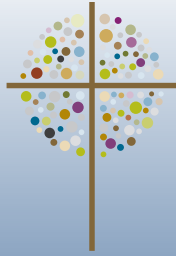


Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church

ANNUAL REPORT 2023





CONTENTS

Care	2
Children's Ministry	3
Communications Team	4
Congregation Nominating Committee	4
Fellowship	5
Finance	6
Foundation	7
Generosity Team	7
Membership & Connecting	8
MIS (Mission in Society)	8
Operations	10
Personnel	11
Seedlings	12
Seniors	12
Worship & Music	13
Spiritual Formation	14
Youth	14

pastor's message

By Peter Whitelock — Head of Staff

Dear Members and Friends of LOPC,

I commend to you this annual report highlighting the meaningful ministry at LOPC and beyond in 2023. Our congregation worked diligently to answer God's call that we serve our community and world! I trust you will be both encouraged and enlightened as you read the faithful summaries from our leadership regarding the programs, ministries and activities which comprise our mission of being a loving community of faith that learns, grows, and serves together.



Our community of faith is comprised of so many faithful servants who give generously of their time, talents and treasure to make all of this outreach possible. We live in a time of dramatic change and significant transition in the church, and this requires new strategies and approaches in order to be effective. I continue to be amazed at the willingness of the congregation to embrace new challenges, provide what is needful for sustaining a vital mission, and always seek to lead with love, humility and kindness.

As we look back on another year together, I am heartened by the depth of leadership, both staff and volunteer, and resources with which we are blessed to continue building and developing a great ministry of love, compassion and inclusion in following the way of Jesus Christ.

Yours,

Peter

care

Submitted by Leslie Finertie and Diane Vollerling

In 2023, Care Ministry transitioned most of its programming from zoom back to in-person. While the focus on maintaining a virtual community during COVID-19 was a priority, the time felt right to move back to in-person meetings for more meaningful connection. During the pandemic, Care Ministry developed Touch of Love bags which were filled with special items that were delivered to seniors at their residences. In December, the final Touch of Love bag deliveries were made. Moving forward, the Deacons will be responsible for senior visits.

Stephen Ministry trained more than ten new Stephen Ministers with five nearby churches through a combination of zoom and in-person sessions totaling 50 hours of training. Stephen Ministers were blessed to have Pastor Chris Baldwin lead a retreat in April which focused on “Why Bad Things Happen” for our consortium of churches. In September, the Stephen Ministry program sponsored a special session for the congregation that discussed suicide prevention and support for survivors. Stephen Ministers are available to provide support for those experiencing challenging life transitions.

During Pastor Jaime Polson’s spring sabbatical, the prayer team, Stephen Ministers, and Deacons continued to serve the congregation with the support from staff and other pastors. All of these Care Ministry teams raised awareness about their ministry by hosting tables at the Ministry Fair and Fall Fest, and provided hosting services at the October event entitled “The Family Circus: Walking the Tightrope of Aging and Eldercare.”

The Care Ministry Outreach Team hosted a community parent education event in April in collaboration with the Acalanes School District. This event focused on suicide prevention and raising teens to become healthy adults. It was a very popular event with over 400 parents and teens in attendance. In September, there was a sold-out community event, Growing Up in Public: Coming of Age in a Digital World, again co-sponsored with the Acalanes School District, which was partially funded by the Deacons.

The Care Ministry team participated in the Musical Remembrance service in November, which was a special service to honor loved ones who had passed recently. The team provided grief resources, and members of the prayer team and Stephen Ministry were also present and provided support to people in attendance.

The prayer team met regularly throughout the year to raise up concerns and praises submitted by the congregation via prayer cards and online submissions.

The deacons met each month in 2023, primarily in-person as the year progressed. The deacons served at 23 memorial receptions and the Deacon Community Fund approved financial requests totaling \$23,594. They began preparing the elements for in-person communion and also continued to deliver home communion kits. They participated in home visits, visiting with many of our seniors outdoors at their homes.



children's ministry

Submitted by Peter Shumaker and Susan Wentworth



2023 was a year of tremendous growth in Children's Ministry as families became more engaged and present for in-person programming.

In The Garden (Sunday School, 6 months–4th grade), staff and volunteers used the Orange curriculum which is a large group/small group format and focuses on a virtue each month to teach children more about God's love for them and others. There is continued strong attendance, with approximately 40 children a week. We have a strong volunteer staff of 12 adults who lead the children on their faith journey.

In June, 83 campers and 45 volunteers participated in Vacation Bible Camp. The children learned about God's monumental love through the story of

Joseph. The mission partner featured during the week of camp was FotoKids in Guatemala.

Kids Rock, a Wednesday afternoon program in September and October, welcomed 12 children grades K – 4th for a time of spiritual formation, recreation, and a service project.

The Children's Choir began practicing in October and there were 18 children that lead the congregation in worship for Advent and Christmas Eve.

Preschool Ministry had 25 youth employees who supported The Garden, Kids Rock, and special needs programming. For many youth, this is their first job, and it is an opportunity for them to learn about job and leadership responsibilities. The youth are great mentors to the young

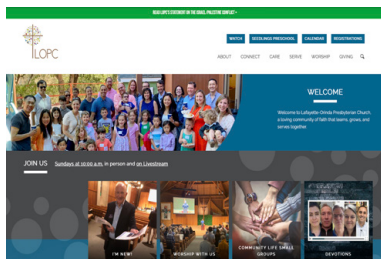
children that they spend time with.

Special Needs Ministry had two active programs each month. Friday Fun Night provided respite for 20 families with children who have special needs for an evening of arts and crafts, recreation, games, and fellowship. There are over 35 families that helped facilitate this program. Friendship Circle is for high school and college age youth with special needs who come and spend time with other youth from the local high schools. This program has developed a much needed community, and it's wonderful to see the partnership between LOPC, the local high schoolers, and the families with special needs children.

communications team

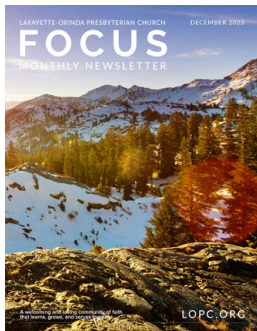
Submitted by Jim Davis

Throughout the year, the Communications Team continued its tradition of operational excellence. 2023 was a year of transition for the Communications Team. The LOPC staff overseeing communications developed an efficient model for managing communications workflow. Because of this, the Communication Team dissolved at the end of 2023.



The new website successfully went live in 2022 and has been the cornerstone of LOPC's online presence. The ministry areas and Communications Team have worked effectively to keep the content current and engaging. There are about 3,500 visits to our website each month.

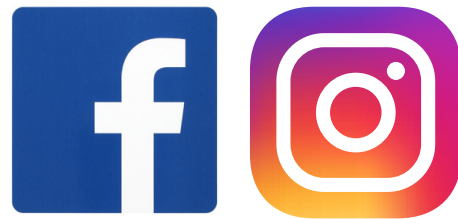
The cornerstone of communications to LOPC's members and community is the weekly "Staying Connected" email which is sent to approximately 2,200 subscribers each Monday. In addition, the devotional videos have about 250 subscribers with a 70% open rate and a 20% click rate.



FOCUS magazine is LOPC's signature monthly communications vehicle. It is printed and sent to approximately 1,000 households via USPS. FOCUS continues to provide the community with the opportunity to touch those who prefer printed material and is a physical touchstone in their homes.



The weekly "Connections" newsletter is available in printed form at Sunday worship services, as well as on the website. Connections describes the happenings in the coming weeks for all of the ministry areas, as well as useful finance and operational updates.



There are approximately 750 followers on LOPC's social media channels, Facebook and Instagram. Social media accounts are used to post event announcements and links to the devotional videos.



LOPC launched the LOPC YouTube channel on December 1. The channel contains approximately 80 videos with new devotions and sermons added each week. There are approximately 80 subscribers to the channel. Responsibility for the channel will be transferred to the new Digital Outreach team in 2024.

congregation nominating committee

Submitted by Jeff Patton

The Church Nominating Committee (CNC) worked diligently to fill all open deacon, elder, Foundation and CNC positions. This included six (adult) deacons, two youth deacons, nine elders, one new Foundation trustee, two renewed Foundation trustees and one open CNC position. A special "thank you" to the entire CNC team members for the fantastic job they did working to recruit this class that will serve LOPC over the next three years.

2023 CNC members: Jeff Patton (Chair); At-Large Members: Steve Crocker, Heidi Johnson, Linda Rosenthal, Lynne Terril; 2023 Clerk of Session: Terry Clark; Deacon Representative: Andrea Hilsabeck; Staff: Peter Whitelock, Jaime Polson

fellowship

Submitted by Cheryl Miller and Brianne Riley

The all-church events put on by the Fellowship Team were a huge success during 2023.

Winter Wonderland on January 29

This event was held on a very cold and rainy morning, and participants enjoyed a variety of food, games and fellowship. Unfortunately, due to the weather, the event wasn't as well attended as the team would have liked and will not be repeated.

Palm Sunday Egg Hunt on April 2

This very popular event was attended by over 350 people who enjoyed live music, food, activities, and the ever-popular age-specific egg hunts.

LOPC Movie Night on July 14

The family-friendly movie was moved inside this year due to hot weather. Over 100 attendees of all ages were treated to Disney Pixar's Lightyear and special guest, Pixar animator and LOPC attendee Kyle Mohr, who shared what it was like to make the movie. Free snacks and an ice cream truck were enjoyed by all.

Fall Fest on October 8

The largest event of the year was attended by over 400 people, who enjoyed activities ranging from face painting and crafts to a petting zoo. Many thanks to the LOPC Foundation for once again sponsoring the ever-popular Mexican fare by Abel's Taco Truck.

Advent Fest on December 3

Fellowship Ministry, in partnership with Young Families Connect and Family Ministry, hosted arts & crafts, advent

wreath making, cookie decorating, and playtime on the back playground for people of all ages.

Thank you to the Fellowship Events Team – Dora Bellport, Tom & Cathy Eberhardt, Kay Goodyear, Jerry & Sherry Hook, Chris Ahlman, Jane Balg, Brie Riley, Cheryl Miller, Michelle Browning, and Chris Baldwin.

Fellowship Groups were also very busy during 2023. These groups give the LOPC community an opportunity to gather in smaller groups to build community and relationships. We thank the leaders of the following small groups for all of their work and efforts!

Young Families Connect (families with infant–4th grade): This monthly event has rotating hosting responsibilities and continues to be a great outreach for families.

Community Life Groups: Men's – Chris Baldwin & Jonathan Nolen; Women's – Sharon Bartlett, Intergenerational – Heather Logan; Intergenerational – Tom Scovel; Intergenerational – Cliff Smith, Mom's – Jaime Polson, & Young Families – Stephen & Cati Dole

4th Monday and Friday Book Groups: Catherine Coleman & Jean Fiske

LOPCiders Quilters – Louise Tanno & Judy Kronmiller
Chicks with Sticks (knitters & crocheters) – Dianne Schneider

Freebirds (empty nesters) – Jim & Sue Nagle

Voyager Ships (senior adults) – Admirals Dick & Kathy Marshall

Presbyterian Women – Colleen Fawley & Mary Lou Young



finance

Submitted by Jim Nagle

We are truly fortunate and thankful for everyone who gave of their time, talent, and treasure to LOPC in 2023. Generosity has been outstanding this year. Overall, total giving of \$3,662,815 came in strong for the year and exceeded expenses by \$52,954. LOPC is fortunate to have strong support from the congregation and staff.

Congregational giving, before special giving, was \$50,067 more than budgeted. Pledge giving was slightly lower than plan for the year by \$24,545. Non-pledge, loose offerings, and other income were \$88,606 higher than budget. During the year, LOPC was blessed to receive a total of \$240,828 from three large undesignated gifts. Session was able to designate \$175,000 of these gifts to provide partial funding of a loan for the expansion of Kurth Memorial Garden in 2024, resulting in a net bequest of \$65,828. Our congregation generously gave \$95,178 for the end-of-year Faith Component.

LOPC deployed \$284,150 in Mission, Special Gifts, and Offerings, which was a \$156,150 increase relative to budget, with gifts to 20 vetted mission organizations, including Monument Crisis Center, Atfaluna, Maui Wildfire Relief, Children of Faith, local food banks, and disaster relief in Syria, Turkey, and Israel.

Seedlings closed the 2022–2023 school year with an additional contribution to the church of \$23,541, resulting from higher summer tuition rates. Overall favorable congregational giving eliminated the need to draw \$93,210 budgeted from the session reserve fund, which was originally budgeted to cover income shortfalls. LOPC had \$9,683 in lower memorial and campus user fees than budget, offset by \$28,377 of higher investment income. We are grateful for the \$411,263 of support from the LOPC Foundation.

Year-to-date ministry expense, excluding mission and special gifts and offering expense, was \$53,859 lower than planned. Personnel expenses were lower than budget, due in part, to staff transitions. Facilities related expenses were higher than plan, due to higher utilities rates, and repairs to the heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems, offset by savings in other areas. Other ministry areas were below budget. The staff at LOPC has done an incredible job managing expenses and allocating resources to meet the needs of our faith community and our mission partners.

LOPC finished 2023 in a solid financial position, which gives us confidence as we enter the new year. We look forward to serving together in ministry with you in 2024. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Statement of Giving & Expense

December 31, 2023

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Fav (Unfav)
Congregational Giving:			
Pledge Income	\$ 2,185,455	\$ 2,210,000	\$ (24,545)
Non Pledge, Loose Offerings, Other Giving	408,606	320,000	88,606
Bequests & Gifts of Praise	65,828	–	65,828
Faith Component	95,178	175,000	(79,822)
Congregational Giving w/o Special Gifts	2,755,067	2,705,000	50,067
Giving: Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings	284,150	128,000	156,150
Total Congregational Giving:	3,039,217	2,833,000	206,217
Session Emerging Needs Fund	–	93,210	(93,210)
Seedlings	157,641	134,100	23,541
User Fees & Memorial Investment Income	54,694	36,000	18,694
Foundation	411,263	411,260	3
Total Giving:	3,662,815	3,507,570	155,245
Expense:			
Ministry Teams Spending	3,285,711	3,379,570	(53,859)
Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings Spending	284,150	128,000	156,150
Total Expense:	3,609,861	3,507,570	102,291
Contributions in excess of Expense:	\$ 52,954	\$ –	\$ 52,954

foundation

Submitted by Jim Beckemeyer

Established in 1993, the LOPC Foundation strives to be a permanent, reliable source of significant funding for LOPC's ministries. The Foundation grants funds to LOPC to support ongoing and new ministries, expand mission outreach, and maintain LOPC facilities.

For the 2023 fiscal year ended September 30, the Foundation appropriated:

- \$411,000 for LOPC's ministries;
- \$158,000 for facilities-related projects.

Grants for LOPC's 2023 operating budget included \$178,000 in general ministry expenditures relating to: church staff salary support, mission partners, deacons, spiritual formation, family ministry, children, and youth.

The Foundation closed its 2023 fiscal year with \$11.4 million of invested net assets, including: \$3.7 million in unrestricted funds supporting general ministry, \$6.4 million of restricted facilities funds, and \$1.3 million of other restricted funds (deacons, youth, leadership, fellowship, mission, and music). The Foundation has a general practice of annually

appropriating 4% of a rolling 12-quarter average of invested net assets for each of its funds to LOPC.

In fiscal year 2023, the Foundation welcomed \$432,300 in both direct and legacy gifts. We are tremendously grateful for, and enriched by, the generosity of those who have contributed in support of the many ministries and missions at LOPC.

In October, the Foundation partnered with the Senior Ministry team to sponsor "The Family Circus: Walking the Tightrope of Aging & Eldercare." Geriatrician and author Dr. Leslie Kernisan and LOPC member Linda Fodrini-Johnson served as keynote speakers for the event which sought to help attendees prepare for a person's older years or to be a family caregiver. For the third consecutive year, the Foundation sponsored a taco truck at LOPC's Fall Fest, providing meals for 229 adults and 95 children.

If you have included the Foundation in your estate planning, please contact a trustee so you can be thanked and included as a "Friend of the Foundation." If you would like to make a direct gift or arrange a future legacy gift and join other Friends of the Foundation, please contact any of the 2024 trustees: Jim Beckemeyer, Lois Boyd, Jen Crocker, Linda Fodrini-Johnson, Andy Gill, Gwenn Lennox, Linda Rosenthal, Mike Ross, or Dara Youngdale.

generosity team

Submitted by Mark Weaver



Once again, we thank the LOPC members and long-time visitors for their enthusiastic support of the church and its mission over the past year.

The congregation responded to LOPC's two most recent pledge campaigns with strong estimates of giving. At the beginning of 2023, we completed the pledge campaign, "We Gather Together." A total of \$2,209,840 was

pledged by 428 households. Although fewer households pledged as compared to the prior year, those that pledged increased their estimates of giving by 6.6%, so the overall amount pledged remained nearly the same as in 2022.

In October, the current pledge campaign, "The Generous Heart", was launched to gather support and funding for 2024 ministry. The printed materials and three videos that accompanied the sermon series highlighted ministry impact in 2023, our goals for 2024, and once more included a request to consider impacts of inflation when determining an amount to pledge. Pledging is critical because it enables the church to prepare an accurate budget. Without estimates of giving, it would not be possible to forecast income, and the church would not be able to commit to many expenditures – including cost-of-living increases for our clergy and staff, as

well as predictable support for our mission partners.

Through the end of December, LOPC received pledges totaling \$1,766,166 from 272 households. This amount is nearly the same as was pledged at this point the previous year. As there is still work to do to reach our goal of \$2,425,500, those who have not yet pledged are asked to prayerfully consider the amount that they can give in 2024. Thankfully, with the decision by a significant portion of our congregation to increase their pledges this year, we are in a strong position for 2024 from a budget perspective.

There has been a trend over the last several years of fewer households pledging, but those that do pledge consistently pledge more each year. It is believed that the reduction of households pledging is primarily a result of older members passing away and many newer members being unfamiliar with the practice of pledging. Thus, in 2023, steps were made to educate the congregation of the benefits of pledging (both to the pledgor and to the church) in order to inspire others to pledge. In addition, the team began the process of analyzing historical giving and pledging data by generational cohort, city of residence, and duration of membership (among other categories) in order to more fully understand the generosity of our members. By completing this process, the hope is to better plan for the future as the demographics of our members change.

Finally, the team continued to author articles for FOCUS that spotlighted ways in which members give their time, talent, and treasure.

membership & connecting

Submitted by Patrick Chen and Patrick Morrissey

The 2023 year saw the return of more members on campus and the reintroduction of friendship pads in the pews. The Membership Team hosted two in-person membership classes in 2023. While there was one less class this year due to Chris Baldwin's sabbatical, this year's classes introduced a new, shorter format that was well received by attendees. The Ministry welcomed 20 new active members which shows a growth trend from the previous two years. The team hosted three classes in both 2022 (24 members received) & 2021 (19 members received). The Youth Ministry did not host a Confirmation class in 2023 to receive youth as new

members.

In December, the team completed the annual membership rolls maintenance project with a focus on personal outreach to members who moved away. Along with the maintenance project, 61 members were removed from the rolls and registers (37 requested to be removed/letter of transfer out & 24 deceased members). Total active membership at LOPC is 1,670 members.

Patrick Chen, Connecting Ministry Elder, and Chris Baldwin continued to develop the new "Next Steps" program helping to invite new members to consider taking their next step of faith

at LOPC by exploring what it means to be a member at LOPC: Attend, Connect, Serve, Give.

Connecting Ministry also hosted a small groups training event and Ministry Fair preparation course to help equip leaders on how to organize their groups, connect with people on the plaza, use the Fellowship One database, create a room and calendar requests, and prepare for the Ministry Fair. The Membership and Connecting Ministries resurrected the Ministry Fair in partnership with Youth Sunday on August 27 helping teams to attract new volunteers and group life participation.

MIS (mission in society)

Submitted by Chris Johnson and Virginia Ross

The Mission Team continued to prioritize advocacy as it related to LOPC's local and global partners. The team established an advocacy/justice sub team in 2023 with the purpose of exploring what justice looks like for each of LOPC's local partners. The sub team met with executive directors of LOPC's local partners to learn more about their specific needs. The team explored and set tangible goals for future advocacy work to better support local partners.

A new *love does* sub-team was created to explore new ways of increasing opportunities for the LOPC community to serve directly with LOPC's mission partners. The hope is to develop more meaningful interactions, which will lead to stronger relationships and sustainability with the organizations.

Another subgroup was developed to identify a new partner that focuses on housing/homelessness. While the Mission Team did vote to continue to partner with Shelter Inc. (LOPC will provide member volunteer hours and



special item collections), financial support will be directed to a new partner that addresses housing/homelessness.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS 2023

The first special offering of the year resulted in \$7,922 for local mission partner STAND! to provide safe lodging, food, and wraparound services for those fleeing domestic

violence. At Easter, \$33,886 was collected to improve the lives of children at Children of Faith Missions (COF) in India and Atfaluna in Gaza. COF used the funds to purchase a much needed 10-seater mini truck to provide daily transportation of students to university and medical appointments. Atfaluna used the funds for hearing loss rehabilitation



in the forms of auditory and speech training. During fall, a special offering for Fotokids raised \$10,511 and was used for students' educational and vocational scholarships. The final offering of the year was the Christmas offering that raised \$41,218 for JF Kapnek and Healing Hearts. JF Kapnek committed to use the funds for medical supplies to help preschool age children in Zimbabwe stay healthy. Healing Hearts intended to use the funds to train more facilitators and thus provide more trauma victims the therapy needed to heal.

DISASTER RESPONSE

LOPC, with the support of the congregation, responded to multiple natural disasters throughout the world in 2023. When a 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit the Turkey/Syria border, LOPC responded with \$8,453 to help with immediate needs including distribution of winterization items (blankets, mattresses), food items, and medicines. The congregation also gave \$2,550 to support earthquake relief in Morocco and flood relief in Libya. When fires devastated Maui, LOPC donated over \$28,250 to the Hawaii Conference United Church of Christ (HCUCC) to help them assist families with immediate needs such as gas, clothes, and toiletries, as well focus on long-term recovery for families affected. LOPC responded to the events of October 7 in Israel and the subsequent violence with a Gaza/Israel collection that netted \$17,030 to be split between long time LOPC partner, Atfaluna, to provide food and hygiene kits to those displaced, and to the ACT Alliance, which provides humanitarian aid in the form of food, medical supplies, and shelter regardless of nationality or religion. LOPC also deployed funds on the balance sheet to World Central Kitchen

to aid in sending food to Ukraine. The team also deployed \$3,600 to Vijana Africa, a non-profit community-based organization operating in the Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi which empowers women to raise rabbits in order to combat hunger and poverty.

ADVOCACY

LOPC sponsored various events during 2023 that focused on racial equity and advocacy. Along with the interfaith group, Neighbor2Neighbor (N2N), LOPC hosted a talk concerning the historic 2022 Supreme Court case on abortion and prayer in public schools and its impact on religious freedom and Separation of Church and State.

The Racial Equity and Engagement Team (REET) hosted a film screening of "Repair the World" followed by Q&A with panelists Rabbi Lawrence from Temple Isaiah and Patrice O'Neil, who directed the film. The event was well received with a capacity crowd of 75 people in attendance. In addition, the REET team also sponsored two events featuring The Rev. Sandhya Jha. The first was "Our History, Our Power, Our Possibilities" followed by "The Spiritual Practice of Advocacy." Both talks centered on how people can be advocates for justice in their communities.

SERVICE

love does

love protects, love hopes, love never fails

The annual *love does* day of service was a hybrid event. People chose to either work on campus or in their own home. 300 volunteers participated to organize:

- 59 boxes of baby clothing for Loved Twice.

- 300 pediatric hygiene kits to benefit JF Kapnek.
- 328 breakfast bags split between Trinity Center and Operation Dignity.
- 300 hygiene kits split between Trinity Center and Operation Dignity.
- 79 polar fleece blankets for Calico.
- 64 bags of used clothing for Trinity Center.
- 40 people worked off-site at the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano and White Pony Express. In addition to the one day of service, there were many other days throughout the year that people volunteered with LOPC's mission partners.

In collaboration with ICARE, a program of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa, LOPC invited Temple Isaiah on campus to work collaboratively to assemble 50 supply boxes that were delivered to new refugees arriving from the Ukraine. Each box contained personal hygiene and household items for a family of four to last one month.

In honor of Mother's Day, LOPC collected hygiene kits for JF Kapnek to distribute to pediatric patients and their mothers as they recovered in Harare hospital. Over 300 kits were collected and shipped.

LOPC hosted Winter Nights Family Shelter for two weeks from October 23 to November 6. There were five families consisting of six adults and 13 children ranging in age from five months to 17 years. More than 225 volunteers helped make the guests feel welcome with home-cooked meals, hot breakfasts, tutoring, and special activities.

operations

Submitted by Dave Engelbrektson

Between new projects, maintenance, and repairs, 2023 was a very busy year for the Operations and Facilities team.

IT and Office projects included:

- The migration of our calendar and scheduling from Service U to a new program called eSpace.
- Installation of AT&T fiber to the campus.
- Several new laptops, desktops, and monitors were purchased to replace outdated models.

Many of the larger maintenance and replacement projects were funded by the LOPC Foundation, for which we were very grateful. Those projects included:

- Staining and painting the front face of the Ministry Center and Oak Room.
- Painting the Fellowship Hall bathrooms and two offices in the Ministry Center.
- Recarpeted 11 staff offices in the west portion of the Ministry Center.
- Replaced all four AED (automated external defibrillator) machines with updated models.
- Replaced the wire fence along the Seedlings playground.

Our Thursday Work Crew volunteers, for whom we are extremely grateful, repaired or replaced countless items throughout the year. Some of the larger items were:

- Resealing the rain gutter joints on the Ministry Center.
- Installing a new bathroom faucet in the Chapel Youth Center.
- Building a new hatch railing on the roof of the CLC.
- Adding a new gate in the chain-link fence at Knox/Chapel Drive.
- Building a new gate behind the cell phone building.
- Rebuilding the covers for the Labyrinth trash receptacles incorporating the new requirement for organic trash.
- Rescreened damaged screens in the CLC and Ministry Center.
- Installed a new bathroom fan in the Chapel.
- Refinishing an unwanted credenza from Seedlings for use in the staff kitchen.

As in a typical year, numerous repairs were required, some of which included:

- Repairs to Fellowship Hall AC; Ministry Center HVAC; and one HVAC unit on the roof of the CLC.

- The electric utility golf cart needed miscellaneous repairs and new batteries.
- A minor elevator repair.
- Several lock repairs/or replacements and security alarm repairs.
- Several repairs to the Sanctuary lighting.
- Several hallway lights in the CLC were replaced with LED fixtures.
- Appliance repair for one of the kitchen ovens.

Other maintenance items included:

- Honeybee removal and relocation from soffit on the backside of the Chapel.
- Goats arrived in early July to clear the hillside of grass and vegetation.
- Removed a large pine tree that die, and two small unsightly mulberry trees. We also had the trees trimmed along Knox Drive, and a large oak tree trimmed that borders a neighbor's property along the lower fire trail.

We worked with the Kurth Board to help launch an exciting expansion of Kurth Memorial Garden.



personnel

Submitted by Brian O'Shea

L OPC is blessed with a tremendous staff, with a high level of job satisfaction and significant meaning in the roles that each staff member has. During the second and third quarter of 2023, Personnel Team (PT) members individually interviewed each staff member to assess how they were doing. The combined findings reinforced that staff had high levels of job satisfaction, defined by a strong sense of purpose, good job security, a respectful and welcoming environment, and a strong feeling of gratitude that was reinforced by security and connectedness through the pandemic.

While the feedback from staff was very encouraging, the Personnel Team recognized that at times like these, when things are going well, focusing on retaining present staff and rewarding them in tangible and intangible ways is very important. In 2023, the Personnel Team prioritized the importance of making salary adjustments for all staff, both acknowledging the inflationary environment combined with the tremendous level of effort that all staff made both through and after the pandemic.

It was evident that there were significant challenges when filling key positions in 2023. The Personnel Team understands that there is a problem related to the high cost of living in the Bay Area and related challenges of moving and housing costs. Addressing the cost of living in the Bay Area has been a real challenge, and the Personnel Team continues to work closely with the Finance Team to address this challenge.

In 2023, there were three fundamental areas of focus for the Personnel Team:

1. Addressing the financial gap associated with living in the Bay Area for both lay and pastoral staff.

This is a significant challenge for Bay Area employers in general, and even given the positive work environment, LOPC was not immune from this challenge, which needed to be balanced by budgetary realities.

2. On a related note, the second area of focus was to assess and monitor a plan for meeting the addressable needs of existing lay and pastoral staff. Even given the positive feedback from the Personnel Team/staff interviews, the team is aware that work needs to continue to maintain the positive and supportive work environment.
3. Finally, the third area of focus was to move toward greater diversification of the Personnel Team. While the team has had a very strong track record of partnership and advocacy with staff, a key to effectiveness is fresh new ideas and insights. By bringing on different generations, more women, and people of color, and making this a goal, LOPC can address the ongoing opportunities and challenges ahead of us.

During 2023, there were changes to LOPC staff. LOPC would like to express appreciation to Allison Kunz and Jon Corry for their dedication and service to the LOPC community. LOPC welcomed Kevin Miller - Technical Operations Manager, Bryan Dunnewald - Director of Music, Junha Kim - Youth Ministry Director, and Cathy Scheve - Care Ministry Administrative Coordinator. We are thrilled to have them on board.

It continues to be a pleasure and a privilege to serve as the team that focuses on the personnel needs of LOPC, and we look forward to a productive and impactful 2024 in continuing to support the tremendous staff we are blessed to have.



seedlings

Submitted by Liz Voelker



Seedlings continued to remain a premiere preschool in the Lamorinda area while serving 112 students in 2024. 27 families were new to the Seedlings program. Staff was composed of two administrators and 20 teachers who managed ten classrooms, including the outdoor classroom. All Seedlings staff participated in Infant, Pediatric, and Adult CPR & AED and First Aid. They also held a staff development training on Big Body Play and Language Development through CocoKids.org.

A 2023 goal was to bring families back together in person to the school/church campus to foster familiarity following the pandemic. We welcomed families back onto campus for the 18th annual Spring Showcase and Art Show in April. Teachers worked together for

months with children in their classes, from infants to pre-kindergartners, to create masterpieces to display in the classrooms and common areas of the Christian Life Center. On the night of the event, more than 100 families flooded campus to enjoy a meal together outside from Abel's Taco Truck and visit our preschool building. Children showed off their art displays in their classrooms and got to visit their upcoming classrooms as well. The Summer at Seedlings program was a huge success yet again. In the fall was the 2nd annual Trunk or Treat event, an in-person Back-to-School night, and a holiday cookie party. Seedlings continued to focus on being a "front porch" ministry by bringing families to the LOPC campus.

seniors

Submitted by Sally Roberts

Senior ministries had an active year transitioning back to in-person events. First Friday Forum hosted six speakers with a varied range of topics including "Understanding Russia Enigma" and "The Critical Challenge of Conserving Land." Programs were hybrid with in-person attendance in Fellowship Hall and online with Zoom.

The LOPC Rossmoor Parish met for the first time in almost four years at the Stanley Dollar Club House. An afternoon of socializing, with drinks and snacks, was enjoyed by 40 LOPC/Rossmoor residents.

Workshops were introduced this year to meet the needs of seniors and families that are experiencing the challenges of aging. A three-week Cognitive Impairment course was offered in the spring. In the fall, Senior and Care Ministries, with the support of the LOPC Foundation, sponsored a very successful event entitled "The Family Circus: Walking the Tightrope of Aging & Eldercare." Six speakers gave presentations pertaining to the many needs of our senior community. A geriatrician spoke about preparing



for successful aging and avoiding common pitfalls. An elder law attorney gave valuable information and legal tools for the aging journey. A popular session was "How to Deal with the Unexpected."

Thursday Fellowship celebrated its 44th year of gathering a joyful community of guests and volunteers in Fellowship Hall for socialization, lunch, and a program. Thursday Fellowship guests were the "older and wiser among us" but still young-at-heart seniors who enjoy an afternoon out to be with friends, build new friendships, and engage in lively conversation. It's

an especially valuable opportunity for those who live alone or have limited access to fellowship. A dedicated group of volunteers ran the program by providing a number of important functions, from greeting and visiting with guests to preparing a salad and dessert lunch, or organizing crafts, music, or entertainment. Most importantly, volunteers offered their unique gift of gab while helping to ensure guests always feel included, respected, and needed.

Senior Ministries continued to focus on activities to support, care, and educate LOPC's thriving senior community.



worship & music

Submitted by Julie Atkinson and Bettie Graves

This year, the work of the Music and Worship Team took place with two sub-teams. The Creative Worship Team brainstormed and strategized on how to bring creative elements to our Sunday worship services as a means of drawing more people into worship and giving it a fresh feel. The team included members of staff, the elders for Worship and Music, as well as other lay representatives. The Worship Implementation Team, which includes members of the Sanctuary Guild, the Flower Team, and the Hospitality Team, worked with their respective volunteers to bring the creative vision to life.

In February, we were delighted to welcome Bryan Dunnewald to the staff of LOPC as the new Director for Music, taking over for the interim choir director, Mitchell Covington. He worked successfully to expand the choir. Under his leadership, the choir presented a

beautiful Concert for Remembrance in November to honor loved ones who had passed recently, and then a wonderful Christmas concert in December.

We enjoyed several sermon series this year. The year began with a series on Proverbs which focused on the deeper wisdom these verses impart. The Lenten sermons and study series focused on forgiveness, culminating in Holy Week services that were as meaningful as ever. Summer began with the series titled “Resilient Faith” which was followed by the always popular Faith at the Movies sermon series. The fall series on the Beatitudes overlapped with the celebration of World Communion Sunday in October, during which the pastors drew on ideas generated by the Creative Worship Team to lift up the words, music, and theology of

people around the world. The year concluded with the “From Generation to Generation” series for Advent.

The Sanctuary Guild worked hard to prepare the sanctuary for worship each Sunday. They paid particular attention to the Friendship Pads, which is a way to welcome more people back to in-person worship. The Flower Team continued to create stunning floral arrangements which beautified the sanctuary. The volunteer ushers and greeters made LOPC members and visitors feel welcome. All three of these teams continued to look for additional members.

The Worship and Music Team is grateful for the time, energy, and passion staff and volunteers give to make worship and music at LOPC a special and meaningful experience. We wish you a blessed and happy 2024!

spiritual formation

Submitted by Jeff Eyet and Pat Stevens

In 2023, the Spiritual Formation Team began the year updating the ministry's definition and purpose statements, which were finalized. The team looked towards how best to implement those purposes. Discussion was also had on how to effectively align with other Community Life ministries. Various faith foundation programs were explored and some were identified as potential faith enrichment opportunities to follow the new members classes.

The Spiritual Formation Team sponsored a workshop on *Lectio Divina* in August. The workshop was led by Robyn Dean, Spiritual Formation team member and co-leader of the

Companions for the Journey program. This workshop was well received and was subsequently offered again on Zoom. The team anticipates offering similar workshops in the future as part of a Spiritual Practices series.

Spiritual Formation's ongoing programs, Women's Spiritual Journey Group (WSJG) and Companions for the Journey, resumed meeting in the fall after a summer hiatus. WSJG began discussion of a book entitled *Braving the Thin Places* (based on Celtic wisdom) and a team of core members continued to provide leadership and direction for the monthly meetings. Companions continued to offer a

choice of two monthly sessions, Monday evenings or Thursday mornings. Each session had three facilitators to lead the small group sharing.

As the year ended, approximately 200 Advent Study booklets were distributed and six small Advent Study groups were offered.

Discussion continued on how to develop Faith Pathways programming that can be responsive to the spiritual needs of people at various stages in their faith journeys. To help with that visioning, new potential members were invited to explore joining the Spiritual Formation team.

youth

Submitted by Nancy Grabow and Lee O'Haver

The Youth Ministry Team had a wonderful year of programming! Sadly, we had to say goodbye to Allison Kunz in March, one of our long-time youth directors. We happily welcomed a new youth director, Junha Kim, in the late summer.

The YOW (Youth on Wednesday) middle school and BTW (By the Way) high school programs resumed this year. In February, youth participated in a service project to make Easter baskets for Hope Solutions. In March, there was a BTW senior reflection night and a senior blessing (youth programming ended slightly early this program year). Youth service-learning opportunities took place over the summer: Service Squad (5th and 6th grades) was a local week-long day camp where youth worked with LOPC's east bay mission partners; the week-long Middle School service learning trip was to Salinas (7th and 8th grades), and the week-long High School service learning trip was to Guatemala to serve with Fotokids. In August, the youth led

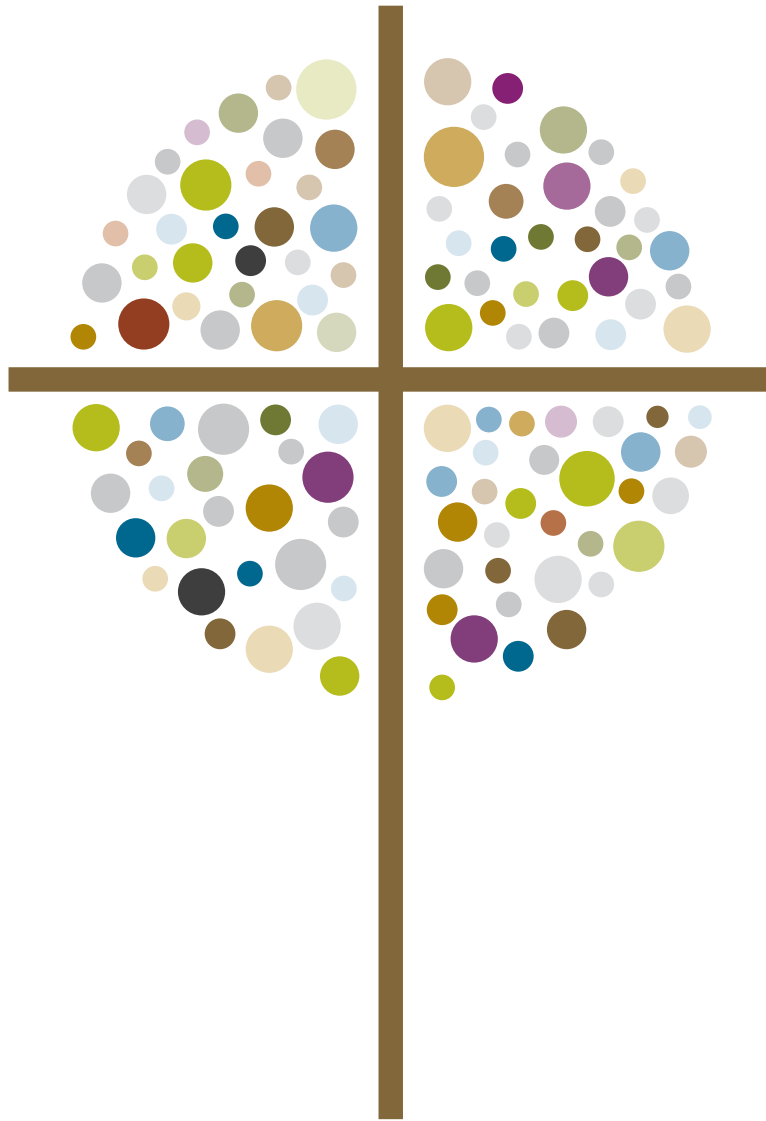


Worship on Youth Sunday and shared their experiences from the summer.

The fall season and start of a new program year brought a lot of new youth ministry volunteers, as well as a consistent group of youth attendees. There was a wonderful and restful fall retreat in September at Westminster Woods. The ever-popular photo scavenger hunt took place in October, and youth participating in the Lighthouse program served at Hope Solutions in October and December. New youth deacons were welcomed,

and a new student leadership team (FOREST) was formed. A large group of youth served at the Winter Nights Family Shelter in November. December brought the annual traditions of the mediocre talent show at YOW, progressive brinner (breakfast for dinner) at BTW, alumni dinner, and Christmas Eve family services.

A special thanks goes to the faithful advisors and to Keris Dahlkamp, Allison Kunz, and Junha Kim, whose love for Christ is manifested in their service to LOPC youth.



Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church

2023 Annual Report

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