

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Alive!
In Christ...in the World



love hopes
love protects
love never fails

love does

See page 8.



FEBRUARY 2019

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Alive! In Christ...in the World

by Peter Whitelock - Pastor, Head of Staff



It was a few years ago now that we came up with the above phrase as an articulation of our LOPC vision regarding what kind of church we want to both be and become. A good mission statement is basically a promise to the larger community concerning our identity and engagement of the world around us as

people of faith. This statement has worked well for us, and I think it nicely captures the sense that we want to be genuinely faithful to Jesus Christ and serve others in his name.

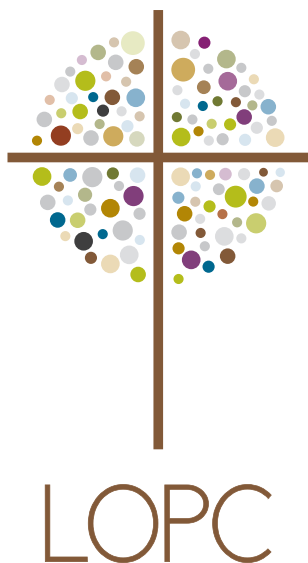
After a few years, though, it’s a good thing to circle back and review such statements. How are they holding up? Beyond that, a group of leaders at the church lifted up the idea that the language of our current statement might be familiar to someone in the church, but it could be confusing to someone outside the community. Can the essence of it be expressed differently so that the promise can be comprehended more widely and readily?

To that end, we’ve been working on capturing the stories and experiences that encapsulate why LOPC is unique, and words and phrases which express who we are as a community. Your staff and leaders are considering what kinds of ideas (even prejudices) people have about “church,” and how we can simply state the essence of promise that we want to make to our community. We even held a leadership retreat to work on updating our mission statement earlier this year, so stay tuned!

At the end of the day, though, who we are is best communicated not through words, but loving action. LOPC is the kind of church where people are accepted as they are, diversity is respected, worship and formation are valued, people are cared for regardless of creed, mission abounds...and Christ is Lord. However we phrase it, that’s worth celebrating!

Grace and peace,


Peter Whitelock



LOPC Finishes the Year in a Strong Financial Position

by Jim Nagle, Finance Team Chair

LOPC is truly blessed with the strength of its 2018 financial results. This is thanks to everyone who has given their time and treasures to the church. LOPC over the years has been very fortunate to be in such a strong financial position and we saw this again in 2018. We are truly blessed to have a faithful giving congregation, staff, and lay leadership that are able to carefully put these resources to work in our community in such a positive way.

I am happy to report that we exceeded income goals with the help of the congregation and were prudent with spending. Congregational giving was 5.3% higher than our goal and included higher Mission and Special Gift donations that can be deployed to our great mission partners. As a result of our financial strength, LOPC was able to give \$50,000 to Hope Academy, the school being built by our mission partner, Children of Faith. This, combined with pledges and other income, along with our ministry teams monitoring expenses, has allowed us to exceed our ministry needs with a \$25,894 surplus. We were able to continue to support growth in the Mission area, and Children's, Youth, Family and Seniors' ministries. The Foundation continued to strongly support LOPC with \$242,456 in funding to be used across all ministries of LOPC.

In total, income for 2018 was slightly higher than the budget, reaching \$3.5 million, \$81,634 more than budget. This was largely due to generous Mission and Special Gifts that will also show up as higher expenses as we deploy them to our mission partners. Pledges and the Faith Component totaled \$2.51 million, \$21,039 higher than budget. Non-Pledge Income, Loose Offerings, and other giving are all areas where we have seen strength, finishing 2018 \$59,514 better than budget.

On the expense side, we were higher than budget, but mainly due to the above-discussed higher Mission gifts we paid out. Expenses totaled \$3.47 million, \$55,740 higher than planned as a result of Mission giving, offset by positive management of expenses by the staff.

Overall, the net result is a surplus of \$25,894. This is a very fortunate position that we are in.

2018 Final Financials

	January to December 2018	
	Actual	Budget
Congregational giving:		
Pledge Income	\$ 2,309,965	\$ 2,250,000
Non-Pledge, Loose Offerings, & Other Giving	309,514	250,000
Mission & other special gifts	222,151	141,339
Faith Component	201,074	240,000
Total Congregational Giving	3,042,704	2,881,339
Other Sources:		
Seedlings Offset to Shared Costs	144,000	150,000
Session Emerging Needs Fund	57,125	104,150
Foundation Support	242,456	256,937
User Fees	12,775	25,000
Total Income	3,499,060	3,417,426
Expenses	(3,473,166)	(3,417,426)
Net Surplus	\$ 25,894	\$ -

RAISING AN EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY COMMUNITY

WITH LYNN LYONS

Lynn Lyons, LICSW, is an internationally recognized psychotherapist, author, and speaker with a special interest in interrupting the generational patterns of anxiety in families. She specializes in the treatment of anxiety disorders in adults and children, including generalized anxiety, phobias, social anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and performance anxiety.

Lynn is known for providing concrete, usable skills to teach families about how anxiety works and to help families respond and react to stress and anxiety in a more productive way. She will talk with parents and caregivers about the positive role that they can play in problem solving, embracing discomfort, and fostering emotional management as we seek to raise resilient children.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

Session I: 6 - 9 p.m.
For parents of tweens and teenagers

FRIDAY, MARCH 15

Session II: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
For parents of children in preschool and elementary school

Session III: 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
For Community Caregivers

Online Registration/\$15
(fee waived for community caregivers)
QUESTIONS? Email michelle@lopc.org

A Time of Rest for Pastor Jaime

by Peter Whitelock - Pastor, Head of Staff

One of the gifts the church has provided its pastors over the years is a sabbatical. It's a time to rest, study, and restore the soul. It's a way LOPC cares for its pastors and sustains them in their ministry. We provide a sabbatical for LOPC pastors every seven years of their ministry at the church for their first sabbatical and then every four years thereafter.

Pastor Jaime Poulson is entering her seventh year of ministry at LOPC. She will begin her sabbatical after Easter on April 21 and return to LOPC on June 8. Jaime will be in Europe for most of her sabbatical with the added blessing that her husband is on his sabbatical from St. Mary's College. Jaime will be traveling and studying the cathedrals and churches of France, Germany and Italy with her family joining the trip as well. Here is a little more about her study plans in Jaime's words:

During my Sabbatical, I plan to visit France, Italy and Germany while studying the lives of the men and women who have planned, built and created cathedrals and the religious art within these beautiful places of worship. A few of the sites I will visit include Chartes, Sainte Chapelle and Notre Dame, Reims Cathedral, San Giovanni Laterano - Cathedral of Rome (first church built in Rome), San Pietro in Vaticano, and the Cathedral of Cologne.

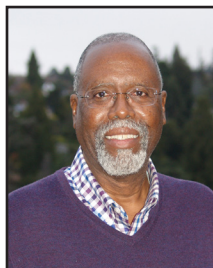
My intention is to understand the faith, circumstances and realities of the lives of these men's and women's everyday lives as they created places of worship and pilgrimage that have resonated with people of faith for many, many generations. I will read a collection of books about the lives of masons, architects, spiritual leaders, priests and nuns, townspeople and others who have contributed to the cathedrals and chapels throughout these countries in Europe. My trip will include studying how churches and the works of art within them can enhance and deepen our faith then and now (sculptures, stained glass, marble busts, wood carvings, etc.).

We wish them well on their adventure and look forward to hearing about her studies and travel at a 10:10 Class when Jaime arrives back home to LOPC. Thank you so very much for providing the time and resources as a congregation that make this season of renewal and study possible for your clergy!

care

Surviving Family Estrangement: Taking Steps Towards Healing

February 9, 9 - 11 a.m., Oak Room



Clyde Wayne of the Berkeley Christian Counseling Center will offer practical steps toward healing ourselves when there is estrangement in our family. He will also offer ways to engage family members when there are doors that may be even slightly open for healing in our relationships. Clyde is an Associate Marriage and Family Therapist, and an ordained minister.

Register online through the LOPC website. Click Care in the Ministries Menu and you'll find the registration on the Care page.

This workshop is free. For more information, contact Renée Wigginton at renee@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x228.

parents

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

FEBRUARY 2, 5 - 8 P.M.

We're getting together to watch a movie for Oscar season. We'll have tacos for dinner, potluck dessert, and, of course, popcorn!

Please RSVP to Julie at julie.l.atkinson@gmail.com so we can get an estimate of how many people will be attending.

\$15/PERSON.

LOCATION AND MOVIE TBD.

CHILDCARE WILL BE PROVIDED.

RSVP FOR CHILDCARE TO
SUSAN@LOPC.ORG BY JANUARY 25.



Register now for the 2019 – 2020 Seedlings school year!

By Tina Clendenin, Seedlings Communications Board Member

Seedlings will begin the registration process for the 2019-2020 school year this month. We are so excited to be moving into our 36th year of providing quality care for the Lamorinda area. This year we have served more than 115 families!

If you are interested in enrolling your child at Seedlings Preschool or know a friend who is, here are a few tips and reminders! Registration will be processed in the following order. Please read carefully for dates and directions that apply to you!

1. Current Seedlings families

Currently enrolled families have priority for registering their children. After processing all of the currently enrolled students, their siblings (who are not currently enrolled) are then processed. Look for a registration packet coming home with your child in early February.

2. Members of LOPC

Registration for current members of the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (who have completed the required membership class and are currently in the LOPC membership database) will be on Thursday, March 7 at 10 a.m. in the Ministry Center Oak Room. Please look for signs on campus to direct you.

3. Families on the current (2018- 2019) wait list.

(This wait list is currently closed.) A registration packet will be sent via email in early February.

4. Community Members

Community members are those NOT currently enrolled in our program, registered on our 2018 – 2019 wait list (this wait list is now closed), or current member of the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC). Registration for community members for our 2019 – 2020 Seedlings program will be on Thursday, March 21 at 10:00 a.m. in the Ministry Center Oak Room. When you arrive, look for “Seedlings Registration” signs. Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. As early as 8 a.m. a sign-in sheet will be put out. Registration will begin in the order of names on the sign-in sheet when there are eight names on it. Community members are encouraged to email the day before at seedlings@lopc.org to find out if there is available space.

If you have questions, please contact the Seedlings office by email at seedlings@lopc.org.

We look forward to another wonderful school year!

Please also note:

- Space in all Seedlings classes is limited and may be filled by current Seedlings children and their siblings. If space is not available at the time you register, you will be placed on the 2019-2020 wait list for a \$50.00 nonrefundable fee. This will be applied towards the annual registration fees if you are placed in the program during the 2019 – 2020 school year.
- After the LOPC member registration on March 7, 2019, we will then slot in anyone who has turned in a Wait List Renewal form. Then we will enroll community members on Thursday, March 21.

youth

Sunday Mornings



Youth Alive
5th – 8th Grade Youth
Sundays during 9 a.m.
worship services

Engage in a weekly Bible story with activities that help reveal how the story is relevant to our modern lives. Get to know your peers and leaders as we grow in faith together! Youth who attend the 11 a.m. worship service are encouraged to enjoy the worship service with family and friends.

February 24: Service-learning with Loved Twice 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

In partnership with Loved Twice, the morning will be spent preparing and packing gently used baby clothes for new families. Loved Twice believes every newborn girl and boy deserves to have clothes for their first year of life—one of life’s basic necessities. Parents and siblings welcome!

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.

TBH (To Be Honest)



9th – 12th Grade Youth
Spring Session
Sundays, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.,
Through March 10
Theme: How We Relate to the World

This program takes deeper dives into some of the more pressing and difficult questions youth have about their faith.

Breakfast pastries and juice provided!



BTW
9th – 12th Grade

Sundays, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

At BTW, we connect with God and each other through games, service-learning projects, worship, devotionals, and small groups.

February 3: Home Groups



Youth on Wednesdays
5th – 8th Grade

Wednesdays, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

We gather together for a fun night of games, snacks, singing, service-learning projects, Bible-based devotional, and small group discussion.

February 27: Make Easter Baskets

Join us for an evening of service when we make Easter baskets for families living at Contra Costa Interfaith Housing (CCIH). CCIH’s mission is to provide permanent, affordable housing and vital support services to homeless and at-risk families and individuals in Contra Costa County.

Contact Allison at allison@lopc.org with questions.

Our annual Easter basket project for CCIH is a hit!



Confirmation 8th – 12th Grade

Confirmation classes:
Sundays, February 3, 10, 17 & 24, 9 a.m. – noon.

Confirmation Sunday is March 17.

At this stage of life, youth are asking, “What do I really believe?” Confirmation is a milestone where LOPC staff support each student as they explore their faith, ask questions in a safe environment, and seek to take ownership of their faith journey. Students explore their faith, doubts, and questions in a safe and encouraging space. This series of interactive theological discussions is focused on the basics of Christian belief and action. Students will have the opportunity to listen, learn, question, write a personal statement of faith, and publicly proclaim their Christian faith in front of their church community.



Youth sleep in tents to experience a piece of homelessness.

High School Overnight

February 8 – 9, 6 p.m. – 10 a.m.

High school youth are invited to an overnight retreat of games, fellowship, and service-learning together! Spend some time getting away from your busy schedules and join us!

Register at www.lopc.org/ministry/youth
Contact Keris at keris@lopc.org with questions.

Summertime Service Learning Experiences

Online registration opens February 1
Register at www.lopc.org/ministry/youth

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, yardwork, 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.

New Retreat Programming at LOPC

Over the past five years, we have introduced more than 15 new programs at LOPC in different ministry areas. During this time, we also have been exploring new retreat ideas for our church community.

Based upon information gathered, our team of pastors, staff, and church leadership identified opportunities to enhance and expand our retreat programming at LOPC. We found that our church community desires new opportunities for transformational, cross-generational faith formation, and fellowship.

In October 2018, we hosted the LOPC All-Church Retreat at Mount Hermon. This year, we will begin hosting the LOPC All-Church Retreat at Mount Hermon every other year.

However, we will still have the opportunity to attend Mount Hermon annually with another church. In 2019, LOPC is invited to attend a Mount Hermon All-Church Retreat with the First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame. This will begin a two-year cycle, with our next LOPC All-Church Retreat at Mount Hermon in 2020.

In alternating years with the LOPC All-Church Retreat, we will host a Men's Retreat (fall) and Women's Retreat (spring).

The retreat schedule for 2019-2020 is as follows:

- Fall of 2019 – High School Houseboat Trip (date to be determined).
- Fall of 2019 – Men's Retreat at Mount Hermon (October 4-6, 2019).
- Fall of 2019 – LOPC members are invited to attend the All Church Retreat led by First Presbyterian Church of Burlingame (October 18-20, 2019). One of our LOPC pastors will be in attendance as a part of this retreat. More information and sign-ups to follow in the spring of 2019 for the LOPC community.
- Spring of 2020 – Women's Retreat (date and location to be determined).
- Fall of 2020 – LOPC All Church Retreat at Mount Hermon (October 2-4, 2020).

We look forward to seeing how our new retreat programming will fulfill your fellowship and spiritual growth needs. We would love to hear from you if you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns. Please connect with the Pastor for Family Ministry, Jaime Polson, at jaimel@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x226 or Michelle Browning, the Assistant for Family Ministry, at michelle@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x248.

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret. And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in heaven. And do not be like them, for they fast to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, when they fast, they make their faces look ugly, so that they may be seen by others. But when you fast, do not let your faces look ugly, for your Father who is in heaven will reward you. And whenever you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret. And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in heaven. And do not be like them, for they fast to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, when they fast, they make their faces look ugly, so that they may be seen by others. But when you fast, do not let your faces look ugly, for your Father who is in heaven will reward you.

Living the Good Life

Practical Guidance from Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount

February 3: Religion that Works **February 17: Put Worry in Its Place**

February 10: Mastering Money **February 24: Let God Be God**

Sermon Series Through March 3

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

mission

Special Offering February 17 & 24



Inspiring people, Changing lives, Ending homelessness

LOPC will collect a special offering on February 17 and 24 to benefit LOPC mission partner, Shelter Inc., an organization that works to prevent and end homelessness for low-income residents of Contra Costa County by providing housing, services, support, and resources that lead to self-sufficiency.

Shelter Inc. seeks to:

- Prevent the onset of homelessness through rental assistance, case management, and housing counseling service.
- End the cycle of homelessness by providing three to 24 months of housing and supportive services.
- Provide affordable housing for over 250 low income households.

Three ways to give:

1. Write a check payable to LOPC with "Shelter Inc." in the memo line.
2. Go to LOPC.org > GIVE BACK > ONLINE GIVING and click "Shelter Inc." in the dropdown menu.
3. Use the LOPC APP > Press "Give button" > Click "Shelter Inc."

Contributions will be accepted February 17 – 28.

love does

love protects, love hopes, love never fails

Kickoff is February 24!

Service to others is an important demonstration of our faith as Christians. The LOPC tradition of serving together continues on February 24. On this day we encourage everyone in the community and beyond to join us in several amazing opportunities to serve. This day of service will be followed with several more opportunities to serve throughout the year. Below are just some of the highlights of the work we plan to accomplish.

love cleans

Join others at Shelter Inc. as we deep clean their kitchen that provides meals to clients daily 365 days a year.

Join others at Loaves and Fishes where we deep clean their commercial kitchen that serves over 200 meals daily.

love organizes

Join others on campus to sort and organize baby clothes for Loved Twice for low income mothers to take with them as they leave the hospital after delivery.

Join others at STAND to help organize their pantry, client boutique and garage.

love builds

Join others at Las Trampas to demo and replace kitchen cabinets.

Join others on campus to build shopping carts for Monument Crisis Center clients.

love serves

Join others preparing lunches and distributing them at a homeless encampment in Oakland.

Join others to sew pillowcases for foster youth in our community.

**Registration opens January 27 at
LOPC.org/lovedoes**

spiritual formation

10:10

grow empowered to live in faith

Join us for 10:10 in February! Here are the topics we will be discussing during the "Love Month."

February 3 and 10: 1 Corinthians and the Love Passage (1 Cor 13)

1 Corinthians 13 is best known for being quoted almost incessantly at weddings, because of its devotion to the topic of Love. As Valentine's Day draws near, we tend to think of love with reference to chocolate and roses. Join Pastor Lauren Gully and Kathy Timpfe for a two-session discussion of the letter of 1 Corinthians, the issues the church was struggling to find solutions for, and, of course, a discussion of 1 Corinthians 13 itself.

February 17: "Divorce: When Love Ends in Heartache"

As sweet as love and marriage are, sometimes they end in brokenness and heartache. Join Pastor Gerald Chinen for a frank discussion on processing and living through divorce, and finding ways to move forward from it.

February 24: "Love Does Sunday" – no 10:10

We will not meet for 10:10 this week – find one of the many projects LOPC has to offer to put your faith and love into action!



Life Worth Living

Thursday evenings, March 21 to May 9
(excluding April 18)

6:30-9:30 p.m.

LOPC

March 30:

All-day retreat at LOPC

- *What does it mean for a life to go well?*
- *What do I need to do to lead a life worth living?*
- *What does it mean for life to feel good?*

During this seven-week program, we will engage in dialogue with leaders of different philosophical and faith traditions to explore how each imagines a life worth living (Utilitarianism, the Buddha, the Torah and the Hebrew prophetic and wisdom writers, Jesus of Nazareth, Muhammad, and Technology/ Scientific Humanism).

We also will engage with contemporary individuals who understand their lives to be shaped by each of these traditions and enriched by practices such as mindfulness meditation, generosity, doing the most good you can through personal choices, compassion, rest, prayer, and forgiveness.

The program includes a retreat that invites you to reflect on your own worldview and approach to the questions under consideration and to enter a process of discerning the good life. During the last session, participants will be asked to articulate their own personal vision of a life worth living.

Cost: \$90

Registration fees are due by March 1.

Limited scholarships available.

To register contact Renée at renee@lopc.org.

For more information, contact Jane Doty MacKenzie at lifeworthlivingsf@comcast.net

community

thursday Fellowship

A program of Senior Care Ministries.

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

We kicked off the New Year by welcoming not only some new guests but also several new volunteers to our program. Program highlights in January included steel drum music by Paul Snagg, which provided a midwinter escape to the Caribbean! Mary Artist-Holden's travel talk on Iceland was also a big hit. This month, we have equally engaging programs. We welcome you to come and see for yourself.

February 7: "Give hope. Give a Hand." Becky and Don Jenkins share their experience of volunteering with the LN-4 nonprofit organization which provides prosthetic hands to patients.

February 14: Singer Leslie Darwin O'Brien shares her voice and personality as our sweetheart on this Valentine's Day.

February 21: Guitarist and singer Michael Kistner performs our favorite songs.

February 28: Bob Simon, retired Civil Engineer in Transportation and current volunteer at the Western Railway Museum, will present the history of Bay Area trains and early BART construction through video and photos.

Typical Thursday Schedule:

11 a.m.: "Meet and Greet" with snacks and beverages.

11:15 a.m.: Craft activities and/or light exercise.

Noon: Lunch. Please bring a half-sandwich and we will provide the salad, beverage, and dessert.

12:45 p.m.: Entertainment.

Questions? Contact coordinators:

Julie Peterson
julie@lopc.org

Clarita Wooldridge
clarita@lopc.org

Both Julie and Clarita can be reached at
925-283-8722 x281.

Humans Being:

Four Chapters in the Bible that Help Us Through Hard Times

Join Pastor Peter Whitelock for a four-week journey through four key chapters that have much to say about how we can weather the challenging seasons of life. This class will be practical, interactive, and, most importantly, applicable to your life. To RSVP, contact Michelle at michelle@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x248.

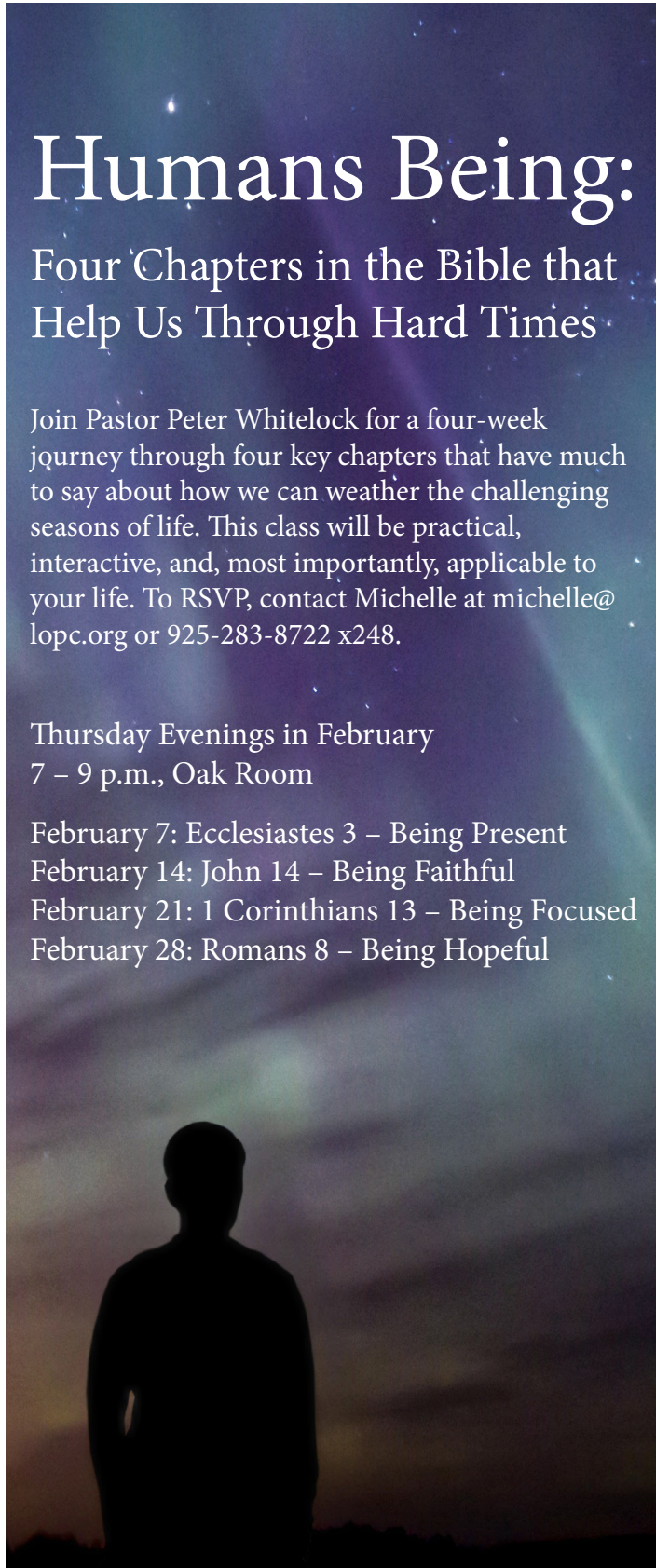
Thursday Evenings in February
7 - 9 p.m., Oak Room

February 7: Ecclesiastes 3 - Being Present

February 14: John 14 - Being Faithful

February 21: 1 Corinthians 13 - Being Focused

February 28: Romans 8 - Being Hopeful



Journey of Faith

by Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, LOPC member



Rick Burris

The Communion Table, Baptismal Font, plant stands in the Narthex, crosses and communion tables in church school classrooms, props for Godly Play—the list goes on and on—all demonstrate the ways Rick Burris has given back to LOPC by using his woodworking skills. (Be sure to look for these gifts to appreciate the work Rick does.) “If I’m able to create something for others to enjoy, it makes me smile,” he says. “It really feels good to help in the church this way.

“I grew up working with my hands and building things. But it was when I served on session and appointed to the Building and Grounds Team that I really became involved here. Right now my passion is getting the Love Does program off the ground. It involves taking the former One Sunday program to another level, finding projects for members to do year round that will help people. If members can’t be present on the date for One Sunday, this will give them other opportunities. Steve Crocker and I are very excited about the potential of serving others who really need us, so watch for details this month about Love Does.

Rick recalls a day when four LOPC workers were replacing stair treads at the Contra Costa Interfaith Housing units. “At the end of the day the facility manager and two other people said to us, ‘We can’t believe you do this on your day off. It makes such a difference to us to have this work done.’ Remarks like this make you want to go out and do more. I’m hooked on helping others.”

*Every day I learn something new—
what I can do and what I can’t.*

Rick’s parents, the late Lois and Jim Burris, joined LOPC in 1959 when Rick was three. He went to Sunday School, got his third grade Bible, and eventually attended the senior high group, but really didn’t fully understand what being a Christian meant. “It was when I was in school at UC Davis and took the fall quarter off for a climbing trip in India and Nepal that it came home to me. We had brought some gifts along and the joy I saw in the face of a little boy touched my heart. It made me realize this was what God wants of us—to reach out to befriend and help others. How simple it can be?

“Back at Davis, I met Kim. Her faith was very strong, as was her family’s. I knew this was what I wanted. It was the start of a journey which I’m still on. Every day I learn something new—what I can do and what I can’t. I rely on the verse in Luke 1:37. ‘With God nothing shall be impossible.’ That’s made me realize if I can’t do something the first time, I can probably make it happen if I work at and if it’s the Lord’s will.”

Rick has stepped out in faith various times at LOPC. He remembers when he and Kim learned Clayton Cobb (a former LOPC pastor) was their neighbor. Hosting a senior high group that evening, he invited them to come. “We did and, later, Clayton asked us up and introduced us as two new advisors. A bit of a surprise, but we wanted to get involved, and right away, we were. God put us in the right place. Being with someone who was nurturing, like Clayton, made me feel anything was possible, even though I was a little unsure about working with kids. But I loved it and stayed on for 15 years.

“When I was asked to serve as an elder for youth I wondered am I really able to do this? But I stepped out in faith and it worked. People of LOPC have really supported me in this learning experience. I’ve now been chosen as a Deacon and will be chairing the Deacon’s Emergency Fund. New challenges and new ways to grow.”

LOPC

Breakfast Group

(formerly Men's Breakfast)



Carol Johnson

*East Bay Regional
Park District*

February 20, 7 a.m.

Healthy Parks, Healthy People

\$5 donation for breakfast at the door.

RSVP by noon on February 19 to Chris at
chris@lopc.org or 925-283-8722 x110

Membership Class

February 8 – 10

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.

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

RSVP for childcare by February 3
to susan@lopc.org.

All are welcome!

Welcome Lexi Morrissey, LOPC's New Receptionist!



I am so happy to join the LOPC team to support the congregation in this role. For many years, my family and I have been a part of LOPC, and we became members in 2007. We were drawn to the strong family ministries at LOPC and the opportunities to participate in mission activities in the community. My children were both baptized here and continue to be involved in Youth programs. Many of you may already know my husband, Pat, who served several years as the Elder for Children's Ministry, and I have volunteered as a New Member Liaison.

I am originally from New York and moved to the Bay Area 20 years ago. In 2010, I moved with my family to Orinda where we still reside. Our children, Merrin and Dillon, have attended the Orinda schools, first at Del Rey Elementary, and now they are both at OIS. As they have grown in the schools, I have volunteered with them, serving the last six years as President of the Parents' Clubs. Now that my school responsibilities are winding down, I am thrilled to put my energies into this new position at LOPC. My professional background has been primarily focused on event management and fundraising, and I look forward to using that experience here in the vast number of programs LOPC supports. Personally, I enjoy all outdoor activities and you will often find us skiing or hiking with the dog in Tahoe.

I look forward to meeting all of you and welcome you to stop by to say hello.

Fourth Monday Book Group

Every fourth Monday, 2 – 3:30 p.m., Fireside Room



Every week, one person volunteers to facilitate discussion about the selected book. Selections include both fiction and nonfiction. We start each meeting with refreshments and a bit of poetry. Visitors and new members are

welcome!

Questions? Contact Bob Hoots at 925-944-0575 or
Catherine Coleman at awaitingword@gmail.com.

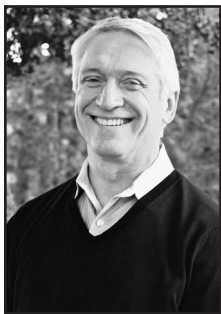


Destigmatizing Mental Health

February 1

1 p.m. – Refreshments, Fellowship Hall

1:30 p.m. – Speaker, Sanctuary



Prof. Stephen Hinshaw will present a lecture, “Stigma, Mental Illness and Families: The Next Frontier.”

His latest book, *Another Kind of Madness: A Journey Through the Stigma and Hope of Mental Illness*, chronicles his father’s recurring mental illness and the doctor-enforced silence surrounding it, plus

the huge need to combat the stigma that encompasses it. Because he has lived with this problem, Prof. Hinshaw is eminently qualified to discuss the subject.

“Despite far great knowledge of the ‘facts’ about mental disorders in present time, attitudes have hardly budged since the middle of the twentieth century,” Prof. Hinshaw says. In his presentation he defines the concept of stigma, emphasizes how it thwarts the seeking of assessment and treatment, and provides vivid examples related to his own personal and family story.

He also portrays the consequences to families when shame and silence are ordered by doctors, in the name of protecting children. Much of the material in this presentation is based on his book, which was recently awarded the “Best Book” of 2018 in the category of Autobiography/Memoir by American Book Fest.

Prof. Hinshaw is professor of psychology at UC, Berkeley, where he was department chair from 2004 to 2011. He is also professor of psychiatry and Vice-Chair for Child and Adolescent Psychology at UC San Francisco. He received his BA from Harvard (summa cum laude) and, after directing school programs and residential summer camps, his doctorate in clinical psychology from UC, Los Angeles. His work focuses on developmental psychopathology, clinical interventions with children and adolescents, and mental illness stigma.

Hinshaw’s research efforts have been recognized by his receiving the Distinguished Scientist Award from the Association for Psychological Science, its highest award, and the Distinguished Teaching Award from UC Berkeley. He has been featured regularly in the media, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Huffington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Today Show*, *CBS Evening News*, *ABC World News*, and many more. He lives in Berkeley with his wife, Kelly Campbell; they have three sons.

“Family secrets still abound, whether they pertain to parents, children, siblings, or multiple generations. Some of the most telling relate to the still-hidden and still-shameful topics of mental illness,” he says.

“This will be a rare opportunity to have the topic brought out into the open and discussed by such an eminent scholar,” says Bobbie Dodson-Nielsen, member of the FFF team. “Come and invite your friends to this free lecture.”

Science and Religion A Model for Reconciling Science and Religion

February 11, 7:15 p.m., Oak Room



Have you wondered if there is way to reconcile modern science with religious beliefs? If so, then this program is for you. The vociferous voices heard in the media usually

present the two fields as battling each other. The quieter voices are proposing ways the two fields are mutually supportive of each other. The Science and Religion program on February 11 will discuss a model for reconciling modern science with religion.

lopc foundation

Thoughts on New Year's Resolutions

By Jerry Ducey, Foundation Trustee

Some of us may have made New Year's resolutions. Your Foundation has not. Why, you may ask? The Foundation continues to support LOPC just as it has done for the past 25 years. We are an organization devoted to LOPC. As its newly adopted Vision Statement says: "The Foundation will be a permanent, reliable source of significant funding for LOPC's ministries."

Why do you support LOPC? Many give because they know that together, we can accomplish more than we can alone. Your Foundation is a way to continue to support LOPC together when we are no longer here to do so. Your Foundation does not make church policy - that is Session's job. Your Foundation is a way to fund what Session decides - today, and in the future.

That's it. Period. No new Foundations resolutions required. Happy New Year!

Happy New Year from the LOPC Foundation Trustees!



Front row, L to R - Dick James, President; Staci Johnston, Assistant Treasurer; Jim Beckemeyer; Kristi Haigh, Vice President. Back row - Phil Placier, Treasurer; Jen Crocker; Jerry Ducey; Dara Youngdale, Secretary; Mike Ross.

session

December Session Highlights

By Jody Black, Clerk of Session

Our final session meeting of 2018 included a presentation by Chris Baldwin about the Connecting, Membership, and Fellowship ministries. He shared the progress, structure, goals and challenges for each ministry. In 2018, LOPC gained 51 new members and six confirmands, a 38% increase over 2017. Chris noted we are seeing a rise in younger members joining LOPC --55% between ages 14 and 40. While these facts are very promising, we still face challenges, notably defining what membership means for individuals exploring their faith today. We also desire to make membership classes more inclusive for individuals with special needs.

In the Fellowship ministry, we must ask who in our community is being underserved or possibly never

served. The aim is to enhance fellowship across all generations and to care for our legacy groups while creating new offerings within our everchanging community.

Finally, the Connecting ministry is busy building its team around the vision of creating a community of meaning, belonging, and hospitality. Chris said the Connecting ministry wants to be "scary good" at building relationships. He also shared specific ways of achieving this ambitious goal.

As this is my last report as Clerk of Session, I'd like to share my thanks and gratitude to LOPC for giving me the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I love this church, and I love my fellow elders who have served alongside me these past three years. We have awesome leadership in this congregation, and we are led by an incredible pastoral team that works tirelessly to help LOPC be "Alive! In Christ...In the World."



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Keris Dahlkamp & Allison Kunz, Youth
Coleen Moulton, Seedlings Preschool
Ryan Timpte, Children

FOCUS NEWSLETTER

Sara Warfield, Communications
Dick James & Lexi Morrissey, Editing

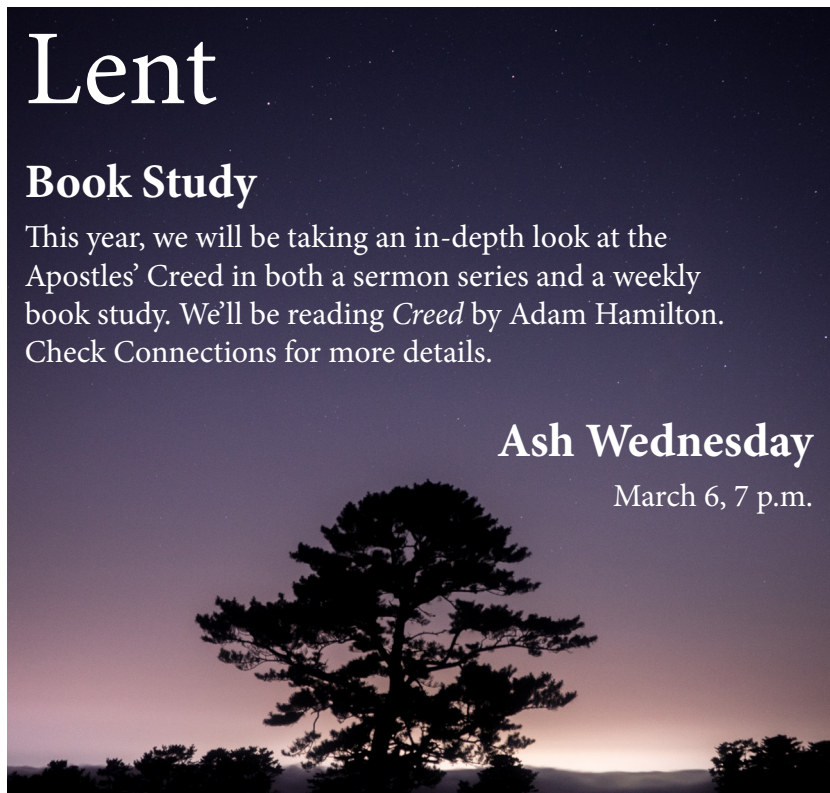
Thank you to all who contribute to each issue.

Monthly FOCUS Newsletter Deadline:

February 1 for the March 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:
www.lopc.org/submission-for-connections



Lent

Book Study

This year, we will be taking an in-depth look at the Apostles' Creed in both a sermon series and a weekly book study. We'll be reading *Creed* by Adam Hamilton. Check Connections for more details.

Ash Wednesday
March 6, 7 p.m.

Sunday Worship Services

9 a.m.

11 a.m.

Invite Friends & Family

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