class? If so, please let us know! We want it to incorporate the idea of going deeper (in God’s Word, in discipleship, etc.).*

# Getting to Know *Cletus Yoder*

*Interviewed by Theresa Hennis*

*We don't always have the time to sit down and talk at length to find out about the many interesting experiences and backgrounds of our fellow LCFers, so we'd like to help you get to know another of our members, Clete Yoder.*



## **First of all, do you prefer to be called "Cletus" or "Clete"?**

I go by either, but as I get older I find that I prefer being called Cletus.

## **What's your favorite thing about LCF?** It's small, personal, and caring.

## **Are you originally from Ohio or from somewhere else?**

I was born and raised in Pennsylvania on a dairy farm, went to California for 1W Alternative Service (a service opportunity for conscientious objectors), and while I was in California, I went back to school and became an engineer, then married and started a family. From there we moved to Idaho for 4 years, then to Ohio, then to New York, and eventually back to Ohio.



## **Describe your family for us:**

Seven and a half years ago I lost my wife to a sudden heart attack. It has been a difficult journey of grief, but I have found that it helps to share it with others who have lost someone close. Whether it is talking with someone one-on-one, or attending something like a GriefShare group, it helps to have someone to talk with and share the loss together.

I have three daughters: Stephanie, 37, married with two daughters, ages 2 and 5, living in Dublin, Ohio. She is a stay-at-home mom who is also a physical therapist graduate from Ohio State. Sherry, 34, a nurse at Ohio State, works in the Neonatal Intensive-Care Unit. She has been living at home with me and has been busy planning for her wedding that will take place on October 3rd. Mary, 32, who is single and would also like to be married, lives in Phoenix, AZ, and works at the zoo as the Primate Manager.

## **What is the most important thing about being a father?**

No matter what the situation, never side with your children, but support and love their mother unconditionally.

## **What does being a Christian mean, to you, personally?**

Being the hands and feet of Jesus and joining Him where He is working.

## **What does a typical day in the life of Clete Yoder look like?**

I get up around 6 a.m., feed the dogs and make coffee, spend an hour or two in devotions with the Lord, eat breakfast, and then go out to feed and groom the horses. After that, there is always something to keep me busy.

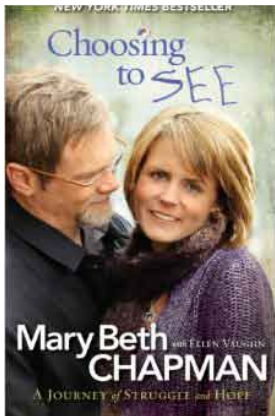
## **Where have you worked?** I'm a retired engineer involved with ministries to help others, three of which include:

- **Mennonite Disaster Service**—I usually serve a month at a time anywhere in the USA where there has been a natural disaster. I am involved with restoring or rebuilding homes damaged or destroyed by hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, etc. I usually work as the project director and/or the construction supervisor, and sometimes as a worker.
- **Joni and Friends Wheels for the World**—I am the local Wheelchair Corp collection person. Used wheel chairs get sent to prisons to be refurbished before sending them into third-world countries for distribution. I go along on the distribution trips as a wheelchair mechanic to adjust/modify the chairs to fit the individuals and sometimes to help build wheelchair ramps.
- **London Correctional Institute Prison Ministry**—for the last three years, I have visited the prisoners on Tuesday nights as an "outside brother" with our LCF Horizon Group.

## **Your favorite scripture?** Psalm 23.

**Your favorite pastime/hobby?** I'm enjoying early retirement by helping others. I love spending time with my granddaughters. I have a horse and one pony, which I enjoy caring for.

**Who has had the biggest influence on you?** The biggest influences in my life were my parents, who loved helping others and sharing Jesus with them.



Recently we shared with you about our new Grief Share group that has started at LCF. This month we'd like to share about a great book in our church library that tells the moving story about a family who experienced deep grief—how they wrestled with it and still managed to see God's grace and love in the midst of it. ~ Theresa Hennis

## Choosing to See

By Mary Beth Chapman with Ellen Vaughn

*"Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything*

*completely, just as God now knows me completely."* 1 Cor. 13:12 (NLT)

You might think a book about losing a child would be too difficult to read, and at some points, reading **Choosing to See** proves to be heart-wrenching. Mary Beth Chapman shares the emotional landscape through which her family navigates the loss of one of their adopted daughters from China, Maria Sue Chunxi Chapman, after a tragic accident. It's a journey that will take you to the other side of grief, where the Chapmans encounter heavenly comfort in surprising ways.

Several of the chapters include lyrics to the songs her husband, award winning singer/songwriter Steven Curtis Chapman, wrote to express his emotions for his family and the grief they share.

Mary Beth says, "No mom can come up with words to express the ripping pain of losing a child...and no words can do justice to the mysteries of God in the midst of tragedy."

Maria was five years old when she went home to be with Jesus on May 21, 2008. Her infectious spirit and the mark she left on her family's hearts and the hearts of those who read this amazing story is a gift straight from God.

A quote from the Chapmans' friend, Dan Allender, sums up the common thread running throughout this book—seeing God's redemption plan in every single circumstance of our life stories.

"If we want to grow in faith we must be open to listening to our own stories, perhaps familiar or forgotten, where we have not mined the rich deposit of God's presence. With better eyes and ears we will sense how God has worked to redeem even our most tragic experiences."

Steven, and one of the Chapmans' sons, Caleb, prayed for God to show them something tangible to assure them of Maria's presence in Heaven. She had accepted Christ just a short time before the tragedy. She could write her name and a few other small things, but had never written the word they saw on a picture of a flower they found on her art table.

*SEE*

Mary Beth says about the flower, "I realized it had six petals. Like I had six children. And only one of the petals was colored in. Like only one of my children was safe at home in heaven with Jesus. And the petal that was safe was blue—Maria's favorite color. Some people might see little things like this as coincidences, no big deal. But to us, these small signs were like a little trail of bread crumbs on a shadowed path, showing us the way to walk. He was showing me all that I needed, just a few steps at a time...giving me glimmers of grace...if I would choose to *SEE* them."

## LCF Council Update

By: David Perkins

The LCF Council has been established for a little over six months now. Over that time, the council has blossomed into a great team of people looking out for the good of the church and some of LCF's needs. The council has been able to tackle a lot of pending tasks at LCF and is continuing to work on those tasks, as well as beginning many new projects.

The new LCF Rosedale Bible College Scholarship is going through a couple more edits and will soon be ready for those who would like to apply. Anyone can apply for the scholarship—from those who are planning on going to RBC full-time to those who just want to take a class or two. There will be more details to answer your questions on the application.

The council is wrapping up the team/committee reviews. Thanks to those of you who were able to chat with us for a few minutes and give us great input. Most of all thank you for what you do in the church and for helping us strengthen the vision for the future of LCF.

As the council continues to move forward with many other projects, keep us in your prayers for wisdom and good conversation. Also keep a look out for the next Council Update for more details and information.

### Serving with a Smile

Thanks to each person who helped out at the Farm Science Review September 22-24! We had 12 volunteers who worked the 7-11 a.m. shift and made a lot of breakfast sandwiches! We were able to earn about \$400. Ten percent of the money earned will go towards shipping Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes; the remaining amount will be put towards furnishings for the youth/small group room.



### Upcoming Activities

Oct. 10 - LCF 101, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Oct. 18 - Communion

Oct. 31 - Harvest Party at Headings, 5-9 p.m.

## 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](mailto:connection@lcfweb.org). Editors: Doris Swartz, Trish Eaton, Theresa Hennis, and Amie Smith  
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