

# The LCF Connection

March 2019

## Turkish Lentil Soup in Turkey

by Clete Yoder, with Pam Stanforth

"I am a visual learner and so having the opportunity to tour parts of Turkey and Israel and see historical places mentioned in God's Word—places where Paul established churches and lived, and where John wrote concerning the seven churches of Revelation—brought the Word of God to life for me. I stood where they stood. Interestingly, before leaving home for Israel, I had read Ezekiel 47, where it describes the vision: "waters flowed out from under the threshold of the house (temple) eastward; for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar." As I stood at the lower parts where the Dead Sea scrolls were discovered, I looked up at a ravine in the mountain, as the tour guide told us this is where the water flows from the Kidron Valley of Jerusalem. (See picture on page 4.) I had one of those moments of clarity of how the rain could flow like a river down steep ravines to the Dead Sea. Jerusalem is 3,800 feet above the Dead Sea, and is located 14 miles west of it. It can be raining in Jerusalem, yet sunny at the base of the ravine; and suddenly, the rain water of Jerusalem can make its way down the ravines towards the Dead Sea. It is hazardous for anyone who might decide to explore the ravines on a beautiful day, having failed to check the weather in Jerusalem."



Clete shared that he had visited Israel once before, but this was his first time to visit Turkey. This trip, which he took this past January, was made even more special since his daughter, Stephanie, was able to travel with him. A highlight from Turkey was getting to tour the areas of the seven churches that John wrote about in Revelation, when he had an Apocalyptic vision on the Isle of Patmos. Clete continued, "The churches are 30 - 50 miles apart. Although there are no remains of their meeting places, in most cases there are ruins that remain of the seven cities. In Biblical days, churches were actually groups of people who met in private homes, caves, or other spaces.

- Revelation 2:1-7 speaks of Ephesus as being the loveless church. Today it has the best Greco-Roman ruins and the most pilgrimage sites.
- Smyrna, the suffering church noted in Revelations 2:8-11, is located on the banks of the Pactolus River.
- Pergamos, which is said to have been the compromising church in Revelation 2:12-17, sits atop a hill at the site of Acropolis, overlooking Bergama.
- Thyatira is described as the adulterous church in Revelation 2:18-29.
- Sardis, the church John identified in Revelation 3:1-6 as the church that was dead, is located 60 miles inland from Ephesus.

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## Youth Group Update

by Meredith Hochstetler

Before the "big transition" of having the youth give leadership to the youth group, Ray and Grace's planning method involved having a quarterly planning meeting to sit down together and physically fill in calendars. Sophia and I, as the new president and vice-president, liked this style of quarterly planning and have

continued with it through the transition. Quarterly planning allows us to discuss our goals as a youth group and put them into action through organizing events and meetings.

One thing new that we have implemented since the transition is that of changing the time of our weekly Bible study and meeting from 3 hours to 2. To get the youth's input, we created a survey. Based on the results of the survey, we made this change and feel it has helped to make our meeting time optimal for maximal youth attendance.

Since the transition, we miss having David and Brenda as part of the youth group. They added to our group in many different ways. I especially appreciated when they would give their input during our times of Bible study. They always made the lessons applicable to our young lives and would relate to us by sharing their own personal experiences. I asked several of the other youth what they appreciated about David and Brenda and following is what they had to say:

**Shepherd Ndungu:** The thing that I really liked about David and Brenda was that they were closer to my age than any other leaders I've had, and were still my role models; they gave me college and life advice, while still being able to see from my young-boy perspective. 10 out of 11 youth would recommend youth leaders that are also friends.

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## Elders Notes

by Doris Swartz

As usual, we began our meeting on February 12th with prayer and sharing. We then went over upcoming church events, updates, and other miscellaneous things to note. We are thankful that Sheila and Katy Miller have agreed to lead the Children's Ministry team.

We continued our discussion about the upcoming Spring Adult Discipleship Class format and possible changes we are considering. We finalized the survey questions that we plan to send out to the congregation soon. We hope that you will all take the time to share your thoughts and feedback with us! ☺

The top two elder candidates that were nominated by the congregation last fall have both declined to serve on the elders team. We are not sure what the next step should be. Please join us in praying that God will provide a 3rd elder for our team and that he will give us wisdom and patience with the process.

We discussed our thoughts about last year's congregational meeting that was held at LCF on Sunday evening, November 11, 2018. Our final conclusion was that, "Jim was right!" It didn't really work—at least not like we were hoping. We would like to have seen it provide for more engagement and discussion as a church body. For our next congregational meeting we plan to return to our former "Celebrate the Church" format on a Sunday morning in mid-January (after the busyness of the holiday season) with a potluck meal and congregational meeting afterwards.

Due to LCF's 2019 budget cutbacks, we canceled our retreat that was scheduled to be at the Proctor Center in March. Instead, we plan to rent the Farmvilla House in Plain City overnight and provide our own food. We are working on finding an available date that will suit everyone's schedules.

We closed with a time of prayer about the various things we discussed. Our next regular meeting will be on March 12th. ■

## Coming Soon: Multiply 2019!

by Pam Shay

CMC's annual gathering, Multiply Conference, is a family-friendly event with activities for children of all ages. Previously known as the Conservative Mennonite Conference's (CMC) Annual Conference, CMC, Rosedale Mennonite Missions, and Rosedale Bible College are working together towards the common goal of maturing and multiplying churches locally and globally. The collaboration of the three agencies will be reflected in shared programming throughout the weekend.

This year, the local churches will serve as host for Multiply 2019 to be held at Jonathan Alder High School. With 800 people expected to attend, this will be a grand opportunity to come together to serve and learn how to multiply God's kingdom locally, regionally, and globally.

It takes a lot of hands to organize such an event. Representatives from each local church (Pam Shay for LCF) have begun looking for volunteers to serve on committees as well as for workers for the days of the events. Committees will coordinate activities between the local churches and identify tasks and needs for the event. Workers will have a specific task at a specific time during the July weekend. Committees include: Facilities & Parking, Security, Safety & First Aid, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Hospitality, Prayer, and Food Services.

### Multiply 2019

Jonathan Alder  
High School

July 26-28

Don't miss this opportunity to attend and serve in Multiply 2019 while it is in our backyard. What can you do?

1. Mark it on your calendar to plan to attend July 26-28.
2. Volunteer to serve in a leadership capacity on one of the committees. Talk with Pam Shay ASAP.
3. Be prepared to sign up for service tasks of the committees when we ask for workers.
4. Pray for a successful and fruitful Multiply 2019 event.

We look forward to your involvement in Multiply 2019! ■

## Council Update

by Jim Jones

Here are some updates from the council meeting that was held on February 19th:

We discussed the possibility of doing a church survey to help us figure out how well we are doing in fulfilling our mission as a church, and to give us valuable feedback. CMC, the conference of which we are a part, recommends that churches take a congregational survey every three years. We think it would be a good idea for us at LCF, especially since our congregation can change quite a bit in 3 years.

The old church building has been listed with Ross Realtors. The broker was agreeable to a commission of 1% if the buyer had shown previous interest in the church. A 5% commission will be paid if the buyer is provided by the agent. Upon the agent's recommendation, the listing price was increased to \$225,000 for its initial visibility on the internet.

Electronic giving continues to be fine-tuned by Dan and Tasha. They have accomplished some trial transactions with the Planning Center electronic giving website and are working at learning the details of how the system works, as well as trying to identify any potential bugs. Once the system is up and running, Dan will put together some informative slides and possibly even a help desk for several Sundays to answer questions and help people get acquainted with it. Watch for more information to come in the following weeks. ■



We enjoyed having  
**The Music Men of London Barbershop Quartet**  
(of which Jeff Gates is a part) join us on February 24. They sang 3 songs during the morning service and a beautiful benediction, followed by a fun variety of songs in the foyer afterwards.





# Great is Thy Faithfulness

by Rosanna Waweru

Faithfulness: true to one's word, promises, vows, etc.; steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; constant; reliable; trusted. When I look back over the last year and a half it absolutely blows my mind to see how God has been so faithful to us. As Christians we are always supposed to believe that God is faithful, but when life gets hard it's easy to forget that fact. But when we actually take a step back and look at what has happened to get us to where we are, we finally see that every small trial was a piece to God's puzzle that creates the most amazing picture.

Sammy and I were married in October of 2017. Most people don't know that when we got married, we didn't have a marriage license. Sammy's passport had expired and his new one did not come in time. I'm a worrier, so the whole time that we were married I was worried that he wouldn't get the passport back at all, and we wouldn't be able to get legally married. So, when it finally came a few weeks later, I was so relieved. Rob married us again, legally, in their living room on a random Friday afternoon.



We began our married life, living only off my income and staying in my parents' basement apartment as we tried to figure out Sammy's immigration situation. When Clete Yoder decided to move to Puerto Rico for a while, we jumped at the chance to move in to his house and take care of it, in exchange for rent. It was a great opportunity for us to save up some money while we figured out everything else.

Shortly before we moved, we began the application process for Sammy's green card so he could start working. The whole process is pretty expensive because you need to get a lawyer to make sure you fill everything out correctly or you could be denied. We started the process and paid what we could to get the paperwork started. But we didn't have enough to pay for the whole process ourselves. We were going to just save money and get it done as soon as possible. But God had other plans. The Benevolence Team at LCF, along with a financial assistance program through Everence, paid for the remainder of what we needed to get the process going. We were on our way to getting a green card. We signed so much paperwork in April of 2018 and were told that the process could take up to 9 months. We were praying that everything would go well.



Before we knew it, we were told that we had our interview scheduled for the end of May, only a month after filling out the paperwork! We met with our lawyer and went through a mock interview just so we could make sure that we were prepared. Finally, the day came for our interview. We were so nervous. We sat in a room with our lawyer and the immigration officer. She recorded our interview and asked us a million questions about each other. I remember shaking the whole time. Finally after about thirty minutes or so, it was over. And then the wait began—to see if we would be denied or granted the green card.

Just a month or so after our interview, we found out that Sammy had been approved. We were so excited! I finally breathed a sigh of relief knowing that everything was going to work out. A few weeks later, Sammy got his driver's license. A couple weeks after that, he got a landscaping job in Plain City. Everything was going great.

Towards the end of September, Clete decided to come back. We had known all along that he would come back eventually but hadn't made any solid plans as to where to live once he returned. We didn't want an apartment because of our pets, and we didn't know where else we could rent. It never even crossed our minds that we could potentially buy a house. We decided to meet with someone from our bank to discuss our options. After speaking with their mortgage representative, we learned that we were pre-approved to buy a house! I personally didn't think this would be possible considering I'm so young and Sammy didn't have a job for very long; but God had this plan for us. After looking at all kinds of houses

online and in person, we finally decided on this little house on a quiet street in London. The inspection passed, everything was approved, and we closed on our first home in December 2018! We are so thankful that God chose this for us!

We have been in our house for a few months now, and the process of making it our own has begun, with Sammy doing all of the work. His job had slowed down because of the weather so he has more time at home. We still have a little income from his occasional work. Just days after I was asked to write about God's faithfulness, Sammy received a call from his boss saying that he is closing the business. Sammy was out of a job. Normally, I worry about everything—even things that are months away. So this news should have worried me more than anything. We have a house payment, along with other bills, and now we are going to be down to one income? But for some reason I had a peace about the whole situation. I kept telling myself that God has a plan and things will work out. The same day that Sammy found out he no longer had a job, he decided to text someone he had done some work for in the past just to see if he had anything available. Lucky for us, he had an opening. He and Sammy met two days later to discuss the details. Sammy found a new job in two days. God had a plan all along.

God always has a plan for us. I don't know why we have to go through these trials and why they have to pop up at the most inconvenient times. But looking back, it's so amazing to see where we are now compared to then. I don't know why we are in London, but God has a plan. I don't know why Sammy had to lose his job, but God has a plan. We have been so blessed by God's faithfulness to us, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds. It makes me think of the song, "Great is Thy Faithfulness," where it says, "morning by morning new mercies I see." It is so true that God always has something new in store for us. It might be a challenge to get there, but it's just a stepping stone in this journey. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." ■



Caught  
in the  
Act!

As you well know, it has been a very cold and snowy winter here in Ohio!

Merv Schlabach, who, along with Clete Yoder, gives leadership to LCF's Buildings and Grounds Team, was caught quite a number of times in the act of shoveling the sidewalks and putting salt down. A big thank you to Merv, along with the ushers and others who work hard to keep the sidewalks and parking lot clear here at LCF! ■



## Upcoming Activities

March 2—Marriage Date Night, 6 - 9 p.m.

March 3—LCF 101, 12:15 - 2:30 p.m.

### Youth Group...continued

**Sophia Headings:** One way that I appreciated David and Brenda in the youth group was how easy they made it for us to be able to talk to and to open up to them about things going on in our lives. They helped us learn more about our journeys with Christ and about life in general by telling us their own experiences throughout high school and relating that to things that helped them through their journeys with Christ.

**Wesley Miller:** I think that their Bible studies were very memorable and meaningful. Also it was fun when they brought their baby Freya with them to the meetings.

As a youth group, we would like to say a belated "Thank You" to David and Brenda for all they have invested in us over the years! Thanks to Ray and Grace for your continued support through this transition process, and to you as a church for your prayers. ■



wheat fields, olive groves, fig trees, and beautiful vineyards, which they maintain mostly by manual labor. I would encourage anyone to visit if they have the chance. I found the people to be friendly and many understood English; so it was not difficult to get around. For me, this experience was one that allowed me to see places that are referred to in Scripture, Now, when I read Scripture, I can better picture in my mind where it is and what it looks like. I can better understand things like in Mark 4:35-40, when a sudden storm arose on the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum, because I have seen the waves become violent and storms arise quickly. Now, when I read about Jesus speaking peace to the storm, I visualize the waves, the storm, and the sea, in my mind."

When Clete was asked about the foods he enjoyed, he said he was not much of a connoisseur of foreign foods, but he did like the Turkish lentil

soup known as Mercimek Corbasi (pronounced as maertschimek) made from red lentils, onion, garlic, tomato and carrot and blended well. Clete continued, "If you are looking for recommendations of restaurants, I'm not your person; but if you're looking for places of biblical significance that will tempt your appetite for more of the Word, I may be able to suggest places to visit." ■



### Turkey Trip...continued

- Philadelphia is known as the faithful church in Revelation 3:7-13.
- Laodicea, a place that today is the site of many ruins, in Revelation 3:14-22 was said to be lukewarm.

These seven church sites are a popular tour route near the Aegean Coast in western Turkey. We were able to visit all of them except for Philadelphia and Thyatira.

Paul was born in Tarsus, which is southern Turkey. He lived in Ephesus and started one of the strongest churches there. John wrote his gospel while living in Ephesus. Ephesus was the second most important city of the Roman Empire. The Romans persecuted Christians, so the Christians had to meet in secret. Symbols were placed at various spots to indicate where they were meeting. Some of these markings (i.e., the fish symbol) are still visible today.

Turkey is 98-99% Muslim, and only 1-2% Christian and Jewish; yet it is steeped in Christian and Jewish history. It is a beautiful country with mountain ridges, valleys,

## The LCF Connection

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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](mailto:secretary@lcfweb.org). Editors: Theresa Hennis, 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.