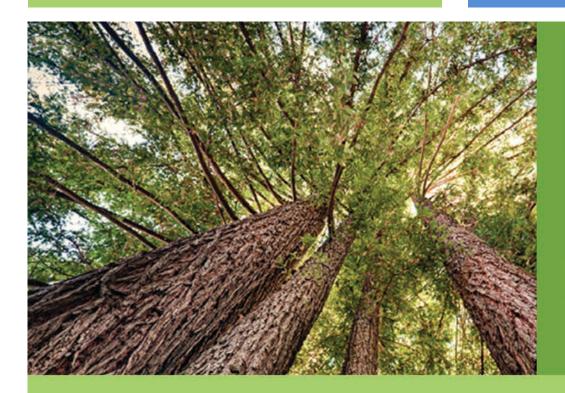
FOCUS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ALL CHURCH RETREAT: DEADLINE TO REGISTER 9/29/17





SPEAKER: REV. DR. CHARLENE HAN POWELL

MOUNT HERMON ALL-CHURCH RETREAT October 6-8, 2017

A STORIED PEOPLE



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Here We Go!

by Peter Whitelock, Pastor - Head of Staff



"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

Jeremiah 29:11

This encouraging Scripture often comes to mind when I'm going over the plans we make each year regarding the ministry of LOPC. The staff and leadership of our congregation are incredibly devoted to the task of using resources wisely in expanding the ministry footprint of our church. We serve, always looking for ways to serve better and more effectively.

As we head into the new year, new teams are deploying to grow our mission involvement, develop an innovative worship offering, and produce videos for children helping them navigate their world faithfully. Existing teams are producing new small groups, fellowship opportunities, resources for families, anti-bias training, multigenerational interfaith groups, prayer ministry, and resources on aging well. Virtually all our teams are making improvements in volunteer training, spiritual formation and using digital resources to communicate more effectively. Whew! There's a lot of good planning going on at LOPC!

Still, in the midst of it all, a gentle reminder from Jeremiah that our confidence is not so much in the plans we make, but rather in the plans God has for us. We first seek to discern what God is up to in our community and world, and then make our own plans to be part of how God is already at work. Our future is, indeed, hopeful, but only because God is committed to us in service to others.

Grace and peace,

Peter Whitelock



Peter Whitelock, Pastor / Head of Staff I Gerald Chinen, Pastor, Care I Lauren Gully, Pastor, Mission & Formation I Jaime Polson, Pastor, Families



MOUNT HERMON ALL-CHURCH RETREAT OCTOBER 6-8, 2017

Located in the beautiful Santa Cruz mountains, surrounded by stunning redwood forests and meandering creeks, it is the ideal retreat location. As early as October 1954, the LOPC All-Church Retreat has been held at Mount Hermon. Since that beginning, the first weekend in October has remained a vibrant LOPC tradition. Mount Hermon is an opportunity for God's family to spend time together. An opportunity to laugh, relax and to play together. It is also an opportunity to learn and be inspired. There will be dedicated programs for preschoolers, children and youth, a barbecue, family-style meals, outdoor worship and outdoor activities for all ages. Accommodations are filling quickly. Questions? Email dave@LOPC.org.

Last day to register: 9/29/17



Register TODAY!

Register online at LOPC.org

A STORIED PEOPLE

From Abraham and Esther to Peter and Mary, there is no doubt that Christians have a rich and complicated narrative. Some of our stories are hard to tell while others offer life and hope. Yet we live in a world that encourages us to filter our stories and our identity to the point of perfection. How do we, as people of faith, reconcile our storied pasts? More importantly, how do we tell our stories in a way that honors what God has done and also speaks to what God is doing? Join Executive Pastor of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York City, the Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell as she leads us in a weekend of story-telling and story-finding.

SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell



The Rev. Dr. Charlene Han Powell is an East Bay native (and devoted Oakland A's fan). Currently serving as the Executive Pastor at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, Charlene is passionate about what lies ahead for the church in the 21st century and being responsive to what the Spirit is calling us to change and retain. The proud daughter of immigrants, she is committed to the unique cultural interpretations of faith and theology. Charlene and her husband Jordan (both graduates of Monte Vista High School) have two daughters, Amelie and Noa. They live on the Upper West Side where they make sure they always keep a good supply of Legos, Play-Doh, wine, and pizza.

Congo Mission Network Annual Conference

September 22 & 23, 2017



The Congo - A LOPC Mission Partner Visits September 22-23

LOPC is the host this year's annual Congo Mission Network (CMN)

Conference for the first time on the West Coast. The CMN is a group that supports the invaluable work of the Presbyterian Church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The CMN is comprised of churches and individuals that support Presbyterian educational and medical work in the Congo. It relies on information from mission co-workers and PC(USA) staff that live in the region. LOPC's involvement stems from its support of the *Healing Hearts*, a trauma healing program and *Build Congo Schools* as well as advocacy.

The theme of the conference is "Moving Mountains in the Congo Through Reconciliation." On Friday, the 22nd, two keynote Congolese speakers will address what is going on in the DRC and why reconciliation is so important. On the 23rd, mission co-workers will speak about their work in the DRC. Late Saturday afternoon there will be a worship service with Congolese music. All are welcome at the conference. You can come for all or part of the conference.

There is no charge to attend except a nominal cost for any meals. Please set aside time to come learn more about a ministry that is an integral part of LOPC's mission effort.

If you have any questions, contact Herb Long (herblong7@gmail.com) or Roberta Spalding (Rlspalding@earthlink.net)



Agenda Highlights

Moving Mountains in the Congo through Reconciliation

FRIDAY, 9/22

8:00-9:00 a.m. Registration & Continental Breakfast

8:30-8:55 a.m. **Congo 101**

Basics about Congo and its Presbyterian Churches – Jimmy Shafe & Anne Crane

9:00-9:10 a.m. Welcome

9:10 -9:20 a.m. **Devotion**

9:20-9:35 a.m. Conference Overview

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

9:35-10:30 AM Keynote Address/Q&A

Dr. Pakisa Tshimika, Ph.D. Congo: Current Conditions in the DRC

10:45-11:45 a.m. Keynote Speaker/Q&A

Dr. Pakisa Tshimika, Ph.D. Historical Perspectives: Strategies for Conflict Transformation & Reconciliation

11:45-12:45 p.m. Lunch

12:45-1:45 p.m. Keynote Speaker/Q&A

Cultural Differences in Conflict Resolution

6:00 p.m. **Dinner**

SATURDAY, 9/23

8:30 a.m. Registration & Continental Breakfast

9:20-9:50 a.m. Mission in the Midst of Conflict

Debbie Braaksma

9:50-10:20 a.m. Congo Update by Christi Boyd

10:35-11:05 a.m. Congo Update by Jeff Boyd

11:05 -11:35 a.m. **Dr. Inge Stheshley**, Ph.D.

Clean Cookstoves; Technology That Reduces Both Economic & Environmental

Pressures

11:35 -12:00 p.m. Dr. Larry Sthreshley, Ph.D.

Responding to Humanitarian Crises

12:00 p.m. **LUNCH**

1:00-2:00 p.m. Roundtable / Reconciliation Discussion

5:30-6:15 p.m. Worship Service

6:30 p.m. **Dinner**

Homecoming Fall Kickoff

Join us for Worship, Fun, Fellowship and Lunch at 12:00 p.m. on the Fellowship Plaza.

Please bring a dish to share!





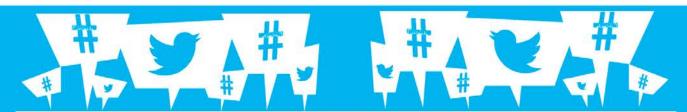
Last names A—M
Bring a side dish, fruit or salad

Last names N—Z
Bring a dessert

FREE TICKET REQUIRED

Please sign-up on the Patio beginning Aug 20th or during the Week in the Ministry Center.

LOPC WILL PROVIDE HOT DOGS, ICE TEA AND LEMONADE.



#TweetableJesus

Jesus gives us words to live by. In this sermon series, we will take a deeper look into inspirational words of Jesus that he gives to us in 140 characters or less.

Sunday Worship Hours: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

9/10/17 - #TheBestPresentEver

So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.

Today's trouble is enough for today. (Matthew 6:34)

9/17/17 - #IntheCompanyofSinners

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners. (Mark 2:17)

9/24/17 - #SomethingWorthSharing

Follow me, and I will make you fish for people. (Matthew 4:19)

10/1/17 - #OneFoundationChurch

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:11)

10/8/17 - #CaughtintheAct

Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her. (John 8:7)

10/15/17 - #BreakingtheCycleforGood

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. (Luke 6:27–28)

10/22/17 - #ThisChangesEverything

Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. (Luke 11:9)

10/29/17 - #ThePerilsofProsperity

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God. (Matthew 19:24)

11/5/17 - #ProofPositive

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:35)

11/12/17 - #PeaceonEarth?

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. (Matthew 10:34)

11/19/17 - #WhenWeaknessMeansStrength

My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

11/26/17 - #NoMoreFear

Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever. (Revelation 1:17-18)

Monument Crisis Center



Every year the Monument Crisis Center distributes over 1,000 backpacks to low-income children K-12 throughout Contra Costa County. LOPC has made it an annual tradition of collecting backpacks for MCC. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation we were able to deliver 95 backpacks this year for both middle and high school students. These backpacks guarantee that the recipients will begin the school year with the tools they will need to succeed. In addition to the collection, a group of young volunteers led by Pastor Lauren Gully helped stuff backpacks at the Monument Crisis Center. Not only did this act as an opportunity to serve for those that participated but a time of reflection. At the completion of their work volunteers were asked to reflect on the service they accomplished by answering questions like "If Jesus were to encounter one of the children who needs a back-pack and their family, what do you think he would do? What do you think he would say?" The addition of spiritual formation to the service opportunity deepened the experience and opened the door to further dialogue.

New Members Class - 10/20 - 10/22



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. Ask questions and find out more about LOPC. All are welcome! The next LOPC Membership Class takes place the weekend of October 20-22. Childcare available by reservation. Questions? Contact chris@LOPC.org.

A Perfect Example - 9/17

September marks the 14th year that LOPC has sponsored a classroom at the Atfaluna School for Deaf Children (ASDC) in Gaza City. Established in 1992, it was the first school focused on academic services for deaf children, adults and their families.

Unfortunately, the harsh economic situation and political turmoil in Gaza has negatively impacted the financial health of the school. In response, ASDC launched an international crowd funding appeal this summer in which LOPC was held up as "A Perfect Example". The campaign material stated "In the year 2003 and till this day the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC) has so generously supported one of the Atfaluna Classrooms in an annual basis. Their support has maintained the needs of the classroom and has provided essential school uniforms, transportation assistance, hearing aids, hearing aid batteries, medical assistance to the students just to name a few of the many needs. Fourteen years later, the "LOPC Class" as it has become known to everyone, is still helping deaf children receive a proper education. What we like to boast is that their continuing sponsorship of this classroom has had remarkable benefits for the students of whom some have already graduated from the class and have begun to work in the community."

Fundraising efforts for the LOPC Classroom kickoff **September 17**, with a video presentation at Sunday services. Our goal is to raise \$25,000. There will also be additional information about the students and school on the plaza for the following two weeks.

Questions? Please contact Melinda Darbee at (925)299-1663 or Robin Freeberg at robin@LOPC.org.



Anniversaries at Seedlings

by Molly Maduck, Seedlings Communications Board Member



You wrestle for 10 minutes with your 3-year-old to get his jacket on, yet his Seedlings teacher has 16 preschoolers (including yours) dressed for the playground in less than three. What's the secret? Seedling teachers have

many, many years of experience with your child's age group. Keep this in mind as you determine what systems work, and what don't, with your curious preschooler.

We wish to congratulate our incredible teachers and leadership team on their 200+ years of collective experience at Seedlings Preschool. We cannot thank them enough for their angel-like work, with our little ones!

1-2 years: Miss Kellie, Miss Kim & Miss Traci.
3-4 years: Miss Dawn, Miss Maddy, Mr. Max,

Miss Noelle & Miss Paige.

• 5-7 years: Miss Carrie, Miss Cheryl, Miss

Robyn, Miss Christine &

Miss Lasondra.

• 10-12 years: Miss Jen, Miss Kathy & Miss Mari.

17 years: Miss Amy.

• 24-26 years: Miss Bobbi, Miss Coleen & Miss Lisa.

Best Wishes

This year, two of our beloved Seedlings teachers, Miss Jan and Miss Rachelle, are beginning new journeys. While we will miss them beyond words, we are so happy for them, and wish them the best of luck in their adventures.

Jan Pinkham

After a 27-year career at Seedlings, we celebrate Miss Jan's retirement. She has taught every age group at Seedlings! With her quick wit and gentle soul, Miss Jan has touched the lives of countless children and parents over the years, and mentored many coteachers. "When Jan suggested I join Seedlings back in 1992, I had no idea how meaningful our time together here would become," said Miss Bobbi, Seedlings Director of Outreach & Enrichment. "Jan is leaving a legacy of compassion. She's always inspired me to listen carefully to what children say, and appreciate how their sense of wonder is a gift that we can all learn from."

Miss Jan is excited to have more time for hiking and biking, exploring San Francisco, traveling, visiting family, and being a grandma. We are looking forward to seeing her again soon, as a Seedlings substitute teacher!

"Retirement was a difficult decision for me. My heart will always be at Seedlings. I love my kids. And they are all my kids," said Miss Jan. "The parents are my kids, too!" she added, with her signature smile and a twinkle in her eye.



Rachelle Longtin

We congratulate Miss Rachelle on her new opportunity teaching Kindergarten at the private school, where her daughter, Audrey, is a student. As a preschooler, Audrey attended Seedlings, and now Miss Rachelle is headed to her elementary school! What a blessing to do what you love, and be with your family. In her 14-year tenure at Seedlings, Rachelle taught multiple age groups including Sunflowers (the 4s), Sprouts (the 2s), Sweat Peas (the 1s), and excelled in the Dandelions (Developmental Kindergarten) for the past 12 years. She is poised and ready for this unique opportunity and her new school is very fortunate to have her!



Congratulations
Our students loved

hosting their first

marriages of Miss

Maddy (to husband

(to husband Colin).

dresses out of toilet

paper, snacked on

wedding cake, and

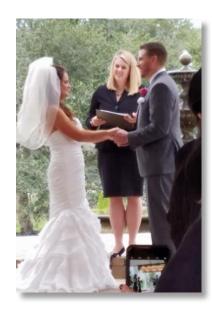
gave each bride a special wedding gift.

The children fashioned wedding

Cole) and Miss Kellie

wedding showers to recognize the

Miss Jan and Miss Rachelle were honored together at the end-of-year school luncheon in June, where our students and parents gave them more hugs than they ever thought possible.



Miss Maddy and husband Cole were married in Sunol, by Pastor Jaime Polson.



Miss Kellie celebrated in style, with the Snapdragons revelers (the 3s).



Miss Kellie and Colin were married in Ireland. Four Seedlings graduates participated in the ceremony! Raziela and Zeva Robinson, were flower girls (pictured); and brothers Gabriel and Ezra were ring bearers.



We also want to congratulate Miss Kellie (pictured with husband Colin) on earning her Multiple Subject, Mild/Moderate Special Education Teaching Credential.



familyministry & Special Needs Ministry present



Friday, September 15, 2017, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

For parents who have children & youth with Special Needs, ages 2-22

Dinner, games, therapy dogs, crafts, activities and a movie!
Children and youth will be divided up by age groups with age-appropriate movies.

Sensory and quiet rooms are provided. All staff and volunteers have had background checks and have had basic training in working with children and youth with special needs. Several professionals who work with children/youth with special needs will be onsite the entire evening.

We will provide a staffing ratio to match your child's needs.



Register

Dave Engelbrektson, dave@LOPC.org, (925) 283-8722 x280

Deadline for registration is Friday, September 8, 2017. We welcome you to connect with us before the Respite Night.

Member Highlight: 100th Birthday On Skis

This article was published in the July issue of the Ski Utah:

In the heat of summer on July 5th, 2017, Snowbird groomed a patch of snow high in the Wasatch Mountains to help 100-year-old George Jedenoff celebrate his centennial birthday in style. This was a day for the record books.

George continues to be an inspiration and doesn't have plans on slowing down anytime soon.

"Please make sure my skis make it back down to the base, I'll need them next year when I turn 101"—George yelled over his shoulder as he downloaded the Peruvian chair.

There are few words to describe this remarkable man who was born just nine years after the first Model T Ford came off the assembly line. He has seen the world change in so many ways, but this man embraces the NOW, as evident in his attitude which keeps him young at heart. He sports the latest iPhone 7, drives himself around the Bay Area in California and skis freshly groomed corduroy on his 100th birthday.

Good on you George and thank you for making the world a better place. "And remember, age is just a number"—George says!



George Jedenoff celebrates his 100th Birthday



Jim Nagle

While Jim Nagle was raised in a large Italian-Irish-American family in upstate New York, which attended mass every Sunday, he's now a Presbyterian elder. This is the story of that journey.

"Growing up, we went to church every weekend no matter where we were.

even when skiing in the winter or at the beach on summer vacation. I also attended Catholic school for a while, so religious education was part of my daily life as well as on Saturday/Sunday," Jim remembers.

When he met his wife, Sue, he was stationed in San Diego with the Navy and she was working as a summer associate for a law firm. "She had one more year of law school in Washington, D.C., but we decided we wanted to be together so we travelled back and forth between San Diego and D.C. for a year, and then we were married. During this time Sue began coming to the Catholic church with me even though she was raised Presbyterian since there was always a Catholic Church around no matter where we were." Jim's tour of duty in the Persian Gulf was for six months right after they were married. He says even then he had access to, and took advantage of, attending Catholic mass aboard his ship. However, while Jim was away with the Navy, Sue had sought out this Presbyterian Church as she didn't feel connected to the local Catholic parish without him.

Sue and Jim began attending LOPC when they moved to the Bay Area in 1994. After their two girls were born she was the first to join. That was in 1999. "It was Sue's turn to take the lead in church involvement which included volunteering in family and children's ministries, and activities and groups like our Voyager ship. During this time, I worshipped at both LOPC and St. Isadore's in Danville, but as our family became more and more involved in LOPC I made the switch and joined LOPC around 2005." Jim admits he never told his grandmother he had become a Presbyterian! Also, he explains he hardly ever attends Mass any more as he feels fulfilled by regular worship at LOPC. However, they did take the girls to a very special (and long) Mass on Christmas Eve in Munich Germany a couple of years ago.

Journey of Faith

by Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC Member

"Serving alongside my wife and daughters has had the biggest impact on my faith"

Of the switch, Jim says, "I was open to different faiths when I was raised, and after being exposed to the Presbyterian Church, I felt it was not that different from my Catholic upbringing, at least in ways important to me. As the girls grew Sue and I discussed our two different Christian faiths many times. I decided to join LOPC because our family really felt a part of the LOPC community, and I thought it would reduce any conflict or confusion for the girls.

"I also was impressed by the opportunities for lay leader involvement at LOPC and wanted to take advantage of those opportunities by becoming an official member. Over the years, I have helped lead programs at Mt. Hermon, supported Sue and her work, been a Doorperson for the Godly Play program, participated in One Sunday with my family, and been a part of a Saturday morning Men's Bible Study. I was part of the Stewardship team and this year became Finance Elder," Jim notes.

"I think serving alongside my wife and daughters in the kids' programs has had the biggest impact on my faith as I had to really give thought about what I believe in order to share it with the kids. I also became very aware of the importance of leading by example for my daughters."

"LOPC has provided so many opportunities for our family to be involved in God's work in the world for which I am very grateful," Jim concludes. "While I may not have gone too far out of my comfort zone in serving, I have certainly gone out of it with my kids as I have sent them off all over the United States, and now the world, to serve. Perhaps now it's time for me to try to follow their example!" Jim chooses as a part of the Bible that is very meaningful to him I Corinthians, Chapter 13.



What Makes Life Worth Living in the Face of Death? – 10/29

Featuring Dr. Lucy Kalanithi 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary



The Congregational Care team is pleased to present Dr. Lucy Kalanithi as our special speaker for our "Journey Through Grief" series. Her topic will be "What Makes Life Worth Living in the Face of Death." She will be with us on Sunday, October 29th in

the Sanctuary from 7:00-8:30 p.m. You may register online at LOPc.org. There is a suggested \$10 donation. Child care will be provided for children age 3 months and up; please contact susan@LOPC.org by Sunday, October 22, for childcare reservations.

Dr. Kalanithi, MD, FACP, is the widow of the late Dr. Paul Kalanithi, author of the #1 New York Times bestselling memoir, When Breath Becomes Air, for which she wrote the epilogue. An internal-medicine physician and faculty member at the Stanford School of Medicine, in Palo Alto. she completed her medical degree at Yale, where she was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha National Medical Honor Society; her residency at the University of California – San Francisco, and a postdoctoral fellowship, training in healthcare delivery innovation at Stanford's Clinical Excellence Research Center. Dr. Kalanithi has special interests in healthcare value, meaning in medicine, patient-centered care, and end of life care. She has appeared on the PBS NewsHour, NPR Morning Edition, and Yahoo News with Katie Couric, and been interviewed for People, NPR, and the New York Times. She lives in San Francisco with her daughter, Elizabeth Acadia.

During her presentation, Dr. Kalanithi will share her personal experience walking alongside her husband during his life, diagnosis, treatment and death. She will share insights on how they together found strength and joy as they faced his prognosis. There will be a question and answer session following her presentation.

If you have any questions about this event, contact ashlee@LOPC.org or x228.

Parent-Daughter Workshops with Girls Leadership

Beginning October 2, 2017



Girls Leadership offers a series of courses for girls and their parents to build emotional intelligence. In the upcoming workshops, parent-daughter pairs will learn about identifying healthy relationships, finding their voices, and communicating more effectively. Girls also develop resilient responses to conflict, challenges and mistakes. The program is interactive, fun and enlightening, and it's also a great opportunity to gain insight and spend time with your daughter in a new and different way.

Register online at girlsleadership.org. Questions? Please email jaime@LOPC.org.

Sing with the Noteables



No tryouts are necessary to join the Noteables—just a love of singing. Rehearsals are every Thursday from 9:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. in the Davies Room, directed by Barbara Vail.

Sopranos, altos, tenors and basses are needed. Please call Barbara Vail at (925) 254-1819 for more information.

Youth Corner

Stories from the Summer Olivia Toth Shares a Reflection from the India Mission Trip

Come join us for a weekly time of snacks, games, worship, Bible-based message and small-group discussions. Friends are always welcomed! No need to register or RSVP.



Yow Kickoff 5th & 8th Grade Parent Social with Pastor Jaime Sept 6, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. with optional dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the Davies room.

Youth Alive

Kickoff September 10. Our revamped Sunday morning program for 5th-8th grade youth runs during both 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. services. Come enjoy games & activities and talk about how Bible heroes inspire us to live as heroes today!



BTW Kickoff 9th - 12th Grade Parent Social with Pastor JaimeSept 17, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in CLC 201.

High School Houseboats Retreat!

September 8-10, 2017. All incoming high school students have been invited to attend this amazing event. They will relax, have fun and worship God in a beautiful delta setting! Questions? Contact Keris at keris@LOPC.org.





I am 16 years old and I want to be a civil engineer. So does Pradeep. Pradeep is an 8 year old boy who changed my life on the High School Mission Trip to India by showing me the power of God's love. He arrived at Children of Faith (COF) about two weeks before we came, so he was very quiet but extremely curious to learn. We had the opportunity to help the COF kids in the

classroom by teaching them reading comprehension, basic math skills, and cool science experiments. Day by day, Pradeep began to open up and crack small smiles when learning a new word or launching a homemade rocket. We would play games with the kids, including cricket, sing songs, make friendship bracelets, and tell them a Bible story that taught them how much Jesus loves them.

I believe that being shown God's love through the directors of COF Anand and Rosie and through our LOPC team helped Pradeep see the amazing opportunities that he can have, like becoming an engineer to help people build houses. Seeing the change that Pradeep underwent throughout the two weeks, from not saying a word for three days to giving me a huge hug before we left, was incredible. I truly felt like God and I were on the same page as I interacted with each of the kids and felt their love for Christ and us. That feeling will never be forgotten.

Another impactful moment for me was going on home visits to members of Rosie and Anand's church. We went to Mariama's house, a one room thatched hut, including a plywood board as her bed and no kitchen. We prayed for her health and she kept telling Rosie, "God gave me everything." Everything?! I was shocked. She walked us out to the car and kept thanking us for coming and visiting. I had a moment of reflection on her house compared to the houses here, and understood the significance of returning to the U.S. and bringing her humility with me.

Visiting Mariama made me realize the amazing level of faith people can have, and that I wanted to give her and her neighbors a safer home. So, as I return to the United States and tell people about my experience in India, I get the question, "Why is this trip important for you in the Lamorinda community?" First, I want to take anyone that I possibly can to India to truly feel what I felt with those children, the hope and love that they contain because an experience like this is something that transcends words or explanations. Second, this trip has made me reconsider my future plans. I now want to work as an engineer in the international setting to aid underdeveloped countries and people like Mariama who don't have great living conditions.

My experience is unique, but giving 49 high school students like me the chance to understand God's love on an international level or recognize their dream of serving people cross culturally is priceless to us and to the Lamorinda community.



Science & Religion - 9/18

7:15 p.m. in the Oak Room



The LOPC Science & Religion group will begin its 2017-18 program year with two programs focused on the provocative new book

Homo Deus by Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari, also author of the widely acclaimed Sapiens: A Brief History of Mankind (2014). In October, Ted Peters of Pacific Lutheran Seminary, and co-editor of the Journal Theology and Science, will present his theological response to Homo Deus, including his views on Harari's suggestion that "Dataism" may be an emerging religion. To prepare for Dr. Peters, the group's September program will be an introduction to Homo Deus centered around a video presentation by Yuval Harari. All are welcome.

Celebrating 15 Years of the Village - 9/25



neighborhood support for aging in our community...

To celebrate its 15th anniversary and the Village movement it inspired, Beacon Hill Village in Boston has invited Villages around the country to participate "virtually" in an event featuring Dr. Atul Gawande, MD, MPH, author of the seminal book *Being Mortal*. The conversation, entitled "Being Mortal's Villages: The Value of Community and Choice as We Grow Older," will feature a discussion on aging, living life with purpose, and how we can transform the possibilities for the later chapters of everyone's lives.

Dr. Gawande is a renowned surgeon, public health researcher and writer, who will speak about the value of community and opportunities as we grow older. While Dr. Gawande's book title alludes to death, the stories in it are about life. He describes people's efforts to maintain autonomy as they age in the face of ingrained habits, cultural expectations and one-size-fits-all corporate offerings. He includes Beacon Hill Village and the Village model as an option for assisting older adults in their efforts, which has often meant providing services and extending community to people who want to remain in their own homes and enjoy the rich stew of activities, attributes, attitudes and ages that engage the community's older adult population.

Choice and community are concepts honored throughout the Village movement. These concepts are behind the underlying principles that led to the founding of Beacon Hill Village and subsequent 200+ Villages that impact the lives of older adults across the country. One of the great issues worldwide today is how to support and care for aging populations. By 2030, twenty percent (20%) of our nation's population will be over 65, an estimated 83 million people. The Village concept and Dr. Gawande's profound understanding of the importance of choice and community offer valuable insights and solutions for this challenging phenomenon.

WHEN: Monday, September 25, 2017; 2:00 p.m.

Doors open at 1:00 p.m.

WHERE: Fellowship Hall

Refreshments generously provided by the

LOPC Foundation

RSVP Online

By phone: (925) 253-2300

By email: rsvp@LamorindaVillage.org

Caregiving for Those Navigating the Journey – 9/24



All too often we hear that someone we know is facing cancer - relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues. During such a difficult time we want to reach out with care and assistance.

The Cancer Support Community San Francisco Bay Area offers comprehensive cancer support services, including support groups, educational opportunities, nutrition education, adaptive exercises, and mind/body classes.

Please join us Sunday, September 24, from 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. in the Davies Room when Margaret Stauffer, Chief Mission Officer for the Community, will present useful information on how to be a helpful caregiver to people with cancer and their families. Margaret is a licensed marriage and family therapist, has extensive experience in working with cancer patients and their loved ones, and has directed programs at the Cancer Support Community for over 16 years.

This program is presented by Stephen Ministry. We look forward to having you join us for this very timely and valuable presentation.

Grief Support - 9/12



Have you or someone you know experienced the death of a spouse recently or within the last few years? Sharing

our experiences during this 10-week class is extremely helpful to our healing process. Course is open to all Widows and Widowers. The next group starts September 12 – November 14, 3:00-5:00 p.m. at LOPC. Pre-Registration required. The workbook is \$15.

If you want to register or have more information, contact Bev Fellows, (925) 949-7628 or beverlyfellows@comcast.net.

Cloud of Witnesses



The Book of Hebrews tells us "we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses."

Who are they? Presbyterian Women will be studying Hebrews this year and we will find out all about this cloud of witnesses as well as getting the answers to questions like:

Who wrote Hebrews?
When was Hebrews written?
To what community was Hebrews addressed?

Study guides are now available in the church office for \$12.00. Be sure to pick up yours before our circles begin meeting in September. If you are not in a circle and wish you were, contact Diane Steuber at (925) 283-3871.

Congo Necklace Team - 9/10

The Congo Team's popular necklaces will be displayed on the patio Homecoming Sunday, September 10, after each service. Look also for our name tag/sun glass holders which give you an easy way to wear your name tag each Sunday — no trying to find a place to clip them onto your outfit.



The Team hand crochets these items with all proceeds going to Build Congo Schools. Education is the key to ending poverty in the impoverished Democratic Republic of Congo. Help more students have access to brick-and-mortar schools, with desks, blackboards and books. The need is great.



Men's Breakfast Where women are always welcome

September 27



Dr. Joe Whitehouse

LOPC Member

Iran: "More Than Amazing" & After
Intermission-"Jordan & Oman"

November 22



Bernie Cowens
VP Chief Security Officer of PG&E
"The U.S. Electric Grid Hacked or Hyped?"

October 25



Chris Gruener
Publisher Cameron & Co.
21st Century Book
Publishing/Print Is (NOT) Dead

December 20



Kristin Lincoln
Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon
Valley Board Member
"Imagine What More We Can Build"

Bring friends & family

7:00 a.m. | Davies Room \$5 donation at the door for breakfast R.S.V.P. to janet@LOPC.org or call (925) 283-8722 x223 before noon on the Tuesday before each breakfast

Companions Introductory Meeting 9/25 & 9/28



Are you wondering where God might be at work in your life?

Perhaps offering you a new invitation or a different perspective?

Are there ways to practice listening for nudges from the Holy Spirit?

Come to an Introduction to Companions for the Journey on Monday, September 25, from **7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**, or on Thursday, September 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Companions meet monthly from October to June and look at and listen to a different Bible story each month, wondering about what each story might say about life today. Using prayer, silence and guided reflection, the group ponders ways that ancient writings impact current decisions. Companions provides trained facilitators who lead smaller groups in a time of personal reflection in a confidential environment.

Participants have said:

- "Thanks to Companions I communicate better with my family, including my teenagers, and my friends."
- "I have learned to see the Holy Spirit at work in others and sometimes even at work in me!"
- "Through Companions, I was moved to begin teaching a class in Oakland for people who have recently arrived in this country."

Questions? Or register for an Introduction by contacting ashlee@LOPC.org.

Called Congregational Meeting - 9/17



Sunday, 9/17, immediately following the second service, we will be voting on new officers. Information on nominees will be available on 9/3 in the Sanctuary and in the Ministry Center during the week.

Questions? Email elizabeth@LOPC.org.

Interfaith Habitat for Humanity - 10/1



Volunteers from our three Neighbor to Neighbor congregations (LOPC, Temple Isaiah and the San Ramon Islamic Center) are joining efforts for an Interfaith Habitat Day to help continue the construction of homes for deserving families at the Muir Ridge Project in Martinez. This will be a wonderful way to bring members of our different faiths together in support of East Bay Habitat. Do you have an interest in being one of those volunteers? If so, since the size of the work crew will be limited, please let us know ASAP.

Contact Terry Clark at terence.clark08@gmail.com for more information.

LOPC Tote Bag



Here's a GREAT way to help the Deacon Emergency Fund – pick up an LOPC grocery tote! All proceeds benefit the Deacon Emergency Fund.

This extra-large, stylish and sturdy tote, made from recycled materials, is the perfect accessory for all your shopping and toting needs.

Totes are available now for a \$5.00 donation until we run out. Pick one up anytime Monday-Friday at the Reception Desk in the Ministry Center office.

Volunteer Opportunity: Capernaum Young Life

Capernaum, a Young Life ministry partnering with LOPC, leads a weekly youth program for adolescents and young adults with special needs.

Capernaum meets at LOPC every Monday evening from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m., beginning their Fall program on September 11 and ending at the end of May.

Would you be interested in volunteering to help with this exciting program as a teen or adult youth advisor? If so, please contact Jaime at jaime@LOPC.org

2017 LOPC Directory Update!

For those of you who participated in the 2017 LOPC Directory project by having your photo taken, you may pick up your copy of the directory in the Ministry Center Office during normal business hours. Need an extra copy? Didn't have your photo taken? We also have a limited number of directories available for a \$10 donation.



thursday Fellowship

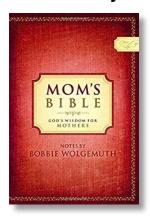
Fellowship: the friendly and caring feeling of community that exists between people who join together and do something as a group!

thursdayFellowship is flourishing and looking to welcome new guests and volunteers for our growing program.

We meet every Thursday from September through June and provide our guests an opportunity to participate in exercise and creative activities followed by lunch and entertainment. As volunteers we listen and laugh, create and celebrate while we extend hospitality and love to our guests.

Our *thursday* Fellowship fall kickoff is on Thursday, 9/7/17.

Moms Study



A group of moms with young children meet monthly, on the first Wednesday of each month from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m., with a Bible and book study and discussion led by Pastor Jaime Polson.

Beginning on September 6, a new study will start. Past

studies have included the books, *The Blessings of a Skinned Knee* by Wendy Mogel and *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brene Brown.

All of our studies focus on incorporating faith in our daily lives, including how we parent. We invite all moms with young children to join us.

Childcare is provided by RSVP. Questions, or RSVP to dave@LOPC.org.

When Opportunity Knocks...

by Dick James, Foundation Trustee



Dick James

Life can be funny. Some times, things that have been carefully planned don't exactly all come together. Other times, when there is no plan, things work out perfectly.

A case in point is the sanctuary projector and screen used in worship and memorial services. Before the carefully designed and executed sanctuary construction

project, they worked very well -- bright picture, clear and visible to everyone. Afterward, not so much -- picture dim, washed out, indistinct, as anyone who attends church knows. New, brighter lighting, adjusted to spread out to cover the larger chancel footprint, improved the visibility of activities there. But it also washed out the picture on the screen -- unintended consequences, not unusual in a construction project, as many know from personal experience.

What to do? Obviously, install equipment that projects a stronger, brighter picture. Easier said than done? Perhaps. Projectors are sophisticated devices -- many choices of technology, complex requirements for such a large sanctuary, size of the image needed, distance from projector to screen are all considerations. Oh, yes, and cost. So the choices were made and a plan laid – and lingered. Money.



Then something unrelated and unplanned occurred. At a recent LOPC Foundation board meeting, Treasurer Phil Placier reported the Foundation in its current fiscal year, which ends this month, had seemingly failed – for

several reasons -- to give the church enough money to meet the Foundation's annual disbursement plan. Every year, the Foundation aims to give the church 4 percent of its assets. But in review, this year it was short of that mark.

Foundation Trustees believe when opportunity knocks they should open the door. Trustee Kristi Haigh thought she heard opportunity knocking and pointed out that underwriting the cost of a new sanctuary projector and required screen would fill the need of the church and, at the same time, more than close the gap in disbursements that the Foundation needed. A motion was made – and approved – for the Foundation to underwrite the full cost of a new projector and screen. Says Peter Whitelock, pastor: "I'm sure everyone is going to love the end product."

Life can be funny sometimes – when the Holy Spirit is at work.

If you would like to become a Friend of the LOPC Foundation contact any Trustee: Dick James, president; Lynn Trowbridge, vice president; Phil Placier, treasurer; Alan Kizor; Staci Johnston; Kristi Haigh; Dara Youngdale.



In Response To Charlottesville

The Session and leadership of LOPC stand firmly in opposition to the hatred and violence witnessed in Virginia recently. Racism must be resisted in all its forms, and it is incompatible with authentic Christian faith. We concur with this statement by our Presbyterian Seminary in the West (SFTS), and we are answering the call to combat racism this coming year through anti-bias training in our children's ministry, a Racial Intersection workshop, producing a series of short videos for families on kindness and inclusivity, developing interfaith family service groups, and more.



IMPORTANT: Dated Material PLEASE DELIVER

Before 9/1/17 Thank you!

Return Service Requested

PASTORAL STAFF

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 Scharch, Organist

TREASURER

Char Casella

MINISTRY DIRECTORS

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

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Ashley Jackson, Communications Director Jennifer Shaul, Digital & Print Admin Chuck Fry / Dick James

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

Monthly FOCUS Newsletter Deadline:

SEPTEMBER 1 for the OCTOBER issue. Email items to communications@LOPC.org.

Weekly CONNECTIONS Deadline:

Monday by 5:00 p.m.

Email communications@LOPC.org.

Sunday Worship Services 9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. Invite Friends & Family

November Quilt Display



This year is rolling right along, and it's time to think once again about the display of your quilts in the sanctuary during the month of November. More information is in the front office of the Ministry

Center, or you can call Ann Loar at (925) 284-1164 or email her at annioar@icloud.com. If you have a quilt you would be willing to loan for display, we'd love to hear from you!

Connect with us online!

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LOPC: Where everyone is welcome, nobody's perfect and anything is possible with God.

Volume XXXVI, No. 9