

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Alive!
In Christ... in the World



May 2019

Contents

Thursday Fellowship..... 3

LOPC Breakfast..... 3

New Members Class..... 3

First Friday Forum 4

PW Luncheon..... 4

Donation Drive..... 5

All-Church Retreat..... 5

Foundation 6

Session Highlights..... 6

Children..... 7

Youth..... 8

Love Does..... 9

Mission 10

Spiritual Formation 12

10:10..... 12

Lunch & Learn 13

Science & Religion 13

Journey of Faith 14



The question for Eastertide is not “What would Jesus do?” but “What are you going to do?”

He is Risen!

By Lauren Gully, Pastor, Mission & Spiritual Formation



After an eventful Lent and Easter Season—we now find ourselves in the liturgical season of Eastertide, and quickly approaching what we call “ordinary time.”

In contrast to Lent and Easter, Eastertide doesn’t create much excitement. But the disciples and everyone else who were part of Jesus’ life or last days were profoundly moved. We learn of their doubts, struggles, and faith in the stories in scripture that immediately follow the resurrection. Eastertide is when we remember the

stories of the beginning of the church and an important prologue that is basically a “where-are-they-now” cover story on the disciples.

What happened to Peter’s faith after he denied Jesus three times? Did anyone ever see Jesus again? Was there really a resurrection? What happened with Thomas’ doubt?

The questions in scripture change. Instead of stories being centered around what Jesus did—they now ask what did the people do next?

This is a question, I think, that we can all relate to.

In society today, people care less about what you believe and care more about how your beliefs motivate you to act and participate in the world and in your neighborhoods. Society is asking us as Christians, “what happens next?”

When I ask myself this question, it affirms my desire to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world—I challenge myself to give more of my time and my money, and it calls me to be a better listener to the stories I hear of those in our neighborhoods that need to be voiced.

The question for Eastertide is not “What would Jesus do?” but “What are you going to do?”

This summer we have many opportunities for you to put your faith into action!

Look in this edition of Focus to see how you can get involved in Love Does, volunteer at VB Camp, or encourage your youth to take part in a mission trip!

Pastors: Peter Whitelock, Head of Staff | Gerald Chinen, Care | Lauren Gully, Mission & Formation | Jaime Polson, Families

Seeking New Church Leaders! Officer Nominations Needed by May 5

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. Each year we elect officers to serve for the following year, drawn from nominations from the congregation.

We are now in the process of selecting new officers and leaders for LOPC for terms beginning January 2020. 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.

The primary qualifications for nominees are:

- **Strong commitment to Jesus Christ and the church's Mission Statement.**
- **Active participation in worship and in other ministries at LOPC.**
- **Stewardship commitment of time, talent, and financial resources.**
- **Leadership ability and organizational skills.**
- **Compassion in human relationships.**
- **An open-minded approach to ideas and problems.**
- **Spiritual depth and maturity.**
- **Ability to equip people for ministry and work in a team-based leadership role.**

Elders, together with the pastors, lead and direct the ministry of the church.

They are persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Elders serve on Session, the governing body of the church. They also chair various church teams through which all ministries are conducted. Eight elders are ordained to serve three-year terms.

Deacons, as set forth in Scripture, are leaders who serve as the caring, compassionate arm of the church.

They provide loving support to all those in need within the church community. The primary area of Deacon service is care of members. Ten deacons are ordained to serve a three-year term and two deacons of high school-age serve a one-year term.

The Congregation Nominating Committee (CNC) members receive and renew nominations for church officers.

They select candidates to present to the congregation. They are elected for a one-year term.

Foundation Trustees serve on the LOPC Foundation. This nine-member foundation receives gifts in various forms and designations, manages investments, and provides funding for LOPC needs that cannot be accommodated in the church's annual operating budget. Trustees serve an initial term of four years and are eligible to be re-elected for one three-year term. Members who have served in the past can be nominated for a two-year term.

Nomination forms will be available until May 5 in the Ministry Center and Sanctuary pew racks, or send an email nomination to cnc@lopc.org. We need your nominations, so please fill out and submit at least one nomination form.

For more information, contact a CNC member: David MacKenzie (Chair), Lois Boyd (Clerk of Session), Jeff Patton, Ann Loar, Richard Courtney, Marsha McDonagh, 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.

community

thursday Fellowship

A program of Senior Care Ministries.

Every Thursday
11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. - Fellowship Hall



Thursday Fellowship celebrates 40 years of service to Seniors in the Lamorinda community on May 23. Thursday Fellowship began in 1979 as a follow-up to the LOPC Deacons program “Friendly Callers”. Many volunteers had been calling on shut-ins in the community, visiting and shopping for them. After a tea party for these Seniors at the church it was decided to meet more often. The “Drop-In Center” was started in the old Oak Room every other Thursday. It was an instant success, and volunteers helped with coffee, crafts, exercises, lunch, and entertainment. The program expanded to weekly, and was moved to Fellowship Hall. Crafts were made and sold at a Christmas Bazaar to help support the program

until funding became more secure. The volunteers have grown close as a group, and their faith journey has become an important part of the program as they minister to others. Years ago, an article about Thursday Fellowship in the former *Contra Costa Times* called us the “best kept secret” in the area.

Come and join us as we kick off our month-long celebration with activities and entertainment galore.

- May 2 Mariachi band for Cinco de Mayo
- May 9 Magician Gerald Joseph
- May 16 Mike Kistner, singer and guitarist
- May 23 40th Anniversary Party
- May 30 International Day Celebration

Typical Thursday schedule:

- 11:00 a.m. -- meet and greet with snack and beverages
- 11:15 a.m. -- craft activities and/or light exercise
- 12:00 p.m. – lunch, please bring a half sandwich. We will provide salad, beverage, and dessert.
- 12:40 p.m. -- entertainment
- 1:30 p.m. -- close and SHALOM

Questions? Contact Coordinators:
Julie Peterson - julie@lopc.org
Clarita Wooldridge - clarita@lopc.org
Both can be reached at 925-283-8722 x281

Membership Class

- May 17 - 7:00 p.m. Off-site dinner
- May 18 - 9:00 a.m. Davies Room
- May 19 - 10:30 a.m. Davies Room

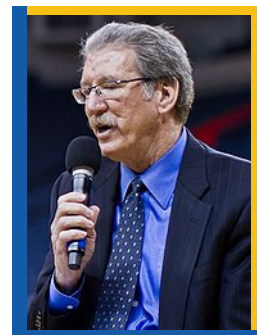
The LOPC Membership Class is an opportunity to meet the pastoral staff, have your questions answered, learn about the programs and ministries of the church, and make new friends. It also serves to clarify what LOPC believes God has called this church to be, so visitors can make an informed decision about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

For more information, contact Chris Baldwin at chris@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x110.
RSVP for childcare to susan@lopc.org.

LOPC Breakfast Group (formerly Men's Breakfast)

This May - specific date TBA
7:00 a.m. Fellowship Hall

Join us for a special annual gathering, featuring Jim Barnett, TV analyst for the Golden State Warriors. \$5 donation at the door.



For more information, contact Chris Baldwin at chris@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x110.

community

First Friday Forum: May 3, 1:30 p.m.

Evangelicals and Protestants: Divided or Not?

Refreshments, Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m. • Speaker, Sanctuary at 1:30 p.m.

On May 3, First Friday Forum (FFF) presents historian David A. Hollinger speaking about global Christianity and the ecumenical-evangelical divide. The lecture begins in the Sanctuary at 1:30 p.m. with refreshments served in Fellowship Hall at 1:00 p.m.

Prof. Hollinger says, “The ecumenical-evangelical divide in American Protestantism is more significant than ever as a result of the increasing influence of the Global South on what counts as Christian witness in the North Atlantic West. The recent quarrels within the United Methodist Church about same-sex relationships dramatize a portentous consequence of treating Protestant denominational bodies as global, rather than national or regional. The Methodists from the Global South are decidedly more conservative on LGBTQ and other issues than most Methodists in the United States. The new strength for conservative Christianity presents several challenges to the more classically liberal, ecumenical Protestants affiliated with the National Council of Churches.



Dr. David A. Hollinger

Well-equipped to discuss the controversies of these issues, Prof. Hollinger is the Preston Hotchkis Professor Emeritus of History at UC Berkeley. He specializes in the intellectual and ethnic racial history of the United States since the Civil War and is past president of the Organization of American Historians. He is a member of the American Philosophical Society and American Academy of Arts and Science and has been a Guggenheim Fellow and a Fellow of the Center for Advances Study in the Behavioral Sciences.

Prof. Hollinger has authored seven books including *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* and *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History*. Along with UC Berkeley, he has taught at the University of Michigan, the State University of New York at Buffalo, and the University of Oxford. “This is a rare opportunity to hear a professor speak on the state of religion in the country today,” says Nancy Holtzapple, chair of FFF. “Come with your questions - and bring a friend.”

Community to Community Presbyterian Women's May Luncheon

May 15, 12:00 p.m



Dr. Karen Ferguson

Are you looking for something interesting and fun to do on May 15? Why not make your favorite salad, put on your favorite outfit, invite a neighbor, and join Presbyterian Women for lunch? Our theme this year is “Community to Community.” We think of those affected by disasters, children of differing abilities, the sick, poor and lonely elderly, and those victimized by trafficking.

Our speaker will be Karen Ferguson, executive director of the Northern California Branch of the International Rescue Committee. Dr. Ferguson will describe her work with this global humanitarian aid, relief, and development organization that was founded in 1933 at

the request of Albert Einstein to help those displaced by war, persecution, or natural disaster.

In addition to the presentation, our annual Birthday Offering will be received. The recipients will be the Disaster Response Team in Charlotte, North Carolina; Effingham Child Development Center in Effingham, Illinois; Good Shepherd Community Nursing Center in Phelps, Kentucky; and Wings of Refuge Restoration Home in Iowa Falls, Iowa.

Invite your neighbor and come on May 15 at 12:00 p.m. to enjoy the premier salad and learn about current concerns in our community and possibly some solutions. Who is your neighbor? Could you be the next Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)?

community

A Joyful Start

Chicks with Sticks Donation Drive

Sunday, May 19, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Help new arrivals and their families have a joyful start! Chicks with Sticks is collecting donations of new and gently used baby clothes and stuffed animals for families in need throughout our community, and we need your help!

Items needed

(please no holes, stains, or missing buttons/snaps):

- Onesies
- Hoodies
- Baby gowns, sleep sacks
- One & two-piece outfits
- Sweaters, hats, booties
- Burp cloths, bibs
- Changing pads
- Books
- Socks, shoes
- Blankets
- Teething rings, rattles
- Hooded bath towels
- Facecloths
- New stuffed animals



Can't make it on Sunday, May 19? No problem! Simply place your donation in the white bassinet at the Ministry Center front desk anytime during May!

Questions? Contact Ellena Bloedorn at enbloec@comcast.net or Dianne Schneider at dianneschneider@hotmail.com. Thank You!

LOPC Potluck Brunch & Egg Hunt

The Palm Sunday Brunch Potluck & Egg Hunt was a blast! We hosted 200+ attendees ranging from young to young-at-heart! Thank you to the Fellowship Ministry Team for organizing this fun event for community building, outreach, and fun! Also, thank you to the Youth Ministry, and Thursday Fellowship Sr. Adult Ministry for helping fill eggs for children to hunt. Lastly, thank you to the Kitchen Ministry for their help with the food.



Save the Date
First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame All-Church Retreat

LOPC members are invited to attend the All-Church Retreat led by First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame at Mount Hermon on October 18-20, 2019. One of our LOPC pastors will be in attendance as a part of this retreat. The speaker is the Reverend Donald Baird.

Accommodation pricing is per person and determined by the room category that you select:

- Deluxe, \$350/adult, \$150/child
- Standard, \$300/adult, \$150/child
- Economy, \$250/adult, \$150/child

Registration opens in August – more information about the registration process and speaker topic will follow. If you are interested in attending this retreat, please email michelle@lopc.org. We would like to track how many people are planning to attend this retreat in our off year.

lopc foundation

Just the Facts...

By Michael C. Ross, Foundation Trustee



As one of the newest members of the LOPC Foundation Board of Trustees, I am writing my first article about some basic facts. If you Google the word “foundation,” you get about 3.3 million results in 0.58 seconds. Included are choices such as cosmetic make-up products, Isaac Asimov’s science fiction series, a dictionary definition, and names of numerous organizations that support various causes financially and otherwise, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The LOPC Foundation is an organization separate from the church that provides significant financial support for LOPC’s operations, facilities projects, and specifically endowed causes. For fiscal year 2019 (October 1-September 30), it has appropriated \$271,000 for the church’s operating budget, and, among other items, has distributed \$100,000 to satisfy its third and final pledge installment for the Sanctuary Retrofit Campaign, to LOPC.

For many years, the Foundation funded specific requests for special projects and temporary funding of new programs. Several years ago, it changed its procedures. Currently it appropriates a total amount from which it disburses funds during the year to reimburse the church for expenses it incurs, as authorized by budgets approved by Session and managed by the church’s teams and staff, restricted in some instances by the terms of specific endowments created by donors to the Foundation.

The Foundation is funded by outright immediate gifts and by planned legacy contributions from estate plans of church members and friends. The funds and their investment returns are intended to provide reliable, significant support for LOPC in perpetuity. For information about the Foundation and how to contribute to it, please contact one of the trustees: Dick James, Kristi Haigh, Dara Youngdale, Phil Placier, Staci Johnston, Jim Beckemeyer, Jerry Ducey, Jen Crocker or Mike Ross.

session

March Session Highlights

By Lois Boyd, Clerk of Session

Session approved LOPC’s updated Vision, Values, Methods, Obstacles, and Measures statement (V2MOM) presented by Peter Whitelock. The update added Worship to the church’s existing priorities, which include: 1) Sharing the good news of The Gospel and making disciples; 2) Breaking down barriers of separation to be an inclusive community; 3) Mission; and 4) Providing ministry onsite, offsite and online.

The Church Nominating Committee (CNC), chaired by David MacKenzie, will start its work of seeking candidates for 2020 church leadership positions including Deacons, Elders, Foundation trustees, and the next Church Nominating Committee. Brochures describing the criteria for candidates for these positions are in the pews and in the Ministry Center. I am very pleased to announce that Paul Koenig was elected as Clerk for 2020 and has graciously accepted. Session elects next year’s Clerk now so the CNC may fill the vacancy created when the newly elected Clerk takes office.

Lynn Trowbridge provided an update on the operation of the Kurth Memorial Garden. The Garden is in solid financial shape with an operating surplus and reserve for ongoing maintenance. Please see the website for additional information about how LOPC members and their family may purchase a memorial plaque or niche.

The Diversity Task Force, led by Gerald Chinen, presented information and impressions gathered from its work to date, having sought input from the congregation (through a third-party survey), the church staff (individually and in groups), and the study of scripture. The input reflected a spectrum of views, when considered together, identified areas the Task Force believes will be worthwhile to consider. The Task Force will present specific recommendations for the church to consider at an upcoming Session meeting. The Diversity Task Force was convened in 2016 when Session established Diversity as one of LOPC’s areas of priority.

children

Vacation Bible Camp

At Vacation Bible Camp, we anchor kids in the truth that Jesus carries them through life's storms through songs, stories, games, experiments, and more. Camp is where kids experience the love of God, grow in the virtues of kindness, justice, and mercy, and learn to change the world around them by being the hands, feet, and heart of God.

We would love to open camp to as many families as possible, but we are dependent on our volunteer capacity. Not only are volunteers essential to our program, the relationships that are built during this week last a lifetime. Please consider volunteering your time this year at Vacation Bible Camp!

Who: Kids 4 years old (by Sept. 1, 2019) to completed 4th Graders (June 2019)

Dates: Monday, June 10 – Friday, June 14, 2019

Times: Monday – Thursday 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., and Friday 2:00 - 5:00 p.m

Cost: April 1 – May 1, \$60 per child; after May 1, \$75 per child

Register today at lopc.org!



Seedlings Spring Showcase

By Tina Clendenin, Seedlings Board Communications Chair

Seedlings Preschool is proud to announce their upcoming Spring Showcase on Thursday, May 2, from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.. This special night gives students a chance to act as mini-tour guides as they show their families around campus and provide them with a glimpse into their day at Seedlings. Teachers display both independent and group projects in the classrooms and throughout the hallways, and there are always lots of photographs of students in action as well! Dinner (from Top Dog!) will be available for purchase in the front labyrinth, giving parents and students a chance to enjoy good company and fellowship. You won't want to miss this end of year celebratory event!



youth

May 17-18 High School Overnight

Join us for a time of games, service learning, and fellowship! This is a great chance to see your peers and advisors again! We'll also learn about homelessness and do a related service project. Register today at lopc.org/ministry/youth/summer-mission/ then join us from 6 p.m. Friday, May 17, through 10 a.m. Saturday, May 18.

Questions? Contact Keris at keris@lopc.org



May 19 Youth Commissioning & High School Senior Blessing

The youth will be commissioned for their summer service learning experiences at both the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. worship services on Sunday, May 19. At the 11:00 a.m. worship service, we'll also recognize the high school seniors as they prepare to transition into their next phase of life. Please come show your support as we celebrate their amazing commitment!



May 22 Middle School Hangout 6:00-7:30 p.m.



Youth 5th grade through 8th grade are invited to another monthly hangout! We'll play all-campus games, have tasty treats, and spend some time with our small groups. Don't miss this chance to reconnect with YOW friends and advisors!

Questions? Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org

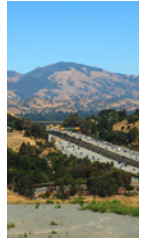
Summer Youth Service Opportunities

Service Squad (5th & 6th Grade)

June 10 – 14, East Bay

Youth who have completed 5th or 6th grade in June will serve for a couple hours each day with a local (East Bay) mission partner, then return to debrief and reflect on their experience. Youth will become acquainted with the many ways in which we can share God's love even within our own community! Our dream is that this week will inspire youth for a life of serving and loving others. Service may include sorting and packing food, yard-work, visiting the elderly and home-bound, running programs for children living in a shelter, and more!

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.



Middle School (7th & 8th Grade)

June 23 – 28, Los Angeles

Youth who have completed 7th or 8th grade in June will spend a week serving the people of Los Angeles. Service may include participating in food-justice programs, spending time with the elderly and infirm, serving food to homeless people, providing care for children in need, and more!

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.

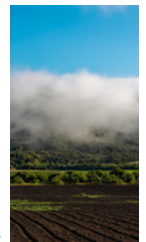


High School (9th – 12th Grade)

July 14 – 20, Salinas

Youth who have completed 9th-12th grade in June will serve the people of Salinas. We will discover God at work as we assist with food-distribution programs for people experiencing homelessness and work among the migrant farm worker community.

Contact Keris at keris@lopc.org with questions.



love does



love protects, love hopes, love never fails

Love Does Collection

LOPC is collecting food and clothing for Trinity Center as a Love Does activity. Look for the collection barrels in the Ministry Center through May 3.

Food Collection Needs:

Snack bars, jerky, canned foods (pop tops preferred), peanut butter & jelly (plastic cans only), cup of noodles, bottled water, and Gatorade.

Clothing Collection Needs:

(only gently used and free of stains, please.)

Shirts, pants (jeans especially needed), sweatshirts & sweatpants, lightweight jackets, socks, casual tops, and sweaters.

Service Opportunity at Operation Dignity

May 4, 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

We will begin the day at LOPC preparing bag lunches and assembling care kits for the residents of a Tuff Shed community in Oakland. Each resident has a bed and room for a few belongings. Participants will visit one of these villages and learn more about what can be done with the ever-increasing homeless crisis. The community is operated by Operation Dignity, a non-profit which provides support services including shelter, housing, and street outreach to people experiencing homelessness in Alameda county, with a special focus on veterans.

Contact Robin at robin@lopc.org for more information.

Fotokids Offers Disadvantaged Kids a Future

By Mike and Ginny Ross, LOPC Members



L to R: Mike Ross, David, Abdias, Ginny Ross

Fotokids, a Mission partner of LOPC, is a remarkable organization that is transforming the lives of young people in poverty-stricken areas in Guatemala. In March, we visited its programs in Santiago Atitlan and in Guatemala City. Over 200 kids, ages 9 to 23, participate in classes to learn photography and graphic arts.

We sat in on classes where the students were learning to use software to create web pages and print-media marketing materials. We witnessed the close attention teachers gave the students and the students' enthusiasm for their work. Some were learning to take studio portraits or showing photographs they had taken of places in their community.

These assignments help students develop communication skills and self-confidence, in addition to the creativity in using the photography, computer, and graphic design skills. The program is supported by social workers who work with each family to support the kids' success. Many of their photos have been shown in numerous U.S. and international exhibitions.

Particularly gratifying was a unique opportunity to have lunch with two young men who had stayed at our home when visiting LOPC 10 years ago. Then just 16, David and Abdias now work using skills they learned in Fotokids. David is a film editor for Fox sports in Guatemala City, and Abdias is a photographer for the government newspaper. Abdias had a photograph published on the front page of the New York Times last summer. It was such a privilege for us to see these two young men again and learn about the success they are enjoying. We were moved by stories we heard that demonstrated how educating and training one member of a family can improve the situation for others in the family, having a "ripple" effect. We are pleased to support Fotokids and to have had this opportunity to see contributions at work.

mission

Summer Food Box Drive 2019

This summer, Monument Crisis Center (MCC) is addressing a need that has become apparent in their clients in the past several years. Most of MCC's clients are at-risk families who experience added food insecurity in the summer as children are home and unable to participate in free or discounted lunch programs at school. As a result, MCC will be collecting Summer Food Boxes again this summer. This program will offer clients an additional food box to bridge the gap, much like the holiday food box program LOPC participates in during Christmas.

The program is designed to bring attention to the issue of food insecurity and help encourage donations during the summer when food avenues are scarcer. Pick up a box at the LOPC office beginning May 12, and purchase the desired items.

MCC Shopping List [Suggested number of items]

Please adhere to list and no glass, candy, toys or perishable items. All items should be placed in a Small Moving Box (16x12x12).

[1] Box Cereal	[4] Canned Fruits
[2] Spaghetti	[2] lbs Bagged Beans
[2] Other Pasta Items	[2] lbs Bagged Rice
[2] Peanut Butter	[3] Mac n Cheese
[3] Dry Soups	[2] lbs Bagged Oatmeal
[3] Tuna	[3] Beef Ravioli
[1] Canned Beans	[4] Tomato Sauce
[3] Soups	[3] Canned Veggies

Completed boxes should be taken directly to the Monument Crisis Center (1900 Market Street, Concord) during June and July at the specified drop-off times listed on MCC flyer.

Contact Robin at robin@lopc.org for more information.



Share the Bounty of Your Garden! Monument Crisis Center Fresh Produce Drop-Off

MCC will accept produce Monday-Wednesday during our donation drop-off hours 9:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.. Monument Crisis Center is located at 1900 Market St. in Concord.

Questions?

Email: dscherer@monumentcrisiscenter.org



mission

Girls' English & Computer Skills Class

Last Christmas, many LOPC members and friends contributed to the Girls' English and Computer Skills Class in Congo. The church was able to send \$9,300 to the program -- \$5,500 from necklace sales and \$3,800 from other individual donations including the Congo Mission budget. The nine-month class, which meets after school, costs about \$18,000 for the 40 girls. Thus LOPC gifts funded over half of what was needed.

The teachers say that many students in Congo fail because they don't learn enough English, and because most of the schools don't have computers in the classroom. The additional challenge for girls is that for most families in Congo, parents pay school fees only for the boys, and the girls must drop out and are expected to get married at a very early age. This class is especially important for these girls because it gives them the resources and skills to do more.

There are many stories from girls in the Girls' English and Computer Skills class relating how that experience had such a positive impact on their lives. Since 2011, when the class started, 40 girls each year are chosen to attend. Willie and Douglas, who teach the class, report that 35 girls from the first class got state diplomas and 12 earned bachelor's degrees. Now, 14 have returned to university to study for their bachelor's or master's degrees. Each class has had similar successes.

Kapingo Pasue, a student at the University of Kananga, says, "My subject is Administrative Science. The skills I learned while attending the class -- training in English and computer science -- helped me improve my scores at university, and at the end of this year, I will have my degree." Another student, Majuni Lunkamba, says her father is very proud of her because she is paying her own way through university by tutoring fellow students in English and computer skills because she learned so much in her high school class.

A heartfelt thanks goes to all at LOPC who contributed to this program and its young students. If you would like to help, please join the Congo Mission Team on May 5 at 10:15 a.m. as they begin to put the 2019 goals into action. For more information, contact Herb Long at herblong7@gmail.com.

Resources of LOPC Mission Partner Squeezed by Cyclone Disaster



On March 14, Cyclone Idai hit the port city of Beira, Mozambique, before moving inland to Zimbabwe and Malawi, bringing devastation with winds over 100 miles an hour, followed by flooding. The UN estimates Cyclone Idai affected 2 million people (dead, missing or displaced) in the eastern part of Africa. Mozambique has recorded 417 deaths with 1,400 feared injured (as of this writing), while in Zimbabwe, 259 have been killed and 200 injured. Malawi reports 56 dead and over 500 missing.

Many LOPC members have asked if LOPC's mission partner, JF Kapnek Trust, was hit. Fortunately, the answer is no, as most of their work on AIDS prevention and assisting vulnerable children is focused in other areas of the country.

The impact was felt mostly in the eastern part of Zimbabwe along the boarder with Mozambique, about 150 miles from Harare, Zimbabwe's capital. Harare and the town of Kadoma, where the LOPC Mission team went this past fall, received little rain. A drought there continues.

The Mozambique port city of Beira, which also serves Zimbabwe, Malawi and other East African land-locked countries, was decimated. One estimate reports that 90% of the city was destroyed. The damage includes the pipeline carrying fuel and natural gas from Beira into Zimbabwe, worsening those shortages for the country.

Other relief organizations have sought JF Kapnek Trust's help with getting supplies to the impacted areas, and it is sending personnel to assess the situation. But even this limited effort means it is using more fuel than expected and at a higher-than-budgeted prices. That, in turn, has pushed the Trust to re-examine its aid priorities in the region.

If you wish to help JF Kapnek off-set the rising, unplanned expenses from this disaster, contact Robin at robin@lopc.org for more information.

spiritual formation

Spiritual Direction at LOPC

Spiritual Direction is part of the Spiritual Formation Ministry at LOPC. It is a reflective process in which a trained spiritual companion walks with individual participants to help them pay attention to God's work in their lives and their most important questions. It is the art of discovering that everyday events are often the means by which God comes to meet us. In Spiritual Direction, participants are invited to explore their experiences, seek awareness of God, and discover authentic questions and desires. A participant is accompanied on this journey by a trained and grace-filled companion, a personal Spiritual Director.



To find out more about Spiritual Direction, contact Diane Grant, LOPC Spiritual Direction Coordinator, at 925-825-8225 or dianebeegee@yahoo.com.
NOTE: All sessions are confidential. There is a modest fee on a sliding scale.

10:10
grow empowered to live in faith

Every Sunday after the 9 a.m. service, grab a cup of coffee and head over to the Oak Room, or come early for the 11 a.m. service. We'll finish by 10:50 so you'll make it to church on time. Childcare is always available. We look forward to seeing you there!

May 5 – Centering Prayer

David Longerbeam, an LOPC member, was raised in Livermore's First Presbyterian Church, and has also has a lifelong interest in the contemplative approach to spirituality. He has engaged in meditation throughout his adult life. Sunday, May 5 he will introduce Centering Prayer, an ancient Christian practice that prepares us to receive the gift of God's presence.

May 12 – Feminine Images of God in Isaiah

John and Bonnie Turpin have been faithful members of LOPC for more than 25 years, following John's retirement from Oakland First Presbyterian Church, where he served for 20 years. Join them for a discussion on mothering images of God in Isaiah. While God is often called "Father" throughout the Old and New Testaments, on occasion God describes Godself in feminine and mothering terms. They will guide us through an examination of two of these passages in Isaiah, and lead a discussion on what these images add to our understanding of God.

May 19 – Parenting Teens (Part 1): College Applications and Teenage Stress

Alan Young has worked in education over the past two decades in a variety of capacities (independent college counselor, non-instructional faculty in community college, admissions reader at UC-Berkeley, and English teacher in Japan). Through his experiences, he has developed a deep appreciation (and concern) for the anxiety and stress that high-schoolers face when applying to college. Come and hear about the current state of admissions and some strategies for successfully navigating the process.

May 26 – Parenting Teens (Part 2): Having Conversations With Your Teens About Drugs, Alcohol, and Addiction

As we continue the theme of parents and teenage youth, join LOPC Youth Directors, Keris Dahlkamp and Allison Kunz, for the second of a two-part series on addiction. They'll share about the current pressures teens and families experience related to drugs and substance abuse. Explore how parents and adult mentors can proactively speak with teens about experimentation and addiction from a place of love.

spiritual formation

Fire Next Time: Climate Change and the Existential Threat of Inaction



Stay informed with this talk. It will survey the complex but certain science of global climate change to set up the urgent issue facing America and the world today: how can we fathom protracted political paralysis and inaction on an issue that threatens human life on the planet? Since the science is clear but the politics all-but-inexplicable, how has climate change become another polarizing partisan issue in the U.S., and still more urgently, whether there are aspects of modern Western civilization that prevent us from adequately facing this issue with the resolve, seriousness, and speed required.

Professor David Peritz, of Sarah Lawrence College, will present this important topic with a subsequent group discussion.

All are welcome to attend! Join us in the Oak Room, Monday, May 20 at 7:15 p.m..



Lunch & Learn: How Do You Deal With Divisive Issues?

Sunday, May 5,
12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall



Join Pastor Peter Whitelock and Terry Clark for interactive dialogue and small group discussion on dealing with the divisive issues that confront us all daily, and learn how to break down barriers to civil discourse. This will be a precursor to an upcoming sermon series on how the Gospel breaks down barriers. Light lunch of soup and salad will be served.

Please RSVP to Lexi at lexi@lopc.org if you plan to attend. \$5 lunch donation.



Save the Date: LOPC 65th Anniversary Sunday, June 9

LOPC will celebrate it's 65th anniversary on Pentacost Sunday, June 9, wit a celebration on the patio following each of our morning services.

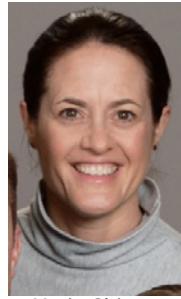
Happy Birthday, LOPC!



Journey of Faith

by Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC Member

Katie Chivers says, “I am a very relational person, and for me, the relationships I have with other Christians have been the most influential on my faith journey. It goes all the way back to the fourth grade when I accepted a personal relationship with Jesus at Redwood Camp in Mt. Hermon. I had a small discipleship group of girls as special friends then and with whom I went through middle and high school. With our amazing leader, we conquered so many topics and everyone was so supportive and encouraging through challenging times. Five of us are still in contact today.



Katie Chivers

“I also had a small group of girls in my sorority at UC Irvine (UCI) that were my help and support through college, and once I graduated, I formed another small group of young adults. We have stuck together over 20 years and have been there for each other through jobs, marriage, and kids. We continue to meet monthly.”

A member of LOPC for 15 years, Katie continued finding relationships. She and her husband, Matt, participate in three small groups -- FISH, couples and Sowers.

“The Sowers, which is a family group, has been a unique experience for me and my faith journey as I am guiding/helping my kids with their own faith journey,” Katie explains. “I am learning a lot by teaching them and being reminded of simple stories and lessons I learned as a child. I find I am looking at my faith again with a more childlike view and almost experiencing things for the first time, just through my children.”

Katie grew up in a strong Christian family and attended Community Presbyterian Church in Danville from the start. “My sisters and I were baptized, grew up going to youth groups, volunteered, and were married there. Church has always been a part of my life.” Katie met

her husband Matt at college, and they have lived in Lafayette for 15 years. Their children are Garrett, 12, and Caroline, 10. Her parents and twin sisters live locally, while her older sister resides in Southern California. They spend a lot of time together as a family, and she says she is so grateful for them.

“LOPC has provided me with a sense of community and belonging,” Katie continues. “I have met some of my closest friends here—again a relational piece — and have been challenged in new and different ways. The pastoral staff are incredible teachers, and I find it very easy to apply sermons to my daily life.

“Our church has also provided me with the opportunity to start some new programs: Mom’s Night Out, Parents’ Night Out, and a baby play-group. All of these programs were a way to allow people to connect. I feel God really uses me to build relationships among young families here.”

Katie says being a Christian has given her a sense of peace. “We struggled to get pregnant for almost two years and that led to a lot of questions about God’s plan for us. It was an incredibly emotional time and now that we have been blessed with two children, I see what God’s plan and timing was for us. Whenever I begin to question or doubt, I really think about that experience and reflect on it. I know God is good, and I do trust in his plan for my life.”

Katie chooses as her favorite Bible verse Jeremiah 29:11: For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. “This verse has been huge for me, particularly in my adult life, trusting in God and His plan for me.”





MAY 2019

49 Knox Drive
Lafayette, CA 94549

IMPORTANT

Return Service Requested

Dated Material
PLEASE DELIVER
BEFORE 5/1/19

Thank you!

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

PASTORAL STAFF

Peter Whitelock, Head of Staff
Gerald Chinen, Congregational Care
Lauren Gully, Mission & Spiritual Formation
Jaime Polson, Families & Executive Leadership

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Brett Strader, Director
Stewart Scharch, Organist

TREASURER

Char Casella

MINISTRY DIRECTORS

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

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Jon Corry, Communications
Dick James & Lexi Morrissey, Editing

Thank you to all who contribute to each issue.

Monthly FOCUS Newsletter Deadline:

May 1 for the June/July combined issue.
Email items to communications@lopc.org.

Weekly CONNECTIONS Deadline:

Every Monday by 5 p.m. for the following
Sunday's issue.

Submit items at:

lopc.org/submission-for-connections

New Sermon Series

EASTER:

stories of

RESURRECTION

from the OLD TESTAMENT

April 28 East of Eden	May 5 Called Into Existence	May 12 A Fish Story
May 19 Them Bones	May 26 In the Pits	June 2 The Fiery Furnace

Sunday Worship Services
9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Invite Friends & Family!

Connect with us online!



[/lopchurch](https://www.facebook.com/lopchurch)



[/LOPC](https://www.youtube.com/lopc)



[@lopc_church](https://www.instagram.com/lopc_church)



[@lopchurch](https://twitter.com/lopchurch)



[/lopc](https://vimeo.com/lopc)

and at lopc.org

- Give.
 - Ask for prayer.
 - Get the latest news.
- All on the LOPC app.

Text "LOPC app"
to the number 77977
to download it today.

