

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

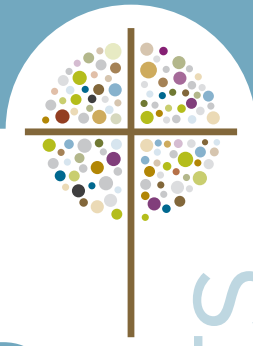
JANUARY 2022

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A welcoming and loving community of faith
that learns, grows, and serves together.

LOPC.ORG



new year: RENEWED HOPE

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in God, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
-Romans 15:13



By Jaime Polson
Pastor, Families & Executive Leadership

At the end of each calendar year, our family takes some time to sit and really talk about the joys and struggles of our year. One of the purposes of this is for us to see where God has shown up in our lives, even in the darkest places. This practice helps me trust in God in a new way. It also continues our practice of gratitude for what this scripture says, that as we trust in God, we will be filled with joy and peace and overflow by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This year was filled with more struggles for me personally than I can ever remember. It was a hard and heartbreaking year in many ways and yet this scripture and practice remind me that I made it through, and with God's help and the help of family, community, and friends, I still have hope. The Holy Spirit fills me with hope for a new day and a new year. Our first sermon series of the New Year focuses on helping us live more faithfully by connecting with God in practical ways that help make our faith the center of our lives. The sermon series is called "Habitat of the Heart", and we will look at scriptures that help form us as people trying to live more faithfully as we seek kindness, love justice, and walk humbly with our God.

May you seek to find God in your lives this year, and may we see the God of love in and through one another. Here's to a blessed New Year!

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Peter Whitelock - Head of Staff
Gerald Chinen - Congregational Care
Lauren Gully - Mission & Spiritual Formation
Jaime Polson - Families & Executive Leadership
Chris Baldwin - Community Life

Worship and Music

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Keris Dahlkamp & Allison Kunz - Youth
Coleen Moulton - Seedlings Preschool

Focus Newsletter

Jon Corry - Communications
Dick James & Lexi Morrissey - Editors

Submissions & Deadlines

Please send requests for submissions to:
communications@lopc.org
no later than February 1 for the March issue.

Thank you to all who contribute each month to Focus!

Time

If you ever question the value of your time as part of your stewardship, remember Paul's encouragement:

*"I appeal to you therefore... by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [with your time] as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."
(Romans 12:1)*



the GENEROSITY corner

Sharing our Time, Talents, and Treasure

By Nancy Henderson, Generosity Team Member

Since childhood we have heard "It is better to give than to receive." But the real question is, "What are we invited to give, besides the obvious: money?" A steady stream of emails and snail mails assure us that our treasure is urgently needed, but what else? This year the focus is on all three types of giving: time, talent, and treasure, starting with time.

Many contribute time generously in various roles:

- Elders, Deacons, and Trustees.
- Teachers, facilitators, and tutors.
- Thursday Work Crew leaders and helpers.
- Mission-partner volunteers and mission trip participants.
- Floral and music teams and all who beautify our worship environment.

The list goes on, both on and off the church campus. For example, one quiet group, the Prayer Team, responded to pastors' pandemic requests to pray for the health and leadership of the Seedlings staff and all congregants in the health-care field. Team members gathered the names of teachers and health-care providers in our community, and they have prayed repeatedly for their well-being.



Photo: 2021 Winter Nights Family Shelter

community



Confirmation Sunday

Save the Date: February 6

Please join us in the morning worship service on Sunday, February 6, as we celebrate the youth confirmands for 2022! Through this program, youth confirm the promises made by their parents at their baptism: to share their intent to live as faithful followers of Christ. The youth will have learned more about Jesus and the Trinity, prayer, the Bible, creation, sacraments and worship, and God's justice in a welcoming and relaxed environment. This is a huge milestone in the life of the youth, their families, and the entire congregation. We hope to see you there with us as we lift up these amazing young disciples of Christ!

Questions? Contact Keris Dahlkamp at keris@lopc.org, or Allison Kunz at allison@lopc.org.

Fourth Monday

Book Group

January 24 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom

Is joining a book group one of your New Year's resolutions?

Join us on the January 24 to help choose some of the books that we'll read in 2022. We read a mix of historical fiction and non-fiction.

Contact Jean Fiske at jdfiske@gmail.com to receive meeting information.

The Nature of Reality - A Discussion

1:00-2:30 p.m., Friday, January 21, 2022, in the Oak Room

The Science and Religion Study Group will convene its first meeting in nearly a year on Friday, January 21, at 1 p.m. in the Oak Room.



The afternoon's discussion will be entitled "The Nature of Reality!" It will be led by LOPC community member Tom Weaver. His research as a physicist has focused on astrophysics (mostly stellar evolution, supernovae, and the creation of the chemical elements in stars), nuclear physics (including advanced nuclear reactors), and laser physics.

"Scientists and spiritual seekers have tried for thousands of years to come to a deeper understanding of the nature of reality through both experiments and spiritual practice and insights," Tom says. "Though no consensus yet exists on what reality actually is, some intriguing possibilities and commonalities have emerged. Whatever reality is, it seems likely to be very different from what we superficially think we see when we look out at our everyday world."

If you have some thoughts on this topic or an interest in what others think, please come. All are welcome, so invite a friend if you think they, too, might be interested. Tom will be drawing on insights from his research as well as using several articles as the basis for the discussion. This will be an in-person gathering, so please be fully vaccinated.

Tom holds a Ph.D. in physics from UC Berkeley, and worked for many years as a physicist at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab while also

helping to select and mentor graduate-student Fellows for the Hertz Foundation, before nominally "retiring" in 2019. His research interests have expanded over the

years to include theoretical biology, the nature of complex systems, and mind/brain operation and the associated phenomena of consciousness.

The following articles will serve as the basis for a more general discussion that can be read beforehand by searching online:

- "Quantum Reality: What does Quantum Mechanics Suggest About the Nature of Reality? (Wall Street Journal's Review (May 29, 2021, of Helgoland: Making Sense of the Quantum Revolution.)
- "Science Should Not Try to Absorb Religion and Other Ways of Knowing" (Scientific American, 6/25/21).
- "Mystical Experience: What the Psychological Research Has to Say." Friends Journal, 6/1/14.

The Science and Religion Study Group at LOPC was formed in 1997 by a nucleus of interested members led by the late Rev. John Turpin to explore the intersection of two of the world's most important disciplines. It met monthly in person and then via Zoom until early 2021, hearing presentations by scientists, theologians, philosophers, teachers, and LOPC members.

thursdayFellowship

caring • sharing • loving

A program of Senior Care Ministries



By Julie Peterson, LOPC Member

In early December, Thursday Fellowship along with Senior Care ministries started the Christmas season by delivering festively wrapped amaryllis bulbs to our treasured guests. The volunteers enjoyed delivering the bulbs as much as the guests enjoyed receiving them. It was a wonderful way to start the Christmas season.

Thursday Fellowship hosted a Christmas party and luncheon on December 16. After an 18-month hiatus, having communicated mainly through Zoom, written notes, and calls, our gathering was long overdue and a resounding success, with over 70 guests in attendance. Bill Bowman started our day with his usual welcoming commentary. Next, the guests created waterless snowglobes that were a big hit. A delicious Cobb Salad catered by the kitchen team was served on beautifully decorated tables as we listened to Christmas carols played by Frank Grannis and Ron Goodyear. After lunch, we were entertained by our faithful and dear friend Michael Kistner, who performed a variety of Christmas Carols and seasonal songs. While we observed Contra Costa Health Services masking and social distancing guidelines, our joy was not hampered, and the excitement of being together again was palpable. Our celebration gave us reason to rejoice and reflected the Christmas message of peace and love. As is our tradition, we ended the day singing the song Shalom! Thank you to each of the volunteers who worked hard on so many details and made this day such a success!

We wish you a Happy New Year and pray we are able to plan more Thursday Fellowship gatherings in 2022. Watch for announcements of events in Focus and in the weekly Connections.



FIRST FRIDAY FORUM



Marilyn Chase

Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa

February 4, 10:00 a.m. on Zoom

To register: lopc.org/first-friday-forum.

Fountains and hanging wire sculptures define the work of San Francisco artist, Ruth Asawa. Marilyn Chase, UC Berkeley lecturer, will present the inspiring story of Asawa and her rise to fame from a farmer's daughter to a celebrated sculptress for First Friday Forum on February 4 at 10:00 a.m. Registration is required.

Born in 1926, Asawa, with her family, spent time during World War II in an internment camp in Arkansas where she learned to draw. She attended the groundbreaking art school at Black Mountain College and went on to create her iconic urban installations.

In a richly visual volume, with over 60 reproductions of Asawa's art and archival photos of her life, *Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa*, Chase documents the artist's transformative touch, most notably in turning wire, the material of the internment camp fences, into sculptures. The author mined Asawa's letters, diaries, sketches, and photos, and conducted interviews with those who knew her to tell this amazing story.

Chase is a graduate of Stanford University with honors in English and UC Berkeley with a Master of Journalism. As a reporter, columnist, and senior special writer at *The Wall Street Journal*, Chase covered tech and medical science for 30 years. This is her second book.

Asawa was a mother of six in her 59-year marriage to architect Albert Lanier. She died in 2013. Her works grace the MOMA, deYoung, Getty, Whitney, and many more museums and galleries across America. Her remarkable life story offers inspiration to artists, art lovers, feminists, mothers, teachers, Asian Americans, history buffs, and anyone who likes a good underdog story. Also, the book will be useful to those interested in Asian American culture and history.



youth



Registration is open online for the Youth Ministry summer service-learning experiences: lopc.org/ministry/youth/summer-mission.

Short-term mission experiences can have a big impact. Youth in 5th-12th grades who choose to spend a week of their summer vacation dedicated to service will:

- Discover where God is already at work in communities in need;
- Act as the hands and feet of Christ to share God's love with the world;
- Learn that those who seem different are not very different at all;
- Practice putting others' needs above their own desires; and
- Lean on God to realize their ability to overcome new challenges.

June 6-10 Service Squad:

A Local Daycamp for youth completing 5th-6th grades in spring 2022.

Questions? Contact Alison Kunz at allison@lopc.org.

June 18-25 High School Mission Trip:

Wapato, Washington, service-learning trip for youth completing 9th-12th grades in spring 2022.

Questions? Contact Keris Dahlkamp at keris@lopc.org.

July 10-15 Middle School Mission Trip:

Los Angeles service-learning trip for youth completing 7th-8th grades in spring 2022.

Questions? Contact Alison Kunz at allison@lopc.org.

Big Games

at YOW on January 30

Middle school youth will spend the afternoon at YOW playing fun, interactive team games! We hope they join us for a special time of fun, fellowship, and bonding.

Questions? Contact Alison Kunz allison@lopc.org.



mission

a month of

love does

love protects, love hopes, love never fails



Coming this February!

Every February, LOPC invites the entire congregation to come together to serve the greater community. Last year due to Covid, participants worked together but separately in their homes, creating polar-fleece blankets, breakfast and hygiene kits, and writing notes of encouragement to first responders. This year its plan is to offer a hybrid approach that will consist of at-home and on-campus projects as well as several off-site projects at various LOPC mission-partner locations throughout Contra Costa County.

The program will kick-off on January 23 in worship and encourage everyone to choose at least one act of service during the month. Participants are welcome to work individually, with a friend, as a family, or as a group (fellowship, bible, voyager, etc.).

Great need continues throughout Contra Costa County, and various service opportunities have been chosen that will take place throughout February to give support and love to the community and church mission partners.

Go to LOPC.org/lovedoes for more information on how to be involved.

Racial Equity & Engagement Team at LOPC

By: Linda Rosenthal and Diane Bianchi, Team Members

The recently formed Racial Equity and Engagement Team assigned by session to study and evaluate LOPC's efforts around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, is seeking to share its work with all church members and friends.

Here are some projects currently underway:

Mission and Value Statement:

Written by the Team and approved by session, this will be our guiding document going forward. Readers are encouraged to read it at lopc.org/racialjustice.

Partnering: Believing this work requires partnerships, the team has interviewed several churches about their experience in engaging members in racial justice. Additionally, the team has contacted organizations that advocate for racial justice about their priorities.

Resource List/Library: An engaging source of books, magazine articles, podcasts, films, and websites focused on racial and social justice issues is being assembled. This will be made available to anyone interested in deepening the understanding of these issues.

Mapping: A survey of LOPC staff and elders in every ministry group has been conducted to determine how racial justice issues are woven into internal conversations, education, service projects, advocacy, and whether they have developed any external partnerships. Results will be shared with participants. So far, key takeaways include:

- Extraordinary responsiveness by staff to invest in anti-bias and anti-racism awareness and education, both internally as well as for congregants.
- Thorough and conscientious review of foundational Christian Education practices and curricula.
- Strong efforts to expand the education component of youth service projects to include historical factors that contribute to social injustice and poverty. Intentional planning and exposure to issues that affect communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
- Growing awareness of the need for charity, justice, and advocacy. In addition to LOPC's core value of strong charitable support for our Mission partners, there is a growing desire to work "upstream" through advocacy.

Budgeting: Funds of \$5,000 for 2021 have been allocated, with \$3000 to Faith in Action and the remainder shared with Poor People's Campaign, Stop Asian American Pacific Islander Hate, and the Oakland Peace Center.

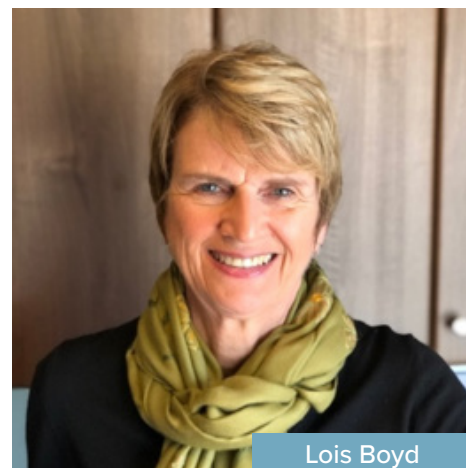
LOPC member survey: Currently underway to assess specific project interests and priorities, develop a communication plan, personal conversations with interested individuals to encourage further engagement, and invite the entire LOPC family to become involved. Surveys are currently accessible online at lopc.org/racialjustice, and paper copies are also available to pick up in the Ministry Center.

The team understands the urgency the LOPC community feels about this work. We have prayerfully explored the social-justice activities to date and are looking for specific opportunities to serve going forward. This work is challenging and requires particular persistence and commitment. The team embraces the message that Jesus brought to the world to love our neighbors as ourselves. It believes it is incumbent on us to advocate for those whose voices and rights haven't been protected in the past.

The team encourages LOPC members and friends to consider joining us in this work. For more information, contact Pastor Lauren Gully at lauren@lopc.org.

journey of Faith

By Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC Member



Lois Boyd

Lois Boyd says this about her faith journey, “Most of all I have been influenced by the Sunday lessons and classes offered by our LOPC pastors. They have so much knowledge and insight that they share so thoughtfully and in a way that those of us without theological degrees can understand. Their faith is so inspiring. It draws me in to want to learn more and deepen my faith.

“My parents’ faith was a foundational influence. Through their beliefs and teachings of Christianity I learned what it meant to follow Christ. And, I continually learn from the examples of others whose faith is demonstrated by how they treat others with kindness and compassion and how they share their time, talent, and treasure to enhance the lives of others.”

As she was growing up, it was a given that the family regularly attended church. She was confirmed, but Lois admits, “I can’t say I really understood the commitment I was making. I went to church occasionally during college years. It was in my young adult years that I began earnestly searching for a church home. That’s when I found LOPC, and what a blessing that was.”

Lois always felt a calling to social work, but she changed her college major and steered toward a career in the business world. However, she found time to pursue social work as a volunteer and became more heavily involved after she retired.

For five years she has served as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for a foster youth. “This experience has opened my eyes to a world previously unknown to me of dysfunctional families, which my charge had. It’s tested me to provide guidance and advocacy to a child who is living with the effect of her earlier trauma.”

Perhaps others might be interested in working with youth in this way. Lois explains the responsibilities: “As a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), I am a trained volunteer to advocate for my youth who has been placed into the protective custody of the child welfare system, working with a team of five paid providers. I hold my youth’s education rights, so play a role in her schooling. Pre-Covid, I met with my youth almost every week. That has fallen off, although I check in with her by phone and text frequently.” Lois also submits reports each month and monitors her case to see that court-ordered services are provided and that they are working toward a safe, permanent home for her. Now that Lois’ youth has turned 18, she is considered a non-minor dependent of the court and will receive an additional three years of social services including Lois’ continuing as her CASA. Kudos to Lois for the time and effort she puts in to help her charge – no easy task.

Lois recalls a time when she stepped outside her comfort zone many years ago and the lessons learned. “I volunteered at a domestic violence

agency that provided support to those who were suffering from abuse and needed to change their living circumstances. My heart was in the right place, but I was young and had no knowledge or experience in this area, so I began searching for something which better fit my skills. We have to know when to step back as well as when to step forward.”

An area she wishes to step forward in now is racial justice. “I am eager to act on all that I have learned in the anti-racism classes the church has offered, most recently the four-part series which culminated in a Saturday retreat facilitated by Rianna Robinson and Gent Grush. I am ready to be a more active participant in social-justice issues.”

Lois has been a member of LOPC for 40 years and says she has participated in some manner in most ministries, serving as an elder twice and currently serving as a trustee for the Foundation. “I even worked at the church as the Business Administrator for two years in the late ‘80s.”

Lois chooses Micah 6:8 from *The Message* as her favorite Bible verse:

“But he has already made plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It’s quite simple: do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, and don’t take yourself too seriously—take God seriously.”

finance

What is Per Capita?

Per Capita is a Latin phrase that means “for each head”. We use it to refer to an annual fee that our congregation pays to higher levels of the Presbyterian Church based upon the number of active members in LOPC. For 2021, the Per Capita amount is \$38.00, or \$76.00 per couple. We encourage members to make an extra contribution to help defray this expense in addition to their other gifts. To facilitate this, you will find a blue Per Capita envelope in your box of giving envelopes. You can also give a check to the church with “Per Capita” noted on the memo line. We have budgeted \$68,210 this year for our Per Capita obligation. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if a significant portion of this could be covered by your extra contribution enabling us to add additional support to LOPC ministries?

Giving at LOPC

One of the most practical ways you can help during times like these is to continue to support LOPC financially.

To give, visit lopc.org and select **GIVE BACK** and the Online Giving Tab, or scan the code above on your mobile device.



2022 Stewardship Campaign

Please consider making a pledge for 2022. Your pledge will help LOPC plan and budget for the following:

- Growing Mission Ministry
- Working for a better, more just world
- Expanding our special needs ministry
- Providing youth with service learning and spiritual growth opportunities
- Taking care of LOPC staff
- Developing new spiritual formation opportunities



Thank you to members and friends who have made a pledge for 2022. Pledge envelopes are available in the Chapel during weekdays and on Sundays.

Visit lopc.org/pledge to pledge or contact Farah Mohammadzai, LOPC Accountant to pledge or for assistance, farah@lopc.org, 283.8722 x265.

foundation

LOPC Foundation Annual Report

By Jennifer Crocker, Foundation Trustee, Treasurer



Jennifer Crocker

LOPC Foundation closed its September 30, 2021, fiscal year with \$12.6 million of invested net assets (equity), after deducting \$180,000 of remaining commitments to LOPC. Legacy estate and other gifts in the amount of \$25,000 were received. The prior year amount was \$188,000.

A 22% investment rate of return for the fiscal year was earned on the Foundation investments, made up of 23 diversified mutual funds and exchange traded funds. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) focused funds are 55% of the investments.

Foundation trustees appropriated \$395,000 for church ministries and \$118,000 for facilities reserve-study project expenses and facilities capital expenses.

See below for net asset values of the Foundation’s 11 funds and Facilities Reserve Account at September 30, 2021, after additions and disbursements to the church:

Unrestricted	
General Ministry Fund	\$ 3,534,000
Restricted*	
Deacons Endowments Fund	\$ 272,000
Thursday Fellowship Fund	\$ 279,000
Dornsife Youth Fund	\$ 407,000
Cranmer Christian Leadership Fund	\$ 277,000
Newcomer Women’s Endowment Fund	\$ 3,000
Holman Mission Endowment Fund	\$ 119,000
Holman Music Fund	\$ 128,000
Steuber Landscape Maintenance Endowment Fund	\$ 140,000
Facilities Endowment Fund	\$ 6,462,000
Facilities Reserve Account**	\$ 938,000

*Restricted funds and accounts are available for grants for limited or restricted uses designated by donors or Foundation trustees.

**The Facilities Reserve Account provides funds for planned as well as unexpected facilities and capital equipment projects. In fiscal year 2021, \$240,000 was set aside in the account.

Learn more about donor opportunities for legacy estate gifts and other gifts to stabilize Foundation support of church ministries in the future at the LOPC website and from Foundation trustees: Jim Beckemeyer (925-324-9655), Doug Bontemps (925-451-4857), Lois Boyd (925-787- 2388), Jen Crocker (925-765-4222), Linda Fodrini-Johnson (925-899-6563), Kristi Haigh (925-890-0265), Staci Johnston (925-588-9992), Mike Ross (925-254-6621), and Dara Youngdale (510-388-4000).

session

November 2021 Session Highlights

By Phil Hunter, Clerk of Session

At November's meeting, we approved two motions. One was a procedural matter to place Jim Beckemeyer in nomination to serve on the Foundation for a second term. The Congregation will vote to approve his nomination at the upcoming congregational meeting. The second motion granted permission for the Kurth Memorial Garden Board to start the permitting process for the Garden's expansion.

One of the more exciting reports to session was learning the new member class consisting of 11 people, was one of the largest in 18 months. There were a wide range of ages, (31-56) with interests in a variety of LOPC programs and activities. You can read about these folks in the December FOCUS.

LOPC's breadth of activities and generosity of all ages was also reported. The Quilting Group helped welcome this year's Winter Nights Family Shelter attendees to LOPC in a special way. The quilters invited the seven children to select their own quilt. With few personal possessions, this gift was very special. Chicks with Sticks contributed 221 items to the Layette Program at Hillcrest Congregational Church. At our Fall Fest, children created 70 greeting cards to be sent to seniors and others of the congregation. It is heartwarming to see all the effort our congregation extends to show others they are loved.

The Finance Team outlined the process for creating the 2022 budget. It all starts, of course, with finishing 2021 on a strong note. If you are reading this column prior to December 31 and wish to make a gift to the 2021 Faith Component, please drop it off at the church before 5:00 p.m. on December 31.

After we total up 2021, the budget planning turns to reviewing the pledges. Be sure you have submitted your 2022 pledge by early January so it is included in the process. With ongoing Covid concerns and unforeseen expenses required as we adjust, the budget work for 2022 becomes even more complex.

No matter where the budget comes out, with all the programs that LOPC supports to help others, I know that 2022 will be a great year for many, both giving and receiving.

care

Care Team Update

The Care Team finished 2021 with the delivery of about 45 amaryllis bulbs, beginning to bloom, to seniors in our congregation. LOPC families delivered them, which is a gift itself. Lassie Colbourn led a class in making a Christmas arrangement with greens, a candle and decorations. It was the first time in the year where we got together in person and had a wonderful time.

In January, we are joyful to have Sophia Colette back to lead us in Gentle Yoga. For those who have enjoyed her classes during the past year and a half, here is an update: she had been at Cambridge, England, for over two months, studying literature and creative writing, especially enjoying her World Literature Class. Her sister is studying at Oxford. What an adventure for two young women from Orinda! On the weekends, she works at Blackwell's, one of the largest bookstores in the world, and also teaches Vinyasa Yoga through her university.

We will not be meeting at a new time: 8:30 a.m. starting Tuesday, January 4th. Sign up a lopc.org/care-events.

The Fun 'n Faith on Fridays program returns January 21, with a live session on campus (we hope!) for published writers to share something about their process and to read from their work. We will have a number of writers from LOPC join us including Bob Finertie, Nancy Henderson, and Francie Lowe.

Sign up at lopc.org/care-events. Watch the offerings from Staying Connected for Care throughout the winter and spring.

hold in PRAYER

**Prayers of comfort and peace
go out to the families and friends of:**



Alice Booth, who passed November 27, 2020 and **Don Booth**, who passed December 24, 2020. **A combined service will be held for Alice and Don on February 12 at 11:00 a.m.**

Carol Agness who passed November 19.
A service will be held December 29 at 11:00 a.m.

Dick Abel, who passed December 16.

Gerry Robey, who passed December 17.



Seedlings: Where are they now ?

The Lindgren Family

An interview with Lisa Lindgren—mother of four Seedlings alumni

By: Sarah Bennett, Seedlings Communications

A couple of decades ago or so, when Elizabeth (Lisa) and Jeff Lindgren moved from the East Coast, they were looking for a church and preschool to call home, and Lisa “knew right away it was LOPC/Seedlings.” They found a home indeed—a place where all four of their boys (Drew, Graham, Sam, Ethan) attended preschool at Seedlings, where Lisa made lifelong best friends, and where the family stayed active in the church for years to follow.

In fact, the Lindgrens loved their time at Seedlings so much that they are hopeful one of their granddaughters (5-month-old Harper, daughter of Drew and Heather) will soon become a second-generation Seedlings student. Drew and Heather recently moved to Moraga, and Drew works in technology and Heather is a fifth-grade teacher in San Francisco. Sam, now 28, and his wife, Parisa, are both high-school teachers and have two children: Delanie (21 months) and Jeffrey (2 months). Graham, now 26, lives in San Francisco and works in technology talent. And their youngest son, Ethan (23), is doing postgraduate study, working as an EMT, and hoping to attend medical school.

Lisa said her family’s experience with Seedlings was “happy and positive.” She is so thankful for the powerful and lasting impact the staff including Coleen, Bobbi, Jan, Candy, Lisa, and Kathy had on her family.

“Our sons were unlikely to nap or want to rest, and the teachers were patient and kind. My husband Jeff and I loved the learn-through-play atmosphere. When I asked the boys recently what they remember about Seedlings, they said having fun and playing with friends. I felt fortunate that the boys had a safe and nurturing place to learn, stretch, grow, fall down, and get back up.”

Lisa notes the impact Seedlings had on her family by the way the Seedlings preschool built a loving foundation that was a springboard into other LOPC programs. “The boys continued their LOPC involvement throughout elementary, middle, and high school.”

Although Lisa notes some activities were not hits with the boys, “Like choir (and she’d like to apologize, again, to those teachers!). Other programs had a profound and lasting impact. All four boys went on mission trips from sixth to twelfth grades. This included traveling to Mexico to build homes, Zimbabwe to help at Mother of Peace Orphanage, New Orleans to clean up after Katrina, New York to help after Super Storm Sandy, Missouri to rebuild after the Joplin tornado, Miami to focus on feeding people in need, Washington state to do farm work, and India to support Children of Faith.” As a busy mom of four boys, Lisa says, “I’m grateful for the parents who tried to arrive a few minutes early some days to chat. I’m thankful we nurtured

those early tentative connections. I’m glad we lingered in the parking lot and tried to smile and wave, even when we were exhausted or stressed. I appreciate that we tried to build on the Seedlings community, take risks, be vulnerable, and not judge.”

Lisa remembers how, when she was on bed rest during her fourth pregnancy, other Seedlings’ moms arranged rides for her boys and a meal train for her family. “Over the years we’ve done a lot of celebrating and some mourning. We root for each other’s kids. We’re still supporting each other through the joys and challenges of parenting and now grand-parenting. Seedlings, or maybe anywhere you decide to truly invest, can be more than it appears to be.”

Lisa remembers “one of the funniest, greatest Seedlings moms ever” who passed away recently. “Our paths hadn’t crossed much as the years went by, but I remember her so fondly. On the walk to pick up our kids she would half-jokingly steel herself to find out what her child had done or said that day. That was the tone—it’s okay if your child isn’t perfect—join the club, laugh, own it, be real.”

Reflecting on her family’s time at Seedlings and beyond, Lisa ends the interview with this thought: “If ‘into every life some rain must fall,’ my own adult-Seedlings self reminds me how essential that rain is to growth.”



**LAFAYETTE-ORINDA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
49 Knox Drive
Lafayette, CA 94549



IMPORTANT

Dated Material
PLEASE DELIVER
BEFORE 1/1/22
Thank you!

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LAFAYETTE, CA
PERMIT NO. 12

RESPITE NIGHT

FOR PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN & YOUTH
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, AGES 2-22.

JANUARY 7 • FEBRUARY 4 • MARCH 4 • MAY 6

6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

ADVANCED REGISTRATION REQUIRED

✉ **MICHELLE@LOPC.ORG**