

The LCF Connection

May 2025

Someday Is Today

BY SHANNON SCHEFFEL

A little over 20 years ago, I was asked to share something at a baby shower, and I wrote the piece called “Someday” which is shared on page 2. For the young parents out there that are in the throws of nurturing and providing for your young children, I hope you can relate.

A person never stops being a mother/parent, but it sure does change with the passage of time. This past January, our youngest got married, and, for the first time ever, Keith and I are experiencing what it feels like to have an empty nest. We kind of like it! The house is quiet and stays mostly clean. Our days don’t revolve around the kids and their activities, and we can make our own plans. There are some things we miss and look back at with nostalgia and are thankful for the blessing of raising three wonderful children.

Transitioning to adult kids who no longer live under our roof requires us to shift how we care for them. When the kids were young, we had more control and, with that, more responsibility. Now that they are adults, we have less responsibility, but less control. Letting go and letting God be in control of my kids and their spouses is a challenge for me, and I find myself praying often to release and give them to God Who is a better parent than I could ever be.

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The Scheffel family (from left to right):

Keith, Shannon, Mandi, Nathaniel, Kendra, Trevor, and Justin

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to develop authentic and passionate
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Some Thoughts on John 14:15-18

A Message from the Pastor

BY REUBEN SAIRS

“If you love Me, keep My commandments.” John 14:15

When I was a pastor in Alabama, one of our bishops (we had bishops in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference) told me about a thorny case he had to deal with. That person, he said, had to learn that there was no excuse for sin.

My first reaction was caution. People are tempted in different ways. We’re weak and strong in different ways. Can I say there’s no excuse for another person? In fact, I can’t, but that’s not my job. It’s God’s, and the bishop was right. We excuse ourselves and give ourselves license to sin, but our excuses don’t succeed. Someone else’s issues never give me the right to commit my own sins.

We all have areas of life where we make excuses. Some of our attempted excuses are personal circumstances, but often other people become our excuse. A concern of mine right now is when we give ourselves a license to be mean, hard, or harsh. This is the tone of our times. We see a lot of tough-talking Christians, and I can be one.

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Council Update

BY RUSS HAUGE

Attendance: Sarah Eichorn, Zach Freer, Rhoda Sommers, and Russ Hauge by Google Meet conference.

March income was \$37,197 which was more than our expenses of \$23,281 by \$13,916. Our YTD income is \$71,054 compared to our YTD expenses of \$50,303, which leaves a YTD balance of +\$20,751.

The majority of the council meeting was focused on the completion of the Church Premise Use Policy. Our initial goal was to have the policy to a point that it could be sent to the elders for review by the end of April. Good progress was made during the meeting, and we will continue to share email updates within the council as they become available. Knowing that this update process has been ongoing for some time, we are still pushing to have it completed and reviewed as soon as possible.

While Sarah has created and deposited funds in an online savings account with Capital One, we are currently defining the process to move funds back to the local checking account in the event they are needed for expenses in the future.

Finally, Text2Giving (one of our online giving options) has notified us that they will begin charging for this service. We are investigating other options that hopefully will not have an additional fee for usage. Updates on this topic will be provided in May.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 20th, at 7 pm, by video conference.



(Someday...continued from page 1)

There is a song by Alan Jackson called "Remember When" that reflects on remembering the days past: *"Remember when we said when we turned gray, when the children grow up and move away, we won't be sad. We'll be glad for all the life we've had. Remember when?"*

Happy Mother's Day to all the loving, nurturing moms—whatever stage of parenting you are in!

"SOMEDAY"

SOMEDAY WHEN THE KIDS ARE GROWN, things are going to be a lot different. The house may actually stay fairly clean. The floors won't be cluttered with toys, books, Legos, Knex, and Pollys. The toilet will get flushed and the lid will stay down. The sinks won't contain dried toothpaste blobs, the windows will not be fingerprinted, and the crumbs will be minimal.

SOMEDAY WHEN THE KIDS ARE GROWN, my time will be spent differently. I won't need to monitor how much time the kids watch videos or spend on the computer. Life will not revolve around the next meal that needs to be made, the homework that needs to be completed, and the loads of laundry to wash and dry.

SOMEDAY WHEN THE KIDS ARE GROWN, things will be quieter. There will be no more off-key piano practice, no more loud music, no more squabbles to break up, no more kids running through the house, and no more slamming doors as they go in and out, in and out.

SOMEDAY WHEN THE KIDS ARE GROWN, things will be less hectic. There will be no more interruptions in the middle of the night, no more lunches to pack, and no more school programs and soccer practices. There will be no more noses to wipe, teeth to brush, baths to give, or tangles to comb.

YES, SOMEDAY WHEN THE KIDS ARE GROWN, things will change. One by one they will leave our nest, and the place will begin to resemble order, and things will be quiet and calm. And then I'll spend my time not looking forward to *Someday* but looking back to *Yesterday*.

Days of the first step, a first word, and a first tooth. Days of slobbery kisses, warm hugs, and reading books together on the couch. Days of painting, coloring, dressing-up, and building. Days of jumping on the trampoline, bike rides, and soccer games. Days of tussling and tickling and silly jokes to make us all laugh. Days of times spent with grandparents, campouts, and picnics. Days of swimming, hiking, and neighborhood playmates. Days of going to church together and reading the Bible together. Days of Candyland, Memory, Carom, and Hide the Thimble. Days of sleepovers, birthday parties, and all-consuming sports activities. Days of growing, teaching, nurturing, and loving. Days of much, much more...

Yes, the memories will be sweet *Someday*. So Lord, help me to be content with *Today* and realize that *Someday* can never be as important and momentous as *Today*.



A Maundy Thursday service held at LCF on Thursday, March 17th, reflected on Jesus' last supper with His disciples and His command to love and serve one another. It included worship, prayer, communion, and foot washing.

Elders Notes

BY DORIS SWARTZ

The elders met at Rob and Doris's home on Wednesday evening, April 2nd. Since we did not have a meeting in March, we spent additional time sharing updates, prayer requests, and praises—both from those in our church family as well as in our own personal lives. Together we lifted these praises and concerns to our Heavenly Father in prayer.

We have several areas where we are currently in need of help at LCF. Some of those areas include: Children's Ministries Coordinator, Congregational Care Team Members, Welcome Team Leader, Coffee Team Leader (Thanks to Lizzie Yoder for volunteering to serve as our new Coffee Team Leader!), and Building Usage Manager. We will share these service opportunities with our church family, praying that God will provide the right individuals to step into each position. If you have questions about these roles or are interested in serving, please contact Pastor Rob.

Our insurance agency has requested the implementation of a six-month waiting period before new individuals can be approved to work with children or youth, as a condition to maintain our current coverage. The child protection team will be meeting next week to discuss this proposal. While we understand this change may limit participation from short-term individuals, such as RBC students, we acknowledge the importance of safeguarding our children and ensuring adequate coverage.

Last week, Rob met with the Congregational Care Team to refine and update their job description, ensuring it accurately reflects their responsibilities. The revised description was shared with us and subsequently approved. We are thankful for the wonderful job they do in helping to care for our church family.

Our Maundy Thursday service has been a cherished tradition for many years. After discussing its significance, we agreed to continue planning for this special service. Though attendance is often limited, it serves as a profound reminder of Christ's death and His instructions to love and serve one another. We believe it plays a vital role in preparing our hearts for Easter. On Easter Sunday, we will have a continental breakfast before church and hopefully some special music as part of the service.

We continued our conversation from our last meeting concerning what the church's role should be in individual issues of practice and obedience to Christ in a person's life—specifically for those who are in a teaching/leadership role. Besides pastors and elders, other positions that would be included are: moderators, worship (music) leaders, youth leaders, small group leaders, and Sunday School teachers. We desire to establish clear expectations and foster productive dialogue and accountability with all who serve in these leadership roles. We will continue to talk later about what this will look like.

We look forward to our elders retreat on April 25-26th at Tanglewood Manor in Hocking Hills. The retreat will primarily focus on discussing the roles of elders and pastors within LCF, with guidance from Roger, our overseer, who will provide an overview of scripture passages pertaining to elders. We also hope this retreat will be a refreshing time away together. Our next monthly meeting will be on May 21st.

Where does the New Testament ever excuse a hard heart, a cruel disposition, a they've-got-it-coming attitude? I see it in myself, but the words of that bishop come to mind frequently. No set of circumstances, no action, style, belief, thoughts, or behavior by another person give me the right to suspend Jesus' teachings about who I am supposed to be or how I am supposed to conduct myself. What must always be inside of me is the fruit of the Holy Spirit: *love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* (Galatians 5:22), and I must show my love consistently to others. I can't even be patronizing or superior when I look at others. There is no excuse for my sin.

Living up to this and not making excuses seems almost impossible to me. It probably is, but Jesus promised us help.

"And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." John 14:16-18

The Helper, also translated Counselor, Advocate, Comforter, will help us and give us grace to keep the commandments. We are not orphans.

A New Chapter

BY THERESA HENNIS

because we were unhappy with LCF. I don't always like change, but I felt led to go, and believe me, I resisted the change for a while. Moving on to a different chapter is where God takes us sometimes, ready or not.

Before coming to LCF, I had previously attended a church in Orlando, Florida, for 20 years, and starting over was a difficult thing—not because the LCF congregation wasn't welcoming, but because I'm not an outgoing person. Meeting people is not always the most comfortable thing for me. Some of the families who attend LCF have been there for many years, but others have come from many different places and backgrounds. It can take time to feel at home.

For those of us coming into an established church family, it can be a hard adjustment. We were warmly welcomed, but it still took me a long time to feel like I was a part of the congregation.

One of the ways in which I was able to find my place was when Doris Swartz, LCF's former administrative assistant and our pastor's wife, asked me to help her with writing articles and editing the LCF Connection Newsletter, in 2015. The name of our newsletter is very appropriate, because it does act as a connecting link between new people and those who've been at LCF for some time. It even helps those who've attended LCF for many years to find out interesting things they might not have known about fellow members.

I worked as a staff writer for the *Madison Messenger* newspaper in London, and writing for the Connection was a comfortable fit for me. Through the last 15 years, as a writer, I was forced out of my comfort zone over and over, because I had to interview people for articles in my magazine career. Putting on my "interview hat" was one way in which I learned to talk to people and get to know them. Each time I wrote a Getting to Know You article for the Connection, I felt more at home with the LCF family.

I will still be in touch with friends I've made at LCF, and will always be grateful for how the church helped me and my grandsons in so many ways. The encouragement, love, support, and strong biblical foundation which are key components of what make LCF the great church it is, will always hold a special place in our hearts.

We thank you for allowing us to be a part of the LCF family, which, like all of God's churches, is a crucial part of His unfolding story of love and redemption.



The LCF Connection

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We would love to hear your feedback! Email us at secretary@lcfweb.org.

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