

The LCF Connection

April 2020



The Cost of Redemption

by Jodi Traverse

When I was fourteen, I had the privilege of attending OBSESS, a weekend teen girls' camp. On our first night there, my group began a beading project that had an arbitrary rule that we didn't know, but our counselor informed us every time we messed up and kept track of all our mistakes. Eventually, we figured out that the rule was that we were not allowed to say any pronouns about ourselves such as "I, me, my, etc."

When the project was finally finished, we were told that we would have to do five pushups for each mistake that was made (and we had made a lot). We did our best to pay for our mistakes, but we eventually got to the point where we just couldn't keep going, and we were still nowhere near the number of pushups we needed. After a while, we assembled with all the other groups to figure out what would happen next.

While we were sitting there worrying about what they would do since we hadn't been able to pay the price for our mistakes, the counselors from all the different groups got down and started doing pushups for us. I'll never forget what it felt like to see my counselor doing pushups for my mistakes. We knew that it was only an illustration to help us picture what God did for us, but it was really powerful. We all have messed up and have no way of redeeming ourselves on our own. We need God to pay the price for us, and He did. He died for us and paid the ultimate price so that we can be redeemed from our sins and come clean before Him. Our redemption was not free. Are we going to humbly accept it, or are we going to try to pay the price by ourselves? ■

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Powerful Music

by Andrea Biscup

The poetry of music provides a powerful way for the truth of the gospel to sink into our hearts on Sunday morning and to replay in our minds throughout the week. Often the lyrics of a song stick in our memories more easily than a sermon. The tune, whether a quiet, simple melody of love and faithfulness, a bouncy chorus of joy, or a soaring refrain of victory, deepens the expression to the words and allows them to come to life. If our minds and hearts are engaged as we sing, we can feel the truths, not just say them.

Singing together as a congregation carries special significance because it gives us the opportunity to testify to each other of our commitment to these truths, no matter what may be going on in our lives at the time. "All our individual stories meet at the cross-section of the worship service" (from Sing by Keith and Kristyn Getty, see footnote). Some of LCF's most frequently sung songs recently (Jesus at the Center, The Goodness of God, Christ is Enough, and Sovereign Over Us) declare our trust in Jesus to be everything we

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



Why Do We Need an Overseer?



A Message from the Pastor

by Roger Hazen, LCF's Overseer

Doris asked if I would be interested in passing along to LCF some of my thoughts as I serve as your overseer. Yes! I think I can find two cents around here somewhere. ☺

Most of you have probably seen me at some point, as I've visited LCF many times. I usually try to bring along my wife of nearly 38 years,

Sharon. She works as an RN at McLaren Hospital in Flint, MI. I have been a pastor for 28+ years, 8 years in Nebraska and the last 20 at Pineview Mennonite Church in Vassar, MI. We have three adult children and 2 grandchildren. Oh, and some of you may know my brother-in-law, Keith Scheffel.

You may not know much about why I'm the overseer of LCF, or what it is I might do. As to the "why"—CMC, the affiliation of churches to which LCF belongs, strongly encourages every church to have an overseer. Here is the statement about overseers as printed in the CMC Annual Report book:

"The overseer serves as a pastor to the pastor, provides counsel to the leadership team and congregation in times of difficulty, assists the pastor and leadership team in formulating vision for the life and ministry of the church, assists the church through leadership transitions, and provides the primary link of accountability between CMC and the congregation."

That "primary link of accountability between CMC and the congregation" is especially important if a church is, for whatever reasons, without a pastor. There are also times when pastors need input from CMC. An overseer who has a relationship with that pastor is in a much better position to give that input than the Conference Pastor or Executive Director. CMC wants very much to see the kingdom of God thrive in the world. Having churches join together in that work provides energy, insight, support, encouragement, and sometimes correction. Overseers are uniquely positioned to be able to connect individual pastors and churches to these and other CMC resources and strengths.

You may wonder how I became your overseer. Some may even want to say, "I didn't vote for him!" No, you didn't! Overseers in CMC are usually chosen at a church leadership level. Pastors need to be able to work closely with overseers, so normally the pastor, in consultation with the rest of the church leadership, suggests someone to serve as overseer. The overseer must be a credentialed minister in CMC and approved by the CMC Executive Board. A more detailed description of these processes may be found on the CMC website at <https://cmcrossdale.org/administrative-resources/overseers/>.

It's amazing how quickly the 500 word limit Doris gave me is reached! But she did promise that I could have other opportunities to write to you in the future. For now let me say that my time as overseer at LCF, which began around 12 years ago, has been genuinely enjoyable. Rob & Doris and everyone I've been involved with in leadership at LCF love Jesus Christ and want to serve Him with all their might. You are blessed with sincere and gifted leaders.

One thing more—overseers count it all joy to pray for the congregations they serve. I am praying for all of you! And I hope you reciprocate toward me! ■

Elders' Notes

by Keith Scheffel

We as an Elders Team had our monthly meeting on March 11 minus Jesse Diller due to illness. We spent a significant portion of our meeting in prayer and discussing 1 Peter 2:1-5. We're trying to make an intentional shift to spend more time in prayer and Bible study as a part of our regular monthly meeting.

We spent time refining an "LCF Guidelines for Teachers" document that clarifies the application and approval process for those who would like to teach at LCF. Additionally, we discussed different options for communicating as elders. We decided to try using the "WhatsApp Messenger" app for the near future in hopes that it will facilitate easier and quicker communication between our regular monthly meetings. That decision proved very timely as we were able to discuss decisions and logistics related to our Sunday morning worship service and other details when the coronavirus crisis hit.

Our next meeting is scheduled for April 14. ■

Council Update

by Jim Jones

The council has asked the Building and Grounds Team to explore cost-cutting measures while our church building is not being utilized. Cleve is working with his team weighing essential and nonessential requirements. They are looking at saving expenses such as church cleaning, utilities (setting back the thermostats), trash pick-up and water delivery. In addition, Dan will be looking into some internet choices and weigh it with our requirements once our building is back in use again. ■



...of finding a creative way to serve and encourage the elderly.



Thanks to everyone who stopped by the church on March 25th to donate items for Pam Shay to sanitize and deliver to local nursing home/assisted living facilities. ■

Upcoming Activities

We do not know how long it will be until we are able to meet again in person...until then, we encourage you to:

- spend time with God—in worship, prayer and scripture
- find creative ways to stay in touch with each other
- serve and encourage those who are struggling
- enjoy the opportunity to slow down
- have fun making memories with those you live with ☺

We will keep you posted as events get scheduled.

Happy Easter!

Getting to Know...Nathan & Alice Jenkins

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Where are you both from, originally?

Nathan is from Akron, and I, Alice, am from Bowling Green.

How many children do you have? Grandchildren?

We have one son, Oscar who is 21 and one daughter, Zoie who is 19. Also a soon-to-be daughter-in-law, Makayla who we adore and can't wait for her to be part of our family.

How would you describe your journey with God?

Alice: My journey started young with the Lord in my life. Sometimes it was a hard road but I never stopped praying even when it seemed as if he couldn't hear me. God was there with me and showed me the answer to my prayers in his time, not mine. I have just recently been shown how Jesus was carrying me through my trials and how he kept a hold of every tear I shed, and he has redeemed me whole again, through those tears.



Nathan: I came to know Christ a few years ago and was baptized by Rob and Reuben at Little Darby Creek on August 26, 2018.

What brought you to LCF?

Jeff Stanforth invited us to come to LCF. I used to work for him at London Correctional.

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

Somewhere with lots of land and by a body of water where we could hunt and fish.

Do you have any special hobbies/interests/ministries?

We love to fish and camp. Nathan enjoys hunting while I enjoy baking. We enjoy children's ministries.



How did you meet and when did you get married? Was there something unique about your wedding, such as place or special theme, etc.?

We met at London Correctional Prison, where we were both Corrections Officers. We were married on June 24, 2013, on a pontoon boat at Deer Creek. That is the first place Nathan took me to fish and where he proposed. It is a very special lake to us.

Who has been the most influential person in your life, or has inspired you, and why?

The book of Esther has been my inspiration in life. When I struggle and go through hardships, I will read about her life. Esther had to rely on God's love to save her and used her to save her people. You get in some situations that may challenge you or even frighten you, and you are scared and alone. Trust God is there, and he will not give you more than you can handle—he is there with you. You may be going through this trial and God is preparing you to witness to others who will later be going through the same hardships.

What do you most look forward to in the future?

Growing old together, enjoying the outdoors with our kids, and someday our grandkids. Traveling the country in an RV.

What is one piece of advice you would give to someone about living a life of faith?

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean on him and trust he is there to help you through anything. Read his words and live by them, and he will help you through this life on earth until the day you meet in spirit.

With the challenges you have both faced with Nathan's illness, how has that shown you God's work in your lives, and how can we, as your church family, help you/pray for you in the future?

God has given us struggles and pain. That is part of life, and the path he has prepared for us. On this path we have had to rely on his Word to get us through and trust we are on this path for his glory. Job suffered many things in his life, and God brought him out of it a much better man. We lose sight of that sometimes and want to wallow in our flesh, and Satan likes to play the pity card on us. We are in a storm, and Satan would say that our ship is about to sink. I want to thank you all as a church for supporting us and for being there for us to lean on, pray with, and fellowship with. You have all played a special role in our lives through your prayers. This congregation is a tight-knit family who uplifts and loves one another. So I say to Satan, we are not in a storm, we are the storm, and through Christ we will rise up and continue to be his children, always. We appreciate continued prayer for complete healing of Nathan's head pain. That would be a beautiful blessing. ■

Powerful Music...continued

need and our desire to put Him first. As I look around at LCF while we sing songs like these, many of you encourage me by singing wholeheartedly, even though I know you are going through hard times. Your faith strengthens my faith.

If a particular song impacts us on Sunday morning, we can continue listening to it throughout the week. The weekly prayer request email includes the song list from that week at the bottom, so we can easily find the titles of the songs we have sung and listen to them at home. After a little repetition, we may not even need to listen to the songs, because they will be ringing in our minds on their own, constantly reminding us of truth! ■

**Footnote: Most of these thoughts were inspired by the book Sing by Keith and Kristyn Getty. You can find it in LCF's library if you are interested in this topic.*

Some of Our Favorite Songs

Compiled by Theresa Hennis and Doris Swartz

Thanks to each of you who responded and shared with us what some of your favorite songs are. Some of us find it difficult to narrow it down to just one. ☺ We hope that the words of these songs will encourage your heart and help you to fix your mind on God and his truth, during this time of uncertainty.

- "Goodness of God" - Daekyun OH
- "Christ is Enough" - Vivi Oh
- "You Say" and "Look Up Child" both by Lauren Daigle - Alice Jenkins
- "Oceans" by Hillsong - Richard Troyer
- "Let Your Glory Fall," "Sovereign Over Us," and "Still" by Hillsong - Youngmi OH
- "Way Maker" - Lucy Elfrink
- "He Reigns" by Newsboys - Shepherd Ndungu
- "Amazing Grace," "Come Thou Fount," "Holy Holy Holy," "As The Deer," "10,000 Reasons," and "Jehovah Jireh" - Amie Smith
- "Thrive" by Casting Crowns and "Lord of the Dance" - Angie Stukey
- "Chain Breaker" by Zach Williams, "Where Feet May Fail (Oceans)" by Hillsong, and "Your Hands" by JJ Heller - Marsha Schrock
- "Shout to the Lord," "I will Call Upon the Lord," and "Lord I Lift Your Name on High" - Colleen Wolford
- "Hope of the Nations," "Amazing Grace My Chains are Gone," and "At the Cross" - Audrey Maust
- "Counting on God," "Lord, I Need You," and "Sing Wherever I Go" - Doris Swartz
- "To God Be the Glory," and "He Keeps Me Singing" - Allan Patterson
- "I Can Only Imagine" - Sandy Hauge



May the truth of God's Word and our worship and praise to him constantly fill our hearts and mouths! ■



Security in the Midst of Uncertainty

by Rob & Doris Swartz

"Life as normal" feels anything but normal right now. How quickly many of the things we often take for granted have become quite special to us—from meeting together for our Sunday morning service to going out to eat at a restaurant with friends. Who would have imagined last month that all of the high school, college, and professional sporting events would be canceled or how valuable a loaf of bread or simple roll of toilet paper would become? :)

Many things have changed and continue to change but we are thankful that we can be sure there are some things that will never change! God is still sovereign over all. He is always good and he is always with us. His Word is still true and his promises are sure. We hope that in the midst of all that is changing around us that you are finding security and encouragement by spending time in God's Word. May you experience deep peace and joy as you rest in God's presence and worship him through powerful music, as Andrea wrote about. It's times like these that we understand in a new way how temporary and uncertain everything in this life is and how incredibly awesome and faithful our God is!

Even though we have not been meeting as a church body on Sunday mornings (and we don't know how long it will be until we can do so again) we hope that each of you are feeling loved and cared for. We urge you to continue to be creative in finding ways to connect with and encourage one another, as well as to help those around us who are in need. From texts and emails to phone calls, virtual hangouts, and even listening to the live stream messages online—we trust that you are enjoying regular contact with our church body. Proverbs 12:25 says, "Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up." Who is God wanting you to bring cheer to today?

Thanks so much for your prayers and understanding as we do our best to help our church navigate through this changing and uncertain time. We look forward to seeing all the good things God is going to do through this experience! May we keep our eyes on Christ and shine his love brightly during this time.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

We are praying for each of you and can't wait to be together in person again! ■



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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.