

The LCF Connection

November 2018



The Youth are Taking Over!

by Rob Swartz

Maybe that title sounds like a scary movie, but to me, it sounds pretty exciting! I have had the privilege of working with the youth and youth leaders the past couple months in exploring how we might be able to make some improvements with how we do youth group. In the process, I proposed the idea to our youth of putting them in charge of their own activities and events. There was a good amount of enthusiasm for the idea from youth and leaders alike so we decided to go for it. ☺ Since then, the youth have elected their own leadership, selecting Meredith Hochstetler for

President and Sophia Headings for Vice President. They are also putting a treasurer in place as well as any other positions that might be needed. Since this is a radical departure from our youth structure over many years, there have been a lot of things to “figure out,” and I expect this will continue as our young leaders grow in their leadership and as the youth group takes responsibility for what they do and who they are.

As a pastor, I’m excited about this change for many reasons. I have long believed that we don’t expect enough out of our young people. They are very talented, resourceful, and have great ideas. This change gives them the opportunity to put those skills, abilities, and ideas into place. Our youth will have the opportunity to make youth group into what they would like it to be. If some things aren’t working well, they have been empowered to change them or make adjustments. Youth group will not be something done “for” the youth or “to” the youth, but “by” the youth. This is what I believe church should be like. It is not a place to “consume” but a place to “serve” and to use our gifts and abilities. I’m also excited about yet another opportunity to mentor young leaders in the church. It’s great!



Don’t worry! Our youth will still have proper adult supervision for all activities. ☺ However, instead of adults organizing and planning things, the adults will just be along to help. Ray and Grace Raber, our former youth leaders, have been very supportive of this change and have

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Thankful

by Doris Swartz

Thankful: “feeling or expressing gratitude, appreciative.”

God instructs us over and over throughout the Bible to “Give thanks”—to give thanks to him, give thanks in all circumstances (both the good times and the bad), give thanks in song, give thanks in our prayers, etc. Yet, how easy it is to grumble and complain, or simply just not take the time and effort to express the gratitude we feel in our hearts.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you, as a church body, for the wonderful job you do in expressing your love and appreciation to your pastors and their wives. I speak for Reuben and Vicki, Rob and myself when I say, your words of encouragement, gifts of appreciation, faithful prayers, and willingness to serve in so many ways, are priceless gifts to us! Thank you so much for the many beautiful ways you bless and enrich our lives! It is our joy to serve Christ by giving leadership here at LCF, and we are deeply thankful for each one of you!

As we enter this month when we celebrate the holiday of Thanksgiving, let us each continue to work at making thankfulness a natural part of our daily lives. There is no end to the list of things and people we have to be thankful for! Happy Thanksgiving! ■

*“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
I Thessalonians 5:18*



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2018 Elders' Retreat

October 5-6, 2018, at the Procter Center ~ by Jesse Diller



We started our first session with a short devotional about letting go of linear thinking ("If I do this, then this will happen.") and focused on drawing near to God, trusting him with the outcome of how things look or feel. We spent time sharing prayer requests and praying for one another.

Rob asked the following questions to guide our evening discussion time:

What does it look like to do things with excellence?

We want to do the best we can as leaders of the church, but sometimes it is not easy to tell what the benchmark ought to be. We discussed this at some length, concluding that we should be growing in excellence, virtues, holiness, discipleship; it's not an on/off switch, or a condition to reach, but a direction in which we are consistently moving.

How do we know we are doing things well?

It can be hard to know; the prophet Jeremiah preached for 22 years without anyone responding. There is a difference between doing your best and making a mistake vs having a careless or lazy approach.

What is the balance between putting the best people in positions and yet allowing everyone the opportunity to serve?

LCF has many very talented members, and while we want to do things as well as we can, we also want to allow people to grow. We want to keep our eyes open to notice how God has called and gifted people (eg. of those who built the tabernacle). The Church is a body with each person having a part to play.

What are some scriptures that guide us in this?

We looked to Scripture for guidance, and discussed the Scriptural principle of giving the first-fruits (i.e., our best) to God. Other principles we noted were the injunctions to "Do it heartily as unto the Lord," think on things that are excellent or praiseworthy, "Play skillfully" (Psalm 33), holding living water in our broken cisterns (Jeremiah 2:13).

In our second session, we discussed the questions:

What are some of the good things we see happening at LCF?

What about weak areas/concerns?

We are glad that God continues to bring new people to LCF, whether by new attenders, birth, or baptism; we have a number of ministries that are doing well and are blessing people. We have also noted a number of people who have stopped attending in the last year, for various reasons. We like that LCF is a body with wide diversity in age, preferred worship style, ethnicity, religious background, stage of life, spiritual maturity, etc.; however, we recognize that this can be both a good thing and an area of challenge.



We spent time discussing our various programs, such as the youth group and our Sunday services. Rob is currently working with the youth group in transitioning the leadership of the youth group over to them. We discussed ways to keep our Sunday services as impactful as possible, while also running as smoothly as possible. We are continuing to research and develop the framework by which we design our services. This included wide-ranging discussions of our worship time, schedule, moderating duties, service length, and, of course, the coffee service.

Our third session was wide-ranging, and we covered a number of topics:

- We spent quite a bit of time discussing the role of the church in ministry to the LGBTQ community. This is, of course, quite a controversial topic in our society at large, as well as in the church. How should the church respond to and interact with those who identify with LGBTQ? We noted that our church conference has published a position statement, and that LCF did the same when the Supreme Court decision came out in June 2015. We will be praying that God will give us wisdom on how to stand for truth and show love and grace.
- We currently have a significant deficit, and changes will need to be made to next year's budget. The Council will be addressing this with the congregation at our congregational meeting in November.
- We recognized that we want to be flexible, allowing the church to grow and change as needed. We also want to make sure that we are raising up and training young leaders. We talked about ways that we are working at developing young leaders.
- We would like to provide opportunity for people to ask questions about what the Bible teaches about various issues. We agreed that this would make for an interesting Adult Discipleship Class.
- We reviewed the document that was put together quite a few of years ago that lists LCF's purpose statement and our 5 key purposes: worship, fellowship, discipleship, service, and evangelism. We continue to believe that these are important ingredients in church life.

As usual, we closed our meeting with a time of prayer. In the future, we plan to transition from having our elders' retreat in the fall to having it in the spring. This will allow new elders who join the team at the beginning of the year to be a part of the retreat. ■

An interview with *Grace Ndungu*

Interviewed by Elisabeth Yoder

How long have you attended LCF? What is one of your favorite memories?

I have been at LCF for about 8 years. I remember when I was still in the youth group, and once a year, I think around Christmas time, we'd have a youth lock-in. We'd be at the church, playing games and consuming every sugar product on the planet.

What do you do for work? Do you enjoy what you do?

I currently work at an Early Childhood and Learning Center. I work with different age groups every day, and I do enjoy it. Just like any other job, it is challenging but very rewarding.

Who is a person that inspires you? What do you admire about them?

My parents. They trusted God when he called our family to move to the United States. Their faith is what I admire most.

What are three items on your bucket list?

1.) Travel and see all the mountains. 2.) See the northern lights. 3.) Do a back-flip.

What is one of your favorite worship songs? Why?

"Known" by Tauren Wells. Listen to it and you'll know why.

What hobby would you love to get into if time and money were not an issue?

Travel across the globe.

What is something you think everyone should do at least once in their life?

Work with children.

If you could make one rule that everyone had to follow, what rule would you make?

Be kind to one another.

What book or movie has had a big impact on you? Please explain.

The LIVE|DEAD Journal. It challenges you to die to self and to know that God will do a Greater work through you. It also encourages you to continually pray for the unreached peoples around the world.

If you could spend one day in someone else's shoes, past or present, whose would it be and why?

The tallest person that ever lived. Those would be big shoes.

What gets you excited about life?

Music. Oatmeal. Sunshine. Doing cartwheels. Conversations about Jesus.



What fictional place would you love to go to?

Hogwarts! And the world of Harry Potter.

What roles do you play in the church and what do you enjoy about them?

I am part of the worship team. I just enjoy playing music and leading others in worship.

What are you are looking forward to in this upcoming year?

There are a few things that I'm looking forward to; but, I'd say getting married is at the very top of the list! (cue: gasp!) Not too long ago, Davin Neumann waltzed into my life. At that time, he'd decided to take a gap year and do missions in Columbus. He ended up being stationed at a church/childcare, which was where I was working. Now, almost 2 years later, we are getting married. God has been so good to us. He has been our source of peace, strength, and comfort— especially since a great majority of our relationship has been long distance. After the wedding, which will be in the Spring of 2019, we will move to Germany, which is where he is from. It will be hard to leave my family, friends, and all that is familiar, but God doesn't call us to be comfortable. We hope and pray that he'll continue to prepare and lead us in this next chapter of our lives.

What is one of your favorite Bible passages?

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Romans 12:12

Thanks, Grace, for helping us learn to know you better! We have enjoyed having you as part of our LCF family and watching you grow in Christ over these past 8 years. We will certainly miss you (and your worship leading) when you move to Germany, but are excited with you about this new adventure! ■



Ladies' Luncheon & Crafts

After church on Sunday, September 30th, the ladies of LCF enjoyed a delicious luncheon together and had fun making fall crafts. It was a special time to welcome baby Mira, and her mother, Lara, to our LCF family. Thanks to each person who helped with food, preparations, and clean up. ■



Upcoming Activities

Nov. 11 "The Meeting Jim Said Wouldn't Work, 5:30 p.m.
 Nov. 18 Last fall Adult Discipleship Class from Luke
 Nov. 26 Caroling at London's Old Fashioned Christmas
 Dec. 9 RBC Choir sings at LCF, 10 a.m.
 Dec. 16 LCF Christmas Program, 6:30 p.m.
 Dec. 23 LCF Family Christmas, 9:45 a.m.

Council Update *by David Perkins*

Since Jim was out of town this month, the Council arranged to contact each other via conference call for our most recent meeting. We had primarily discussed and updated each other on items we have been working on for some time now such as the implementation of the LCF Child Protection Policy and the church's budget.

There was discussion about having a more grounded security policy during our Sunday service and Sunday School. Jim will talk with Dave Stewart about formalizing a policy to have an usher always in the foyer area to address any visitors who arrive during the service. In addition, there will be a regular hallway walk to check on the Sunday School classrooms per our LCF Child Protection Policy.

The old church building was discussed, and Jim has a potential buyer whose lease is up on his current building in July 2019. He has leased his facility for several years and is looking to buy his own. He has a small assembly-line business which produces specialized components for medical equipment and runway taxi lights.

We would like to give thanks to our CPT leader, Pam Shay, for doing an excellent job managing and leading the implementation of the newly revised LCF Child Protection Policy. She has already held refresher classes and is checking into financial help for the background checks. All of the Children's Ministry volunteers will be required to complete the new electronic background check by December 31, 2020.

"The Meeting That Jim Said Wouldn't Work" is approaching soon. It suits all of us to change it from November 4th to November 11th. The Elders and the Council will lead this meeting to discuss the vision, the budget, and other various structures of the church. Hopefully we can prove Jim wrong and have a good turnout for this meeting! We hope to see you there! ■

Youth Group...continued

transitioned to the role of "youth sponsors". They are making themselves available to help the youth in whatever way the youth would like.



Would you encourage and support our youth as they step up in this way? Thank our young leaders, Meredith and Sophia, for accepting these new roles. Pray for them, and for our youth group, as they establish a new identity and purpose together in ministering to one another and other youth from our community. ■

Did You Know...?

- There were 5 people from LCF who ran in the Columbus Marathon on a very chilly, October 21st: Ray Raber, Nathaniel Smith, Mandy Hochstetler, and Vernon Hochstetler ran the half, and Kevin Swartz ran the whole.
- Vinny Hochstetler was one of the Patient Champions who, along with his team, cheered on the 18,000 runners as they ran.
- Meredith Hochstetler was selected by the student body of London High School as their 2018 Homecoming Queen.



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: Theresa Hennis, Amie Smith, Elisabeth Yoder, and Doris Swartz
 If you prefer that we do not use photos of you in the Connection, you may opt out by emailing us.

