

The LCF Connection

April 2026

Missions Trips

By Evan Hostetler, Derek Elfrink, Kerry Molina, Josiah Baker



Evan - I had a good time and lots of fun during my recent trip working with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) as part of the RBC Trades program. On January 4th, I flew to Houston, TX, and got situated at the base which was a United Methodist conference center. I was part of the long-term group of about 15 people, and every week we would have 15 or so new weekly volunteers to help out. The people who we were building houses for had some damage from Hurricane Beryl and were struggling to make it. We were starting five houses from the stem walls up and had around three groups each week working on different houses. The first couple weeks we were framing houses. We had gotten all five framed by around three weeks in. After the framing, we put on siding and trim with a Tyvek wrap and a metal roof on top.

About that time, the current long-term group that had been there left, and a new one took over. It was a little different because of the different leadership but we adapted pretty fast and were back to work. With the new group, most of the work that we did was insulating the crawlspace and the walls and putting up drywall. When the day came that we were leaving, it was a little hard to say goodbye, but it had to come. On February 14th, I flew back to Columbus. I am glad I got to experience this trip.

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Caring for Our Community

A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz

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I have heard some good thoughts this past year from some of you at LCF asking how we can be more involved in helping and serving in our community. As I observe Jesus' life, I see Him caring not only for the spiritual needs of people, but also for their physical and mental needs as well. I have sensed Him prodding me to think about how I can do the same. Clete Yoder helped us do this by engaging us to help provide wheelchair ramps for those in our community who are disabled or need help. Our Benevolence Team has assisted many people over the years for those both inside and outside the church, putting people up in hotels, helping people purchase vehicles, providing food and gas cards, and many other types of assistance. Our wheelchair ramp ministry has come to a close, and we have had challenges properly determining real needs versus those who are "gaming the system." It feels to me like now is a good time to reassess. The church isn't a social agency, but the world needs to know that Jesus loves them, all of them. How do we work this out? It's something I'm figuring out.

Since last fall I have been meeting regularly with "Task Force for Our Community Unhoused" which is composed of various concerned individuals, churches, and local agencies who are looking at how we can care for those in the London area who don't have a home. I've been encouraged. There are a lot of people who care and I've come to realize how important it is for the church to be seen and understood as a place that cares as well. So far it has been a slow process trying to find a place that can be used as a warming center and expanding the opportunities for those who have lost their home to find a safe place to stay and get back on their feet. I'm still figuring out how

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Derek - As many of you know, for 3 weeks, I took a tour of Europe for a cross-cultural trip with Rosedale Bible College. And boy, was it a fun trip! I got to see so many things and meet so many people. For the trip, I had to take 2 classes: Introduction to Humanities and History of Christianity 2. Throughout the trip I learned so many things I never knew before. I got to see paintings I had studied about, lots of famous landmarks, and even got to go to Zurich, Switzerland, where a lot of the Swiss Reformation happened. That was where our history of Anabaptism started. Some highlights from the trip were seeing the Eiffel tower in Paris at night and seeing St. Peters, which is a beautiful cathedral. I got to attend my first two masses in two very famous cathedrals, one at Notre Dame and another at Florence Cathedral. I also got to see the famous Colosseum in Rome and went inside. I loved trying gelato which is like ice cream but ten times better. I also enjoyed eating pizza fresh from Italy (10 out of 10 would recommend). I miss my trip in Europe, and I would totally go back if I had the chance.



Kerry - Joseph and I recently had the privilege to go with the Plainview Spanish class to the ministry Esperanza in Shiroles, Costa Rica. While I could talk at length about the natural beauty of Costa Rica, the true beauty of the trip was seeing how God and the church community transcend our language and cultural differences.



The prospect of being fully immersed in a foreign language can be intimidating, but the girls did not let that stop them from joining in with the community at Esperanza. Even though it was late when we arrived, there was a group there to welcome us and help us to get settled. The next day, we had to hit the ground running. Along with volunteers from Esperanza, we went to help repair the roof for an elderly woman from the community. We did a little bit of everything from helping cut support boards and passing up the roofing sheets to cleaning the kitchen and chatting with the elderly woman. By the time we went back to the base for lunch, we were all happy for a break. In the afternoon, we helped to prepare juices to sell as part of a fundraiser. Although not every day was as busy as that first day, we always had a full day. We did activities with local children, made cookies to share at a campfire, taught Sunday school, visited the elderly, and did an art activity with the ladies. We also got to connect with people by playing table games, chatting over delicious meals, and playing hours of volleyball. Monday was a particularly enjoyable day. Our group, along with workers and volunteers from Esperanza, spent the day at the beach. It was a day of good food, good company, and lots of fun. We got to see sloths and monkeys, and experienced Costa Rican snow cones. The beautiful Caribbean Sea and the perfect weather were an ideal way to relax after our busy weekend.



We were at Esperanza for only a short time, but it was hard for our group to say goodbye. Even though there was the language barrier and cultural differences that sometimes baffled us, everyone had made new friends and had come to love the community there.



We had three goals for our trip—practice Spanish, experience the culture, and be a blessing to the community there. We were also very blessed by them. They welcomed us warmly; they cooked fantastic meals for us; they encouraged us; they shared their stories with us, and they listened to our stories. They were patient with us while we struggled to remember the right words. We were able to laugh together, work together, and worship together. As I thought back over our trip, I thought of Revelation 7:9, which says that every nation and every language will worship together before the throne of God. Trips like these are a taste of that. They remind us that despite our differences, we are all one in Christ.

Josiah - Hello LCF! This is Josiah, Isaiah's brother and son of Mike and Karen. If you all didn't know, I'm currently living in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau, West Africa. I have felt that God wanted me to serve overseas and after my first attempt didn't work out, God opened a door for me to come here and serve with our family friend, Daniel, who is also the pastor here in Bissau. As I sat trying to write to you all, I was confronted with a complete lack of inspiration. In light of that, I have decided to walk you through a day in my life. This day is slightly busier than most; allow me to start in the beginning. My day started as most days start, with waking up by 6 am and immediately doing our daily devotion with the household. This day Daniel and I were jointly scheduled to clean and do dishes. We have one of four options each for chores: cook, clean, draw water, (which

entails carrying nine 5-gallon buckets of water roughly 100 yards, which doesn't sound so bad until you're midway across and realizing that 5 gallons is very heavy) and one rest day. After we finished our chores, I made coffee and ate breakfast. Following that, Daniel and I had stuff to do downtown, so we grabbed a toka toka, which means basically a stripped-down 15-passenger van with benches welded into the floor. Once downtown, we went to the Ministry of Chambers, which is where you go to legalize documents for things like land, marriage, etc. We then walked 2.5 miles to meet with a friend of Daniel. We proceeded to spend a good chunk of the day at the restaurant, to which we had walked. We had a meeting with Rosedale International at 3:30 pm. Directly after that meeting, we went to pick up some documents at a WEC (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ) center. From there, we went to another meeting with a pastor here in Bissau. We were quite hungry so on our way to meeting with the pastor we ate some street food. After spending the entire day out and about, we finally made it home via toka toka around 8:30 pm. This day did end as most do, by making it past 11:59 pm and collapsing into bed exhausted.



Walking around the city.



My friend Daniel dressed up to do business in the city.

Worship Team Update

By Annika Miller

Every Sunday morning, churches around the world spend a significant portion of their time singing together. But have you ever stopped to wonder why? Not everyone is musical, or finds music the most natural way to worship, and yet it's been a part of church life from the beginning. If singing isn't everyone's natural way of worshiping, why has it always been such an essential part of the church's life together? Worshiping God through music is a tradition that the church has passed down through the generations and finds its source directly in scripture.

There are two clear exhortations in the New Testament that we make this a habit in our gathering as believers. Colossians 3:16 says, *"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."* Ephesians 5:18b-20 says, *"Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

These passages do not stand alone in holding music highly. Singing is mentioned over 400 times throughout all of scripture. Music is all throughout the Psalms as a way to express our joy and gratitude to the Lord. We get glimpses into the very throne room of God where the angels and the elders are singing praises to God.



It seems evident that God created us to respond to music. It has the power to shape our hearts and minds, and it gives us ways to express emotions that go beyond simple words. When we sing together corporately, it bonds us together around the truths that we all affirm, and helps us to remember those truths as we go throughout life. The songs we sing matter, and the way we engage with Sunday morning music as a church matters.

Whether you are the most musically gifted person, or get frustrated with the sound of your own voice, the truth is that God gave you that voice and he is asking you to use it to glorify him. Scripture doesn't necessarily say it needs to be a beautiful noise unto the Lord, but rather a joyful noise. For some this comes easily, for others it may be an act of discipline to enter

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I can best help with my connections and my skills, but I think I've decided that I should always be involved directly with something like this.

What about you? I'm curious how you are figuring it out. There for a while I got pretty cynical after seeing people take advantage of our church over the years as we tried to help them. I developed an attitude that I'm pretty sure wasn't like Jesus. I'm trying to recover from that and find a good balance. As I observe how Jesus interacted with people, I see that He cared for all kinds of people. He was criticized for hanging out with the seedy part of the population, but he reminded us that these are the ones who need help. How can I hang out with those who really need the help? I'm not sure yet, but I feel Jesus leading me down this path to show His love to the "least of these" whoever that might be and to do it face-to-face. I'd love to learn from you how you are figuring it out as well.

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into worship in this way. Either way, it is something God gave for us to participate in as a community of people who want the message of Christ to dwell among us richly.

Psalm 150

1 Praise the Lord.

*Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.*

*2 Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.*

*3 Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,*

*4 praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,*

*5 praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.*

*6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.*

Elders Notes

By Brandon Wengerd

The elders met at Rob and Doris's home on March 17th. We spent time reflecting on the ways God is at work within the church. We brought our requests and praises before Him—both those from our church family and our own personal lives.

Corin's Internship Mid-Year Review

We appreciate how Corin and Katie have jumped in and been involved with things like helping lead the young adults group and opening their house for waffles on Saturdays. We are grateful for the study and effort he has put into preaching. We will provide an update on the internship soon as we review the first half of the internship.

Prayer for Children

We evaluated how the prayer for children has gone to date. In general, it seems that the children like being able to participate in the prayer during the service. We discussed the possibilities of providing the prayer in a printed format for use outside of the church service as well.

Maundy Thursday

We are looking forward to celebrating Maundy Thursday with communion and foot washing as well as our Easter morning service with some special music. It is a special time to prepare our hearts for worship. We can reflect on Christ's death, resurrection, and the great love He showed to all.

Membership

We are thankful to everyone that renewed their membership. We see this as a way that we can be accountable to each other and to God, and to care for one another.

Youth Leader Special Offering

We really appreciate the time our youth leaders, Mike and Karen Baker, have put in over the past few years and would like to take up a special offering for them on May 31st.

Offering Time

Worship through giving has continued to be an important emphasis in our service. We are thankful for the different avenues we can provide for people to give—whether online, through the giving app, or in person with the offering bags. It is a time to reflect on giving back to God through the church for all ages. We see it as a way of God working in our lives to be generous people.

We closed our time with prayer and set our next meeting for April 15th. As usual, we welcome you to share your thoughts and concerns with us.



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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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