

The LCF Connection

September 2025

Getting to Know the Wengers

BY CORIN WENGER



Who are we?

Katie and I grew up knowing each other as family friends. We got married in our early twenties and have been figuring life out together in the seven years since then. Since we started having kids, I have been focusing on providing semi-stable finances for the family, and Katie has been focusing on taking care of the kids. We both like to read books, drink coffee, go on trips, study and memorize scripture, and stay up late. Katie likes to knit and bake, and I like a wide variety of athletic pursuits and technology. In the last few years, we have learned that we also really enjoy inviting people over to our home for food and companionship. (Come over for waffles if you haven't yet!)

What has been our journey so far?

I grew up in Big Cabin, Oklahoma, and International Falls, Minnesota. After high school, I served a mission internship in Argentina but then went back to school in Traverse City, Michigan. I got a bachelor's degree in maritime technology, which I use for work. I spend four months a year traveling for work on commercial cargo ships. We both have often taken time in the summers to work or volunteer at youth camps, and in recent years, have been active volunteers at church, especially with youth and young adult ministries. I tried my hand at software development for a time but ultimately went back to my maritime job.

Katie grew up in Plain City, Ohio, and went to college at Rosedale Bible College. (Katie is a daughter of John and Rosy Shenk and thus also a sister of Elisabeth and Kerry.) She worked at Rosedale for a number of years then went back to school to further her biblical studies education before family needs put a pause on formal schooling. Since then, she's been baking and selling breads and cookies on the side and doing as much self-study of the Bible as time allows.

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Real Life Experiences with Lifewise

(Ministry Spotlight)

BY BECKY HOSTETLER

A few years ago I heard about a program called Lifewise. It is **Bible education** offered **during school hours** that is **privately funded**, located **off school property**, and requires **parent permission**. My initial internal response was, "That sounds nice... but I don't see it happening." As a graduate of public school and a parent of public school children, I experienced church as separate from school. Yes, we are to be a light in all areas of our lives, but the idea of *teaching* the Bible to public school students didn't seem realistic to me.

Thankfully, God "*is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us*" (Ephesians 3:20). Our God has taken this program and multiplied it beyond what anyone could have imagined. What started with two schools in Ohio in 2019, has multiplied to over 1,100 schools in 34 states as of August 2025, and the numbers change weekly.

When I heard that my community was interested in starting a program at Jefferson Local Schools, I felt called to attend the informational meetings and show my support. We had a rough start, as the school board was initially not on board with allowing the program. After overcoming several obstacles, we had the privilege of offering our first class to middle school students in the spring of 2024. In the fall of 2024, we added classes for 5th grade, of which I had the opportunity

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Council Update

BY RUSS HAUGE

Rhoda Sommers, Zach Freer, and Russ Hauge met by Google Meet video conference. Sarah provided the finance and HVAC input via email and text.

July income was \$18,395 which was more than our expenses of \$17,080 by \$1,315. Our YTD income is \$138,931 compared to our YTD expenses of \$109,621, which leaves a YTD balance of +\$29,310.

The majority of time during the August meeting was spent discussing the options to either fix or replace the 14-year-old HVAC Unit #2 (3 times larger than the unit replaced earlier this year) that serves the fellowship hall and kitchen area. We received multiple quotes and have notified the Building and Grounds Team to move forward with replacing the unit based on the quote from R&T Yoder HVAC.

With Corin joining the pastoral team at LCF, he was given a letter from the council indicating the amount of housing allowance that he is entitled to during 2025. Entitlement letters for 2026 will be generated for all pastors during the 2026 budget cycle.

Zach Freer has mounted a fire blanket, first aid kit, and the choking prevention unit in the kitchen, and the AED was moved to a new location just inside the main church entry doors. Small temporary signs indicating where all safety equipment is located have been mounted near all fire extinguishers. Input related to sign wording, color, and placement would be greatly appreciated prior to having permanent signs created.

As mentioned in last month's minutes, Chief Bennington of the Lafayette/Summerford Fire Department has offered any assistance that they could provide the church in the future including AED, CPR, and fire extinguisher training. The council is recommending that the usher team take the lead in determining the actual need, who should attend, and scheduling of any desired training. Russ Hauge has the contact information within the Fire Department.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 9th, at 7 pm by video conference.

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to teach, and this school year we are adding 3rd and 4th grades, which I will also be teaching.

What a blessing and a challenge this has been! Of my fourteen 5th graders last school year, a few knew the Bible well, but most did not. One of my most memorable lessons was on Abraham and Isaac. A major theme that came out of that lesson was that **God is to be number one** in our lives. This was a novel concept to many students. Another comment I received that I will never forget is, "You're telling me lying is a sin?" Also, the truth that Jesus is God is a hard one for all of us to wrap our minds around, but especially for students who have not grown up hearing it. Our goal at Lifewise is to plant and water seeds, and let God make them grow (1 Corinthians 3:6-9).

Each Lifewise lesson has a Bible story, memory verse, Jesus connection, character trait, and activity. I love that the curriculum takes us through the Bible chronologically and that each lesson points to the Gospel. And I love sharing all of this with children in my community. My prayer is that the children will tell their families, the families will fill the churches, and many will be saved.

"...we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."
Psalm 78:4



(Wengers...continued from page 1)

For a few years after getting married, we lived at Rosedale, but then followed God's leading and moved to my hometown of International Falls. We lived there for three years and forged some very deep friendships and close Christian community. In June of this year, we moved back to central Ohio, continuing to follow God's leading, this time to pursue pastoral ministry at LCF.

What are our plans for the future?

How many kids will we have? Are we done having kids? Where will we live? Can we afford that house? What jobs will we have? Will there be enough money? When can Katie go back to school? Is Corin going to attend seminary? How can we get more sleep? What are we going to have for supper? These are just some of the questions about the future that seem to constantly whirl around in our minds. It can be overwhelming and anxiety-inducing, especially when we desire a lot more peace and order than we have currently. However, Katie and I try to grow as we age, and it turns out that to reach maturity, we have to put ourselves in situations that aren't clean and simple. We have to tackle unknowns, delve into chaos, and continually practice perseverance and discipline. Our plan for the future is the same as our plan for right now: place our trust in God to care for us and help us and guide us as much as we can, and ask the Holy Spirit to help us when we find ruts where we are having difficulty trusting. In doing so, we find peace that doesn't depend on all our desires and plans working out all the time. As for more definite plans, we do have a few: raise our kids to love and follow Jesus, visit all the US National Parks (ask us about our favorite so far!), hike the Appalachian Trail, own a house, and see both of us go back to school.

The Greatest Commandment

A Message from the Pastor

BY REUBEN SAIRS

Consider three interesting Bible passages. When Jesus was asked (Matthew 22:34-40) what is the greatest commandment, He responded, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is*

the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

All the law and prophets fall in line in this order. How should we understand it? Are those first two commandments a philosophical foundation, a commitment of will, an aspiration, a goal? Jesus didn't elaborate on it, so we have to think about how this works. I find two ideas pressing on me. First, maybe any effort of command-keeping has to rest on these two principles or it lacks the vitality it needs to keep going and be consistent. Second, perhaps when we try command-keeping without setting these two ideas first, our obedience might be self-serving and only appear to be righteous.

It is important to point out that Jesus never suggests that there is an unresolvable tension between these top two commandments and all the rest. It would be misguided to think we would surrender commands in order to keep higher commands as a matter of course, but most of us will concede that there is such a thing as a moral dilemma in which it seems impossible not to have to choose the greater good or lesser evil. That's a different discussion. Here the emphasis is on motive and sequence.

Paul says something similar in both Galatians and Romans. In both cases he is talking about the commands that are regarded as the second five of the Ten Commandments—the ones that find their focus in human relations.

Galatians 5:13-14 says, *“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

In Romans Paul gives some specific examples of how love empowers true obedience to specific commandments.

Romans 13:8-10: *“Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”*

Does bringing these points forward help you? It helps me because it changes obedience into character development. It transforms white-knuckled, force-of-will command-keeping and points instead to changes that I know God is working in me internally. I'm not tempted to think this makes it easier. In fact, I think it sets the bar far higher, but it makes morality a deeply spiritual experience and not a mere matter of effort.

Multiply Conference

BY DWYLYN AND JESSICA GINGERICH

Multiply is an annual gathering of our church conference, Rosedale Network of Churches, where people from various cultures and generations come together for a reunion of sorts. This year's conference took place in southern Indiana, in the town of Montgomery, at Barr-Reeve High School—about four hours from London, Ohio. Attendees came from as far as Oregon, New York, and even Ethiopia, uniting for a weekend of exploring new perspectives, singing together, and reconnecting with old friends.

The conference theme was Romans 12, in which the church is called to offer their lives fully to God, have their minds transformed, as well as humbly serve the body of Christ, and to show love, peace, and goodness to all people. The four main services featured four pastors from RNOC churches across the country, each teaching on a different section of Romans 12 and guiding those gathered through the richness of the passage. In addition to these main services, there were 15 smaller sessions, and each person could attend at least three. Topics ranged from a book discussion and ministering to those with addictions, to foster care and adoption, along with several sessions on the gifts of the Spirit.



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Elders Notes

BY DORIS SWARTZ

The elders team gathered at Rob and Doris's home on Wednesday, August 6th, for our monthly meeting. We began with a time of praise, reading Psalm 8, and sharing recent glimpses of God's work in our lives. We then shared prayer requests and spent time praying together for them.

We reviewed and approved our first completed Outreach and Ministries Building Usage Application. Megan has requested to lead a weekly fitness class for women from September through May, serving as a Revelation Wellness Instructor. We wish her well in this endeavor!

After faithfully recording the minutes of our elders meetings for many years, Doris shared that she's ready to pass the baton. We're hopeful that a volunteer will step forward before our next meeting.

Rob will be preaching on several challenging themes in the coming weeks: telling the truth, turning the other cheek, and loving your enemies. He welcomes input from the elders as he prepares to address these important topics.

We continued our conversation about the church's role in community service. We would like to see outreach and service be guided by a clear vision and happen organically as God leads. Our discipleship efforts should encourage individuals to discover their unique callings and ways to serve with their God-given gifts and passions. We will also give more visibility to opportunities to serve in our community.

We revisited the idea of offering a short, simple prayer for children as they are dismissed to Sunday School each week. Gideon will talk with Naomy and then will try to develop a proposed plan before our next meeting.

Upcoming Schedule:

August 23 to September 6 - Reuben & Vicki will be in California

September - Kick off Small Groups

September 14 - Outdoor Service, Baptism and Potluck

October 5 - Communion

November 23 - Gratitude Sunday and Thanksgiving Potluck

December 14 - Children's Christmas Program (during the Sunday morning service)

December 21 - LCF Family Christmas and Continental Breakfast

We're grateful that Jeff Gates has once again agreed to lead the planning for Gratitude Sunday, the Children's Christmas Program, and LCF Family Christmas. Thank you, Jeff!

Offering an Adult Discipleship Class on Sunday mornings like we have in the past has proven to be challenging due to its impact on worship practice, prayer time, children's classes, fellowship, etc. Instead, we're exploring a condensed format—likely a Friday evening and Saturday morning sometime this winter—with childcare and possibly a shared meal. More details to come!

Our next elders meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 16th.



(Multiply Conference...continued from page 3)

For us, the best part of the Multiply Conference—and arguably the most unavoidable part of the weekend—is the community of people. You can be standing in a hallway, and suddenly an old acquaintance appears, greeting you with a hug and a quick conversation. Once the conversation ends, you part ways—and perhaps you may never cross paths again during the rest of the weekend. The feature of reuniting and connecting with new people is the most impactful part of the conference.

We found the weekend to be encouraging and uplifting. The main services, breakout sessions, and conversations came together to create a meaningful experience. For anyone considering it, we highly recommend joining Multiply 2026 in central Pennsylvania (July 31st - August 2nd).



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A monthly newsletter designed to enhance communication at London Christian Fellowship.

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

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