

The LCF Connection

September 2023



Reflections from Multiply Conference in NY by Annika Miller

The Multiply Conference this year proved to be a great time of reconnecting with old friends and making many new connections across the conference. Representing LCF were: Mike, Karen, Micah, and Zane Baker; Audrey Maust; Abraham and Naomy Ndongu; Rob and Doris Swartz; and myself. Rob and Doris took advantage of the in-home lodging option where they were able to learn to

know a new couple and discovered some mutual connections with them; however, she said, "The common relationship that binds us together is our love for Christ and His church! Being blessed by the hospitality of others renews my desire to bless others in the same way." Rob also spoke of being encouraged and coming away from Multiply "with renewed vision to share the hope of Jesus with those around us." For me, it was a first-time experience, so I went in not knowing what to expect. Since I went with Rosedale Bible College, I was part of the youth activities on Saturday, where we talked about practical ways that we could transform our communities. We heard from the Olmstead family and how hard they have worked to make connections in their community in Utica, NY. RBC students shared their stories of how they were transformed through their studies, and Rosedale International shared their work and how they are working diligently to transform communities all across the world and some of the challenges with that. Micah and Zane enjoyed RI's portion of the youth sessions where they did an immersive REACH experience. Youth were able to learn about different countries and cultures where RI sends missionaries and about how the REACH program works in taking missionaries to those countries.

All throughout the weekend, there was an overarching question of "How do we transform the church and how do we (as the church) transform the world?" This is a big question, and not one that is easily answered in a single weekend conference.

It seems when we talk about the church and what transformation looks like, the centric idea has to do with going and making a difference in the world. We talk about how the church is called to go and make disciples. We are transformed when we become Christians, but transformation is not just a one and done deal. It is a process of changing. It is being constantly molded by what the Holy Spirit wants of us and by what Jesus is asking of us.



Continued on page 4...

Inside this Issue

Reflections from Multiply	1
C4 Summer Update	1
What About Our Stuff?	2
Council & Elders' Updates	2
Getting to Know Annika Miller	3



Summer Update by Mike Baker

It is hard to believe summer is almost over. As August ends, life for C4 youth will return to a routine of school, Friday night football, marching band, and soccer. Our summer in C4 was very different due to various camps, vacations, and work schedules. We did not meet regularly but snuck in some very fun events.



Wearing our new C4 t-shirts at our 4th of July party!

We got together to bowl in late June and found out we had some hidden talent as well as many gutterballs. With his fantastic tech skills, Jayce kept the tunes flowing in the bowling alley. Over the Fourth of July weekend, we had a party at the church with a significant water balloon fight and some relays involving getting very wet. In early July, we went miniature golfing and again found some hidden talent. We had five hole-in-ones over the evening and lots of laughs and frustrated sighs too. We did not break any putters, so that was a win. 😊

The highlight for many of us was Bethel Camp. During Junior High B (grades 6–8) in July, we had four campers and 4 of us on staff. Karen helped in the kitchen and kept us fed. Josiah and Micah served as counselors. Jayce, Jolene, Ella, and Isaiah enjoyed themselves as campers. I (Mike)

Continued on page 2...



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

LCFweb.org

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

What About Our Stuff?

A Message from the Pastor

by Reuben Sairs



Discipleship topics come and go a little bit in the church. Who knows what is driving that? A topic will be hot for a while and then fade. I suppose that has a good side—our needs change with our situations.

At the same time, what we can do to live for Christ, grow, and be healthy spiritually will probably be about the same everywhere for all time.

I've noticed one topic that seems to have faded a bit in recent years—concern with materialism—our stuff. What will we do to get stuff? Will our stuff make us happy? Will our stuff get in our way? The idea is that acquisition can trip us up spiritually, and it might be a subset of greed or even idolatry.

This verse from 1 Timothy popped out at me last week. It's part of a larger passage about the love of money. Verse 7 says, *"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."*

Our stuff requires our investment in what we think will be 'the good life.' Our desire for stuff takes our ambition, our money, our time, and then can eat us up with worry about loss. The Bible is clear about what this might do to us. Jesus said (Matthew 6:19-21):

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Jesus told a parable about a man who owned so much he decided to build his own storage unit. (Luke 12:20), *But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

I don't think the idea is to deprive ourselves, pinch ourselves back into an ascetic lifestyle—barren of all those nice things that do bring us joy. I think the idea is to re-orient ourselves. The problem isn't about things; rather, it is about our relationship with things. What is the quest for them doing to us? How might it be warping us spiritually?

As is so often the case, it is easy to see this in others, and much harder to see it and admit to it in ourselves. One size doesn't fit all in these matters. What do you think? Have we Christians developed a sound and attractive witness to the world with regard to our possessions? ■

Elders' Notes

by Keith Scheffel

On August 16, 2023, the Elders Team gathered at Rob & Doris' home for their monthly meeting. Present were: Gideon Eichorn, Abraham & Naomy Ndungu, Reuben & Vicki Sairs, Keith & Shannon Scheffel, and Rob & Doris Swartz.

The meeting commenced with sharing prayer requests and updates on shepherding matters, followed by a collective prayer session.

Upcoming plans were discussed, including the possibility of an outdoor service on September 10th.

We discussed the Children's Ministry at LCF, particularly the challenges of finding Sunday School teachers. We highly value the opportunity we have to teach and train the children among us. We hope and pray that we can continue to do this well.

An RBC intern named E.J. will be serving at LCF beginning this fall.

We agreed to initiate the Elder nomination process a bit earlier in order to accommodate the new Elder's participation in the Elders' retreat in November at the Proctor Center.

Keith reported on legal review estimates for the LCF Constitution and will ask the Council to decide if we should proceed with obtaining a legal review.

Our next meeting is scheduled for September 13. ■

Council Update

by Jim Jones

The Council met via phone on Tuesday, August 15th.

Due to some unforeseen expenses, our year-to-date operating expenses have continued to exceed our income by an average of approximately \$1000 per month (\$7000 year-to-date). To address this trend responsibly, we are holding off on some purchases and services until next year. Despite this, our working capital continues to exceed our church pay off of \$32K by well over 50%. We are in a healthy position; we just need to address the trend.

If any individuals or small groups are interested in volunteering to clean up our grounds this fall, please contact Phil. What would be involved? Some hedge clippers and rakes for pruning and clearing some debris from the beds to prepare for mulch in the spring.

Our next meeting will be September 19th. ■

C4 Update...continued

enjoyed being a speaker that week as we dove into prayer and its different postures. Shepherd also volunteered for high school week at Bethel Camp.

We are excited for fall to be upon us. We have a new youth leader, Annika Miller, and we are so happy to have her join us. Our two seniors plan to attend Discover Rosedale in October. We will return to Bethel Camp for the Senior High retreat in October, as well. The rest of the calendar is still being planned, but I am sure pickleball, basketball, dodgeball, worship, and Bible study will all be a part of it. ■



Those from C4 who went to Bethel Camp.

Getting to Know. . . Annika Miller

by Elisabeth Yoder

Did you wonder who it was that wrote the article about Multiply Conference? If so, perhaps you have not yet met Cody Miller's sister, Annika. She has visited LCF from time to time over the past couple of years but has recently decided to make LCF her church home and is excited about helping out with C4 and in other ways! We asked her to introduce herself a bit to us.



We would love a brief background of you and your life thus far.

I was born in Montana, and when I was two, we moved to Honduras where we were missionaries for four years. When we moved back to the US, we moved to Virginia where my mom was originally from and that is where I spent the next fourteen years. After graduating high school, I worked for a year and then went to a community college where I got my Associates of Applied Science in Business Management. While I was going to community college, my parents and I also worked to start up a discount store which I then managed for 3 years. Once I had finished community college, I planned to focus on building and expanding the business, but I also have always felt a call towards working with youth and college-age kids. I felt like I didn't have the tools I needed to be able to do this effectively, so I decided to go to RBC for winter term to hopefully gain some tools. I had been helping in children's ministry, directing our church's VBS, leading girls Bible studies, playing on the worship team and all those things up to this point, and because of how involved I was with everything back home, I didn't really want to leave that community for much longer than the six-week winter term; however, I ended up coming back for spring semester, and then came back again for the entire following year and graduated from RBC in 2022. I wasn't sure where I was headed after my time at RBC, but I knew that for the summer, I needed to head back home to Virginia. My brother, Cody, had tried to convince me to move out here after RBC, but I told him, "That isn't going to happen unless I get offered a job in the area that involves things I am really passionate about, and that's not going to happen because I'm not planning on applying anywhere." So I went back home for the summer. Towards the middle of the summer, I got approached about applying for a job out here in a ministry that I would have loved to be a part of. I prayed about it, and it didn't feel like the right fit, so I said no. Then, towards the end of the summer, when Ericka passed, I was approached by RBC about taking her position. I knew immediately that that was what I was supposed to do, and over the next couple of months worked through the process interviews, leaving the business back home, moving . . . all the things.

How does your job at Rosedale play to your strengths? How does it challenge you?

Some of my strengths that play into my job at Rosedale are my administration skills and my desire to connect with people and build relationships. I have always had pretty good administration skills and am a fairly organized person. In my job at RBC, this is critical. I enjoy bringing order to places of complete chaos, and admissions is a very chaotic field so that works out well. I also enjoy connecting with people. Working in admissions, requires being able to connect with people and build long-term relationships with them, and this has always been something I have been very passionate about and enjoy doing. One thing that challenges me in the field of admissions is that I am an introvert, and being around people constantly can be exhausting. This is especially difficult when I am running events on campus, going to conferences or traveling to schools and churches. I also have a great dislike of public speaking or being the center of attention in general, and since public speaking is a big part of my job, this is also a big challenge and an area I have had to grow in quite a bit since starting.

What are some of your passions? How do you enjoy engaging with them?

One thing I am very passionate about is discipleship, and I have always felt specifically called to work with high schoolers and college students. This is one of the reasons I love working for RBC. I am able to disciple students and build relationships with them. Before coming to RBC as a student or to work, I was leading Bible studies and working in kids ministry at church (at that point I would have still been in the youth group). I always thought I would be helping with youth somewhere at some point, and now I am looking forward to doing that here. There are a lot of directions this passion for discipleship has led me over the past several years, including going to RBC to seek mentorship and to be able to better understand the Bible and engage with passages in a way that would be beneficial in discipleship. I have been very thankful for this very clear calling because it has helped me know what I need to say no to and what I need to say yes to.

What are three items from your bucket list?

I have a lot of items on my bucket list. I love traveling and anything outdoorsy and would love to someday backpack through Europe. I also would love to visit New Zealand and want to visit every state in the US (only 6 more to go!).

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment?

Probably my biggest accomplishment was starting and managing a business while I was in college. I am no longer a part of the business, but it is good to see something I started doing well and set to go far if managed well in the future.

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

I don't have much free time, but the last few months I have been trying to be more intentional with how I spend the free time I do have. I enjoy reading and right now have a long list of books I am hoping to work through before the end of the year. With all the traveling I do, I have started trying to either pick up a new skill (especially on longer trips) or find a topic to learn more about either through podcasts or reading. I also enjoy growing plants (which is really difficult in a small apartment with very little natural light) and experimenting with sourdough. On a free Saturday, I enjoy finding places I haven't been before to explore or driving down to Hocking Hills to go hiking. In Virginia, I would often go kayaking in the evenings or weekends, but I left my kayak in Virginia so I haven't been able to do that this year. I also enjoy camping and backpacking, which I have not had as much opportunity to do since moving.

Continued on page 4...

Multiply...continued

When thinking of the idea of transformation, Romans 12:2 comes to mind. *“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* but like so many easily quotable verses, I also think of how easy it is to lose the significance of this by only looking at this very familiar part of the verse. Romans is all about transformation! It talks about what transformation looks like in a church context, but it also talks about what it looks like for individuals. Immediately before the *“be transformed”* cliché, we see that we are to *“present our bodies as a living sacrifice.”* That doesn't seem fun. When we include this part of the verse, the idea of transformation seems like something that could be painful! We are not to be *“conformed to this world.”* We are called to be different—to be set apart—set apart for service to God and, as we see later on in the passage, service to others.

In the Sunday morning service, Brian Hershberger pointed out the importance of being in tune with the Holy Spirit. He asked if our churches are willing to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say, and he asked if we, as individuals, were willing to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say. Do we listen expectantly? Do we have the posture of listening when we come into God's presence, or are we so focused on what we want or on our agenda that we are unable to hear what God is saying. Are we too afraid to step onto the unknown, unpredictable path that God is calling us on or are we willing to step out in faith, trusting that God will transform us and will use us to reach those around us?

We are to go and share with others, but this comes from our own transformation through Christ and being in communion with the Holy Spirit. ■



Annika...continued

What are you excited about right now?

Right now, I am excited about the next couple of years of my life. It's crazy how much can happen in a couple of years, and looking back at the last couple of years, I am amazed at where God has led me. I am excited to be able to plug in somewhere where I can help with youth and am excited to be in a place where God can use my gifts and passions for his Kingdom. Two years ago, I would have never imagined I would be where I am now and had a lot of questions about why God had me where He did. He has brought me so far, and I still can't always believe I am doing something that lines up so well with what I am passionate about and with what I have always loved doing.

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

Three words that describe the person I aspire to be are: intentional, consistent, and welcoming/hospitable.

Is there a Biblical truth or passage you have been focusing on recently? What about it speaks to you?

There are quite a few ideas I have been thinking about a lot lately, but one of the main things has been the idea of being generous and what that looks like when understanding material possessions as something we have been gifted to steward and not to hoard. This has been a journey for me, and I confess, it has not been an easy one. I like having things in their own little boxes right where they belong. I like order, and generosity and living with the idea that our possessions aren't actually ours, but rather a gift for us to use, which means I have a lot less say than I would sometimes like over who gets to use my precious Dutch oven, for example. This is sometimes chaotic. Sometimes it means my Dutch oven won't be in its rightful place when I want to make my sourdough bread...but is it actually my Dutch oven? Instead of having New Years resolutions like working out more or not eating sugar, I'll often have a character trait or idea that I want to develop, and this year, that has been generosity. I have been challenged by how generous others have been to me, and through the process of evaluating how to be generous myself with whatever resources I have, I have gained a whole new appreciation for others when they are generous.

What is your favorite topic to talk about? Alternatively, what topic do you think you could talk about for the longest?

Honestly, I am not much of a talker unless I am in a one-on-one conversation with someone. Group settings—especially in groups where I don't know many people—stress me out and I end up barely saying anything. That being said, I love connecting with people and understanding how they think and how they process life. I love understanding where people are coming from and why they have made the decisions they have. I therefore have done a lot of research on psychology, personality tests, mental health, and things of that nature. I probably could talk with someone for hours about those things. I also love talking about travel and sharing stories of different travel experiences and have had multiple hours-long conversations with people about that, as well.

And finally, what makes community meaningful to you? How can we best support you and pray for you?

I love building community and having a solid community around me. Before attending RBC as a student, I was always having people over to my place and planning ways for the youth to get together (game nights, bonfires, outdoor movie nights...etc.). At RBC it seemed like the community just naturally formed around me with little effort on my part. Now, I am finding myself back in a place where I again need to intentionally build community and find ways to invest in community. I am excited to plug into LCF and be able to invest in a community of believers. Working in admissions is quite chaotic, and I often don't have the time I wish I would be able to build a strong community base here, but I am excited to plug in and become involved where I can. You can pray for me that I would be able to plug in well and to be able to have that strong base, and as I begin helping with the youth, that I would have the energy and focus to do that well.

We are thankful to God for bringing Annika to LCF and encourage you to introduce yourself to her and to pray for her as she invests in young people here at LCF and at RBC. ■

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, Annika Miller, and Doris Swartz