

The LCF Connection

February 2020



Celebrate the Church

Sunday

by Elisabeth Yoder

On Sunday, January 19th, we at LCF celebrated our role in the global body of Christ, as well as our local community of believers, on our "Celebrate the Church Sunday." During our morning service, we were thrilled to welcome Allan Patterson, Peyton Miller, Dave and Anna King, Nathaniel Smith, Grant Shoemaker, and Chris Conte as new members at LCF, and we were able to give our blessing to David and Brenda Perkins and Marcus Freed as they follow the leading of God to serve beyond LCF. We were reminded of God's great faithfulness to us through a slideshow highlighting His work in and through our church body this past year.

And the celebration did not stop there! Jeff Gates captured a group photo of us "as we are now." Our stomachs were filled with good food and our hearts were filled with good fellowship as we enjoyed a delicious potluck meal together.

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God's Amazing Love

by Theresa Hennis

When the month of February rolls around, our thoughts seem to automatically go to all things love. When you think about love, what comes to mind? Hearts and flowers? Candy and cards? As Christians, we've been given the greatest expression of love imaginable through Christ's sacrifice for us. Seeing that love in tangible forms is a blessing. We wanted to share two examples for you to think about as you consider how God expresses his love to us and through us.

Molly Rosati created the artwork pictured on the right and suggests that as we look at it we ponder the following question: *How would you describe the love expressed in this image?*

Pam Stanforth shares two incidents where she recently felt God's love expressed in tangible ways:

"What a treasure, the words of Yahweh, hidden in our hearts and brought to our remembrance by the Holy Spirit when we have need. I had only just met this lovely lady, but within minutes I felt a sense of urgency that I was to lay hands on her and to

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The Biggest Little “Church”

A Message from the Pastor

by Rob Swartz

Jesus often spoke in parables, and I find that he still does. Life constantly reminds us of the truths of scripture, and I believe God is always trying to get our attention through life's everyday experiences. Recently, Doris and I watched a movie called "The Biggest little Farm" that reminded us a lot of what we think church is like. I've been preaching lately about what is on our hearts for LCF, and this movie captures in a "parable-sort-of-way" part of my vision for church. So...I adopted the title and changed it to "The Biggest little Church." ☺

This documentary is a story of a city-couple attempting to start an ambitious, organic farm on 200 acres of barren ground in northern California. Everyone said they were crazy, and in many ways they were. ☺ It reminds me of when God asked Abraham to go to a country he would show him and, crazy enough, Abraham packed up and did just that. In fact, I think God is calling everyone to do this in some sort of way whether as individuals or as a church. Will we step out in faith to follow the dream God has given us?



Not only will we step out in faith, but will we stick with it "when the going gets tough?" I like the way the movie doesn't sugarcoat anything. This young, inexperienced couple suffered a myriad of setbacks and difficulties from coyotes to a huge snail invasion. It's almost comedic to see how they keep getting hit with problems. But it's also very inspiring because they persevered. They didn't give up. They didn't panic, but learned to step back to evaluate each problem and then come up with a creative solution. The Bible talks a lot about perseverance, too. Will we persevere in this race we are running? Will we creatively work through problems or will we give up?

One of the biggest problems they experienced was that soil on this neglected farm was dead. How were they going to revive the soil? They brought in a consultant who quickly became a close friend and encouraged them to "diversify, diversify, diversify" so that all of the plants and animals could work together to produce vibrant life. It sounds a little like "pie-in-the-sky," but it worked. As they planted cover crops, all kinds of varieties of fruit trees and vegetables, and all kinds of animals, vibrant life began to return to the farm. Diversity also brought problems, but learning how to get all of those diverse lifeforms to contribute to a healthy farm was one of the great successes of this Biggest Little Farm.

I am reminded of what the Bible says about the church. It says that we are one body made up of many members or parts, each of us caring about and needing the other members. A healthy church is a diverse church. We have one thing in common, and that is our love for Jesus, but we need a variety of gifts, callings, backgrounds, ethnicities, and ages to really be healthy and balanced. I'm grateful for all the different people God has brought to LCF, and I hope that diversity continues.



Maybe one of the biggest themes of the movie is the idea of impermanence of all things and that we are not here just for ourselves, but working together for some greater purpose. I couldn't agree more. We are here for the glory of God and to serve others. May we never forget that.

I encourage you to check out "The Biggest Little Farm," and may we all be inspired to be the church God has called us to be! ■

Elders' Notes

by Jesse Diller

We began our first meeting of the new year, held on January 14th, with a time of sharing and prayer for: those who are experiencing health issues, traveling, young families who have just welcomed a new baby, our upcoming Celebrate the Church Sunday, etc.

We discussed the summary document about what is on our hearts for LCF, which is a result of what we have been sharing and talking about over this past year. Rob is using it as a basis to share with the church over the next few weeks what we are about at LCF. We think it is important to make it very clear that our greatest desire is to see Jesus at the center of all that we do. Everything else flows out of that. We will continue to work to express that in our leadership.

We discussed plans for our 2020 Celebrate the Church Sunday. We will be bringing in new members as well as inviting existing members to renew their membership. We considered various ways to invite members to do that, as well as to give them an opportunity to express interest in serving in various areas (especially where volunteers are currently needed). We will include a special send-off prayer for several individuals who will be leaving the local body to serve at other places. We will end with a short Q&A time after the potluck meal.

We spent some time considering the leadership of the church, and discussing ways that LCF can raise up the next generation of leaders. We talked about discipleship programs, opportunities for public speaking and participation in our Sunday services, as well as educational opportunities.

We ended our time with prayer, remembering the various situations we discussed. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 11th. ■

Council Update

by Jim Jones

The council continued their discussion of LCF's Child Protection Policy and possible revisions.

With the sale of the old church building our mortgage interest has been reduced. If needed the option is available to reduce our monthly payments in the future if needed. Council has unanimously agreed to maintain our current monthly mortgage payment to save interest and reduce our payoff time to five years. If any additional funds are needed to balance the budget, they will be taken out of savings.

Our 2019 Income came \$800 short of 2019 Expenses. ■

Getting to Know... Dave & Anna King

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Where are you both from, originally?

Anna: I grew up in West Jefferson and Dave grew up in Columbus.

How did you meet each other?

We met at a Bluegrass Festival in Columbus, where Dave's dad was singing with a group.

Is there anything interesting about how Dave proposed to you, and when you got married?

Dave proposed to me at his grandparents house. We got married the following year, 3 days after my 16th birthday. Dave was 19 so we were both very young but we married with our parents' blessing—as long as I would finish school (which I did). Dave's dad, who has been a pastor for many years, was the one who married us. Interesting to note: we were late to our own wedding rehearsal because we were closing on a house. It is a testimony to God and his faithfulness that we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary on March 15th!

What hobbies/ministries are you involved in?

- Anna: I love spending time with our kids and grand-babies, and I like to crochet, sew, and read. I desire my daycare to be a ministry to the families I work with every day.
- Dave: I like to play softball, be with the grand-babies, and coach.

Where do you both work/what do you do?

- Anna: I work from home, providing childcare for 5 kids (2 full-time and 3 part-time).
- Dave: I work at Worthington Industries as a welder. I have worked there for 36 years and am looking forward to retiring in July.

Do you have a favorite quote or bible verse?

- Anna: Psalm 91:11
- Dave: Psalm 23

Do you have any pets?

We have 1 dog. His name is Solomon.



How many children/grandchildren do you have?

We have 2 children and 7 grandchildren. We are thankful that both families live close by and we get to see them often.

If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be and why?

We are both happy where we are and feel that we are exactly where God wants us to be.

What do you look forward to in the future?

- Anna: Growing old with Dave and spending time with my children and grandchildren.
- Dave: The same. ☺

Thanks, Dave & Anna, for helping us to learn to know you a bit better. We are glad to have you as a part of our church family here at LCF! ■



God's Amazing Love...continued

pray with and for her. I was a little timid, but I knew God's power was not timid, and I was only a willing vessel. As we talked, got to know about each other by sharing, there came a lull in our conversation, and I knew it was God's timing. I asked her if she would mind if I prayed with and for her. Her whole countenance changed. She confirmed that she was longing for a special moment from God. Most often God's love is expressed by His Words spoken through the willingness of His children. His words bring comfort, encouragement, and confirmation of what He has already spoken to us in our hearts. It was a double blessing because as I listened to her responses after praying God's Words over her, I, too, felt encouraged as God confirmed to my heart the unction of His Holy Spirit.

The other incident was a lady staying in one of the RV campers in East Texas, where we camped. She has COPD and PTSD (Military background), lives alone, and says she is very much an introvert. Jeff and I cooked a meal and invited her over to our camper home. She opened up and talked for hours! It was God's love that kept me silent and listening, and it was God's love keeping both Jeff and I awake until at last she finished talking and went back to her camper. We were hesitant to ask her over again; however, I knew we had to. Sure enough, it was a repeat of the first visit, then, and once again, when we had her over before we left. I believe she needed a safe space to empty all she had inside. God's love and mercies are sure, and sometimes love comes in the form of just listening." ■

Child Protection Update

LCF's Commitment to Children, Youth, and Volunteers

by Pam Shay



"Children are a gift of the LORD..." (Psalm 127:3), and here at LCF, we take great efforts to care for and protect the children engaged in all activities at the church. Children's Ministry at LCF promotes discovering God, growing spiritually, and developing gifts to equip young people for living in today's world. It takes many people to teach, engage, and oversee children of all ages in the various activities offered at LCF: Sunday School teachers, youth leaders, nursery volunteers, and many more. We are thankful for each child, youth, and volunteer that God brings to us and are committed to providing the best care and protection possible for each one.

LCF strives to provide a safe place for the younger generation by making sure that each person who works with children and youth is qualified and caring and is committed to following LCF's policies and procedures to promote a safe and secure environment. We obviously would not want to have someone who has been identified as being abusive towards children, of unsound character, etc. working with our children and youth; thus, everyone who works with youth and/or children at LCF is required to complete a Children's Ministry application—which includes going through a screening process and online background check. Once approved, they are expected to participate in the annual training meetings. The application process and background checks help to verify that the volunteers are well-suited to work with the children and youth, and the required training assures that they are up-to-date on LCF policies and are well trained in how to handle different situations.

The Child Protection Team (CPT) works closely with Church Leadership, as well as each of the leaders who work with youth and children (nursery, youth, etc.) to oversee the safety of the LCF Children and Youth. They manage the Children's Ministry applications and provide regular required training for all of the volunteers. Members currently include: The Children's Ministry Coordinator (Becky Hostetler), LCF's Administrative Assistant (Doris Swartz), and a representative from the congregation and leader (Pam Shay). 2020 is a year of updating our records, conducting annual training, and working to improve the process for volunteering to work with children and youth. The CPT will be reviewing the list of approved individuals to make sure all data is on file and ordering any needed background checks.



Please mark your calendars for this year's training session. It will be held on Sunday, February 23 and March 1, at 11:30 a.m. (about 15 minutes after the Sunday service). All volunteers who work with children and youth, including teen helpers, may select either one of the two dates to attend the informational meeting which is expected to last around 45 minutes.

Children's Ministry Applications are available by the church mailboxes in the foyer or from anyone on the CPT. If you have any questions, please talk with Pam Shay or other members of the CPT. ■

Celebrate the Church Sunday...continued

Additionally, all those who are currently members at LCF were given the opportunity to sign the membership book to show their continued commitment to our body of believers. Everyone was invited to work together on a puzzle signifying each of our places as a piece in the body of LCF.

We are deeply grateful for each other and the opportunity we have to worship and serve God together. ■



*"Dear Friends,
Since God so Loved Us,
we also ought to Love One Another.
No one has ever seen God;
but if we love one another, God lives in us
and his love is made complete in us."*

1 John 4:11-12

Upcoming Activities

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|-----------------|--|
| Feb. 17-20 | CMC's Pastors Conference in Hicksville, OH |
| Feb. 16 | Hymnsing at Shiloh Mennonite Church, 7 p.m. |
| Feb. 23 | Tom Mast will be sharing at LCF |
| Feb. 28-29 | Relational Wisdom Seminar at Shiloh |
| Feb. 23/March 1 | Child Protection informational meeting, 11:30 a.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 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.