

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MAY 2024

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A welcoming and loving community of faith
that learns, grows, and serves together.

LOPC.ORG



The Good News of Pentecost

By Jaime Polson — Pastor, Care & Executive Leadership

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.



1 Corinthians 12:12-13

The church celebrates Pentecost this month on Sunday, May 19. This celebration is often considered the birthday of the church. Pentecost marks the beginning of the church, the coming of the Holy Spirit for all believers, and the proclamation of the Good News of the Gospel for the world—that Jesus has come for the salvation of all people!

What Good News to celebrate together! We are invited to join in and share this Good News as the body of Christ, rooted in our faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ. I believe the gift of Pentecost helps us remember that each one of us, made in the image of God, come with many gifts we share with one another for the building up of the church, that we may then go and be the church in the world, sharing God’s love!

We are at our best as a church community when we can bring our full selves, our traditions, cultures, and gifts, and celebrate what makes us unique and gifted! The church has long been a diverse community of believers, bringing together people from many nations, bound together by Christ’s love and mission.

This month, we are celebrating Asian American Heritage month at LOPC. The Racial Equity and Engagement Team is planning ways to celebrate and lift up Asian Americans in our congregation and community through worship and the celebration of art, music, and prayer. This month, we look forward to celebrating our faith in Christ and giving thanks for the continued building of a strong Christian community that loves and serves God together.

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Pastoral Staff

- Peter Whitelock - Head of Staff
- Lauren Gully - Pastor, Mission & Outreach
- Jaime Polson - Pastor, Care & Executive Leadership
- Chris Baldwin - Pastor, Community & Formation
- Jane MacKenzie - Temporary Pastor

Ministry Directors

- Keris Dahlkamp - Youth
- Junha Kim - Youth
- Coleen Moulton - Seedlings Preschool
- Bryan Dunnewald - Music
- Susan Wentworth - Children’s Ministry
- Emily Austin - Children’s Ministry

Treasurer

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Focus Newsletter

- Pamela Moidel - Design
- Dick James & Lexi Morrissey - Editors

Submissions & Deadlines

Please send requests for submissions to: communications@lopc.org no later than May 1 for the June/July issue.



Staying Connected: Sign up for our weekly email to stay up-to-date on all things LOPC! **Visit:** lopc.org/email.

Need to reach us?

info@lopc.org • 925-283-8722





16 GRAMMY AWARDS BETWEEN THEM!

LOPC SOUNDS OF SPRING

MUSIC AND VOICES

TALENT FROM SANTANA, DAVE MATTHEWS BAND & THE BLUES BROTHERS!

FRIDAY, MAY 3 7:30 - 9:00 P.M.

FEATURING



TONY LINDSAY
VOCALS



MICHELLE JORDAN
VOCALS



TOM SCOTT
SAXOPHONE



MADS TOLLING
VIOLIN



JOHN R. BURR
PIANO



TERRY MILLER
BASS



GARY NOVAK
DRUMS

ALL NET PROCEEDS BENEFIT LOPC MISSION PARTNER CHILDREN OF FAITH MISSIONS IN INDIA.

TICKETS AT LOPC.ORG/TICKETS. \$30 SUGGESTED DONATION.

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 49 KNOX DRIVE, LAFAYETTE



YOUTH



► **Questions? Email
Keris Dahlkamp:
keris@lopc.org
or Junha Kim:
junha@lopc.org**

Senior Blessing May 19 at 10:00 a.m.

During Worship, we will recognize and celebrate 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!

Save the Date! Youth Sunday August 25

Mark your calendar for 10:00 a.m. on August 25, when the children and youth will lead us in all aspects of the worship service. They will deliver sermons on their experiences at Vacation Bible Camp, Service Squad, and the Wapato and Salinas/Border Service-Learning Trips.

2024 Summer Service-Learning Registration

Registration is open for the youth ministry summer service-learning experiences!

Short-term mission experiences can have a big impact. Youth in 5th–12th grade who choose to spend a week of their summer vacation dedicated to service will:

- Discover where God is already at work in communities in need.
- Act as the hands and feet of Christ to share God’s love with the world.
- Learn that those who seem different are not very different at all.
- Practice putting others’ needs above their own desires.
- Lean on God to realize their ability to overcome new challenges.

June 10–14 Service Squad: A Service-Learning Day Camp for youth completing 5th–6th grades in spring 2024.

June 16–21 SLAM (Students Learning About Mission) Trip to Wapato, WA, for youth completing 7th–12th grades in spring 2024. *Registration closed.*

July 7–14 High School Service-Learning Trip to Salinas and USA/Mexico Border for youth completing 9th–12th grades in spring 2024.

To register, visit lopc.org/service-learning.

Lighthouse at Hope Solutions May 4, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

A committed group of youth and advisors will visit Hope Solutions Lakeside Apartments site in Concord for an afternoon of fellowship, food, crafts, and games. Lighthouse is an ongoing program that establishes a deeper, long-term relationship with resident families at Hope Solutions. It is wonderful to watch the friendships and understanding continue to grow between the youth from LOPC and the children from Hope Solutions.

Questions? Contact keris@lopc.org.

A welcoming and loving community of faith that learns, grows, and serves together



CHILDREN

Dive into Vacation Bible Camp at LOPC!

Get ready to “splash” into fun this June. At Scuba Vacation Bible Camp (VBC), kids dive into friendship with God. Scuba is filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch! Hands-on science experiments, team-building games, standout songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the engaging activities that help energize each day. Parents and friends are invited to join us at our Fin-tastic Finale each day at 4:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary for a wrap-up of the day’s adventures.

We’d 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, but the relationships that are built during this week can last a lifetime. Come celebrate God’s greatness and consider volunteering your time this year at Vacation Bible Camp! Contact Susan Wentworth at susan@lopc.org to find out more about this opportunity.

Who: Kids 4 years old (by September 1, 2024) to completed 4th graders (June 2024).

Dates: Monday, June 10–Friday, June 14, 2024.

Times: 2:00–5:00 p.m.

Cost: \$155 per child.

Registration now open. Capacity is determined by how many volunteers participate and will be enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For more information, visit lopc.org/vbcamp2024.



Questions? Email

Emily Austin:
emily@lopc.org or
Susan Wentworth:
susan@lopc.org.

Seeking Upcycled items for VBC

To turn our Sanctuary and classroom spaces into an underwater oasis, we are seeking the following supplies to create coral, creatures, and more:

- Pool noodles (used or new)
- Egg cartons
- One old rowboat (email emily@lopc.org)
- TP/ Paper towel rolls
- Small plastic bowls (not disposable)
- Streamers

Please deliver all supplies, boat excepted, to the Ministry Center VBC box located directly behind reception through May 15. Thank you!

Volunteers needed in The Garden this summer!

If you have a Sunday or two free this summer, we would love your help in The Garden helping our children grow their faith. Our goal is to give our school-year volunteers a break and a chance to go into the sanctuary for worship. To be able to do this, we need your help to come and spend an hour with our kids. Please consider giving of your time on a Sunday during the months of June, July, and August. No experience required to come and love the children of LOPC. The Garden serves children Pre-K through 4th grade.

the GENEROSITY corner

Giving Time, Talent, and Treasure through LOPC's Service Programs

By Nancy Henderson, Generosity Team Member



Half a world away, one of LOPC's Mission Partners, **Children of Faith (COF) Missions**, provides a loving refuge for 120 at-risk children. With LOPC's annual support, COF successfully teaches, feeds, clothes, shelters, and loves eager young minds and bodies. Recently, 15 LOPC members visited COF, bringing their talent and treasure to this joyful community. The team's projects included

building a garden, teaching science, harmonica, creative writing, sewing and civics, decorating cookies, and leading

daily devotional time with praying and singing. We felt God's presence all around us, and we left with fuller hearts than when we had arrived.

We are grateful to see the global impact of LOPC's contribution to the COF's campus over the years, including a dormitory, basketball court and playground, and this past year a new vehicle to take students to college and medical appointments. This year, LOPC will supplement COF's own fundraising efforts to meet their need for a new kitchen and dining hall.

Overseas and local trips like this help us witness Faith in Action and provide an opportunity to serve those who benefit from our time, talent, and treasure. Service trips like this and others fill our minds and spirits, as we demonstrate how God values everyone and is at work in the world.

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'
(Matthew 25:40)

To learn more about LOPC's service work in the local and global community, please go to lopc.org and click on the "serve" tab.

We are called to share whatever, wherever, and whenever we can. Join us!

session

March Session Highlights

By Mark Weaver, Clerk of Session



Elders and pastors gathered together on March 19 in the Oak Room.

After sharing my own faith journey, attendees shared their joys and concerns, and session proceeded to

approve our consent agenda.

Elder Royce Nicolaisen, one of 15 participants on the adult mission trip to Children of Faith Missions in India, reported that the trip enriched the lives of both the students and also those who attended. Pastor Peter Whitelock reported that our Director of Music, Bryan Dunnewald, has organized a special concert at LOPC on May 3 that will raise funds to purchase musical instruments for Children of Faith. The concert will feature a combined 16 Grammy awards among seven musicians, led by notables such as Tom Scott of Steely Dan and Tony Lindsay of Santana.

Peter noted that, on March 20, Elders Terry Clark and Chris Johnson would lead a group to the San Ramon Valley Islamic Center to participate in the breaking of a fast for Ramadan. Chris also reported that, on March 23, he and others would join an interfaith March for Peace in connection with the Israel/Palestine conflict.

Peter observed that the Rev. Dr. Anne Stewart's visit to LOPC was a success. The Executive Vice President of Princeton Seminary led a women's retreat on March 9 which was extremely well received. The next day, she preached to the congregation, met thereafter with children from Temple Isaiah who were in attendance to learn about the Christian faith, and then led a discussion on understanding God in the Old Testament.

Peter will be taking his sabbatical from April 17–June 13. In addition to his planned travels, he will be studying how the Book of Genesis relates to cosmological models, which he hopes to use in a sermon series in the fall.

During Peter's absence, Pastor Jaime Polson will serve as head of staff and Pastor Chris Baldwin will be moderator of session.

Jaime reported that team goals are in the process of being finalized, which will allow LOPC to plan its ministry for the upcoming program year, which runs from August 1, 2024 until July 30, 2025.

Jaime then shared with us that the Racial Equity and Engagement Team is planning ways to celebrate and lift up Asian Americans during the month of May. Church members will share their beautiful traditions, a speaker will be invited to discuss her life of faith as a second-generation Asian American Christian, and there are plans for a read-together of George Takei's graphic novel about his childhood in an internment camp during World War II.

At the conclusion of our meeting, elders voted for next year's Clerk of Session, which will be announced prior to next month's meeting.

PALM SUNDAY EGG HUNT



Our annual Palm Sunday Egg Hunt event was a hit with all ages! IT WAS AWESOME!!! We hosted three age-appropriate egg hunts all over the church campus: 1–3-year-olds toddled around the Oak Room picking up colorful eggs, 4–7 year-olds rushed the Chapel that was transformed into a special colorful hunt of its own, and then our 8–10 year-olds searched the Sanctuary with a special lights out flashlight egg hunt through the pews! SO MUCH FUN!

Along with the egg hunts, there was a special appearance from an Easter Bunny (Youth Ministry Director, Junha Kim) and everyone enjoyed live music from The Remi Moulder Duo, face painting, arts and crafts, a photo booth, games (including Squishmallows and candy prizes!), sweet breakfast bites, sandwiches, treats, free play, and a ton of smiles! A huge thank you to Michelle Browning and the Fellowship Ministry Team for hosting an incredibly fun event for the entire community as we ushered in Holy Week!

WELCOME new members

Diane Barbera



Diane Barbera grew up in Orinda attending Santa Maria School, Miramonte, and St. Mary's College. She became the

Administrator/Pastoral Associate for Santa Maria Church in Orinda, and then renewed her career in banking. She has four daughters, six grandchildren, and recently became a widow. Currently, she is a certified grief educator and moderates grief groups.

Neil and Puja Bondy



Neil and Puja Bondy moved to Orinda in 2021 and are raising their big, blended family with love and care. They are parents to

twins Lily and Cyrus (age 10), twins Cleo and Daphne (age 9), and Yogi (age 3). Puja is grateful to serve her community as a nurse, and Neil enjoys his profession in civil engineering. As a couple, they enjoy volunteering at a cancer camp, watching their kids play sports, indulging in Survivor marathons, Taco Tuesdays, and hosting gatherings of friends and family. Neil enjoys disc golf and springboard diving, and Puja enjoys reading and vegetarian cooking. They feel very blessed to join the uplifting spiritual community they have found at LOPC.

Myra Gillum



Myra Gillum moved to the San Francisco area last spring to be with her two children, her daughter in Pleasant Hill and her son in SF. Before that, she

was a long-term member of Vienna Presbyterian Church in Virginia, where she was in the choir briefly and served as a Stephen Minister. She is looking forward to being able to continue in Stephen Ministry here at LOPC. Now retired, she has been a psychotherapist and a high school English teacher, and she enjoys bicycling, gardening, and animals. Myra is especially fond of dogs and hopes to own one of her own soon.

Michele Himmelberg



Michele Himmelberg moved to Oakland in 2023 after living in Orange County for most of her life. She is single and retired, blessed with two adult daughters, a son-in-law, and

twin grandchildren (turning four this year). She worked as a journalist for nearly 30 years and then as a public relations director for Disney Parks. She enjoys hiking/walking, travel, and board games - and entertaining her grandchildren! What attracted her to LOPC was the teaching and the commitment to social justice. Michele says, "I'm excited to create my new spiritual community here and find ways to contribute."

Matthew and Ann Lofton



Ann & Matthew Lofton began their married life 35 years ago, attending a Presbyterian church in Los Angeles. They moved to Benicia in 2020 and love it. They are blessed

with two adult daughters: Shelby, a broadcast journalist based in UT, and Paige, who works with Autism Spectrum Disorder children here in the Bay Area. Their family loves travel and is obsessed with their dog, Nutmeg, a 17-year-old Havanese. Having made a study of local Presbyterian churches, they kept coming back to LOPC because it simply "feels like home." From that centering breath as worship begins, to the music, to the excellent preaching by every member of the pastoral staff, they are glad to join this community of believers.

Jim and Kristin McPhail



Jim and Kristin McPhail have lived in Lafayette for more than 17 years where they raised their family, Maddie (27), Zoe (23), and Connor (20). Jim is

involved in corporate real estate and Kristin is an interior designer working for a Miller Knoll dealership in SF. Travel is in their DNA, as they are frequently visiting their kids in Washington, DC, Charlottesville, VA, and Seattle, WA as well as traveling abroad and visiting family in Oklahoma. They look forward to becoming involved at LOPC and serving in the many ministries that support the community and others in need. They have been attending LOPC for many years and look forward to making it their official home!

Kimberley Overaa



Kimberley Overaa has lived her life in Lamorinda except during college at USC in Southern California. She has been married to Jerry Overaa for 16 years, and has three grown sons, John Crossley (38), Luke Crossley (34), and Samuel Crossley (30). She

has been a master gardener since 2005 and loves farming, growing flowers, reading, and walking in the early morning with Orinda Road Runners and walking Caminos in the summertime.

Lee and Laura Paige



Lee and Laura Paige met in Portland, OR. Lee was in law school and Laura was a bank teller at the drive-up window! They eventually got together “on the same side of the glass” and were married November 3, 1978 in Vancouver, BC. After

clerking for a judge for a year, they moved back east, settling in NJ. Lee worked his entire career for international insurance brokers. Laura did office and retail work, while at the same time developing incredible skills as a jewelry designer. They spent five years in NY/NJ and then got on the corporate re-lo track: 10 years in Hartford, CT, 10 years in Boston, and finally to San Francisco in 2006. They moved to the east bay in 2011. They have two children: 1) Dave is a TV executive producer in LA. His wife Sarah is a comedy writer. They have two children, Sid and Freddie (ages 4.5 and 1.5 respectively). 2) Lesley is a pediatric occupational therapist in Oakland. Her husband Matt is a tech genius. They have a son, Desi (age 3.5).

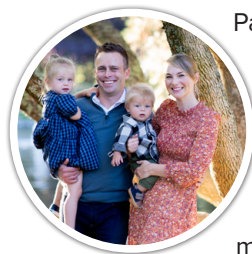
Christine “Chris” Parks



Chris Parks returned to the East Bay two years ago from Grass Valley, CA where she had lived for 20 years. While there, she served as president of the Peace Lutheran Church’s Woman’s group intermittently for a total of four years.

Chris had originally joined LOPC in the early 1980’s. At that time, she had served as an LOPC deacon, participated in Thursday Fellowship, and was a member of Schooners. Since her return, she has enjoyed reconnecting with family and friends, and says that she has returned to this church, where she feels at home.

Paul Rudwall



Paul Rudwall and his wife, Erin, live in Lafayette and have two children, Mia (4) and Jack (2). Paul and Erin work in sales and marketing roles at technology companies. In their spare time, they enjoy spending time with family, getting outdoors, and when they can find time, trying to ski or golf. They’re excited to join LOPC and meet more members of the community!

Daniel Sargent



Daniel Sargent is 1/5 of the Sargent Family, who are joining LOPC in sequence. His wife Alethea is already a church member, and their three children are Corrina (11), Ramona (8), and Johanna (5). Daniel is a historian who teaches at UC Berkeley (a generalist, or dilettante, by instinct, his interests range from foreign policy and government, to international relations, to history at the planetary scale.) Daniel is a devoted

father to his daughters, a persistent runner and cyclist, and an enthusiastic but inelegant skier. The names of the Sargent children were taken from the Bob Dylan songbook, an indication of Daniel’s appreciation for music—an arena in which he lacks gifts of his own. The Sargents live in Reliez Valley, Lafayette, and their children attend Springhill Elementary School.

Martijn Scheybeler and Krista Seiden



Martijn and Krista live in Orinda with their two children, Charlotte (3) and Lukas (almost 1), and their dog, Pepper. Martijn is a marketing executive, and Krista is a marketing analytics consultant. They love skiing and travel (to the Netherlands, where Martijn was born). They are happy to join LOPC as members to help support the local community!

RuthAnn Schwan



RuthAnn Schwan and her husband, Carl, live in Lafayette with their cat, Panther. Her husband is retired, and she continues to teach piano lessons in her studio in their home. She plays the violin in a string orchestra in Rossmoor. She was a member of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church since 1976 and recently started visiting LOPC. The

music, sermons, and friendliness of this congregation drew her in. Her hobbies are reading, watching baseball (don’t Go A’s!), and watching a good Netflix movie. She enjoys staying in touch with her two grandchildren, both of whom are in college. She looks forward to hearing more quality music and theology from this congregation in the future.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

new members CONTINUED

Caitlin Thompson



Caitlin Thompson recently moved back to Orinda after 10 years in New York City where she met her husband, Richard. They have a daughter, Evangeline “Evie” (21 months), and a baby boy arriving in April. Caitlin most recently worked in corporate culture for an entertainment brand and has her MBA and MA in Social-Organizational Psychology from Columbia University. She was confirmed at LOPC in her youth and her late mother, Nancy Fitzmaurice, loved the church community. Evie starts preschool at Seedlings this fall, and Caitlin looks forward to connecting with other young families.

Matthew and Angela Timm



Matt and Angela Timm live in Orinda and have two children, Danielle (19) and Colin (15). Although they moved to the area in 2007, they have spent much of the past 10 years living overseas in Australia and the U.A.E. They have enjoyed the opportunity to see the world in their travels, but are also happy to be back home. Danielle is a freshman at UCLA, and Colin is a sophomore at Miramonte. They are looking forward to becoming part of LOPC and serving the community.

new youth members

2024 Confirmation Class



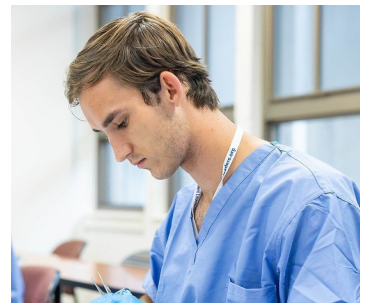
Ashlyn Browning, 11th Grade



Paige Carpenter, 12th Grade



Jenna Englehart, 12th Grade



Levi Johnson, 12th Grade



Samya Johnson, 12th Grade



Magdalena Meyers-Dahlkamp, 10th Grade



John Weaver, 12th Grade



Katie Weaver, 11th Grade

staff announcement



Welcome Tom Galbraith!

We are happy to announce that Tom Galbraith has joined LOPC as the new part time Campus Operations Coordinator. Tom is responsible for LOPC’s meeting/event calendar and supporting church facility operations. Tom is in the church office Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Tom is excited to bring his years of operational knowledge to the thriving LOPC community in which he lives. Assisting with campus operations and driving the calendar for all facilities scheduling keeps him happily on his toes. Tom loves communicating with members and groups to continuously streamline the processes for room reservations. If Tom isn’t at LOPC, you will probably find him behind a drum set, performing or teaching, or just making noise.



FIRST FRIDAY FORUM

First Friday Forum's speaker for May will be LOPC's own Dr. Laura Beth Nielsen, presenting "The Transformative Power of Prison Education." She will demonstrate how and why prison education serves everyone.

Dr. Nielsen is a professor of Sociology and Law at Northwestern University and a research professor at the American Bar Foundation.

She has been interviewed by PBS, NPR, Fox, *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *Time*. She is widely published regarding civil and constitutional rights, mobilization, and inequality. She studies how ordinary people understand and use the law.

This program will be on Friday, May 3 at 1:30 p.m. and is open to the community. It is held in the

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church sanctuary and simultaneously available online. To watch the program click *Watch* on the webpage at lopc.org/first-friday-forum/. Registration is not required.



foundation

A Benediction

By Dara Youngdale, Foundation trustee

The Reverend Dr. Jonathan L. Walton, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, offered this benediction when preaching at LOPC:

"Life is short. Time is filled with swift transitions. We don't have much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel this thing called life with us. Let's be swift to love, Make haste to be kind, Be quick to compliment, Slow to criticize.

(And if you do, do so constructively.)

Love yourself, for loving yourself is a precondition for loving your neighbor.

If we do these things, we may begin to approximate what it means to

Do justice,

Love mercy, and

Walk humbly before our God."

What a powerful reminder about life, love, and our Christian faith in action. At LOPC, many are taking "...time to gladden the hearts of those who travel this thing called life with us." Many are called to serve, and many are extending the love of Christ at LOPC, within our local communities and globally.

As we come alive in our faith, connect in community, and serve throughout the world, the LOPC Foundation is a financial partner and supporter of LOPC's mission now and into the future.

If you would like to join in building the Foundation and add to the investment many others have made in LOPC's future, please consider naming the Foundation in your estate plans. Any gift amount is appreciated.

To learn more about legacy giving and how the Foundation supports LOPC, please reach out to a Foundation trustee or visit lopc.org/foundation.

hold in PRAYER

Prayers of comfort and peace go out to the families and friends of:

Kaaren Rose, who passed on February 27. A service will be held on May 11 at 1:00 p.m.

Gwen Reichert, who passed on April 2.

Ralph Sackman, who passed on April 5. A service will be held on May 18 at 2:00 p.m.

Ernie Hulsey, who passed on April 7.

Tom Lowe, who passed on April 15.

thursday Fellowship

caring • sharing • loving

A program for Senior Care Ministries

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

By Julie Peterson, Coordinator

This month, Thursday Fellowship will celebrate 45 years of service to seniors in the Lamorinda community. We are excited to acknowledge this milestone with a party and a catered lunch on May 9. Save the date!

Thursday Fellowship began in 1979 as a follow-up to the LOPC deacon's program "Friendly Callers." Many volunteers had been shopping for and visiting senior "shut ins" in the community. A special tea party at LOPC was held for this group in May of 1979. It was so appreciated and well attended that the volunteers decided to invite the Seniors for tea on a more regular basis. The "Drop-In Center" was started, and it met in the former Oak Room every other Thursday. It was an instant success, and volunteers helped with coffee, crafts, exercises, lunch, and entertainment. The program grew into a weekly program and moved to Fellowship Hall to accommodate the growing program. Crafts were made and sold at a Christmas bazaar to raise money to support the program until funding became more secure. The volunteers began meeting for



prayer and planning each Thursday morning, and this gathering grew into an important time of spiritual formation for the volunteers. The volunteers grew close as a group and their faith journey became an important part of the program as they ministered to others. This tradition continues as an important part of the volunteer's day. Years ago, an article about Thursday Fellowship in the *Contra Costa Times* called it 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 Schedule:

- **May 2:** Entertainment by Syria T. Berry, popular Bay Area, entertainer, guitarist, and versatile vocalist.
- **May 9:** 45th Anniversary Luncheon and Party featuring Joe and Gillian Roebuck.
- **May 16:** Michael Kistner, singer and guitarist, and longtime friend of Thursday Fellowship, will perform our favorites as we sing along.

- **May 23:** Doug Bryson, "The Scottish Tenor," and colleagues will perform.
- **May 30:** San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Yale graduate, Julie Kim, will play her violin accompanied by UC Berkeley and Saint Mary's faculty member, Sharon Lee Kim, on the piano.

Our typical daily schedule is as follows:

- 11:00 a.m. "Meet and Greet" with snacks and beverages.
- 11:15 a.m. Creative arts and crafts, activity, or light exercise program.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch: Bring a sandwich and we will provide salad, beverages, and dessert.
- 12:45 p.m. Entertainment.
- 1:30 p.m. Program ends.

Questions?
Contact Julie Peterson at julie@lopc.org for more information.





A CHAT WITH MISS DAWN: INSIDE THE TULIPS CLASSROOM AT SEEDLINGS

By Kaylin Deutscher, Seedlings Board, Communications

At Seedlings Preschool, each teacher has a unique role in shaping our little ones' early-learning experiences. Among them is Miss Dawn, the nurturing force behind the Tulips class. With years of experience and a heartfelt approach to teaching, Miss Dawn plays a crucial part in our preschool's community. This month we explore Miss Dawn's background, her approach to teaching the Tulips class, and what makes her classroom a special place for our preschoolers.

Kaylin: *How long have you been at Seedlings? Can you share a bit about your background before joining?*

Miss Dawn: My journey with children began when I was 19, at a center in Oakland called the 24-Hour Children's Center, where I worked with 2-year-olds. After that, I moved to a before and after school program called City Kids in Tracy, and then to Kindercare in Livermore, where I worked with 3-year-olds. I took a hiatus to stay home with my daughter for five years. Upon

returning to the workforce, I found my home at Seedlings, where I've been for 12 years.

Kaylin: *Tell us about the Tulips class. What makes this age group so special?*

Miss Dawn: The Tulips class, with children ages 3 to 4, is a joy to work with. This age is all about emerging independence and self-discovery. We embrace this by allowing the children significant input in planning our activities and themes throughout the year, making each school year distinct and exciting. For instance, one class's fascination with bugs led us to construct a giant ant wall, while another's interest in space transformed our room into a cosmic exploration zone.

Kaylin: *What does a typical day or week look like in the Tulips class?*

Miss Dawn: Our days are structured yet flexible, beginning with Circle Time for discussions on themes, Alphafriends, and announcements. This is followed

by Free Choice, where children engage in various activities based on their interests. The remainder of the day includes lunch, outdoor play, and quiet time, providing a balanced mix of learning, play, and rest.

Kaylin: *What aspects of Seedlings do you appreciate the most?*

Miss Dawn: Seedlings' warm, caring, friendly, and welcoming environment is what I cherish the most. It's a place where both children and staff are nurtured and valued, making it a wonderful community to be a part of.

Kaylin: *Can you share some of your favorite memories from Seedlings?*

Miss Dawn: Attending the NAYCE conference in LA with my colleagues is a standout memory, marking the first off-site staff activity since my tenure began. Another precious memory was our teacher's day retreat in Napa. Despite my initial reservations due to not drinking alcohol, it turned out to be an exceptionally fun and bonding experience.

church nominating committee (CNC)

Seeking New Church Leaders for terms beginning January 1, 2025!

One of the cornerstones of our Presbyterian heritage is the annual election by the congregation of church officers to provide leadership for the church. It is a privilege and responsibility to nominate members to serve 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:

Elders: 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 annually to serve three-year terms. At the time of producing this issue of FOCUS, the following teams need an elder assigned in 2025. CNC, Membership, Fellowship, Racial Equity/Engagement, Spiritual Formation, and Youth. Once the 2025 clerk of session is determined, there will be an additional team that will need an elder.

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. Deacons

serve a three-year term. Two deacons of high-school age serve a one-year term.

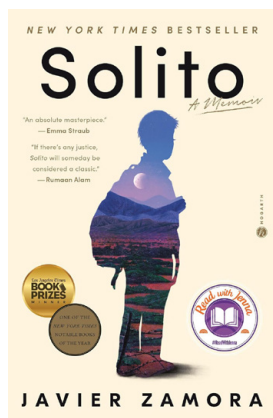
Foundation Trustees serve on the LOPC Foundation. This nine-member foundation receives gifts in various forms and designations, manages investments, and provides funding for LOPC needs that cannot be accommodated in the church's annual operating budget. Trustees serve an initial term of four years and 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.

The Congregation Nominating Committee (CNC) members are elected for a one-year term. Their duties include receiving and reviewing nominations for church officers and selecting candidates to present to the congregation.

Nominations can be submitted on the website at: lopc.org/cnc.

For more information, contact a CNC member: Jeff Patton (Chair), Mark Weaver (Clerk of Session), Steve Crocker, Heidi Johnson, Linda Rosenthal, Lynne Terril, Esther Kim, and Peter Whitelock. Thank you for your prayerful consideration. We are looking forward to hearing from each of you.

community

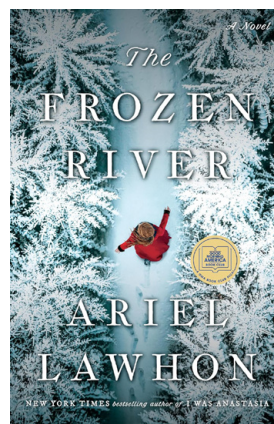


Fourth Monday Book Group

May 27 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom

The group will discuss *Solito, A Memoir* by Javier Zamora. Javier was just nine when he embarked upon a 3,000-mile journey from his tiny village in El Salvador to the United States in hopes of reuniting with his parents who fled a few years earlier. He traveled alone amid a group of strangers, relying on the help of a "coyote" hired to lead them to safety. *Solito* is about family: family left behind, family waiting at the other end of the line, and the family that sustained Zamora along the long journey.

Contact Jean Fiske at jdfiske@gmail.com to be added to the group.



Fourth Friday Book Group

May 24 at 4:00 p.m. on Zoom

The group will discuss *The Frozen River*, by Ariel Lawton.

All are invited to join. To receive the Zoom link, contact Catherine Coleman at awaitingword@gmail.com.



Young Families Connect

May 5 following Worship

Are you a family with young kids (infant–4th grade) looking to hang out with other families? Join us on the back playground where kids can play on the playground and parents can hang out with each other enjoying breakfast bites and coffee.

Email Michelle Browning at michelle@lopc.org for additional information.

care



The Deacon Ministry consists of LOPC members who have been elected by the congregation to serve as beacons of care. Deacons offer support in the following ways:

HOME VISITS

Deacons arrange and participate in visits to members who are homebound, hospitalized, or in various types of care facilities.

HOME COMMUNION

Upon request, home communion kits are available to members not able to attend worship services in person.

MEAL DELIVERY

Deacons order and deliver food to persons recuperating from illness, those recently discharged from the hospital, new moms, grieving families, or anyone who might need a meal in a time of crisis.

To request any of these services, please leave a message on the Deacon Line at (925) 283-8722, ext. 274. Messages are responded to in a timely manner daily.

Dementia Caregivers Support Group

May 1 and 15

Join this one-hour support group for those caring for someone with dementia. The group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom.

To register, please contact Linda Fodrini-Johnson at lindafj620@outlook.com.

finance

Financial Update

Submitted by Jim Nagle & Staci Johnston

The church closed the first quarter of 2024 with pledge income of \$726,625 which is ahead of budget by \$103,625. Non-pledge and loose offering giving were lower than plan by \$21,575. Year-to-date March total contributions were \$850,166 as compared to the budget \$736,279. Part of this increase relates to higher mission giving for the Kapnek Trust and the Congo related to the successful 2023 Christmas special offerings.

Ministry Team spending of \$909,813 was less than budget by \$48,761, excluding additional mission and special gifts spending. No unusual items were noted in ministry expense.

Year-to-date March 2024 closed with net contributions of \$39,713 favorably exceeding the projected year-to-date budget shortfall by \$128,948.

Thank you to those who have pledged and made their pledge contributions early in the year. LOPC is grateful the first quarter of the new year is off to a strong start. We encourage anyone who has not pledged to consider making a pledge so that we can plan and continue our great ministry. It is never too late to pledge!

Giving at LOPC

One of the most practical ways you can help during times like these is through your financial support.



To give, visit lopc.org/giving, or scan the code on your mobile device.

Statement of Giving & Expense

March 31, 2024

	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Fav (Unfav)
Congregational Giving:			
Pledge Income	\$ 726,625	\$ 623,000	\$ 103,625
Non Pledge, Loose Offerings, Other Giving	65,704	87,279	(21,575)
Faith Component	150	150	-
Congregational Giving w/o Special Gifts	792,479	710,429	82,050
Giving: Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings	57,687	25,850	31,837
Total Congregational Giving:	850,166	736,279	113,887
User Fees & Memorial Investment Income	17,091	18,954	(1,863)
Foundation	139,956	139,956	-
Total Giving:	1,007,213	895,189	112,024
Expense:			
Ministry Teams Spending	909,813	958,574	(48,761)
Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings Spending	57,687	25,850	31,837
Total Expense:	967,500	984,424	(16,924)
Contributions in Excess of Expense:	\$ 39,713	\$ (89,235)	\$ 128,948



**LAFAYETTE-ORINDA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
49 Knox Drive
Lafayette, CA 94549



info@lopc.org
925-283-8722

IMPORTANT

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BEFORE 5/1/24

Thank you!

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SUMMER of love does

Summer is a great time to travel, relax, and hang out with friends and family—yet for some of our LOPC mission partners, summer can be a time when more volunteers are needed. Two years ago, we began the Summer of *love does* program, which aims to provide various service opportunities for people to participate in during the summer months and help fill many spots that would otherwise go unfilled. Our hope is that you may be inspired to join us at our summer of *love does* service opportunities or discover other organizations that need help this summer in our community.

Visit lopc.org/lovedoes to find links to volunteer opportunities you can explore on your own and look for LOPC's Summer of *love does* opportunities in the coming months.