

The LCF Connection

December 2021

Stronger Together

by Shepherd Ndungu

How It Started:

Several years back Jack Rosati approached me about the idea of checking out his gym. I could tell that he was interested in more than just showing it off—he had a genuine interest in the sport. From his own years of experience in weightlifting, he knew the benefits and wanted to pass them on to others. I, however, was not going to be that person. As a former track-and-field athlete, my physical abilities all revolved around running, which is a polar opposite of weightlifting. And so, I politely declined and moved on. Years later, as my interests changed and running abilities dwindled, I approached Jack and decided to take on the challenge. What I ended up gaining was more than just physical ability; I got a friend and an appreciation for collaboration.



Shepherd—Personal Impact:

So, what have I gotten out of it? There are the obvious physical benefits, but I'd like to focus on something else. My time spent with Jack has been about more than just building muscle, it's also been a time of building relationship. Before this, Jack and I would passively talk in church, find out how each other were doing, and then we would both move on. Although I considered him a friend, our friendship had little depth. Now, Jack and I engage in conversations about politics, the church, our struggles, and so much more. He has quickly become one of my favorite people to have conversations with as he provides insight that's refreshing and thought-provoking.

Shepherd—Bigger Perspective:

And having someone along with me on this journey as both a guide and friend has made me realize the value in working together with others. It may seem easier at times to do things alone, but when we experience troublesome days or even great days worth celebrating, having someone there with you can turn any day into a better one. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 tells us that *“Two are better than one...for if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.”* Such an attitude applies to both our day-to-day activities and our walks with God. *Continued on page 4...*

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Revelation Studied in Sunday School Class

by Becky Hostetter

One Sunday morning last spring the students in my Sunday School class asked if we could study the book of Revelation. My initial response was “Sure—if you get another teacher.” While I feel I have a decent Bible background, Revelation was not a part of that. I knew that God wins, and that was about the extent of it. The following week I kept thinking about my inadequate response. Later, in a conversation with Pastor Rob, I asked him for his opinion. He encouraged me and said he felt comfortable with my class reading through the book together. While hesitant, I knew this would be good for me and for all of us. And so began a study unlike any other.



Becky's Sunday School Class: Kaleigh, Ella, Derek, Patrick, and Evan (Not pictured: Jayce)

My goal for this study was to give the students an overview of what is in the book. From previous personal attempts at studying Revelation, I found I would get lost and scared sometime after reading about the seven churches. This time, as I began to dig deeper, I discovered that we were going to learn more about Jesus through this study. My students and I were familiar with Jesus as a teacher, a humble servant, the Lamb of God; but in Revelation, Jesus is revealed to us as the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Lion of Judah, and so much more. We saw strange and glorious worship scenes in heaven. We learned about the seven seals, trumpets, and bowl judgments. We learned about the fall of Babylon and the battle of Armageddon. We learned that, yes, God wins, and if we place our faith and

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The Reality of Christmas

A Message from the Pastor
by Reuben Sairs

I've visited a few of the very famous cathedrals in Europe—Notre Dame in Paris, The Duomo in Florence, Italy; the Cathedral (also a Notre Dame) in Strasbourg, France, and several less well-known, but significant, places of worship descending from the Middle Ages or just after. If I remember the visits clearly, once in a while there would be a strange mixture of tourism and piety under one roof. Tourists were predictably wandering around seeing the place, taking pictures, selfies, going through the usual tourist moves, but then there were lightly attended services (masses) or Roman Catholic practice of one kind or another happening at the same time. Sometimes I would see an individual kneeling at an altar, praying, maybe lighting a candle, leaving an offering, probably hoping to be invisible while the crowd walked past. Alone or in a group, the believers were in the middle of a throng, worshipping, while the crowd filed past.

I felt a kind of pain mixed with admiration for the devout Catholics who were still there for worship. For them it was still church, for the others it was history, architecture, art, all of which are fine with me, but I wonder if most tourists could understand the faith that created these spaces. I often wondered what the tourists from many lands thought of the small bands or lone worshippers—believers praying, chanting, following, while the world of tourism marched on.

I find a parallel in my own Christmas celebration. The world is decorated, attempts at goodwill abound, some of the cultural festivities are good (I love a live Christmas tree, lights, gatherings, gift giving and receiving), but some of it's crass. Whatever else I might write about it, it's a big commercial machine, and much of it has little to do with Jesus. Then there is this small group of people, or this individual at the rail, and I'm that person or with those people, still worshipping, still fascinated with God incarnate, with the virgin birth, with no room at the "inn," with shepherds in the field, with magi already being called from a distant land.

In my Christmas, mostly, I leave out the sentimental bowing donkeys, and boys with drums and the non-Biblical "heart-warming" inventions. The real story warms my heart. The Christmas story to me isn't a fable. It is the key moment in history when God is incarnated in human flesh, and thus is launched the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Yet milling around my world are tourists, taking pictures, perhaps puzzled by the small band of worshippers who come to Christmas not with a naive view of history or theology but with the attempt to be part of the story and the faith, and dare to believe they can be, even 2 millennia later. They still believe Christmas to be true, real, central. They still believe that the Light of the World shines in a world that can be very dark. It's always my hope that maybe just one of those Christmas tourists might still look into a church or see a person who still worships and be drawn to the faith that will change their life and heal them. Such thought was not all, but plays a part in my own Christian testimony—the arresting thought that maybe this was real. ■

Elders Notes

by Jesse Diller

Rob opened our meeting with prayer. We then spent a while discussing some difficult situations, and how best to support those involved in them. Reuben then led us in a time of prayer for all involved.

We are following up on the nominations for LCF's vacant spot on our elder's team; we spent some time working through our next steps in that process.

As the Christmas season is fast approaching, we spent some time planning / scheduling some of the events that surround it; we are planning to have LCF Family Christmas on December 19th and will include the children's Christmas program since it will be fairly short. We are expecting to have the RBC chorus sing at LCF on December 5th. We missed having them last year and would love to have them come sing at LCF again.

Reuben and Rob have talked about the adult class we have had in the past. It seemed like the interest in that format has waned over the years but they would still like to find ways to incorporate good Bible teaching. We talked about the idea of trying to have a Saturday/weekend class with a specific focus such as apologetics or another topic—of course, including some food. We may try something like that sometime this winter and see how it goes.

We would like to continue to develop a strong focus on missions at LCF. We talked about the possibility of setting up a Missions Team, and about the need for leadership we'd have for that team. If we had a Missions Team perhaps someone on that team could also serve as LCF's contact person for Rosedale International.

We spent some time discussing our youth ministry. Youth groups in the broader church are struggling in general, trying to figure out what works in this culture of so much activity and technology. We will be thinking and praying about it and seeking God for how he wants us to support our youth and their leaders. We noted good things that we see happening in the lives of our youth that we are very thankful for.

Quinton closed our time by praying about the situations and issues we discussed. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 14. ■

Thanks So Much!

by Vicki Sairs

Rob, Doris, Reuben and I are smiling in this picture. The smiles are real! You, our LCF church family, have honored us and supported us well, and we don't take that for granted. Thank you so much for your cheerful affection and generous care during Pastor Appreciation month and throughout the year. We love you! ■



Council Update

by Jim Jones

The Council met via phone on Tuesday, November 16th.

Dan Frederick's first 3-year-term on the church council ends this December. He is open to serving a second 3-year-term. The council is unanimous in recommending him for another term. A congregational affirmation vote will take place on Sunday, December 12th.

The council will be finalizing the 2022 church budget. If any of the ministry teams have any special budgetary requests that are above their normal yearly allocations please inform Tasha Slaubaugh or Sarah Eichorn. ■

Getting to Know...Linda Moyer

Interviewed by Theresa Hennis

Two years ago, December 2019, Linda was able to move into her new apartment after being homeless for several years. In the fall of 2018 various individuals from LCF and one, in particular, Grant Shoemaker, became aware of Linda living in her red truck at the old Sonic. They befriended her, took food and coffee to her, and made sure she had what she needed. They invited her to church and Linda started attending LCF in 2019. She enjoyed the good coffee and learning to know people.

After more than a year of putting in applications and looking for a place to live, Linda's friends at LCF were happy to be able to help her move the items she had in storage into her own apartment. She continued to attend LCF in person until Covid-19 hit. Now she watches the livestream from her apartment, which saves her gas. Since we don't see her in person, we thought we'd help you learn to know her a bit more and be reminded of the many prayers God has answered on her behalf.

Linda was born and raised in Columbus.

She has two sons and a daughter, Greg, Eric, and Kimberly.

Linda was inspired by her paternal grandmother, Grandma Ray, who was an herbologist. She grew her herbs on the mountainside in Honacre, West Virginia. She cooked on a wood-burning stove. She taught Linda much about life.

Linda loves to read, play computer games, and do puzzles. She said, "It's been so long since I've thought about what I'd like to do, and the money is an issue. It's been a long time since I've had a vacation. I don't have a clue. I'd love to go to Old Man's Cave in Hocking Hills. I'd love to see Stonehenge and Easter Island. I've wanted to go there since high school."

Linda believes in helping herself and others, and she doesn't like to accept help. She had to learn to allow others to help her.

She has taken care of others most of her life. She says, "I'll walk through Walmart alot, and I've become friends with older customers who ride in the carts, and when they have trouble I help them reach things and load them into their carts. If somebody needs help, it's like my head turns automatically, and I say to myself, 'I can help them.'"

Occasionally, Linda will treat herself to a dinner at Bob Evans. Recently, when she was there eating, she overheard an older couple discussing their lack of funds for a bill, and how they were going to have to order the cheaper items. Linda walked over to them and gave them the money for their meal. She wanted to pay it forward for all the times she was blessed by others when homeless.

Linda enjoys going to the Senior Center here in London for the meals, which are only five dollars. She is feeling things a little tight right now, so her favorite pastime is getting to eat out. She has the food at home, but doing dishes is not her favorite thing to do. Also, it has taken time for her to adjust to being in a home where she is free to make meals. "It's a whole different world now," she said.

She continued, "If I could get people to understand one thing, it would be that they shouldn't be prejudiced."

Linda noted that she likes being different, and a lot of people can't seem to handle that. Grant is one of those people whom she feels has always been so accepting of her. She uses it as a reminder to herself to accept others around her, even if they're different.

She says she gets close to God by simply talking to him. A friend told her she needed to do it by praying. She replied, "I am praying when I talk to him like a friend. I thank him for the squirrels and birds outside my patio door, and for the ideas he gives me. He has blessed me a lot. He has blessed me with so much. I talk to him like I talk to anyone."

Some of the things she likes about LCF is that there are no pews, and that we have mixed marriages and all colors, shapes, and sizes of people! She said, "The thing I don't like when I watch online is that I can't see everyone!"

She likes being by herself, but does also like to visit with others. She told me, "Just because I'm in an apartment doesn't mean I don't want visitors." Even in what would seem to most people to be the hardest of times, Linda is always about helping others.

Note: If you'd like to bless her, you could pick up the egg salad from IGA in South Charleston (which she said she loves!) and drop it off to her.

Pray for Linda's truck to make it through the winter. It has enabled her to live in it when times were hard, and it has served her well.

She wants to thank the church for helping her when she had it rough and invites you to stop by and visit her sometime. ■



Linda does not like to have her picture taken so here is a picture of her stuffed wolf, Hunter (who has lived with her for years) sitting on the red truck they lived out of, with their current apartment in the background.

Winston Goes to Church

by Sandy Gregg

I would like to introduce you to one of LCF's regular attendees. It is my 15-year-old cat, Winston, who has lived with me for the past 13 years. Normally, I would be attending services at LCF in person, but due to some health concerns that I have, I have been avoiding crowds during the pandemic. Since I've been home more than usual, I am noticing things that I may have overlooked before, particularly when it comes to the pets the Lord has given me to care for.

As you can see in the photos on the right, Winston enjoys watching LCF's livestream services on the TV or computer screen. In the past few months I've



noticed that he will settle down and watch LCF services with me. Interestingly, it seems that he especially likes our lead pastor and will frequently sit and watch with me when Rob is preaching. (Note: I haven't noticed him doing this when anyone else is preaching.) He appears to be paying attention because his head is up and his ears are pointed in the direction of the screen. This is very amusing to me so I took a couple of pictures just for proof. I hope you enjoy seeing this as much as I do. ■



Revelation...continued

trust in Jesus our names will be written in the book of life and we will dwell with God forever in a new heaven and new earth. We learned that the Bible begins with the tree of life in a garden and ends with the tree of life in the new Jerusalem. We learned that there is a blessing in studying this book. *"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."* (Rev. 1:3) And we learned that Jesus is coming soon—a fact He reiterates three times in the last chapter.

While we learned many things, we were left with just as many questions. Revelation is an apocalyptic form of literature and is written with many symbols. While some of these symbols are explained in the book, many others are not. It is difficult to understand what is symbolic and what is literal. Add to that the many different scholarly interpretations found in commentaries, and there were times that my head was spinning. My class and I won't begin to say that we understand it all, but through this study we now know what is written in this book, and we know that we don't have to be afraid because no matter what happens on earth, God is in control and God wins! ■

"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" Rev. 22: 20b

Stronger Together...continued

Jack—Personal Impact:

It is a poorly-kept secret that older folks love to give advice, often unsolicited, to younger folks. At 21, this irritated me. At 63, I find myself doing it. Without diving too deeply into the psychology of it all, I will simply say that, as we age, we tend to think about things we wish we had done when we were young and it dawns on us that our attempts to make up for those things later in life are often limited in ways they would not have been in our youth. I have become quite accustomed to sharing my unsolicited advice and receiving a polite nod, at best. So, imagine my joy and excitement when Shepherd approached me to take me up on my offer of joining me in my strength training! There is no question in my mind that I am the one who has received the most benefit from our friendship. At my age, personal records (PRs) are hard to come by and infrequent. However, Shepherd was persistent and consistent in his training and nutrition and did virtually everything right. I watched him get up early and travel a considerable distance on multiple occasions despite his other commitments. Take heed Boomers: If you think young folks lack focus and commitment, maybe you are making invalid assumptions or aren't hanging out with the right young folks. Shepherd's PRs have been frequent and impressive. He has become very strong. Seeing him reach his goals is every bit as exciting for me as it is for him. But he has also seen me experience setbacks, and he has stayed in contact with me to encourage me as I work my way back from them. We are bound together by our Faith and our common goal of getting stronger. We have become close as a result and, while we are at different stages of our life, our generational differences do not divide us. They make things more interesting.



Jack—Bigger Perspective:

Sadly, at present our society seems focused on the things that divide us. As our pastors have noted, the Church has fallen victim to this world view and it has tainted our mission and our reputation. This, of course, is not to pick political sides or to say that we shouldn't vote our conscience. Rather, it is to remind us of our priorities. We are ambassadors for Christ. The relationship that Shepherd and I have developed based upon a simple mutual commitment to strength training has brought us closer and made us rejoice in each other's success. We, as the Church, need to be in each other's corner. *"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as in fact you are doing."* 1 Thessalonians 5:11 NIV ■

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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
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