

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LOPC is here to support you
on your journey of faith.

So, What?

**Lessons on receiving the fullness
of life that resurrection promises.**

Please join us for this sermon series beginning April 8.

April 2018

Mission Task Force

by Lauren Gully, Pastor - Mission & Spiritual Formation



If you were to summarize Jesus' teachings into two words they could be 'follow' and 'go.'

Page

Pastor's Column.....2

COMMUNITY LIFE

ONE Sunday.....3
 New Members.....5
 Dismantling Racism8
 First Friday Forum9
 Let Us Break Bread Together.....10
 PW Birthday Luncheon.....10
 How Do I Pray?.....10
 Men's Breakfast.....10
 LOPC Foundation.....11
 Chicks With Sticks.....11
 We Believe?!?.....12
 Saturday Evening Worship.....12
 Science & Religion.....12
 New Member Class.....12

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Journey of Faith.....13
 Mission Partners.....14
 Healing Hearts.....15

FAMILY AT LOPC

Seedlings.....16
 BTW.....18
 Vacation Bible Camp.....18
 Raising Teens.....18

Personnel Changes.....19
 Officer nominations.....19
 So What? Sermon Series.....20

See more at LOPC.org



One of the elements that makes the heart of our congregation distinct is our commitment to Mission—I know that it was one of the first things that I noticed about LOPC and it is what I hear a lot of our newest members say they notice as well.

For me, Mission is central to a community of faith. If you were to summarize Jesus' teachings into two words they could be 'follow' and 'go.'

We follow Christ by being led through our lives in prayer and study, and we go out into the world to be the hands and feet of Christ—serving the poor, feeding the hungry, and bringing God's love to those who we encounter.

Last year our Session identified Mission as a key priority of the church. In order to get a true assessment of our current mission program and to reimagine a five to ten-year plan for mission we initiated a Mission Task Force, chaired by current mission elder Peter Darbee.

We are currently in the final stages of editing our Mission Task Force report. But we found that the Bible is unequivocal about the need for Christians to live their Christianity through service to others. In mission, we hope to teach and encourage that mission is a foundational aspect of any and all Christian witness. As a committee we reviewed Luke 10:25-37, Matthew 25:31-46, John 13:1-7 and 34-35; and found ourselves focusing on our calling to service as Christians and thinking about the reciprocal ways that we can get to know and become a better community that is working to bring about the kingdom of God.

We hope that you will catch our vision of what God is trying to do through our community and join us in LOPC Mission!

Community Life

We believe everyone thrives when we come together in a community of faith, whether as a congregation or in a smaller group setting. We have a variety of groups to suit the needs of everyone. Some groups focus on study or spiritual practice, others focus on service, and still others emphasize fellowship and common interests. But all groups provide a meaningful and fulfilling way to serve others, develop new friendships and deepen our faith together.



ONE Sunday 2018 was a sunny day filled with service, connection and accomplishment. LOPC had over 375 people of all ages participate in on campus and off-site projects benefitting 14 different agencies across Contra Costa County including LOPC mission partners

Some of the highlights this year included the deep cleaning of the dining hall at Loaves and Fishes in Martinez that serves over 200 individuals daily. The clientele includes the homeless, seniors on minimum incomes and those struggling with mental illness and addiction. In addition, LOPC members helped pack 9000 pounds of produce which the Food Bank disbursed on Monday morning. Sharon Zeppegno of the Food Bank reiterated that it could not operate without volunteers like those on ONE Sunday. Many families stayed on campus and sorted over 1250 pounds of rice and beans, almost 1000 diapers and 300 birthday bags for the Monument Crisis Center. The LOPC sewers led the effort to create pillowcases for Foster A Dream, an agency that provides support to foster children in Contra Costa County. LOPC's Youth Groups helped sort and package 71 boxes of baby clothes to be distributed to low income mothers in Contra Costa County.

ONE Sunday 2018 Highlights

Bay Area Rescue Mission – Created over 300 hundred toiletry kits.

Contra Costa Food Bank – Over 3700 lbs. of food were packed.

Contra Costa Interfaith Housing – Installed new overhang for communal bike rack, prepared raised beds with dirt and held a pizza and craft party for residents.

CALICO – Created 69 polar fleece blankets.

Creek Kids – Over 300 paintings were created.

Foster A Dream - 64 pillowcases sewn.

Habitat for Humanity – helped paint the exterior of two homes.

Las Trampas – Organized a supply cabinet, refreshed garden ready for plants, and helped with decorations for upcoming April fundraiser at the headquarters. Also installed kitchen cabinets and lighting at home for disabled adults.



Loaves and Fishes – Deep cleaned the central kitchen.

Loved Twice –Sorted and packed 71 boxes of baby clothes for low income mothers.

Monument Crisis Center – Built 35 shopping carts, packed countless bags of rice& beans, diapers and birthday bags.

Primera Iglesia – Planted a succulent garden, installed new cabinets and 2 benches and organized sewing supplies.

Shelter Inc. –Helped with facility maintenance and painting of two resident rooms. Also served a meal and provide activities and crafts for residents.

STAND – Deep cleaned kitchen, organized pantry, clothing closet and garage. Installed a gravel walkway for residents of shelter.

Though service is at the forefront of ONE Sunday there is much more that happens that day. Participants learn about the needs that exists in the greater community. They are educated about problems they may never encounter in their own lives ... hunger, homelessness, domestic abuse, etc. They meet individuals that are struggling with these issues and find a meaningful connection with them. Their encounter though short may impact their preconceived notions of these societal issues and inspire them to do more. The hope for ONE Sunday is always that participants not only serve but become inspired to do more and make a connection!

MAKE A CONNECTION!
SAVE THE DATE! ONE Sunday 2.24.2019

PRIMERA IGLESIA PRESBITERIANA HISPANA CHURCH

Over the past five years members of LOPC have participated in One Sunday at Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana Church (AKA Primera Pres.) located in the Fruitvale district of Oakland. During the year we meet and ask the leaders “what do they need, how can we help?” The response “can you teach us how to use an electric sewing machine?” And that is how the “The Sewing Club” started.

LOPC member Nancy Henderson, over the last four years has been teaching sewing skills. The “Machina” as the machines are called have proven to be a challenge. Modifying tension, loading bobbins, changing needles, following patterns skills that are being taught on some Sundays from 2:00-4:00. Four years, probably hundreds of broken needles and jammed bobbins later the ladies have a selection of fabric and not one but seven sewing machines. This in part from the generous donation of LOPC’s Presbyterian Women’s Club.

The sewing club was able to hold a “pop up boutique” at Primera Pres. The ladies proudly displayed and sold infinity scarves, pillowcase dresses, and the best seller the “LILY” head bands for babies.

A special thank you to Nancy for your exuberant energy, and dedication synonymous with your faith.



Community Life

New Members – February 2018

by Chris Baldwin, Director of Community Engagement

Raphaëlle Babin



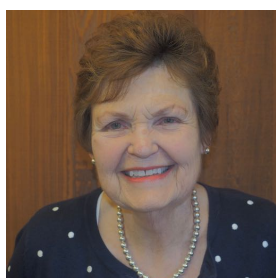
Raphaëlle is 20 years-old and a student at Diablo Valley College. Originally from Quebec, Canada, she moved with her family to California two years ago and absolutely loves it here. She enjoys traveling and discovering new parts of California. What

attracted her to LOPC was the community that has expressed unconditional love and had experienced peace at the first worship service she attended.

Andrew James (A.J.) Bassak

A.J. grew up in Lafayette and went to school in Alameda at Alameda Community Learning Center. He currently lives in Pleasant Hill, attends Diablo Valley College, and plans to transfer to study mechanical engineering. What attracted A.J. to LOPC was that he had attended over the years with his parents (Drew & Becky Bassak) and has felt warmly welcomed by the community. A.J. writes, “No matter who you are or your background, it seems to me LOPC will be accepting of you with open arms.” He really enjoys the music at the church and the sermons from the pastors.

Gail Brekke



Gail has lived in Contra Costa County since 1951 and is a retired educator from the Mt. Diablo School District where she has worked as a teacher, principal and coach. Her passion for education led her on teaching travels to Cali, Colombia. Gail enjoys

traveling, gardening, reading, visiting art museums, attending dramatic arts events, and sports. What brought her to LOPC was the friendly, welcoming staff and congregation. Gail has enjoyed the challenging worship services, connection to the local community through mission/outreach programs and the beautiful, inspiring location of the church.

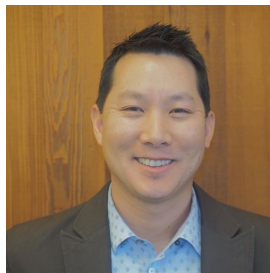
Chris Brock



Chris has been an active attendee at LOPC in the youth ministry and special needs ministry for a few years. He currently serves as an intern in the Youth Ministry program and leads the Young Life Capernaum Special Needs Ministry on

Monday evenings. Chris is a full-time student at St. Mary's College in Moraga and is pursuing ministry as a career. His interests include youth ministry, mission ministry, and sports. What has attracted him to LOPC was the youth programs and service opportunities.

Patrick & Patty Chen



Children:
Noella (Age 4), Adalyn (Age 2), & Kaia (Age 5-months)



The Chens moved to Orinda in 2015 and have three daughters – Noella, Adalyn, and Kaia. Patrick and Patty are both physicians at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland. Patty enjoys running, snowboarding and traveling and Patrick enjoys photography, sports, and history. What attracted them to LOPC was the Children's Ministry, teaching,

community activism, and a mission of inclusivity.

Amanda Chipman



Children:
Hudson (Age 9), Storm (Age 7), and Palmer (Age 5)

Amanda grew up in Austin, TX, and met her California husband while living in New York. The Chipmans have lived in the Bay Area for five years and all three of her children have either

Community Life

attended or currently attend the Seedlings Preschool. The community is what attracted Amanda to LOPC. Amanda writes, "LOPC has always made me feel welcome and comfortable to attend services. It has been a familiar place for my kids, too, since they all attended Seedlings."

Kennedy Cosgrove

Child: Harper (Age 10)



Kennedy is a native Californian who has been fortunate to live in some wonderful places - New Orleans, Alaska, and Seattle. He moved to Lafayette five years ago for work as a psychiatrist at Kaiser

Permanente in Oakland. Before entering into medicine, he was a sportswriter at the L.A. Times and continues to be a big sports fan. Most importantly, he shares that he is blessed to be a father to his wonderful 10 year-old daughter, Harper. What attracted Kennedy to LOPC was Harper's love of the Sunday school and Y.O.W. programs. It really told them that this was the right place for them.

Bridget Dankworth



Children: Addison (Age 10), Reese (Age 8), & Clementine (Age 5)

Bridget and her husband, Chris, moved to Lafayette 10 years ago right before they had three daughters. Before

she became a mom, she lived in San Francisco for 10 years where she was a School Counselor in the San Francisco Unified School District. About 12 years ago, she started her own business doing wardrobe consulting and styling, which has been another passion of hers. In her free time, she loves traveling with her husband and daughters and watching her girls play in their various sporting events. Bridget writes, "What attracted me to LOPC was the sense of community, desire to give back, and the weekly sermons that really resonate with me. I am excited to become a member of LOPC."

Lyle & Charlotte Deck



Lyle & Charlotte are both UC Berkeley grads and have lived in Orinda for 48 years. They enjoy playing golf, tennis, walking, hiking, horseback riding, swimming, and keeping up with their four grandchildren. Charlotte taught in the Orinda School District for 45 years as a Resource Specialist and Lyle was the General Sales Manager for the Spreckles Sugar Company. They enjoy traveling and have been to Europe and Asia. They originally attended LOPC

when Rev. Jim Little was the pastor and reconnected with church when Peter and Anne Whitelock became their neighbors. They were impressed with the staff, sermons, and music at worship.

Jean Fiske



Jean moved to Rossmoor in April 2017 to be closer to her son's family. She has three young grandsons. Along with her husband, John, they enjoy being active members of The Rossmoor Trails Club and are frequent hikers. Jean also enjoys gardening with

native California plants, listening to music, cooking, entertaining friends, and traveling. What attracted Jean to LOPC was the welcoming environment for all Christians seeking to deepen their faith and to be Christ's hands and feet in the community. Jean currently sings in the choral music program at LOPC.

Community Life

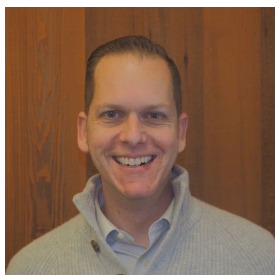
Judi Gavello



Judi grew up in Walnut Creek and recently moved back to the area. She is a middle school French teacher in Alamo and Moraga. On the side, she teaches dance and also works at a winery in Napa Valley. She has one son who

has recently returned from serving in the U.S. Air Force. Judi found herself at LOPC after hearing good things and reading on the church website that LOPC embraces people of different faiths and that's an important aspect for her. Upon visiting, people were friendly, welcoming, and she loved the choir. Judi said, "I just felt at home here. I knew it was right for me."

Eric Hunn



Children: Nikhil (Age 9) & Neel (Age 6-months)

Eric attended LOPC as a boy and sang in the choir. His mother led the Youth Programs for a time at the church. Over the last four years, Eric, his wife, Piya, and

their two sons, Nikhil and Neel have been attending LOPC intermittently after living back East for 20 years. The Hunns live in Lafayette and their eldest son attends Happy Valley Elementary School. Eric is V.P. of People for Powerbar and was Interim Head of Human Resources for Whole Foods until recently. Eric is the Chairman of the Contra Costa County Juvenile Justice Commission. He's an avid runner and a Scout Leader in his spare time. What attracted Eric to LOPC was the theology, robust programs, vibrant and thriving church community, and the historical connection.

Kristin Indorato



Kristin has grown up in the East Bay and is appreciative of the welcoming and friendly congregation. She looks forward to being involved!

Ben & Kelley Lazzareschi



Children: Hope (Age 3) & Reese (Age 9-months)

Ben and Kelley are native "Bay-Areans" from Orinda (Ben) and Santa Rosa (Kelley). They have been married for five and a half years and have two daughters. Hope attends the Seedlings Preschool. They enjoy being outside and spending time skiing in the winter and being on the lake in the summer. The strong sense of community involvement and family ministry opportunities attracted them to LOPC.



Philip & Renee McLemore



Children: Connor (Age 10) & Garrett (Age 7)

Renee and Philip have two boys, Connor and Garrett who attend Camino Pablo Elementary School. Renee is Vice President of Marketing and Sales at Claremont Insurance in Concord and Philip spends far too much time on the road as a Management Consulting Director for PWC. For fun, the McLemores live vicariously through their sons who play basketball, soccer, baseball, and swim competitively in the summer. Renee and Philip say, "GO RANCH!" What attracted them to

LOPC was the people. The people are warm, inviting, and welcoming. They also enjoy the inclusive nature of the church. They want their sons to grow up knowing the love and power of Jesus Christ, and how we can all use his teaching to make the world aligned to his design.



Alexander (Xander) & Meghan Mitman



Children: Clara (Age 6) & Hannah (Age 6)



Xander and Meghan moved to Lafayette from Oakland about three years ago and soon after started attending LOPC. Xander is a product manager and Meghan is a transportation planner in Walnut Creek. Their six-year-old daughters are in kindergarten at Burton Valley Elementary School and enjoy going to the Sunday school and Kids Rock programs. Meghan's parents, Mark and Patti, also attend regularly.

They appreciate the message and attitude about "belonging" as opposed to fitting in. They opportunity to serve the community while deepening their faith spurred them to become LOPC members.

Thomas & Vicki Roberts



Vicki is a native of Kansas City, MO, while Tom is from San Francisco. Vicki moved with her family to San Francisco at age 11 and married Tom in 1965. The Roberts have lived in the East Bay for 43 years of their wonderful 52 years together. Tom is a retired CPA and Vicki is a retired case manager for a foster finding agency. Together, the Roberts have two grown children and six grandchildren who all live in the East Bay. Vicki and Tom enjoy reading, RVing, and traveling both foreign and



domestic. At LOPC, they have found services closer to the traditional format which they prefer and have enjoyed the energy and devotion of the congregation and leaders. They enjoy the excellent message from the pastors and the membership classes helped clarify lingering questions they had about joining a church.

Family ministry presents

DISMANTLING RACISM, TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

THE ROLE OF PEOPLE OF FAITH

In our current social climate, we are constantly reminded of the divisions among people and even encouraged to view others as threats to our own wellbeing. In such a time as these, how can we recognize and advocate for the common humanity that connects all people to one another?

Join the Rev. Sandhya Jha (pastor, director of the Oakland Peace Center, author, community organizer and anti-racism trainer) to reflect on root causes of racism and the spiritual tools we can access to confront the systems that hurt some and benefit others. During our four hours together, we'll look at some terms that will help us develop shared language around racial justice, examine how our faith can strengthen our work to address divisions in our community, and discuss the possibilities for concrete action by people of faith. Lunch will be served.

Please RSVP to dave@lopc.org by April 9, 2018.

Rev. Sandhya Jha will also be preaching at LOPC on April 8, 2018.

SATURDAY APRIL 14, 2018
12:30 P.M. - 4:30 P.M., OAK ROOM

Community Life



“The Four Waves of Global Jihad” titles the talk which Glenn Robinson, Ph.D., will present at First Friday Forum, April 13 at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Please note this is the second Friday in April.

He says, This lecture examines the four distinct forms of global jihad by Muslim radicals that have been seen since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1970s launched the first wave. “The fourth and current wave, a ‘personal jihad,’ represents the dominant form of terrorism in the world today and has proven to be rather durable. I will not only look back on some of the major events of global jihad, but also on what lies ahead.”

Proficient in both written and spoken Arabic, Robinson has spent time in virtually every country in the Middle East and North Africa. He is the author, or co author, of three books on Palestinian politics and development and is currently writing two books on jihad information strategy (Stanford University Press) and on the comparative politics of the Middle East (CQ Press).

Raised in Lafayette and a graduate of Acalanes High School, Robinson is a political scientist with over 35 years experience studying and living in the Middle East. He has been on the faculty of the Naval Postgraduate School since 1991. He earned both his BA (1982 with highest honors) and Ph.D. (1992) from the University of California, Berkeley. He has been a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Jordan and a

2018 Speaker Series



April 13

Dr. Glenn Robinson
“The Four Waves of
Global Jihad”

1:00 p.m. Refreshments - All are invited

1:30 p.m. Speaker – Free

A very popular series of outstanding speakers on topics of current interest

Senior Political Scientist at the RAND Corporation and has studied at the American University in Cairo, Yarmouk University in Jordan and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

“The fourth and current wave, a ‘personal jihad,’ represents the dominant form of terrorism in the world today and has proven to be rather durable.”

A sought-after speaker, he is frequently requested to comment on Middle East affairs by values media including the PBS News Hour, National Public Radio and KCBS radio. He is the author of over 40 published journal articles and book chapters on Middle East political, development and security. He now lives in Pebble Beach with his wife, Elizabeth.

“Glenn has spoken twice before to large audiences at LOPC and is well know to many locals. His insightful knowledge of the Middle East makes him eminently qualified to speak on his chosen, and timely, topic,” says Nancy Holtzapple, of the First Friday Forum Team. “Come to enjoy refreshments and conversation at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall which precede the lecture.”

For further information call 925-283-8722.

Presbyterian Women's Birthday Luncheon - 5/16

Let Us Break Bread Together

Please join other women of the church on May 16 from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. for our annual potluck salad luncheon. You will enjoy the finest array of salads, have a chance to make new friends and greet old ones, and hear Ann Collins speak on “Songs of the Slaves”.

Ann Collins has been giving speeches and dramatic presentations in the Bay Area since the seventies. She was involved with Toastmasters and won their regional and district contests and placed second in the world-wide contest. With a Bachelor's Degree from Berea College and a Master's degree from the University of Iowa she taught Speech and Oral Interpretation at Queens College in Flushing, New York and several other colleges, including JFK in the Bay Area. For twenty-three years she worked with Taxpayer Service in Oakland and has given many speeches for work organizations.

Our annual birthday offering will be taken. This offering began in 1922 and the monies collected up to this year have funded nearly 100 major mission projects. This year the recipients will be Cottage Village, a tiny-home community for low income residents in Cottage Grove, Oregon, the Village of Grace Center for Physical and Spiritual Health in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and The Dwelling Place in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota.

Come, bring a friend, a salad to serve 4 to 6, and enjoy an afternoon of facts, food and friendship.

Donate BART Tickets

Is there a nickel, a dime or a quarter left on your BART ticket? Don't throw it away! Drop it in the BART ticket box in the Ministry Center. These will go to Cameron House, a neighborhood community center in Chinatown, S.F. They turn them in for cash to help carry out their programs.

How Do I Pray? – 4/5



- Would you like to learn new ways to open yourself up to God's presence?
- Would you like to experiment with new ways of praying?
- Do you want to become familiar with the vocabulary of prayer?
- Do you desire to make prayer a natural part of your life?

Join Jane Doty MacKenzie and Carl Grant for a 5-week prayer journey as together we practice non-threatening ways of growing in comfort with prayer, both silent and collective.

Dates: Five Thursday evenings April 5 – May 3

Time: 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: LOPC Chapel

Men's Breakfast

Ian Baird

Orinda Hiking Club

“Hiking the Bay and the World”

Come and learn about great hikes you can take in your own backyard or with the group around the world.

Bring friends & family | 7:00 a.m. | Davies Room
\$5 donation at the door for breakfast
RSVP by noon 4/24 to janet@LOPC.org or x223

Community Life

Living the Long View

by Dara Youngdale, Foundation Trustee



Dara Youngdale

I recently read that giving is contagious. A study found that, “acts of altruism can spread by three degrees – from person to person to person.” That means one generous act from any of us can “influence dozens or even hundreds of people.” What a wonderful way to imagine the power of leveraging acts of altruism at LOPC -- our time, talents and treasure in relationship with each other.

Our church and its Foundation compose a community of givers, present and past. Together, we support worship and ministry, our staff, one another and a myriad of programs in partnerships locally and globally. We do this through annual giving, special gifts and legacy giving.

I have experienced LOPC’s generosity in many ways over the past decade. In 2010, when our daughter was in the Youth Group, I joined the church community in volunteering hours, donating supplies and raising funds to send over 60 students on the mission trip to the Mother of Peace Orphanage in Zimbabwe. What a life changing experience for our daughter, Grace, and so many of our youth. I have also had the professional pleasure of taking part in the renovation and reconstruction of our campus facilities, spending hundreds of hours with volunteers to plan projects and then spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on construction projects raised through capital campaigns. Last summer, I was heartened by the “All Together Campaign”, an outpouring of financial support to cover immediate needs for our beloved staff. And as a Foundation Trustee, I am now seeing a steady stream of new commitments and legacy gifts from “Friends” to the Foundation.

Legacy giving, by definition, is all about taking the long view. In his recent *Focus* article, LOPCF President Dick James shared the Foundation’s strategies on growing the Foundation’s assets by setting goals and sticking to them, no matter the market volatility. Through this approach -- coupled with prudent, long-term investing, careful harvesting of assets, plus the influx of gifts -- the Foundation has grown to approximately \$10 million in assets over the last two decades. Did you know that the Foundation is now among the largest financial contributors to LOPC annually -- and that it is poised to help support LOPC in perpetuity?

So what about each of us? Are we taking the long view? And more importantly, are we living the long view? Are we living lives and giving in ways that are consistent with our values, individually and as a church community. I see that being practiced by members of my LOPC Small Group, fellow worshipers and so many others engaged in the vision that is LOPC. This reminds me of another article in which the author wrote, “Generous living is about approaching each day with an open heart, and open mind and an open hand.” The author asks, “What can you do today to live more generously? What generous living choices can you make today that will make a difference in the future?”

As Trustees, we are taking the long view and invite you to do the same. Consider joining with us and so many others to live the long view and become a member of the LOPC Friends of the Foundation community. To do so, contact me or any of the other Trustees: Dick James, president; Kristi Haigh, vice president; Phil Placier, treasurer; Staci Johnston; Jim Beckemeyer; or Jerry Ducey.

Chicks with Sticks’ Annual “Baby Shower” – 5/20

The Chicks with Sticks team, LOPC’s knitters and crocheters, request donations of NEW and GENTLY USED baby clothes (preemie / newborn to 18 months) and stuffed animals, for families having financially difficult times in our community. Questions? Contact Dianne Schneider at dianneschneider@hotmail.com.

Suggested items needed: onesies, baby gowns, sleep sacks, one and two-piece outfits, socks, shoes, sweaters, hats, booties, blankets of various types, teething rings, rattles, hoodies, books, hooded bath towels, facecloths, burp cloths, bibs, changing pads, new stuffed animals. (Please, no holes, stains or missing buttons.)

Let’s help new arrivals get a joyful start. Donations will be collected on the Plaza, Sunday, May 20, 9:00 a.m.-12 noon and in the white bassinet at the Ministry Center front desk in May.

Community Life

We Believe (?!?)

Sundays, 10:15 a.m.



In an ever-changing world and in an area where much of what religion has to offer is misunderstood or sensed as out-of-date, it can be difficult to navigate our own belief. Contrary to what some might believe, faith is not the absence of doubt! Christian faith isn't cut and dry, and elements of faith look different for every person.

Bring your questions as we continue our exploration of various topics and navigate our way through faith and doubt with fellowship! Each session will be led by a different pastor.

- 4/22 Demystifying the Book of Revelation. Jaime Polson and Professor Zach Flanagin. Davies Room.
- 5/06 Why Did Jesus Have to Die? Peter Whitelock. MC Oak Room.

Questions? Email ashlee@LOPC.org.

New Members Class – May 4 – 6



The LOPC Membership Class is an opportunity to meet the pastoral staff, have your questions answered, learn about the programs and ministries of the church, and make new friends. The class also serves to clarify what LOPC believes God has called this church to be so visitors can make an informed decision about formalizing their commitment to this faith community.

The next LOPC Membership Class meets May 4-6. Childcare is available by reservation. Questions? Contact chris@LOPC.org. Register online at www.lopc.org/welcome/join-lopc/

Science and Religion – 4/16

7:15 p.m. in the Oak Room



Astronomers and cosmologists have reached an understanding that the universe is very large, so big that we will never have tools to see it all, and it is

expanding at an ever increasing rate. The expanding part should be no surprise, after all we've known about the expansion since the late 1920's. However, the increasing-rate of the expansion only became apparent late in the 1990's and is largely dependent on our accepting that our universe is mostly filled with stuff we can't see or measure directly with any of the wonderful instruments that we have discussed in previous meetings.

A contemporary view of the universe requires that we accept a universe filled with invisible dark matter and dark energy to the point where all the normal matter, that we do see, represents only about five percent of the matter/energy total for the universe. Chuck Smith, science and religion enthusiast, hopes to give you a sense of why we accept the presence of these mysterious phenomena and how we think they influence the continuing evolution of our universe.

Including material originally written by Neil deGrasse Tyson as essays several years ago and more recently showing up as chapters in his best seller, "Astrophysics for People in a Hurry", Chuck Smith will present a timely and interesting program on Monday, April 16th at 7:15pm in the Oak Room. All are welcome.

Join us on May 5 at 5:00 p.m.!

New!
Saturday Evening Worship
A casual, contemporary service for all ages.

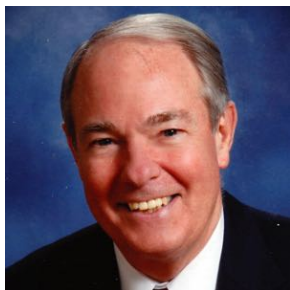
Please join us in the LOPC Sanctuary for a new worship opportunity. All ages are welcome in this casual, contemporary service. Children are always welcome in the Sanctuary and will have the option to leave mid-service to participate in a special children's message in the Chapel. They will rejoin worship in the Sanctuary after the sermon. Childcare will be available in the CLC for children 4 years old and younger.

Spiritual Formation

Spiritual Formation emphasizes our openness and receptivity to God. The heart of Spiritual Formation is about deepening your connection to God. Spiritual Formation can be described in different ways because we experience our connection to God differently. Our diverse offerings range from the contemplative to the active, from the traditional to the current, and the spirituality discovered in nature.

Journey of Faith

by Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC Member



Terry Clark's faith journey began as a seven-year-old alter boy in a large Catholic Church in suburban Cleveland. "During elementary school and throughout my time in Jesuit high school and college, faith and service (and sports) grew into integral constants of my

life," he says. "Then, as I worked my way through college and law school, service and servant leadership came to mean involvement in issues of fairness and justice. That concept crystallized as I completed my education, entered the practice of law, and married Hilde."

In Cleveland, during the '70s, '80s and '90s, Terry worked with people of different faiths and cultures, addressing complex problems related to racial, ethnic and other forms of discrimination. "This work brought me great joy as I felt I was following the precepts in Micah 6:8 which asks, 'what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'"

As his journey continued, it became clear to him that "God does not call the qualified, but qualifies the called." "Whatever skills I have come by the grace of God, who expects me to use them as His hands and feet in the world, with humility and gratitude. To transfer God's love and goodness in service to others has evolved as my purpose in life. This purpose has been buttressed by Philippians 4:13: 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'

Relocating to Los Angeles in the '90s, Terry joined La Cañada Presbyterian Church and continued his interfaith work. In 2009, Terry retired, moved to the East Bay and joined LOPC. "Of great importance to me was the assignment to develop my personal Vision and Mission Statements," Terry says. "Mine affirmed that all aspects of my life are guided and nurtured by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and must embrace Christ's teachings on 'justice,

fairness, understanding, reconciliation, mercy, forgiveness and helping those in need,' particularly in interfaith relationships, to make a difference in response to God's call.' I keep this statement above my desk where I see it every day."

A continuing focus on interfaith opportunities led him to the San Ramon Valley Islamic Center (SRVIC) and Temple Isaiah (TI). "I wanted to develop interfaith programs with others of the Abrahamic faith. With the support of (LOPC pastors) Peter Whitelock and Judy Durff that became my focus and ministry."

That relationship inspired the formation of the East Bay Interfaith partnership of *Neighbor to Neighbor* (N2N) of which it's been "his privilege" (Terry's words) to serve as coordinator of N2N and also the Interfaith Team at LOPC.

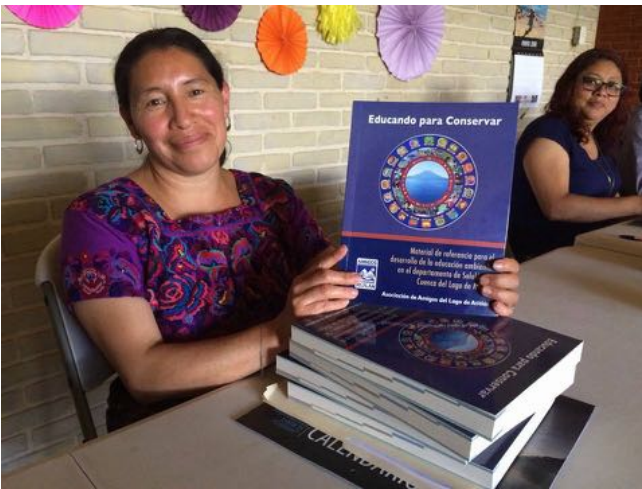
Additionally, Terry's commitment to this calling has led him to serve on the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County, which has 108 congregations, and, for almost five years, as president. He explains, "This work has deepened my own faith through the process of relating what it meant to be a Christian with people of many other faiths, who likewise, are engaging with me in sharing their most cherished and meaningful beliefs and values for everyday life."

While Terry has played many leadership roles, including Clerk of Session, and chair of the Race Relations Task Forces, he continues to put Interfaith Work first, with emphasis on the qualities he embraced so many years ago, fairness and justice.

Numerous scriptural passages resonate with Terry but the one that most comes to mind is Philippians 2:3-8. 'Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourself....(I) look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus (who, through God)...humbled himself and became obedient to the point to death, even death on a cross.'

A Re-Introduction to one of LOPC's International Mission Partners: The Association Amigos del Lago de Atitlán

By Emilie Fontaine, of AALA



LOPC has been supporting the Association's environmental education programs since 2010. The organization Amigos del Lago de Atitlán is proud to share with LOPC members the work that we are doing in the Lake Atitlán basin in the Department of Sololá, in Guatemala.

The Association Amigos del Lago de Atitlán (AALA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of its communities in rural Guatemala. Since the Association took its first steps more than 10 years ago, it has grown rapidly, largely because of LOPC's partnership. Now we are a family of 30 members: employees, neighbors, volunteers, engineers, and scientists working in different areas such as sanitation and cleanup of the lake, reforestation, scientific research, and environmental education. This team includes nine young and passionate environmental educators from the Lake Atitlán basin. They speak Spanish and their Mayan languages – T'zutujil, Kaqchikel or K'iché' – so they can easily connect with children and school teaching staff.

Lake Atitlán is arguably the most important and valuable water resource in Guatemala, and has become highly contaminated due to human activities, from population growth without proper sanitation or waste management, to farming practices, to

deforestation. The Lake Atitlán basin is home to 300,000 people who depend on their waters to survive. The main objective of the environmental education program is to preserve the lake, the most important source of water for the local population. We have developed a very important and unique environmental education program designed specifically for the needs and context of Lake Atitlán. We seek to sensitize, promote, and encourage participation in caring for our natural resources. The educational textbook and workbook Educating to Conserve encompasses information, activities, and experiments aimed at teaching sustainable ecological practices and habits. AALA has developed three volumes of this material, appropriate for elementary school, middle school, and high school, and multiple editions over time have kept the manual and exercise booklets updated with current information. We created the material in collaboration with Guatemala's Ministries of Education and Agriculture and Natural Resources, academic institutions, and local and international non-profits. With great effort, we have succeeded in making this project financially sustainable, without receiving any funding from governmental organizations.

Through the years, we have distributed more than 12,000 copies of Educating to Conserve in 19 municipalities of the Sololá region. Distribution of these texts goes hand-in-hand with training and strengthening the capacities of the public school teachers and directors through technical and pedagogical means, and implementation of environmental knowledge. We are currently working in 110 public schools. Our next challenge is to achieve weekly monitoring and follow-up of this material in all the schools. Along with classroom work, the program





involves the students in their community, engaging them in school garden creation and tending, composting and recycling projects, school and community clean-up campaigns, and reforestation field trips. More than 3,000 teachers, 680 school directors, and 95,000 students have taken part in AALA's environmental education program.

Now in its second year, the Association also created and promoted the "Green School of Lake Atitlán" competition, in 110 schools. The objective is to ensure that families and communities improve their quality of life, focusing on personal, family, school, and community hygiene, as well as encouraging new habits and changes for the benefit of the environment, through the participation and commitment of the school directors, teachers, students, families, and the community in general.

We believe that we can improve every child's life by providing relevant and high quality education. Educate today and you educate the future! AALA sincerely thanks LOPC for their support in doing this important work!

Website: (English) www.amigosatitlan.org/en
(Español) www.amigosatitlan.org/es
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AmigoAtitlan
Instagram: www.instagram.com/amigoslagoatitlan

If you are interested in finding out more about or getting involved with LOPC's partnership with AALA, please contact Megan Robbins at meganrobbins@yahoo.com.

Healing Hearts Continues to Help the Children of the Congo

In 2016 the congregation of LOPC donated funds to train 30 facilitators to implement a curriculum to help children traumatized by the extensive violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. This program, Healing Hearts, is a Bible-based curriculum specifically designed for children who have experienced unimaginable violence in their families and communities.

The program has been very successful as it has reached over a 1000 children. The facilitators went through a second round of training in 2017 so they can train others to help sustain the program.

Below are some Healing Hearts stories:



Deborah Edrungi "I am 10 years old. I thank the Lord for this trauma-healing program. People always treated me as a less intelligent child. But since we started this trauma healing program, I am doing well in school. I have taken the decision to count from now on the divine help in any problem that may happen in my life."



Moise Kasereka "I am 12 years old. After the death of my father, I was always having problems because I did not want to play with the other children. If one of my peers provoked me, I wanted to fight until death with him. I thank the Lord because since I started to follow this trauma-healing program, now I am feeling well. I can play with others, I can feel joy and have become attentive in class."



Colomb Mwengezya (facilitator) is a nurse. Following the advanced training in 2017, he worked with eight others to organize a trauma-healing camp for 14 deaf/mute children. Colomb says he organized the event using the Healing Hearts curriculum to give hope and self esteem to these children. Colomb and his team worked with a sign language translator. The children were able to follow all 10 lessons, and they expressed their appreciation.

Family at LOPC

At LOPC, everyone is welcome and celebrated for the love and care they put into their families. Our definition of what it means to be a family is broad and inclusive. We invite you to be a part of something bigger, a church that strives to show all of us God's love and provides programs that teach families how to walk with Christ.

Preparing for Kindergarten

by Bridgette Thomas, Seedlings Communication Board Member



Seedlings Preschool hosted its 3rd annual Kindergarten Readiness Discussion Panel, in February. There was a fantastic line-up of local kindergarten teachers and administrators from: Burton Valley Elementary (Lafayette), Glorietta

Elementary (Orinda), Happy Valley Elementary (Lafayette), Rheem Elementary (Moraga), and St. Perpetua (Lafayette). This event was very well attended with nearly 40 Seedlings families turning out to ask questions and learn more about what they can expect when their child enters kindergarten.

Parents' nervous feelings were calmed by teachers' unanimous message that the best way to prepare over the summer is to simply play with your child and read to your child!

Everyone is hoping to make the transition into kindergarten as smooth as possible! Here are just a few play-based ways Seedlings helps to prepare students in a variety of developmental areas:

- *Social/Emotional Development*
- *Physical Development*
- *Cognitive Development*
- *Creative Arts*
- *Listening Skills*
- *Pretend Play*
- *Physical and Language Development*

1. Social/Emotional Development

Practice taking turns.



2. Physical Development

Practice gross motor skills with large scale building projects.



3. Cognitive Development

Focus on one activity independently (or with a friend) for up to ten minutes.



4. Creative Arts

Present the option to paint on different mediums. Ask him to draw the things he sees around him.



5. Listening Skills

Verbally give children specific one-step and two-step directions and give support as they follow through.



6. Pretend Play

Always encourage dressing up, and occasionally join your child in her fantasy world!



7. Physical & Language Development

Practice fine motor skills by letting your child use child-safe scissors to cut out a variety of shapes, including letters! Use creative ways to teach your child the letters of the alphabet, especially the letters in his or her name.



8. Cognitive Development

Help your child explore and enjoy a variety of books.



Family at LOPC

BTW Q&A – 4/22

On April 22nd pastors Jaime Polson and Gerald Chinen will be at BTW youth group for our annual question and answer time! It is a wonderful opportunity for the youth to ask any faith or life related question they like. Questions will also be collected on the weeks leading up to that date at BTW.



Vacation Bible Camp: Shipwrecked



At Vacation Bible Camp, we ground kids in the rock-solid foundation of God's love through songs, stories, games, experiments, and more. Camp is where kids experience the love of Jesus that will take them through life's dark times while sharing that love with others in a safe and fun environment. Kids 4 years old (by Sept 1, 2018) to completed 4th Graders (June 2018). Monday – Thursday 1-4 PM and Friday 2-5 PM. April 1 – May 1, \$60 per child; after May 1, \$75 per child. Registration opens online at LOPC.org on April 1st.



Confirmation Sunday – 4/15

Please come join the youth as they are confirmed on April 15th at both morning services! They have been taking classes from LOPC staff and guest leaders on subjects such as: Church and Fellowship; Prayer; Presbyterian Sacraments of Baptism & Communion; The Bible; Worship; Mission; The Problem of Evil; Trinity & Doctrine of God; Resurrection; Sin & Forgiveness; Interfaith & Witness; Reformation & Presbyterianism. The services will be led by Youth and Children's Ministries!

familyministry presents

RAISING EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY TEENS

Sunday, April 15th and 22nd from 6:30-8:30 p.m. or Wednesday, April 18th and 25th from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Please join us for an interactive presentation and discussion with Graham Wiseman, an LOPC member and presenter for Teen Esteem about raising emotionally healthy kids. The Sunday evening presentations are oriented more to parents of high school students, while the Wednesday evening presentations are oriented more to parents of 5th - 8th grade youth. All are welcome at either series.

The series will include research based information on how to raise emotionally healthy kids, what warning signs to look for indicating some problems, and some sources of support if you are seeing those signs. Youth attending BTW on April 15, or YOW on April 18, will hear from presenters from Teen Esteem and take part in thought-provoking activities. Questions? Contact Dave@LOPC.org

LOPC Staff Transitions Ahead

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...”

In the natural course of things, change seems to be the one constant. As the author of Ecclesiastes reminds us in the above verse, though, there is a timeliness to everything. In that spirit we have been pondering the retirement of our beloved Church Administrator, Chuck Fry, in October of this year. More information will be forthcoming, but words cannot express the love, dedication and commitment he has poured into the task of keeping us organized, efficient and coordinated in our ministry to the world!

Over the past several months the Personnel Team has reviewed several staffing and transition options in consideration of the retirement of Chuck Fry, Director of Operations. It really was a season of discernment in identifying the multiple ways that Chuck provided leadership to our ministry, and evaluating the best staffing plan to carry us forward.

After extensive discussion and review, the Personnel Team, with Session’s concurrence, has decided that rather than hire someone to fill Chuck’s position, we will restructure existing positions to allow for some internal promotion. It was evident early on to your leadership team that his position had morphed and changed over the years, and the needs of the church moving forward have shifted. We realized, as well, that we had gifts and skills on our existing staff that could be better maximized in service to the church through modest restructuring.

Effective May 1, 2018

JAMIE POLSON, who has been serving as our part-time Pastor for Family Ministries, will be promoted to the full-time position of **Family and Executive Ministry Leadership**. Jamie will continue to develop wonderful ministry for families in our community, and she will also be working closely now with Peter in ministry planning, budgeting and executive level leadership. Not only has Jaime displayed wonderful gifts in this regard during her tenure at LOPC, but she has extensive non-profit leadership experience prior to joining our team.

ELIZABETH BALL will be promoted to **Administrative Manager**. In addition to continuing her support of Peter, Session, Stewardship, and CNC, she will take on additional personnel management, which is a perfect fit for her background in Human Resources.

Elizabeth will also oversee communications, which is a critically important area of concern for our growing church.

DAVE ENGLEBREKTSON, who has been serving as an administrative assistant for operations and Family Ministry will be promoted to **Campus Maintenance & Activities Manager**. He will now focus all of his time to oversee facilities, campus maintenance, scheduling and activities. Those of you who have worked with Dave know him to be incredibly thoughtful, conscientious and committed to the healthy operation of our campus, which is in near constant use by our church and community.

We are confident that this restructuring will provide the staffing support needed to keep the church running smoothly and efficiently. We will miss Chuck, surely, and commend him to this new path of enjoying a well-earned retirement. Following the restructuring implementation on May 1, Chuck will continue on the staff for a time, working on special projects and providing transitional support, until his formal retirement in October. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact either Paul Koenig, Personnel Chair, or Peter Whitelock, Head of Staff.

Nominations for 2019 Church Officers needed by May 6, 2018

One of the cornerstones of our Presbyterian heritage is election by the congregation of church officers to provide leadership for the church, as well as loving support for those in the church community.

We are now in the process of selecting new officers and leaders for LOPC for terms beginning January 1, 2019. It is a great privilege and responsibility to nominate members who will serve LOPC as elected lay leaders. It is also necessary for us to participate in the essential process that will influence our church in the near future.

Nomination forms will be available until May 6 in the Ministry Center, the Sanctuary pew racks or send an e-mail nomination to cnc@LOPC.org. We need your nominations, so please fill out and submit at least one nomination form. Any questions? Contact a CNC member: Michael Kim (Chair), Jody Black (Clerk of Session), Jeff Patton, Ann Loar, Randi Long, Katie Owensby, Linda Kinrade (Deacon Representative), Peter Whitelock and Gerald Chinen.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration. We are looking forward to hearing from each of you.



LOPC
LAFAYETTE-ORINDA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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APRIL 2018

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Peter Whitelock - Pastor / Head of Staff
Gerald Chinen - Pastor, Congregational Care
Lauren Gully - Pastor, Mission &
Spiritual Formation
Jaime Polson - Pastor, Family Ministry

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Brett Strader, Director
Stewart Sarch, Organist

TREASURER

Char Casella

MINISTRY DIRECTORS

Chris Baldwin, Community Engagement
Keris Dahlkamp & Allison Kunz, Youth
Chuck Fry, Operations
Coleen Moulton, Seedlings Preschool
Ryan Timpte, Children

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Jennifer Shaul, Digital & Print Admin
Chuck Fry / Dick James / Paul Cohune

Thank you to all who contribute to each issue, and to proofreaders Bev Fellows and Janet Jourgensen.

Monthly FOCUS Newsletter Deadline:

APRIL 1 for the MAY issue.
Email items to communications@LOPC.org.

Weekly CONNECTIONS Deadline:

Monday by 5:00 p.m.
Email communications@LOPC.org.

So, What?
Lessons on receiving the fullness
of life that resurrection promises.
Please join us for this sermon series beginning April 8.

4/8 A Connected Life	4/29 A Joy Producing Life
4/15 An Empowered Life	5/6 A Spirit Filled Life
4/22 A Centered Life	5/13 A Witnessing Life

Sunday Worship Services

9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.

Invite Friends & Family

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