

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AUGUST 2024

# FOCUS

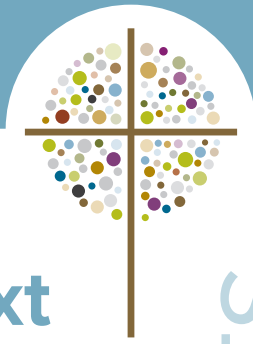
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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

[LOPC.ORG](http://LOPC.ORG)





# What is Your Next Step of Faith?

By Chris Baldwin — Pastor, Community & Formation

This is a question that I've begun posing to folks during recent new member classes. At first, it became a way to invite people to become involved in ministry programs. But over time, it's actually become an important part of my own faith journey too. The reason why it's important is because it invites us to consider what God is up to in our lives and continue looking for what God is doing in, around, and even through us.



This August, we're again going to host the Ministry Fair (Aug. 25), which will be an opportunity for you to consider how you might take your next step of faith at LOPC. Perhaps your next step of faith can be to join a small group or invite those people who sit next to you in the pews over to your home for dinner. A next step of faith for some might be to join LOPC as a member, firmly rooting yourself deeply in the community. For someone else, it's making sure they give generously or volunteer with a service project or ministry program. There are many steps of faith that can be taken, and one person's step of faith might differ from another. And that's fantastic because we're all on different faith journeys.

Friends, what is your next step of faith as we begin the fall program year? What is God inviting you to consider participating in and contributing toward in the LOPC community? Whenever and whatever you decide to participate in, I invite you to tell someone so they can ask you how that activity is going...and consider following up with them to tell them how you have seen God at work!

Whether you're a longtime member of LOPC or are a new visitor, know that there is a next step of faith awaiting you where God is inviting you to learn, grow, and serve in this loving, inclusive, and amazing church family. You are so loved!

I can't wait to see everyone take their next steps of faith together! Happy August!

## CONTENTS

### August 2024

- Upcoming Events ..... 2
- Mission ..... 3
- Community ..... 4
- Youth ..... 5
- Children ..... 6
- Thursday Fellowship ..... 7
- Staff Announcements ..... 8
- Generosity/Formation ..... 9
- Seedlings ..... 10
- Care..... 11
- Finance ..... 12
- Session ..... 13

#### Pastoral Staff

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

- Staci Johnston

#### Focus Newsletter

- Pamela Moidel - Design
- Lexi Morrissey - Editor

#### Submissions & Deadlines

Please send requests for submissions to: [communications@lopc.org](mailto:communications@lopc.org) no later than August 1 for the September issue.



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

#### Need to reach us?

[info@lopc.org](mailto:info@lopc.org) • 925-283-8722



LOPC welcomes

# Dr. Heath W. Carter

Associate Professor of American Christianity at Princeton Theological Seminary

August 17 and 18



Dr. Heath W. Carter teaches and writes about the intersection of Christianity and American public life and most recently has focused on the future of American democracy. He is currently working on a book entitled *On Earth as it is in Heaven: Social Christians and the Fight to End American Inequality*, retelling the story of the American social gospel, which transformed not only churches but the nation as a whole and powered faith-filled movements for a more egalitarian United States of America.

We are fortunate to have Dr. Carter at LOPC to lead us in two important conversations for times such as these.

## Christian Nationalism

Saturday August 17, 9:00–10:30 a.m. in the Oak Room

Dr. Carter will share some personal stories and will also address the origins and development of Christian nationalism from a historical perspective. He will help us consider how we, as Christians, can most faithfully and effectively engage in public life during this time of surging Christian nationalism.

**Please register at [lopc.org/registrations](http://lopc.org/registrations).**

## Surviving an Election Year with Our Souls Intact

Sunday August 18, 11:11 a.m. in the Oak Room

We sing “Blessed be the Tie That Binds,” but how is that possible in a hyper-polarized nation? How is it possible to love our neighbors when we so vehemently disagree with them? Dr. Carter will lead a conversation about how we, as Christians, can faithfully navigate this election season by standing strong in our convictions but without abandoning Christ’s call to love all our neighbors. With God’s help, we can find ways to hold onto the possibility of persuasion and the hope of transformation, for ourselves and others.

**All are welcome.**

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MINISTRY  
FAIR

SUNDAY AUGUST 25  
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

## Explore, learn, and connect!

Whether you're a long-time member or new to our community, there's a place for everyone at LOPC. Come and discover how you can be a part of our church community. We can't wait to welcome and connect with you!

For more info, email [michelle@lopc.org](mailto:michelle@lopc.org)  
Ministry Table Sign-ups at [www.lopc.org/registrations](http://www.lopc.org/registrations)

# mission

## Christmas in August

Sometimes, saying, “Thank You,” doesn’t seem enough. Two small words often don’t fully reflect the impact of someone else’s actions and generosity. In this case, the “Thank You” is from the JF Kapnek Trust (Kapnek) and countless young children in Zimbabwe for the 2023 LOPC Christmas offering. The offering raised nearly \$20,000 for Kapnek.

For years, Kapnek focused on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of AIDS and the curbing of AIDS in the general public. This was done by creating their early childhood development programs (ECD, ages 0-8) to provide healthcare to children, helping them be more resistant to AIDS and other diseases.

Part of Kapnek’s focus on children’s health is their sponsorship of health check-ups for ECD-aged children periodically during the school year. Kapnek brings government nurses from cities into rural and remote areas for the children to receive health exams. Health records are created and maintained so their health can be monitored. At these rural health clinics, parents of children younger than preschool age are invited to have their children examined and, occasionally, with the parent’s



# KAPNEK TRUST | USA

permission, be immunized against common childhood diseases.

The LOPC Christmas offering was earmarked to help Kapnek launch a pilot program in the Mhondoro District, southeast of the capital city, Harare. When learning of LOPC’s generosity, a former Kapnek board member generously matched the LOPC Christmas contribution, which provided approximately \$39,000 to help with this new program. The program creates and distributes health kits to 18 clinics serving 54 ECD centers in the Mhondoro Ngezi district. The kits will be used to treat common childhood illnesses that are identified during health checks, as well as treatment for minor accidents around the home (see targeted list below). Providing on-the-spot medical care should greatly improve outcomes for common childhood illnesses and accidents.

It is expected that of an estimated 12,000 children to be seen, roughly 1,000 children will benefit from ‘on the spot’ treatment for various ailments. An additional 200 children are expected to be referred to a district hospital for further treatment for

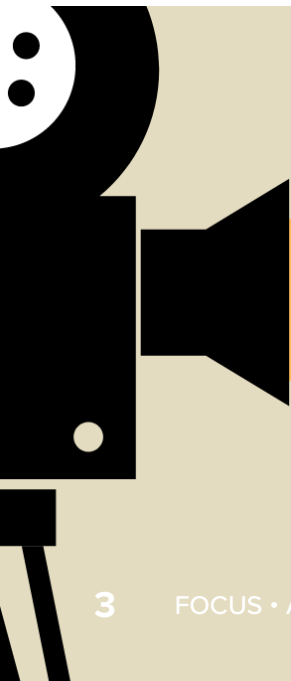
health concerns identified during the health checks. In 5,000 caregivers with health education and awareness during the health assessments.

Progress reports will be conducted at the end of each school term detailing activities, achievements, lessons learned, and expenditures. It is expected that lessons from this pilot program will be used to expand the program to other JF Kapnek Trust supported districts of Zvimba and Chegutu.

**Blessings to all who help make this happen.**

**Targeted list of childhood conditions and accidents to be treated by the medicines in the kit:**

- Respiratory infections
- Skin Conditions
- Diarrhea
- Eye Infections
- Ear Infections
- Throat Infections
- Burns
- Snail Fever (bilharzia)
- Worms



## Summer 2024



LOPC’s popular summer sermon series connecting compelling scenes from our favorite movies to meaningful Bible passages.

**8/4  
Wonka**

**8/11  
In Restless Dreams:  
The Music of Paul Simon**

**8/18  
The Sandlot**

**9/1  
The Holdovers**



# community



## Update on Gaza/Israel

**August 4 at 11:11 a.m.  
in the Oak Room**

Join us to hear an update from Doug Dicks, who is living in Jerusalem and is PCUSA's Regional Liaison for Israel, Palestine, and Jordan. His work informs and enables PCUSA's advocacy for peace and justice in the region. All are welcome.

Register at [lopc.org/registrations](http://lopc.org/registrations).

## Book Group Meetings

**Fourth Friday Group:**

**August 23 at 4:00 p.m. on Zoom**

**Fourth Monday Group:**

**August 26 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom**

Have you read a book this summer that you'd really like to discuss with friends? Join us in these planning meetings and advocate for the book you favor. We will choose books for the next 6 months or so after a good discussion. If we choose your book, we'll ask you to lead the discussion when the time comes.

**To be added to the Zoom meetings, email Catherine Coleman at [awaitingword@gmail.com](mailto:awaitingword@gmail.com) for August 23 and Jean Fiske at [jdfiske@gmail.com](mailto:jdfiske@gmail.com) for August 26.**



## Lunch and Presentation on Domestic Violence

You are cordially invited to join LOPC's Stephen Ministers for lunch and a presentation by STAND! For Families Free of Violence on Sunday, August 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the Oak Room. STAND! is committed to promoting safe and strong families by helping to solve domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse.

**Please register for this event before August 7 by visiting [lopc.org/registrations](http://lopc.org/registrations).**



## Be Part of Our Community Groups!

We are excited to extend an invitation to you for an enriching new program called Community Groups.

What is a Community Group? It is people coming together to serve or just spend time together. It makes fellowship with others easy with a group of curated mission and fellowship experiences each month from September through May.

As part of a Community Group, you can expect various service opportunities within our community and beyond. Whether it's volunteering at Winter Nights, serving together at love does, or participating in other service opportunities, there's a place for you to contribute your time and talents.

Beyond service, we believe in fostering a sense of belonging and friendship. Our gatherings will also include meaningful fellowship where we share life together, encourage one another, and grow together spiritually.

We welcome you to join us! Whether you're new to the church or a longtime member looking to deepen your involvement, these groups offer a supportive environment where you can make a real impact and deepen your relationships at LOPC. Sign up as a family or as an individual, or grab some friends and sign up as a group together! Already in a group? We would still love to have you, and you can sign up your existing LOPC group! All ages welcome!

We will kick off all groups on September 8 after worship and have opportunities planned until May. We look forward to seeing you there and working together to spread love and compassion in our community all while becoming more connected at LOPC.

**To sign up go to [lopc.org/registrations](http://lopc.org/registrations). Please register by September 1.**

**For more information go to [lopc.org/belong](http://lopc.org/belong).**

**For questions or to get even more excited email [lauren@lopc.org](mailto:lauren@lopc.org) or [chris@lopc.org](mailto:chris@lopc.org).**

## Attention, Quilters!

Once again, our sanctuary will be adorned with the traditional November quilt display! This is a time to show off your own skills, or perhaps those of a beloved relative or friend. The display goes up for the entire month of November, so start considering what you might want to contribute. We hope you will! We take great care of your quilts, and you will get them back at the end of November. A letter will soon follow with details for those who have loaned their treasure in the past.

**If you are new to this, and need that more detailed letter, or you have any questions, please email Ann Loar at [annloar@icloud.com](mailto:annloar@icloud.com).**



# YOUTH

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

## **Youth Alive!**

**Starting August 11, Sunday  
Mornings, 10:00 a.m. in CLC 201**

Youth Alive! is back for the 2024–2025 school year starting August 11. Youth in 5th–8th grade take part in fun games, activities, and Bible-based discussions relevant to their lives while connecting with peers. Students learn about how God has connected with people in Scripture and how we continue to see God at work in our lives today.

## **BTW: By The Way Starting in September!**

BTW is LOPC’s ministry for high school youth and meets on Sunday evenings in CLC 201 from 6:00–7:30 p.m. Reach out to junha@lopc.org for more information.

## **Save the Date for Youth Sunday!**

**August 25**

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

## **YOW: Youth on Wednesday Starting in September!**

YOW is LOPC’s ministry for 5th–8th grade youth and meets on Wednesday evenings in CLC 201 from 6:00–7:30 p.m. with an optional dinner in the Davies Room at 5:30 p.m. Reach out to junha@lopc.org for more information.





# CHILDREN

## PLAY! on Wednesdays

Epic Bible stories transformed by YOU!



There are so many epic stories in the Bible: David vs. Goliath, baby Moses floating down the river in a basket, Jonah being swallowed by the whale, Joseph's coat of many colors, and more. This fall, Children's Ministry launches a new creative arts and tech program called **PLAY on Wednesdays!** Kids in K–4th will have the opportunity to engage with these stories and experience them in a whole new way. Each week, our Co-Director of Children's Ministry, Emily Austin, will use her theater background to introduce new ways of storytelling: stop-motion animation, shadow and hand puppetry, improvisation and tableaux, sound scape, prop and costume design, etc. We will read various accounts of Bible stories and picture books to learn the plot of the week and then break into

small groups to take on the role of actor, designer, or playwright! Our young creatives will then get to work, telling the story in their own words and expressing their ideas of what these stories might mean in today's world.

PLAY on Wednesdays will run in two sessions and have a window-on-the-work showcase at the conclusion of each session which we will open for friends and family to attend. Tuition for PLAY on Wednesdays is \$175 per semester.

**FALL:** Sept. 18, 25, Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, showcase: Nov. 6.

**WINTER/SPRING:** Jan. 15, 22, 29, Feb. 5, 19, 26, March 5, 12, showcase: March 19.

3:15–5:00 p.m.

For more information or to register, visit [lopc.org/registrations](http://lopc.org/registrations).

Questions? Email   
Emily Austin:  
[emily@lopc.org](mailto:emily@lopc.org)



# thursday Fellowship

*caring • sharing • loving*

## A program for Senior Care Ministries

Every Thursday  
beginning September 19.  
11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall

By Julie Peterson, Coordinator

Thursday fellowship is traditionally on hiatus in the summer months, but this year two more meetings were added to the calendar: June 27 and July 18. We had a full house, and it was wonderful to have the extra time to visit and to enjoy each other's company. You could feel the energy and connection in the room as we played bingo, exercised, and celebrated birthdays, which included a special one for Frank Grannis who turned 100 on July 24. Frank is a vital part of Thursday Fellowship and entertains us from a list of 1,000 songs he has memorized. What a joy to know him and have him as a part of our program.

This August we will be on break as the volunteers take the time to prepare and plan for our 46th program year.

On September 19, Thursday Fellowship will resume! We will meet every Thursday in Fellowship Hall from 11:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. except for holidays. Mark your calendars and join our community for some fun, fellowship, and friendship.



### September Schedule

- **September 19:** Michael Kistner, singer, guitarist, and longtime friend of Thursday Fellowship, will perform our favorites as we sing along.
- **September 26:** Syria T. Berry, popular Bay Area entertainer, guitarist, and versatile vocalist, is a Thursday Fellowship favorite.

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](mailto:julie@lopc.org) for more information.





# staff announcements

There are two staff transitions this month at LOPC. First, Youth Director Keris Dahlkamp, who joined LOPC’s youth program in 2014 and has spent the last few years obtaining a Master of Divinity degree, is now ready to explore chaplaincy work at John Muir Health. Keris has been an integral part of LOPC’s youth ministry program, and we thank him for his years of service and loving care of our youth. Second, Junha Kim, who joined LOPC’s youth program in August 2023, has been called to serve as Associate Pastor for Mission, Community Engagement, and Youth at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon. This is a wonderful opportunity for Junha, and to receive a call such as this as he continues his doctoral program coursework is a blessing. We are so grateful for Junha’s heartfelt service to our youth and church community this past program year.

We recognize that two youth ministry staff leaving LOPC in the same month is not ideal, but know that there are already plans in place to ensure that 2024–25 youth programming provides LOPC youth with meaningful opportunities to grow with God and experience favorite activities during YOW, BTW, and Sunday morning programs. Pastor Jaime Polson will continue to provide oversight of youth programs and will lead as interim director, with the help of other clergy and staff, until a new director and associate director of youth ministry are hired. LOPC is blessed that our youth program includes many dedicated volunteer advisors who will be present this fall and will provide program continuity for our youth.

## A Farewell Note from Keris:

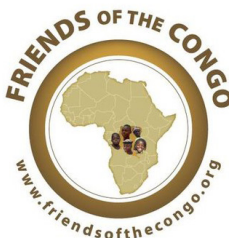


Thank you for all the care and love you have shown my family and me over the years! It has been such a huge blessing and privilege to be involved in the lives of the youth, families, and whole community as the director of Youth Ministries through that time. The memories we have cultivated together have enriched, nourished, challenged, and inspired me. I am so fortunate to have grown and served here in the ways I have.

Throughout my life, I have always tried to trust my intuition and listen for how God is moving in my life. Over the last year, I have been discerning my role in ministry, and I am feeling called to explore the work of chaplaincy. Since December 2023, I have been serving part-time at John Muir Health in Walnut Creek in this capacity. It has been an incredibly affirming and wonderful experience on multiple levels. As Pastor Jaime said, this fall I will begin a full-time and year-long residency with John Muir Health. This is an opportunity I feel so grateful and humbled to have before me.

In my time here, there are two mission partners that have left a significant mark upon me: Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children and Friends of the Congo. When I reflect on my ten years here at LOPC, I often think about how much of it began by listening to Friends of the Congo staff speak in the Fellowship Hall, which then inspired the “CongoSwim” and the LOPC Congo Team. In addition, I am compelled to continue to lift up those suffering in Gaza in the ongoing horrific war, including those our congregation partners with at Atfaluna. If you feel compelled, please direct any donations in my honor to these worthy causes through LOPC.

My prayer is that you may be well, and that we may all continue to listen to the call of the Spirit in our lives, together. To the youth, you are my heart. Thank you for your support. God bless, dear friends.



## A Farewell Note from Junha:



Friends and family, thank you to each and every individual that I have had the privilege of meeting in my time here. Though a short time, I have developed a gratitude for this community’s embrace and support, and it is only

because of this past year here at LOPC that I even feel capable and cautiously confident about stepping into a pastoral call. It has been a blessing to be the director of Youth Ministries and be entrusted to care for your families during this time. Thank you again, and I pray that we will partner in ministry in the future.

To the youth, I am absolutely honored that you allowed me the privilege of speaking into your lives. Each of you are so clearly crafted with God’s heart imprinted on your life, and I will continue to pray that every single one of you will continue to dive into the depth of God’s love deeply embedded and fully woven into your identity. You have all been an unforgettable gift in my life, and I do not take the responsibility of having been your youth director for even just a year lightly. I will cherish the many shared memories and lessons we learned together, and I hope I will make you as proud as I have been of each of you. Always lead with love and be confident in your powerful voice, friends.

Blessings and best,

Junha

# the GENEROSITY corner

## Our youth, our future...

By Alan Coe, Generosity Team Member



Does God care about the mental health of our youth? Yes, of course, He does. God only wants good things for our children. He invites us to “cast all anxiety on him, because he cares for us.” 1 Peter 5:7.

Anxiety? Has parenting ever been more challenging than it is right now? Hard to say for sure, but parents are dealing with a whole new world of external influences that are readily available. Think about how social media influences our youth. The social media personalities, called “influencers,” make money influencing our children—for better, or for worse? While it is a great blessing to live in a community such as ours, along with it comes the pressure our children often feel to be successful in a success-oriented community.

For many years LOPC has partnered with an organization called Challenge Success to work with parents (and grandparents) in our community to help them prepare their children for the variety of opportunities and challenges they will encounter in school and beyond. LOPC member, Courtney Anderson, has played a key role in bringing Challenge Success into our church community, the local schools, and community at large. The organization seeks to improve well-being, engagement, and belonging for our children in school and in life. LOPC has introduced Challenge Success starting with Seedlings, followed by grades K–12. Part of the “challenge” is

to broaden the definition of success. The narrow definition of success (best student, best athlete, most popular) can often lead to disappointment, anxiety, depression, or other mental health disorders. On top of that, there is the pressure associated with getting into a top college! By broadening the definition of success, all of our children find their own measure of success and happiness in whatever they pursue.

If your child is struggling with any of these challenges, please know you are not alone, and we invite you to join us as a faith community to discuss and share ways we can better support our youth. Challenge Success is on the LOPC campus throughout the year working with parents of children of all ages. On September 18, there will be a program for high school parents and on September 24 a program for middle school parents. You can learn about the Ten School-Year Resolutions for Parents. My favorite is #9: I will honor the importance of PDF (play time, down time, and family time). Kids need time to play, daydream, and just hang out.

LOPC provides financial support for Challenge Success by way of the Family Ministry budget, the Deacon Community Care Fund, and the generosity of our members.

LOPC member Graham Wiseman has dedicated almost two decades of his life raising awareness about mental health and fostering well-being among students in our local community, and beyond. We will have a look at Graham’s work in the February 2025 issue of *Focus*.

Jaime Polson, Pastor of Care and Executive Leadership, oversees LOPC’s engagement in these varied programs that support and nurture both parents and our youth. Jaime is also available as a resource to parents who want a trusted and safe avenue to talk about the challenges facing their children.

Thank you, Courtney, Graham, and so many others for the gift of your time and talent to love and support *our youth, our future...*

## spiritual formation

### Consider Companions for the Journey

There comes a time for most of us when we discover a deep desire within us to live from the heart what we already know in our heads and do with our hands.

You may be in a season of personal transition in your daily life or in your spiritual life. In Companions, we covenant together to seek spiritual community and to support one another in our identity as God’s beloved children. Our time together is a time of learning and listening to each other, to ourselves, and to God. We use Scripture, prayer, silence, and time in smaller Companioning groups with a trained facilitator. The time together is a safe place, free of judgment, advice, or questioning.

Spiritual community is the work of the Holy Spirit, to which we add our intentional commitment and effort. We commit to learning to listen to God, to self, and to others while using timeless spiritual practices. In this community, we can grow in our ability to discern and respond to God’s gracious presence and action in us, among us, and through us.

If those intentions call to you, consider Companions. In seeking, we learn. This journey of finding is available to us together through Companions. No prior experience necessary. The Holy Spirit accepts and gathers us as we are and helps us become who we wish to be.

Companions meets monthly from October to June. Keep an eye out for future announcements regarding meeting details.

**Stop by our table at the Ministry Fair on August 25. For more information, contact Carl Grant at [clgrantsd@gmail.com](mailto:clgrantsd@gmail.com) or Robyn Dean at [r2dean@sonic.net](mailto:r2dean@sonic.net).**



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



# SUMMER AT SEEDLINGS!



**LOPC**  
FOUNDATION

By making a legacy gift to the LOPC Foundation, you can give the way you live—by making a better future for your loved ones and making a lasting impact on our LOPC community.

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





## care



### Deacon Support

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 parents, 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.**

### MCI (Mild Cognitive Impairment) Support Group

**Mondays, August 5–August 26 from 10:30–11:30 a.m.**

This is an in-person support group for those with a diagnosis of MCI. To ensure appropriateness for this group an interview is necessary.

**Please contact Linda Fodrini-Johnson at [lindaf620@outlook.com](mailto:lindaf620@outlook.com) to schedule a phone or in-person interview. The group will be led by Pastor Jane Doty MacKenzie.**



## STEPHEN MINISTRY

### Stephen Ministry Training

Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide confidential, one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, illness, family member estrangement, or relocation. Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, but they all share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need.

LOPC's Stephen Leaders, together with those from neighboring churches, will be conducting the required 50-hours of training for Stephen Minister candidates, from September 14, 2024, through January 2025. Classes will be held Tuesday evenings via Zoom and in-person on a few Saturdays, with long holiday breaks.

**For those wishing to participate, an interview will be required during the summer. To apply, or for additional information, please email Jean Lee at [jleetravel@comcast.net](mailto:jleetravel@comcast.net) or Pastor Jaime Polson at [jaime@lopc.org](mailto:jaime@lopc.org). Do you have gifts for caring, encouragement, and listening? If so, please prayerfully consider becoming a Stephen Minister.**

*[God] comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. (2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT)*

## hold in PRAYER

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

**Dennis Nugent,** who passed on May 8. A service will be held on August 3 at 11:00 a.m.

**Victoria Collins,** mother of Kim Felton, who passed on June 20.

**Sallie Carter,** who passed on June 25. A service will be held on August 15 at 1:00 p.m.

**Phil Jenkins,** husband of Vi Egli Jenkins, who passed on June 30.

**Trudy Ausfahl,** who passed on July 4.

### Dementia Caregivers Support Group

**August 7 and 21**

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 [lindaf620@outlook.com](mailto:lindaf620@outlook.com).**



# finance

## Financial Update

Submitted by Jim Nagle & Staci Johnston

LOPC is off to a solid start for the first half of 2024. Year-to-date total giving was \$92,198 improved from budget. Several factors related to the stronger giving: \$74,568 of unbudgeted member gifts of thanks, \$24,958 in higher special

gifts and offerings, \$9,632 in higher pledge giving, offset by a \$48,658 in lower giving for non-pledge giving and loose offerings. 2024 investment income is higher than budget, which is a nice upside for 2024.

Ministry Team spending of \$1,776,548 was less than budget by \$33,052,

excluding additional mission and special gifts spending. Overall ministry team spending is consistent with or favorable to ministry budgets.

Year-to-date, June 2024 ended with net expenses of \$258,141 which is an improvement from the projected year-to-date budget shortfall by \$100,292. It is normal this time of year to have total year-to-date expenses exceeding total contributions.

LOPC is grateful to our generous friends and members for their 2024 giving. 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!

Statement of Giving & Expense			
June 30, 2024			
	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Fav (Unfav)
<b>Congregational Giving:</b>			
Pledge Income	\$ 1,134,632	\$ 1,125,000	\$ 9,632
Non Pledge, Loose Offerings, Other Giving	110,213	158,871	(48,658)
Bequests & Gifts of Praise	74,568	-	74,568
Faith Component	150	150	-
Congregational Giving w/o Special Gifts	1,319,563	1,284,021	35,542
Giving: Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings	75,941	50,983	24,958
<b>Total Congregational Giving:</b>	<b>1,395,504</b>	<b>1,335,004</b>	<b>60,500</b>
User Fees & Memorial Investment Income	58,888	27,190	31,698
Foundation	139,956	139,956	-
<b>Total Giving:</b>	<b>1,594,348</b>	<b>1,502,150</b>	<b>92,198</b>
<b>Expense:</b>			
Ministry Teams Spending	1,776,548	1,809,600	33,052
Mission, Special Gifts & Offerings Spending	75,941	50,983	(24,958)
<b>Total Expense:</b>	<b>1,852,489</b>	<b>1,860,583</b>	<b>8,094</b>
<b>Contributions in excess of Expense:</b>	<b>\$ (258,141)</b>	<b>\$ (358,433)</b>	<b>\$ 100,292</b>

## Giving at LOPC

One of the most practical ways you can help is through your financial support so LOPC can share God's love through our ministries.



To give, visit [lopc.org/giving](https://lopc.org/giving), or scan the code on your mobile device.

# PLAY!

## on Wednesdays

### Epic Bible stories transformed by YOU!

For Youth ages Kindergarten through 4th grade

Fall session: September 18 - November 6

Winter/Spring Session: January 15 - March 19

Wednesdays, 3:15 - 5:00 p.m.

For more information, see the full program description on page 6.

Register Now at [lopc.org/registrations](https://lopc.org/registrations)



# session

## May & June Session Highlights

By Mark Weaver, Clerk of Session



### LOPC's May Session meeting

was held on May 28, one week later than normal as a result of LOPC hosting the San Francisco Presbytery meeting on May 21. With

Pastor Peter Whitelock on sabbatical, Pastor Chris Baldwin moderated the meeting; Pastor Jaime Polson has served as Head of Staff while Peter has been away.

After Elder Jeff Eyt shared his faith journey, Clerk of Session Mark Weaver reported that LOPC pastors, staff, and congregation made the Presbytery meeting a success. The church campus was used for meetings, a full worship service, dinner, and the Presbytery meeting itself. Pastor Chris Baldwin, who leads the Personnel Working Group for the Presbytery, successfully shepherded two motions related to the recent departures of the three-person team serving jointly as Executive Presbytery, as the Presbytery seeks to hire a single Executive on a going-forward basis. Elizabeth Ball, LOPC Administrative Manager was honored by Leticia Williams, the stated clerk of the Presbytery, for organizing what was the first in-person meeting for the Presbytery in nearly five years.

As part of her operations update, Pastor Jaime Polson shared metrics regarding changes to participation in our youth and children's ministry programs as we have come out of the pandemic. Jaime then informed us that LOPC Treasurer, Staci Johnston, who has provided invaluable leadership with respect to our church's finances during and following the pandemic, intends to retire early next year. We are grateful that Staci has provided ample notice, which will allow for a seamless transition as her replacement is hired and trained.

Elder Jeff Patton, who leads the Church Nominating Committee, reported that his team's work is nearly complete. His team has had great success filling the slate of nominees for leadership positions beginning January 1, 2025.

Jim Beckemeyer and Linda Rosenthal, Foundation Trustees, shared an informative presentation with Session that highlighted the Foundation's vision, mission, giving, and growth. They emphasized that the LOPC Foundation is a faith operation that acts in trust, serves in faith, and builds relationships.

Finally, in executive session, it was approved to provide funding to enable our temporary pastor Jane MacKenzie, to remain in her current position through year-end.

**June's session meeting** was held at Elder Andrea Hilsabeck's home and included a delicious al fresco dinner and some time for elders and pastors to connect with one another. It was a

lovely evening and a perfect setting to welcome back Pastor Peter Whitelock following his eight-week sabbatical. During Spiritual Formation, Elder Royce Nicolaisen shared a heartfelt testimony of his faith and the importance of giving back to both our local and global communities.

Session approved one motion, to call a meeting of the congregation on September 29 to approve the Congregation Nominating Committee's (CNC) slate of nominees for leadership positions (elder, deacon, CNC, foundation) with terms beginning January 1, 2025.

During the meeting, Peter Whitelock shared some highlights of his sabbatical, one of which was travelling to Spain to walk the Camino de Santiago.

Jaime Polson discussed the ministry team goal planning process which will wrap up in August for the upcoming program year. She also reported on personnel matters such as current staff transitions with the open Treasurer and Youth Ministry positions, staff performance review process, and the state law mandating staff training/policies for de-escalation and workplace violence. This important training will take place for staff in August. Jaime concluded her report with an update on Kurth Memorial Garden construction and the new roof on the Ministry Center.

Lastly, Elder Jeff Patton, chair of CNC, presented an update on the slate of elder, deacon, CNC, and Foundation nominees which will be presented to the congregation in September.



LAFAYETTE ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Summer MOVIE NIGHTS

Showtime at  
6:30 p.m.

Join us for a fun, free evening of popcorn, drinks  
& family-friendly flicks! All are welcome!

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 1 • WONKA (PG)**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16 • SANDLOT (PG)**

**SPECIAL GUEST: SF GIANTS BUSTER POSEY**

Register at [www.lopc.org/registrations](http://www.lopc.org/registrations)

Lafayette-Orinda  
Presbyterian Church

# FALL fest

Sunday  
October 6  
11am - 1pm

**Free entry**

Live Music  
Kids Activities  
Games & Prizes  
Delicious Food

**All are welcome!**



**LAFAYETTE-ORINDA  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

49 Knox Drive  
Lafayette, CA 94549



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# SAVE THE DATE!

## Sounds of the Season A Fall Concert Celebration

### September 20 7:30 p.m.

Tickets available  
August 15

More information  
coming soon

Sponsored by LOPC's Music Ministry  
and featuring Special Guest Artists