



# The LCF Connection

May 2021

## One of the Greatest Experiences in the World

by Jenn Frederick



We'd like to introduce you all to my nephew, Beckett! He is four years old and very outgoing. He loves construction equipment, creating art and music, and playing in the dirt.

We recently got legal custody of Beckett. It was a long process, but we are so happy that we went down this path. Beckett will now be able to grow up with Rebekah (also 4 years old) and Josiah (2 years) and we are hoping they learn from each other. They all seem to all fit very well together and they love playing together, making up funny jokes, helping around the house, jumping on the trampoline, and having campfires.



Pictured from left to right:  
Dan, Rebekah, Beckett, Josiah, and Jenn

Throughout this process I think God has been teaching me several lessons.

- Firstly, patience. There were a lot of ups and downs, and I really wanted it to be all over with.
- Secondly, that all children need is someone who will love and take care of them.
- And thirdly, that being a mother is one of the greatest experiences in the world (even though it is incredibly hard). ■

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## A New Season

by Shannon Scheffel

If you don't know Steve and Phyllis Swartz, they are dear people you will want to get to know. Some of us at LCF have known them for years, but if you are new to our church, you may have not had the chance to meet them yet. Whichever is the case, we hope that we all have the opportunity to see them more at LCF as Steve and Phyllis are approaching a big change ahead.

What is that change you may ask?

Steve is retiring!! His last official day on the job was April 30, 2021. Steve has been in his position as CMC Conference Pastor (a pastor to pastors) for the past 18 years. He has faithfully been giving leadership to our conference churches and pastors, traveling far and wide to lend support and counsel. He also has invested in many young people, providing training to this next generation of leaders.



Steve, we have no doubt that you have been a huge blessing to the CMC churches; and Phyllis, you have been there by his side, also traveling many miles and lending your support. We congratulate you both on a job well done and wish you the best in this new season of your life!

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## Revived!

Seven ladies from LCF attended the Revive Conference at Shiloh Mennonite Church on Friday evening, April 23, and Saturday, April 24. Here are some of their reflections and highlights:



From left: Jodi, Karen, Doris, Pam, Angie, and Maggie (Not pictured: Shannon)

**Pam Stanforth:** I loved the soft pretzel making before the movie on Friday night! Just like the buttery goodness of those pretzels to our physical appetites, the “ingredients” that made up the conference were so “yummy” to our spirits. I was very encouraged by the young women who led us in meaningful worship and who spoke in the various sessions. As our country has been in the throes of chaos and racial/political divisiveness, my heart has been heavy. Hearing so little kindness on social media platforms, I have wondered about the direction of our younger generation. Seeing the leadership of these young women at the conference gives me hope for the future. God reminded me of the words from 1 Kings 19:18, *“I am preserving seven thousand who have not bowed to the god of Baal.”* The Revive Conference was what I needed to bring about revival in my soul.

**Shannon Scheffel:** Psalm 95:1 *“Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our Salvation.”* Although I could only attend the Friday evening session, I must say the worship time was memorable.

**Karen Brown:** I am so glad I went to the Revive Conference, even though it was a little out of my comfort zone. It was a great way to learn to know some of the ladies from LCF better, especially as we shared meals together on Saturday. The Friday evening time of worship blew me away! To see so many young ladies leading such touching songs in praise was outstanding. The speakers were excellent. Some of the “take-a-ways” that I want the Holy Spirit to help me apply to my life and my interactions with others include: to love and pray for those who hurt me, to remember that I am uniquely made and chosen by God, and to be content regardless of my circumstances, allowing God to reveal himself to me and make something beautiful from my hurts and chaos.

**Jodi Traverse:** *“And He said, “My presence shall go with you and I will give you rest.”* Exodus 33:14. This conference could not have been timed more perfectly. My Friday was another hectic day at work, until I arrived at Revive. This much needed time allowed for me to relax and refocus before facing another crazy week. One point from this weekend that I hope I will remember is to rest in the midst of my storms. We don’t have to go crazy and stress ourselves out because Jesus wants us to find our rest in Him rather than attempting to do everything on our own strength.

**Angie Stukey:** The moment I walked through the doors I felt support and love. That feeling stayed until I walked out of the same doors on Saturday afternoon, and it continued throughout my week. I hope that feeling never leaves. With the help of Jesus and my support group (LCF ladies), I believe that feeling of love and support will be a constant in my life. *“God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.”* Psalm 46:5

**Doris Swartz:** It’s hard to choose just one thing from the conference that I enjoyed most. Worship with a group of sisters in Christ from other churches (especially after this year of being apart) was a sweet experience. One of the songs we sang (Yet Not I, but Through Christ in Me) really spoke to me, and I have been listening to it often since then. I was challenged and encouraged by each of the messages we heard. I came away with lots of practical things to put into practice—in my relationship with God, with my husband, and in my own mind. Of course, it’s always fun to hang out with a group of ladies from LCF and learn to know each other better. A special treat was being able to attend and just relax and enjoy it without having to be responsible for anything. :)

**Maggie Gates:** I was not able to be there on Friday evening, but Saturday was just the self-care that I needed! It was relaxing to participate in the afternoon yoga session (while other ladies painted flowerpots for a craft). The food was delicious, and the flowers, decorations, and the bag of goodies and a beautiful rose to take home added that “special touch” that we ladies enjoy.

*We are all very thankful to our sisters at Shiloh for the great job they did in hosting the conference and for inviting us to join them for it!* ■

## Elders Notes

by Jesse Diller

On April 13th we met once more via Zoom. We began by sharing concerns that were on our hearts and spent time praying for them. We gave updates about various situations and shared our thoughts and questions.

We talked a bit about the youth group. Sarah, Peyton, and Shepherd are giving interim leadership to it currently, to try it out and see how things go. Rob plans to meet again with the three of them at the end of May to evaluate how things are going and make any needed adjustments.

We spent some time discussing the technical side of our service. Our tech team has been busy dealing with computers, sound, livestream, MediaShout, video, etc. It’s a continuing process!

We are planning to have a parent/child dedication on Mother’s Day Sunday morning, May 9th. Since we did not have one last year, there are quite a few little ones who have not yet been dedicated.

We have 7 high school seniors this year whom are connected to LCF. Rob is planning to meet with them sometime soon to discuss this milestone and the next stage of life, which brings various opportunities and so many important things to think about.

We talked about our recent Easter services, and how thankful we are for each person who shared and helped out in various ways. It’s great to see people returning to in-person services! We also want to encourage and pray for the young men in the preaching class as they are sharing their messages with the congregation.

We talked about the challenging balance of giving everyone the opportunity to be involved, but also of trying to maintain good quality in what is being done. We value authentic worship and broad participation and want to be a church that gives a lot of grace and space for people to serve and to discover their gifting; but, we do not want to be careless or have things that distract from Jesus and the gospel message.

We closed our time by praying once again about the situations that we discussed. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 12th. ■

# Getting to Know... Peyton Miller

Interviewed by Elisabeth Yoder

Peyton Miller has been a part of LCF for several years. He has actively contributed to our church through being an usher, helping with youth group, and participating in the preaching class. He is a valuable part of our community, and we want everyone to get to know him better.

**What are three words that describe the kind of person you aim to be?**

Motivated, kind, and servant.

**Tell us about your family! We would love to know more about where you come from.**

I am from Plain City. My parents are Richard and Ruth Miller. I have 2 siblings, an older brother and an older sister, and my dog Max.

**If money wasn't an issue, what is something you would love to try?**

Traveling to a new country every week for a year, or building the world's largest taco.

**Is there a Biblical character you particularly relate to? What is it about their story that speaks to you?**

I really love the story of Joseph and how he stayed obedient to God no matter the circumstances. I'm certain that most of us would have thought, "Surely this can't be God's plan" if we were in his situation.

**Is there a time of your life that has been particularly formative? How did it impact who you are and your walk with God?**

In 2018 I spent 10 ½ months in Central America with a discipleship program called Vida 220. It included 3 months of discipleship training and then the rest of the time we did outreach. It gave me a new perspective and motivation to glorify God and serve others around me.

**What are a few long-term goals you have?**

I would like to learn everything I can about construction and be able to build and remodel almost anything. I would also like to leave the country once a year for as many consecutive years as possible.

**If you could have a super power, what would it be and why?**

Invisibility, I do enjoy some peaceful alone time.

**What is, in your opinion, the most interesting thing about yourself?**

I have traveled between countries by air, land, and sea, and I like listening to Spanish music.

**What is a Biblical truth you wish people paid more attention to? Why do you feel it is especially important for us now?**

I believe living in community with other believers is extremely important even if we don't agree on every detail. I feel like many people these days will choose their relationships based on politics or social movements instead of connecting through the faith we share.

**Out of all the ways you're involved at LCF, what is one you especially enjoy?**

I enjoy working with the youth group the most.

**What are three countries that are at the top of your list to visit?**

New Zealand, Chile, Iceland.

**Is there a quote or particular piece of advice that has stuck with you and been instrumental in your life? If so, what?**

"There's nothing you can sell me that can make me happy." - Jon Foreman

**And if you were giving advice on living well, what would you say?**

Spend time investing in people instead of things. ■



## Council Update

by Jim Jones

Throughout the years some of our church keys have been misplaced. This month we plan to have the exterior doors re-keyed. We will simultaneously re-issue new keys with new security system codes. The old security codes will be purged. Expect an email before and after the changeover takes place.

The internal locks will remain unchanged. For those requiring access to interior locked rooms, two keys will be required, one for the new exterior locks along with your current key for the interior locks.

If you have any questions about keys or the security system please contact Russ Hauge. ■



# Serving Those in Wheelchairs

by Cletus Yoder

As many of you know, LCF has a wheelchair ramp ministry that started in 2015. We put our first ramp in for a gentlemen in London on November 25, 2015, and he passed a month later on December 30th. They needed a ramp to get him in and out of the house to take him to his doctor appointments. The ramp was a great blessing to the family even though it was for only one month. We removed the ramp so that it could be installed for another family. That is why the ministry exists. We keep hearing from the families and community agencies (Loving Care, Senior Center, Madison Disability, etc.) about how necessary this ministry is to the community.



So far, we have installed 79 ramps at no costs to the recipients using donated funds from grants (2 grants from Home Depot at \$4,500.00 each), some recipients, and LCF contributions designated for the ramp ministry. Donated funds are used for purchasing materials only. The average material costs for a ramp is approximately \$450.00. All of the labor is volunteered, and we use our own tools. Of the 79 ramps installed, 25 have been removed and reinstalled for other ramp recipients. So far, no materials have gone to waste.

Our usual process when we get a request for a ramp is:

- We visit the applicant to see what the needs are, what their physical condition is, and if they can afford to pay a contractor for a ramp. If not, we explain that our ministry will install a ramp for free using LCF donations and grant money to pay for the materials and that church volunteers will build and install the ramp.
- We then take measurements and note the elevation differences from the door where they want to exit from to the area of ground where they want to end up.
- With that information we design a ramp, purchase the materials, build the ramp off site, haul it to the site, and install it. We help with obtaining building and zoning permits when needed.



From left: Keith, Justin, Richard, Kelvin, (homeowner) and Ray

The best parts of the ministry are meeting with the recipients and listening to their needs and hearing how grateful and blessed they are with our help. The other part is coming together as a group of volunteers to install the ramps. It's always a great time of fellowship as we work together. Our volunteers at LCF are the best!

My dream has always been to make this a multi-church ministry. The idea for this ministry came from a friend of mine in Erie, Pennsylvania, who participates in a wheelchair ministry called Ramps of Hope. They shared the details of their program with me so that I could start a similar ministry here in Madison County. I would still like to see the ministry expand to include more churches. I would also like to hand the leadership off to younger people. I am getting up there in years and would hate to see the ministry end when I am longer able to lead it. If you know of anyone who might be interested, I would love to talk with them. Also, if there is anyone who would like to be part of the installation team, please let me know. We usually install the ramps in the evenings or on Saturdays. It usually takes around 2 hours to install a ramp. When you think of this ministry, please remember to pray for those in wheelchairs whom we are serving, for their families, and for those of us who connect with them. May they see the love of Jesus through this ministry! ■

*New Journey...continued*

Here are some fun facts about Steve and Phyllis:

- Before Rob became our pastor, Steve served as LCF's pastor for 17 years, from 1985 to 2002.
- Phyllis recently published a book called *Yoder School*. Check it out from our church library. With more time, Phyllis plans to continue her writing more seriously.
- Steve is a certified counselor and has counseled countless individuals over the years, doing much of this out of his home office.
- Phyllis taught a total of 30 years. She retired from London City Schools in 2015. She continues to teach and give wise counsel through her blog called "apple to apple" at <https://phyllismillerswartz.com>.
- Steve and Phyllis live in a beautiful home on North Main Street in London. There they enjoy hosting their two children, spouses, and eight grandchildren, and tending their flower and vegetable gardens. I personally have known them to be very gracious hosts over the years.

When asked what they look forward to with retirement, here are some things they mentioned:

Steve has goals to expand his counseling business, spend more time with his grandchildren, to be more involved in the London community and LCF, and to travel for pleasure, not for work.

They both look forward to turning the heavy load of conference challenges over to younger leaders and to spending more time in their own bed, eating their own food, and controlling their own schedule.

Though retirement will bring some changes, I imagine they won't fully "retire." I'm quite sure Steve and Phyllis will find creative ways to invest in people and share the love of Jesus with whom they come in contact with.

Blessings to you on the journey ahead,  
Steve and Phyllis! ■

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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, Kelli Dean, and Doris Swartz. If you prefer that we do not use photos of you in the Connection, you may opt out by emailing us.