

The LCF Connection

November 2015



Life as a Foreigner, Again

By Candice Mast

There is this idea in Christian circles that says about missions, “We go into the world to share the love of Jesus. We have answers and we go to give them to people without answers.” I 100% believe that Jesus is the hope of every person I meet here in Thailand. ON THE OTHER HAND! This overseas life goes far beyond, “Ta-da, here I am with the good news!” In my real life, “missions” is being a foreigner learning how to live here again. It’s receiving and receiving and receiving without knowing how to give back. It’s cockroaches and kitchen floods. It’s battling daily with my emotions. It’s apologizing over and over to my husband and kids. It’s pouring sweat and not knowing what to say to people, stumbling

over tones in the language, and feeling lonely. It’s sticking with it for the long run. It’s all the beautiful, wonderful things about living in another culture and all the hard things, mixed up and served on a platter each day.

We lived in Thailand for seven years already, but we’re still foreigners and always will be. After two years away, there is a lot of adjusting to do again. While many things are familiar and we love our city and our old friends, we are realigning ourselves with the culture here. We need Thai people! I need my Thai teacher who rarely smiles but patiently teaches our multi-cultural class (Chinese, Dutch, Korean, American) how to express ourselves in words, in tone, in action (politeness above all!). I need my neighbor down the street—an older lady who always asks me where I’m going (“Paay nay” is the equivalent of “hey, what’s up” in America). She seems to be a hoarder (or recycler to be kinder) and goes through our trash often, taking most of it home with her (I cringe! Sorry for the grossness of our trash!). Her front patio is piled with broken things which she industriously repairs and cleans. I love the way she checks on us, asks after us, gifts her wrinkly smile, brings us clumps of bananas, helps me carry in groceries.

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Operation Christmas Child Ministry

by Pam Shay

October 17 was a great day of LCF fellowship and working on projects for the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. Everyone came together to decorate shoeboxes, assemble toiletry kits, rubber stamp kits, and fishing kits, work with various projects such as: organizing hair clips, sewing fabric, putting batteries in flashlights, etc. Amazing work by 24 pairs of hands to complete 9 projects for 200 shoeboxes in just 2 hours!

We invite all of you to join us from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 14th, to pack all of the collected gift items, kits, etc., in the boxes and prepare them for shipment.

Please pray that these 200 plus children would come to know the love of Jesus because of these simple shoebox gifts this Christmas.



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



What is Worship?

A Message from LCF's Pastoral Intern

by Benji Martin

When you hear the word “worship”, what comes to mind? For me it’s standing in a group of people on a Sunday morning singing songs led by a band of some sort. The people with their hands in the air and their eyes closed are the ones who are really “doing it right.” But is this really all worship is?

I was recently reminded that my picture of worship really is not a biblical view. As the song says, “worship is more than a song;” it’s an attitude, a lifestyle. Worship is not just a musical experience. Google defines worship as an expression or act of reverence and adoration. So does this describe an intention/feeling or an action? I think it’s a combination of the two. Worship is not only a thought, neither is it in and of itself an action. Rather, an action is an expression of worship from the condition of our hearts. So it is not the singing of songs that is considered worship, it is the attitude of the heart that the singing represents.

Worship then does not end at 10:20 on a Sunday morning, but continues throughout the day, week, month, etc. Worshiping God is living out the love and respect that we have for Him. Both on our good days and our bad days we are called to give thanks and praise to God. Praising God should not be dependent on our circumstances as David reminds us in Psalm 42:5 and Psalm 70. He is still good and He is still God. And it is that acknowledgement of praise that helps pull us through the hard times.

I often hear that worship is service. Passages like Romans 12:1 and Isaiah 58:6-7 may make us inclined to think this way. Yes, a life of worship will involve service for sure, but it’s important to remember that service as a substitute for worship is idolatry. Service is glorifying to God when it’s used as an expression of our heart’s desire to praise and adore our Father.

So how can we fill our days with the worship that our God deserves? One idea that I’ve come to appreciate comes from Richard Foster’s Celebration of Discipline. “Our lives are to be punctuated with praise, thanksgiving, and adoration.” I like the imagery of punctuation. It’s true that we cannot live every second breathing out prayers and praises. But between every “phrase” or “sentence” of life there is to be some reconnection and refocus on Christ. In these “commas” and “semicolons” we can actively give praise, say thank you, and adore our Lord for his faithfulness and provision. I think this is a good picture of what Paul might have meant in Romans 12:1 when he tells us to give our bodies as a living sacrifice to God.

Our punctuation may involve a lot of question marks, and even a few exclamation points. Our focus shouldn’t be on how we feel during each phrase, but on finding ways to praise, thank, and adore Him through it all. This is the picture of worship that I’d like to try to emulate.

Elders' Notes

by Vicki Sairs

We met on October 6 at Rob and Doris’s house and spent most of our time discussing two important issues: new elders and a youth trip.

The Elusive Elder

We’re eager to develop and cultivate leadership gifts in the church. One way to do that is by inviting younger people to serve as junior elders. Lately we’ve talked about what it would mean for us to have a younger elder on the team. We don’t like the term “junior elder”, and we’re looking for another term, perhaps a “Timothy elder.” One possibility would be to have this person serve a one-year term, with a release clause at the end of that year.

We’re looking into candidates to serve in this way, even as we’re still trying to fill the three-year positions with other individuals. Please pray for us as we sort this out.

Traveling Youth

Reggie Cooper, LCF’s current youth leader, joined us from 8 - 8:30 to discuss youth mission trips, with two main questions. We discussed the first one and will think about the second and discuss it at a later time.

- Would we like to see the youth do an overseas mission trip this coming year?
- Do we want to define a format for youth experiences/mission trips going forward?

Our discussion covered a lot of ground. We don’t feel strongly about whether a youth trip has to be local or overseas (both have pros and cons). We do believe that any mission trip should help the youth grow in their relationship with God and give them the opportunity to do meaningful, needed work.

Reggie told us he would write a letter that lays out the various options (with expenses), and would send it to the youth and their parents for feedback. He also planned to have a meeting with all of them to come to a consensus on what they’d like to do. We will support them in whatever decision they come to.

Our next meeting is the elders’ retreat at the Procter Center November 6-7. We will focus on discipleship and leadership training, and we’d love to have your prayer support.

Upcoming Activities

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| Nov. 6-7 | Elder's Retreat at the Procter Center |
| Nov. 14 | Operation Christmas Child Packing Party, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. |
| Nov. 15 | Potluck and Congregational Meeting |
| Nov. 13-15 | Fiddler on the Roof musical at Rosedale Bible College |
| Nov. 30 | Caroling at London's Old Fashioned Christmas |

An interview with *Sammy Waweru*

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Where are you from, originally?

Originally from Thika, Kenya, a town about an hour away from Nairobi.

How many are there in your family, and where do you live?

There are five in my family. My parents, and three kids. I have an older brother and a younger sister who are both in Kenya. I currently live in Rosedale with the Ndungus, whom I consider my second family. They have truly been a blessing to me.

What or who brought you to LCF?

The Ndungu family.

How did you become a Christian? Who influenced you the most?

I accepted Christ my sophomore year of high school during a weekend challenge, which is like a weekend revival meeting, in the school. My parents are my biggest influence. I always think to myself that "when I grow up I want to be like them."

What are your favorite things to do? Hobbies, etc.?

Music, Books & Bass. Music is one of my favorite things. I have always enjoyed listening to music, and after starting to play the bass guitar I enjoy it even more. I also love reading, mainly historical-fiction, fantasy and sci-fi genres.

Do you have a favorite food? Favorite music?

I can't say that I have a favorite food, but I do enjoy a good steak. When it comes to music, I listen to a wide range of genres. My top two favorite genres are Jazz and Funk.

What is your favorite scripture?

Jeremiah 29:11. It was one of the verses that my Sunday school teacher had us memorize. I like this verse, because whenever I find myself wondering why things are going the way they are, it reminds me that He knows and His plans are for my good.

You help out in many ways "behind-the-scenes" at LCF. What are some of the things you do and what do you enjoy about them?

I handle the technical side of the website and do the weekly sermon uploads. Doris handles the content. I like learning new things. When we started working on the Web site I had very little experience with building Web sites and it was fun to research and learn how to do the things we needed to do with it. We wanted it to be built simply and yet be attractive and easy for people to navigate.

I started working more with the sound system this year, and so far so good. I am still learning and trying to figure out how to best use the gear we have to help the worship team create an atmosphere/environment where people can freely worship.

I recently helped put up the new speakers in the Fellowship Hall. The main reason for those speakers is overflow control, if we ever run out of space in the sanctuary, as well as to have sound availability for various activities that take place in the Fellowship Hall. The cool thing is that it is a completely independent PA system. What this means is that in addition to being able to feed the sound from the sanctuary for overflow issues, we can use it by itself. Therefore, groups meeting in the fellowship hall can be given access to a PA system without having to move gear from the sanctuary. It is not complete yet, but I hope we can get it done before the end of the year.

I also enjoy playing bass on the worship team.

What do you think would be a fun thing for LCF to do in the future, as far as technology with computers, sound, etc.?

One thing we have been talking about possibly doing in the future is streaming video out to the TVs in the foyer and maybe even have a live stream of the Sunday service on our website. I think this would be a cool project to be a part of.

What do you like most about LCF?

The people are cool! :) I also like the annual camp-out. I especially enjoy kayaking up the creek.

Thanks so much Sammy for all that you do and for helping us to know you a little better!



Foreigner...continued

I need my old friends, like Ju, who cares about me and checks in on my kids when they are sick and advises me about



what TV channels are best for improving our Thai and makes time for me in her busy work week. At the kids' international school, I'm making friends with another mom, Vivienne, from Taiwan, who is also a newbie and knows no one else. We stand in the cafeteria waiting for our sweaty, uniformed kids and talk about life in Thailand and visas and how school is going. I'm working up the nerve to enter the large circles of Thai moms and speak their language—my elementary school shyness reemerges when I'm intimidated!

A few weeks ago, our family took a long walk, still exploring our new area, beyond our immediate neighborhood, Muban Phairot. As we made our way down the street, we dodged motorcycles going every which way. I stopped to pick up a bag of beautiful pale "cherries" that were clearly not and asked the name. The older lady vendor paused to let me know the name and that they were very sour (implying I wouldn't like them). I smelled the charcoal smoke and felt the concentrated heat of grills and my mouth watered over tempting meats on sticks. Street dogs milled around and school children and factory workers, both in uniform, made their way home to shower and relax. We crossed a bridge of sixteen lanes of traffic, smelling exhaust and sewer fumes and feeling the warm, wet cling of humidity. We settled on a supper spot and ate fish and rice with a fan cooling our faces, a dog lounging by our table and a Chinese soap opera, dubbed in Thai, blaring in the background and grabbing the kids attention. On the way home, walking the dark streets of our neighborhood (I still savor those words! We have a neighborhood!), the kids stopped by a tiny family store to pick out a pack of cookies for their planned sleepover, and we saw a delivery of thousands of eggs to someone's front gate.

Life swirls around us and, as outsiders and newcomers, we barely make a ripple. Yet under the surface of what we can see, I know, is God's powerful spirit, stirring. We do have the answer with us, but we don't have ALL the answers. We are the foreigners (farang) making mistakes and learning and needing help. I am tired from language school and missing people and messing up daily. In the long run, what I hope those around me see is that I have someone helping me. I have peace in my life and love in my family because I have Jesus. I keep going because I have Jesus. I say sorry when I mess up, because I have Jesus. I care, because I have Jesus. In spite of all the times I don't do the above, I STILL have Jesus. And I want them to have him too... because he meets the needs of every tired, emotional, mistake-making, one of us.

(For more about the Masts in Thailand, be sure to read their fall newsletter.)

October LIFE Groups

LIFE groups, "women sharing life together", rotate leaders, participants, and activities monthly.

Loving
Inspiring
Fellowshipping
Encouraging



Karla Knief, Becky Hostetler, and Boni Stewart met in the church nursery for an artistic October LIFE group. They enjoyed expressing their creativity by painting faces on the animals (which had earlier been painted on the nursery walls), and painting Van Gogh's "Starry Night" in the sleeping nursery. They finished off their evening with a great meal and fellowship at Los Mariachis. We join Jayce in saying, "Thanks, ladies, for your beautiful work of art!" (Stop by the nursery sometime to see it.)



Another LIFE group was awed by the stunning creativity of God, the Master Artist, while hiking at Glacier Ridge Metro Park on a beautiful fall Sunday afternoon.

If you would like to be included in the November LIFE groups contact Tasha Slaubaugh.

LCF 101 - A Great Place to Start



On Saturday, October 10th, nine people attended the fall LCF 101. They enjoyed getting to know each other, as well as learning more about LCF, its structure, beliefs, etc. Of course they enjoyed the pizza, pumpkin bars, etc., as well! Many of them expressed their desire to take the next step and become a member of LCF.

If you would like to participate in the next LCF 101 class, let Doris Swartz know.

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, Theresa Hennis, 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.