

The LCF Connection

October 2021

Life's Messy Unknowns

by Anna (Rosati) Lee



I have always enjoyed tidy things. A freshly weeded flower bed, the last piece fitted into a puzzle, or a nicely scrubbed floor brings me a zing of pleasure. I like five-step plans and schedules and structure. And that love of tidy things has kept me putting off writing an update for you all, dear readers. I wanted to wait until I could edit out all the messy unknowns of life in transition. However, it seems we will be living with unknowns for quite a while, and so, here we are.



As many of you may know, I left my position as an ESL teacher at International Community School of Bangkok this past June. My husband, John, and I stepped out of our ministries in Thailand and began our international move to his home country of South Korea. I have greatly enjoyed spending time with my family here in the U.S. over the past few months while John has been working in Korea to formulate future plans. And what shall I say about our future plans? Well, here it comes. We most likely have an apartment in Dungkuchon near John's family. Currently the apartment is under renovation, so we can probably move in sometime around the end of November. In the meantime, I am in the process of getting my visa for entry into Korea and hope to join John there at the end of October.

Well, dear readers, just in case all of those messy what-ifs have left you feeling a bit unsteady somewhere in your mid-section, I feel I should offer you the concrete promises upon which we have been building our foundations over the past few months.

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

"Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character, and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." Romans 5:3-5

"For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:6-7

And so it is with a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline that we invite you to join us in prayer that God's will be done in our lives and that He would be glorified through our decisions and actions. Thank you again for being a wonderful church community. You are a blessing. ■

Celebrating New Members

by Harmony Devlin

How wonderful is it to have 9 new members become a part of our LCF church family! We are so excited for each of these individuals who became members on Sunday, September 26th. Although we come from different backgrounds and experiences, we come together as one body, for one purpose—to serve our Lord. We are thankful that the Lord sees us through each "season," as some people may watch online, while others come in person, and some people may come and others may go. God is faithful through it all!

As we continue to grow together, let's remember and put into practice what Rob shared in his recent message about being members of one another. We are blessed to have each other as a church family to encourage one another and endure the hard times together, to lift each other up in prayer, and to enjoy and celebrate the good times together!

Thank you, Lord, for continually watching over us and for bringing new believers to join us. Help us as a church family to care for one another well, and to go out and share Your love with the world each day. ■

New members, from left to right:

*Shepherd Ndungu
Kerry Shen
Rosy Shen
John Shen
(Rob Swartz)
Rhoda Sommers
Kelli Dean
Jeremy "Dean" Dean
Sarah Eichorn
Gideon Eichorn*



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255 US 42 NE
London, OH 43140
(740) 490-2121

LCFweb.org



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Drinking in the Bible (no, not that kind...)



A Message from the Pastor by Reuben Sairs

In a recent sermon about loving one another, Rob used 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 as one of his texts. One of the phrases in verse 13 intrigued me, *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”*

The Bible describes our experience of God in Christ in many ways, but having drunk into the Spirit is one I want to think about. Paul used the same description 2 chapters earlier in a very mystical description of the Exodus, *“they all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.”*

These images shouldn't surprise us, when we know that Jesus used a water pouring ceremony for one of his most memorable teachings in John 7:37-38, *“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive;...”*

Jesus didn't prescribe many rituals for the church, but communion stands out, and of course it involves drinking. I don't know why I haven't put these passages together before.

There are some negative uses of this drinking metaphor, too. Wicked people are to drink from a cup of God's wrath. You can see one example of this in Jeremiah 25.15.

Why drinking? The image is strong—when you drink you take whatever the beverage is into yourself, and it becomes part of you. It takes what's outside of you and puts it inside of you. But it isn't just biological and unconscious; drinking affects you. A good cup of coffee, hot chocolate, *“wine that makes glad the heart of man”* (Psalm 104:15*) etc., all come with more than just good flavors—they come with memories, occasions, moods. And, of course, we're not going to last long if we don't drink something. Thirst is a primary drive. As I understand it, your hypothalamus is working behind the scenes all the time, regulating your system, and calling for liquid by making you thirsty. It's so satisfying to get something to drink when you're really thirsty.

Experiencing God is difficult to pin down in descriptions. It is personal, it is mysterious, we can't make it happen apart from God reaching into our being first. It's described in many ways, but drinking his presence, even though it's a regular thought in communion, has not been one of the ways I've pondered it. I'm going to do that. I'll recommend that to you.

*I'll mention that I'm an abstainer. There are many cautions about alcohol in the Bible as well. Check out Proverbs 23:29-35.) ■

Elders Notes by Rob & Doris Swartz

The elders team met on September 28 and enjoyed a late-summer evening on our patio, with background noise of barking dogs and kids celebrating with kazoos. We are excited to have Quinton Miller serve as a pastoral intern at LCF this year and were thankful to have him join us for our meeting.

Rob read 1 Peter 5:1-5, and we spent some time talking about what this passage says about the role of elders in the church. We are thankful for Jesus, our good Shepherd, and want to follow his example of humility and servant leadership. We desire to serve willingly and faithfully and to do our best to shepherd the flock he has entrusted to us here at LCF. This discussion was the springboard for most of the rest of our meeting as we talked about how we can care for and “shepherd” the flock that is under our care.

We talked about how to care well for those going through difficult times, those we have been missing, those who are new among us, those who are engaged, and many more.



We are so thankful for God's provision and work among us! We spent time reflecting on the good things we see happening such as: the 9 people who recently became members, the opportunity to provide nursery care and Sunday school again, young men who are willing to preach and intern, small groups starting up again, new small group leaders, and more. God is faithful!

Other conversations included:

- Maranatha Community Church is in the process of transitioning to LifePointe Church
- How to handle requests that we receive from people (not connected to LCF) who are raising support to go into missions
- The desire to hopefully be able to support a youth pastor again at some point
- How often we have communion at LCF (currently, it is quarterly, with the communion being the entire focus)

On October 17th Rob will be preaching on the Biblical qualifications for elder, and we will give the congregation the opportunity to submit nominations to be considered as we search for a new elder.

As always, we closed our time by praying about the various situations we discussed, and we will continue to be praying about them. ■

Council Update by Jim Jones

We had our monthly council meeting via phone on September 28th.

We are thankful for the excellent job Tasha Slaubaugh has done serving as treasurer at LCF the past 5 years! In March 2021, Tasha asked us to find a replacement for her. Since then, we have been looking to find a capable and willing person to serve in this position. We, with the approval of the elders, are happy to recommend Sarah Eichorn to serve as LCF's new church treasurer and council member. On Sunday, October 17th, members at LCF will be given the opportunity to vote on this recommendation. For continuity and training purposes Sarah would overlap with Tasha through the end of the year. ■

Getting to Know...the Eichorns

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Gideon and Sarah Eichorn became members at LCF on Sunday, September 26th. We are thankful to God for bringing them to us and look forward to learning to know them better. Here's a start...



Where are you both from, originally? Do you come from a small or big family? Anything you'd like to share about growing up?

- Sarah: I have lived in central Ohio all my life and have three brothers and one sister.
- Gid: I was born in Paraguay, South America, and have four sisters and two brothers. I have many fond memories of living in a rural agricultural setting in Paraguay. I still remember when electricity and indoor restrooms became available to us, and we thought we were living in luxury! When I was 8 years old, my family moved to Ohio to take over my grandpa's family farm as he was getting ready to retire and to be here for my grandparents in their sunset years.

What did you want to do when you grew up?

- Gid: I wanted to be a farmer. This may come true yet.
- Sarah: I was one of those that frequently changed my mind and remember wanting to be anything from a nurse to a librarian.

What or who drew you to a relationship with Jesus?

Sarah: I gave my life to Christ after a conversation with a high school teacher who encouraged me to accept God's gift of salvation.

How did you two meet? Is there anything fun or unusual about your relationship you'd like to share?

- Sarah: We met on our first days of first and second grades. I instantly had a crush on the cute little new boy from Paraguay, and we had secret off-and-on crushes on each other throughout our school years.
- Gid: We experienced the thrill of skydiving together when we were engaged.

How did you come to welcome your daughter, Zaria, to your family? Is there anything special you'd like to share about her? Do you have any other children?

In short, we both felt called to first grow our family through adoption. We both like to travel and pursued an international adoption. We were connected with an agency that worked with several small countries in the Southern Caribbean. Nearly four years after beginning the process, we brought Zaria home from Grenada. She is no stranger to adversity, and we thank God for His faithfulness in her life. Most recently, she has made tremendous progress in overcoming selective mutism. Zaria really wants a sibling, and we are praying to that end.

What is your passion/calling in life?

Orphan care and sharing the gospel with immigrants to the US from unreached people groups

Who do you admire the most and why?

Gid: I really admire my grandparents on both sides. They didn't always choose the path of least resistance and weathered many difficulties in a God-honoring way.

What is the best piece of advice you've ever received, and what advice would you give other young couples/families?

Never stop learning! One of the best gifts you can give your children is a big picture, biblical worldview. A worldview that takes into consideration the perspectives of believers from other nationalities and cultures and especially our persecuted brothers and sisters.

What ministries/volunteer work have you done, and what did the experience teach you about yourself/others?

- Gid: I was a caretaker for a small group of boys at a children's home in Mexico for 1 1/2 years.
- Sarah: Probably the most impactful outreach I have done was the month I spent in Asia where my group's purpose was to smuggle Bibles to a few countries and travel to remote villages to prayer walk and introduce villagers to Jesus as we had opportunity. The experience immersed me in numerous cultures that operated entirely different from my western upbringing. I was struck at how small my worldview was and how vast God's great love is for the millions of people He created from every nation, tribe, and tongue.

Where is your favorite place to have quiet time? Do you have a special devotional/Bible reading plan you prefer to use?

Sarah: We love the solitude that our little farm in the country provides. We both have read through or listened to the entire Bible in a year a few times and found that to be a worthwhile endeavor. Earlier this year I did a study on the story of Scripture from The Daily Grace Co. I really enjoyed learning how everything in Scripture from Eden to eternity points to Jesus.

What can we, as your church, do to help you in your faith walk?

To celebrate our highs and encourage us in our lows, as we hope to do the same to you as our church family

Thanks so much for giving us that glimpse into your lives. We are glad to have you as part of our LCF family! ■

In the Eye of the Beholder

Margaret Hungerford, Irish novelist between 1855 and 1897, wrote under the pen name, The Duchess. In her novel “Molly Bawn” she included the idiom “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” She indicates that beauty is subjective rather than objective according to the one observing the object.

On Saturday, September 4th, a group of ladies from LCF and some of their friends enjoyed a fun day at London Arts Center creating colorful art pieces. As I guided them through the creation process and observed each lady’s choices and combinations of colors for her particular piece, I admit, I was not fond of some of the choices. I was tempted to add my own splashes of additional colors to their canvas; but, I had declared it to be a “No Mistake Art Project,” and therefore, refrained from offering my thoughts as to what would create a piece to my own liking, my standard of beautiful. I patiently observed how each canvas was created and became beautiful with many unique differences. It was interesting to note how the canvases reflected a bit of the character of the artist who was creating it. Truly, each and every canvas turned out beautiful and there were NO mistakes. This lesson made me think of God’s creation of and deep love for each one of us.

What I may see and determine as “beautiful,” another person may not. Yet, this very awareness encourages me to look at the world through the eyes of others, to challenge myself to appreciate differences in perspectives, as well as the uniqueness these differences bring. Not everything has to be my way to be considered beautiful. If I look, really look, for beauty in something, even if it’s different, I can usually find it. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says, “He has made everything beautiful in its time.” Psalms 139:14 personalizes it, “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” Beauty is expressed in the qualities that God births in each one of us—these include joy, love, grace, gentleness, unselfishness; spiritual qualities expressing the very attributes of God—the One who is the source of all that is beautiful!

Art and music preferences may be very subjective, and expressed as in the eye of the beholder, but God’s love is objective. I am the object of His love, and He is gentle towards me, without condemnation, never demanding. He allows me to choose the beautiful He offers, or, if I would rather, to choose the ugly of the world. It is God alone who holds the ultimate standard of beauty as is stated in Ecclesiastes 3:11 above.

One thing we know for sure is that all works of art are only very pale reflections of the beauty of our great God! “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” (1 Corinthians 13:12) I want to see through the eyes of Jesus. I want to see people as He does—not finding their faults, not gauging beauty superficially by my own standard as to what qualifies as beautiful, but, instead, to see them through His eyes of love. I want to remember that God made this person in His image and was willing to die for them—not just for me—but for THAT person! Despite THAT person’s warts, scars, brokenness, sense of fashion or style, messy hair, purple hair, wrinkled skin, body size, tattoos, disabilities, pale skin, dark skin, or even...if they are a Buckeye or Wolverine fan—God loves them ALL, and thinks they are beautiful—just like He does you!

I invite you to join me in praying, “Abba, Father, help me to see every person through your eyes of love—wonderfully, uniquely, and beautifully made by you, created in your image, loved and called by Jesus to be his cherished child. Amen!” ■

Pam was born and raised in Louisiana. She lived there for 32 years. She is a testimony to God’s faithfulness in the midst of life’s hard times. She is retired and enjoys volunteering at the London Arts Center. She lives with her husband, Jeff, in a cozy, art-filled condo here in London, and loves staying in touch with her 3 children and 9 grandkids, who are stretched from Texas to Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Louisiana. The three pieces of art featured on the right give you a glimpse of her beautiful creativity.



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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. 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.