

The LCF Connection

February 2022

Celebrating Our Church Family

article and pictures by Jeff Gates



“Close Enough to Perfect for Me.” That title from a song in the 1980s by the country group Alabama may most accurately describe how we can proudly feel about each other at London Christian Fellowship.

At “Celebrate the Church Sunday” on January 16th, Pastor Rob asked in his message, “Who are we?” He noted some of who we are but said the most important thing is that we are in Christ! We aren’t the perfect church,” he said, “and we should rejoice in that!” He said we should rejoice in that because an imperfect church is a safe place for other imperfect people who need Jesus, as well, and a place where everyone can be used in ministry. An imperfect church is where we can share our struggles, weaknesses, and failures, knowing that we will not be judged, but loved and encouraged, and a place where everyone knows that whatever good that is being accomplished is by the power of God!”

One of the verses he referenced was 2 Corinthians 12:10, where the apostle Paul tells us, “That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Continued on page 4...

Inside this Issue

Celebrating Our Church Family	1
Integrity, Faithfulness & Service	1
How Do You Read the OT?	2
Council and Elders Updates	2
Getting to Know Cody Miller	3
Thoughts from Reading Through...	4

Tasha... Integrity, Faithfulness and Service

by Jim Jones, LCF’s Council Chair

I think one of the most rewarding aspects of being a LCF attendee for over 25 years is watching all the kids grow up before our very eyes. It reminds me of my fleeting years, while at the same time, leaving me feeling extremely blessed.

One example that comes to mind was a visit to Rob and Doris’s home when their kids were young. Larissa, at the age of 10, had a working library in her room, organized down to the last detail with a process to check out books. Bryce, being the youngest at 4 years old, gave me a guided tour of all the bathrooms. He couldn’t wait to show me everyone’s toothbrushes. I casually mentioned to Rob that I had used his and hoped he didn’t mind. 😊

For me, the kids at LCF have always stood out as special in so many ways. Now they are amazing adults, which is a testimony to the wonderful families that have raised them. Tasha is truly one of these amazing adults.

Continued on page 4...



Tasha (Troyer) Slaubaugh growing up as a child at LCF.



Tasha (left) washing dishes with Larissa and Brenda at a youth fundraiser.



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How Do You Read the Old Testament?

A Message from the Pastor

by Reuben Sairs

How well do you know the Old Testament (OT)—the Hebrew scriptures? I think it would be safe to say that many Christians don't know them very well. I hope you're joining LCF in our Bible reading project this year. It's never too late to start, and never a problem to get back on track if you already flaked out. Keep at it. Come back!

The Old Testament might be a challenge. How do you read and understand it? How does it fit in with Jesus? At LCF we believe that the OT is the word of God, scripture, and does all those things that scripture does—it is light, revelation, source, help. In fact, the New Testament (NT) can't really be understood if we don't understand that the OT is the foundation. Jesus was a Jew, as were the apostles; it was their Bible. They saw their whole story in the context of the Old Testament scriptures.

The church has not been uniform in how it has read and applied the OT. Our denominational statement of theology says this: "The Scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, are the Word of God,..." and finishes the article with this: "...the entire New Testament being the fulfillment of the Old Testament and the perfected rule for the Christian church."

Our view is sometimes called New Testament finality. By no means does this idea denigrate the OT or render it obsolete as scripture. The OT is a long record revealing the nature of God and his relationship with humans. It shows his unchangeable character, and lays the foundation for understanding our relationship with him in Jesus. At the same time, we have insisted that it is a different Covenant, enacted with a specific group and nation and that era has closed. Although we don't know precisely what's next, apparently God still has plans for his chosen people—the Jews.

Consider a few verses from Hebrews in the NT. Hebrews 9:15, "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." That's a dense verse! Consider also this intriguing remark in Hebrews 12:24 "...to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel." In Communion we always read, "This is the blood of the new covenant" (Mt 26:28). It's new.

It would be an illegitimate use of the OT to dig through it without giving due regard to what it means to live in the New Covenant—a different time. In many ways the church did this, and it really took off long ago in the 4th century when the church wed itself to the Roman empire and looked for models for government. There were none in the NT, so they tried to draw them from the OT, but somewhat inconsistently. The NT knew of personal salvation, Christian life, and the church. The NT was not about building Christian empires, nations, or politics if you will. The NT was inviting individuals from all tribes, tongues, nations into the kingdom of God. We can continue to identify with our countries and ethnic backgrounds, but we also realize that these things get in line behind our principle identity, and must change in character because we have become children of God. It's not a popular view, but I stand by it: there may be a nation with a lot of Christians and some Christian values, but there is really no such thing in the NT as a Christian nation. It is simply not a category. What there is in the New Testament is the church and the world.

As you read the OT this year, I hope you can do two things.

1. Appreciate it as the word of God that will heal and fill you, and give you a richer understanding of Jesus and the NT.
2. Understand that the New Covenant really is new, and brings multiple changes to the way we must practice our faith. ■

Elders Notes

by Jesse Diller

We met via Zoom for our January 6th elders meeting. We noted that it is time for our Child Protection procedures to be reviewed at LCF. It has come to our attention that there are some details in the process that need to be clarified. Rob shared the suggested policy that he and Pam came up with for how to proceed if and when something comes back from an online background check. The elders team added a few changes and affirmed it.

We discussed details for Celebrate the Church Sunday coming up on January 16th. The day will include: our membership renewal, a potluck meal, followed by a short business meeting with information about several ministry teams highlighting ways that people can be involved, LCF's budget and finances, a Q&A time.

We have quite a few areas at LCF where we need help. We will have a handout for Celebrate the Church Sunday listing the top areas where we need help so that people can express interest in the ways they would like to serve. We discussed a few of these, and are praying for God to provide the help we need and are thankful to him for the way he provides people to serve.

We have had some suggestions from members of the congregation about things to consider incorporating into our services. We spent time talking about these and ways we can make adjustments and give people an opportunity to engage with what they hear in the messages. Reuben and Rob expressed their conviction that our Sunday morning service needs to include a clear declaration from God's Word. The team affirmed that any changes to the service must not detract from that centerpiece.

Reuben closed our time by praying about the various situations and issues that we discussed. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, February 3rd. ■

Council Update

by Jim Jones

The Council met via phone on January 18th.

Sarah is going to look into Venmo as a payment option for members buying coffee.

Due to poor customer service and long turnaround times, we are switching our background check agency for those involved with children's ministry to Checkr. It is comprehensive and user friendly. The \$25 cost per background check will be paid for by LCF.

The 2022 proposed budget was finalized. Sarah discussed the proposed budget at the congregational meeting on Sunday, January 16th. The salaries for the pastors and church secretary received a 5% cost of living increase. \$2,000 of the \$6,135.91 2021 surplus was applied to our benevolence ministry and to the first month of the salary increase. ■

Getting to Know...Cody Miller

Interviewed by Elisabeth Yoder

We're happy to have Cody Miller as a part of our community at LCF. Ideally, no one is a stranger here, so we wanted to give everyone the chance to get to know him a bit better.

Tell us a little about yourself! We would love to know a brief background about your life thus far to help us get to know you better.

Well, I am Cody Miller from Farmville, VA, originally, although I have lived in three states (Montana, Virginia, and now Ohio) and spent significant time in two other countries (Honduras as a missionary kid, and Spain as a cross-cultural student).

I ended up in Ohio as a student at Rosedale Bible College in 2018 where I graduated from a year ago. I grew up the oldest of two, then three, and now four kids (Annika 21, Felicia 18, and Cassidy 10). My parents are Roy and Lucy Miller who still live in Farmville, VA.

What are three words that describe the person you want to be?

Honest, reliable, and loving.

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

Not to pick someone that is one of the most popular picks, but David has always been someone that I've been able to draw parallels to my life. I have drawn so much encouragement from him being called a "man after God's own heart" despite his story of sin and disappointment.

What is something you're passionate about? How do you enjoy engaging with that passion?

I'm passionate about building honest and meaningful relationships with people (eye roll...I know, right!), but it's true. The community of friends that I build around me has become one of the most important things to me.

If you could time travel, when, and where would you go?

1840s pioneer life

What are some things you enjoy doing in your free time?

- Sports
- Reading/Writing
- Music
- Going fast

What are a few of the items on your bucket list?

- Skydiving
- Hang gliding
- BASE jumping
- Hiking the Appalachian Trail
- Climbing Mt. McKinley

If money were not an issue, what's a hobby or a skill you would love to learn?

Pro-level racing

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

"Interesting" or "Intriguing?" I would think of myself as a fairly intriguing person mainly because I tend to come across as a little dark and mysterious. "Interesting?"...maybe because once you get to know me you'll have a very different opinion of me.

What's your most controversial opinion about something mundane?

Water is not wet!!!

What is a Biblical truth you wish people paid more attention to?

Suffering and lament are not bad things. In fact, they can be some of the most formative and uplifting things

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

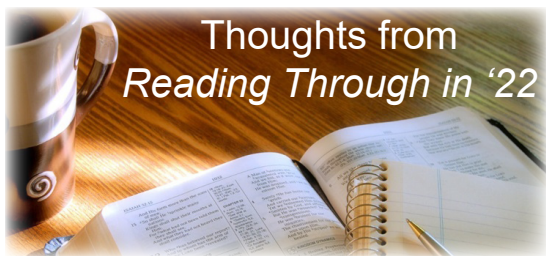
"I meant what I said, and I said what I meant." --Horton (Dr. Seuss). Authenticity is a huge deal to me.

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

Don't worry about tomorrow. Let it worry about itself.

If you learned anything about Cody that you find particularly interesting, track him down and start a conversation! We're excited to see how God uses Cody as a part of our congregation and to continue to get to know him better. ■





Thoughts from Reading Through '22

by Colleen Wolford

Reading through the Bible in a year...seems like a daunting task! In fact, I have tried it one other time and only made it half-way through.

I am excited to give it another chance this year with our LCF family. I love the idea of the Sunday sermons including something from the weekly readings. It makes me feel like we are reading together. I look forward to seeing which verses the sermon will be from.

This week I read the words of one of my favorite songs when reading in Psalm 8:1, "Oh Lord, our Lord how majestic is your name in all the earth!"



I hope that many others of you are grabbing a bookmark and joining me in reading through the Bible this year. It's not too late! ■

Note: We'd love to hear from you and feature your thoughts here as you read through the Bible this year!

Tasha...continued

I remember Tasha in her younger years as a quiet girl with a sweet personality, often looking after her 2 younger sisters. She was responsible and mature for her age and always a good student. During her senior year in high school she even attended classes at Rosedale Bible College.

Now, a wife and mother, she homeschools her four wonderful daughters, often while multitasking. Despite Tasha's busy schedule, she took on the position of treasurer and council member for the past five years. Church treasurer is a busy and often thankless position that never rests. Behind the scenes every week there are tasks that have to be accomplished while maintaining a budget, paying salaries and bills. Tasha was a blessing—extremely reliable, trustworthy and faithful as our treasurer and council member; a joy to work with!

This was also a particularly challenging period for our church. We had a certain number of families relocate out of our area while balancing a mortgage followed soon after by the COVID-19 shutdown. God continued to provide for our needs down to the last dollar. Since there was no additional surplus we had to get resourceful, had great discussions and made some difficult decisions.

Throughout all this I always admired Tasha's calm demeanor, sound decision process and professionalism. I speak for the entire church council, past and present, that it was a joy and privilege working with Tasha. She was exemplary, serving our church in so many ways.

Thanks so much Tasha, for all that you have done!! And to her husband, Joe, and daughters, Lydia, Hannah, Tabitha, and Ruth—thank you for sharing Tasha with us! ■



Celebrate the Church...continued

Pastor Rob highlighted some of the ways people serve in ministry here at LCF—from the tech team to music, to the Council and Elders, nursery care, and so much more. He challenged us, that while we recognize that we are imperfect, we should not use it as an excuse to be lazy or sloppy. We should always desire to give God our very best, and that includes trying to work on areas that need improvement.



Other areas within the church that were recognized and celebrated included: our online church, the wheelchair ramp ministry, those who make coffee each Sunday, others who serve as ushers, greeters, Sunday School teachers, nursery workers, meal providers, prayer warriors, and so much more! A slideshow of the past year at LCF was a beautiful reminder of God's faithfulness to us and the

many blessings he has given us.

Members were given the opportunity to renew their membership and everyone was asked to think about how God wants them to be involved.



As the service came to a close a "family" photo was taken, followed by a potluck meal and a short business meeting in the Fellowship Hall. It gave more time to connect with one another and to humbly reflect on how to serve Christ in and with this wonderful, one-of-a-kind church family. ■

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, Kelli Dean, and Doris Swartz
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