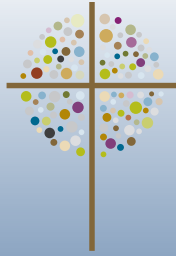


SANCTUARY

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church



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pastor’s message

By Peter Whitelock — Head of Staff

Dear LOPC Family,

What a remarkable year this has been! An exhaustive record of how our ministry has impacted the community near and far is truly beyond our ken, but in these pages you will find a faithful record of intentional love in action and service to others in the name of Jesus Christ. I commend this annual report to you, and hope you are encouraged and enlightened in the reading of it. In these often stressful and challenging times, we have worked diligently to be “a welcoming and loving community of faith that learns, grows, and serves together.”



Our community of faith is made up of a large gathering servants who give generously of their time, talents, and treasure to make all of our ministry possible. In a time of constant change, we offer the promise of love and support to everyone. I am continually amazed at how our congregation embraces new challenges, provides what is needful for sustaining a vital mission, and always seeks to lead with compassion, humility, and kindness. As we look back together, I am heartened for the future by the depth of leadership, both staff and volunteer, which continues to build and develop a great ministry here in following the way of Jesus.

Yours,

Peter

care

Submitted by Alexis Thompson and Diane Vollerling

The Care Ministry team at LOPC has had a wonderful year, meeting monthly to come up with some new initiatives focusing on caring for young families and refining previous care initiatives.

For new young family initiatives, the deacons began providing cards and care packages for parents in the church when new babies arrive.

Care Ministry continued hosting parent education events in collaboration with the Acalanes School District, including one in September with Dr. Denise Pope, Ph.D., a renowned author and co-founder of Stanford's Challenge Success. Drawing on her extensive expertise in child development and education, Dr. Pope shared practical tools and strategies for raising confident and well-balanced children in today's over-scheduled and anxious

environment. In December, LOPC hosted another educational event, a special screening of *Chasing Childhood*, a thought-provoking documentary that examines the evolving nature of childhood and parenting, and hosted a follow up panel discussion with LAFSD educators.

This year, the prayer team, Stephen Ministry, and deacons continued to serve the congregation with the support from staff and other pastors. We raised awareness by hosting tables at church wide events.

The prayer team continues to meet every Tuesday to raise up the concerns and praises submitted by the congregation by prayer cards and online.

Stephen Ministry trained new Stephen Ministers at LOPC. We look forward to

continuing to expand this ministry in the years to come!

The deacons provided more than 50 meals in the past six months for families with new babies as well as meals for people after surgeries and during illness to help care for them. The Deacon Community Care Fund provided financial support for our LOPC community in caring for urgent needs in their families. In 2024, the deacons served at numerous memorials in support of our members and community. They prepared communion and also continued to deliver home communion kits, participating in home visits, and visiting with many of our seniors at their homes. We are grateful for their work and care.

children's ministry

Submitted by Cati Dole

What a year Children's Ministry had in 2024! We continued to see steady growth in attendance in the Garden (Sunday School), with more than 50 children regularly participating. We also had record numbers in our Sunday morning infant and preschool program (six months – four years old.) Children's Ministry continues to use Orange Curriculum, which helps to engage children in a deeper relationship with Jesus.

During the summer, we welcomed 50 children to Vacation Bible Camp and the theme was SCUBA: Dive Into Friendship With God! The children experienced the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. Surge for Water, an organization that provides clean water access for children in Haiti, Uganda, the Philippines, and Indonesia, was

selected as the beneficiary of the week-long offering at vacation bible camp.

Children's Ministry was excited to introduce a new program in the fall, PLAY on Wednesday (POW). POW is an after school program focused on telling favorite Bible stories in new ways and included stop-motion animation, shadow and hand puppetry, improvisation and tableaux, sound scape, prop and costume design, and more! The program was a hit with the 15 children who participated, and we are so excited to see it grow!

Also during the fall, the Children's Choir resumed this fall with more than 20 children participating. They gave beautiful performances during Advent and Christmas Eve services.

We continued to welcome families to participate in Friday Fun Nights, a special program for children (and their siblings) and young adults with special needs. This program provides respite for over 20 individuals. We have over 35 volunteers and staff that help and are "buddies" to the children and young adults that have special needs.



digital outreach program

Submitted by Jim Davis

The purpose of LOPC Digital Outreach Program is to build and maintain community with our members, attendees, local residents, and those who are out of the area through online access to engaging and faithful video content. We hope to bless people where they are and that they look to our church as a resource for life issues from a faith perspective.



YouTube Channel

We launched the LOPC YouTube channel (youtube.com/@LOPCYoutube) in December 2023 and there was significant increased online engagement in 2024. We currently have over 200 subscribers and more than 230 videos. Year to date,

our six short “life challenges” videos have had a total of over 80,000 views by leveraging YouTube’s advertising capabilities.

It is our primary online video platform and our digital business card to communicate who we are as a church. Our channel currently has six playlists: (1) Welcome Videos, (2) Devotionals, (3) Life at LOPC, (4) Sermons, (5) Big Questions, and (6) Talking Story.



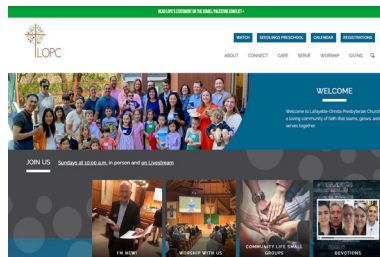
Streaming

We use Vimeo to live stream our weekly Sunday services. Our annual Vimeo agreement expired in

November of 2024. We have had several issues with Vimeo and are investigating potential alternatives to Vimeo. In December, we switched from an annual contract to a monthly subscription in case we want to transition to another platform in the coming year.

Outreach Strategy

Local Community: Our goal is to inform residents about who we are (our “brand”) and to invite them to become part of our community at LOPC. We also want to be a general resource of faith to the local community.



Online Community: We believe that our online community can benefit from our online offerings even without ever setting foot on our physical campus. We may create a specific email address to encourage specific interaction, with the intent of having personal follow up with individuals.

fellowship

Submitted by Cheryl Miller and Jonathan Nolen

The Fellowship Ministry hosted four large seasonal gatherings and several smaller events:

Palm Sunday Easter Egg Hunt on March 24

Over 400 people attended the Palm Sunday Egg Hunt activities. It was wonderful to see attendees of all ages participating in what is a highlight of the church calendar.

Backyard Bash on June 23

The very first summer Backyard Bash event featured barbecued hot dogs and hamburgers, old-fashioned picnic games, live music, a cake walk, prizes, and more. A special highlight was Dunk-a-Pastor, which was a very popular activity for young and old alike. Pastors Peter, Jane, and Chris were good (wet) sports!

Fall Fest on October 6

We hosted over 400 people on the plaza for games, snacks, and music and tacos catered by El Molino. The overwhelming favorite activity was the petting zoo!

Jingle Bell Jamboree on December 8

We hosted the first all-church Jingle Bell Jamboree with arts & crafts, wreath making, and cookie decorating for over 200 guests.

Movie Nights

We paired movies with faith topics from the Sunday message and included two incredible guest speakers who shared stories of their faith.

- Friday, Jan 19 – *Super Mario Bros* (50 attendees)
- Friday, July 12 – *Barbie* (96 attendees)
- Friday, July 26 – *Apollo 13* with Q&A from retired astronaut Jim Van Hoften (120+ attendees)
- Thursday, August 1 – *Wonka* (32 attendees)
- Friday, August 16 – *The Sandlot*, with Q&A from former Giants player Buster Posey (300+ attendees)

Young Families Connect (monthly)

Families with children between infancy and fourth grade continued to meet monthly on the playground after worship for a time of connecting and fellowship.

Voyager Ships Piano Concert on April 9

85 attendees from the Voyager Ships gathered for a weekday piano concert by a pianist. It was the first activity with all of the voyager ships since the pandemic.

Community Groups (new in 2024)

Fellowship Ministry, in partnership with Mission, kicked off a new Community Group program. This program welcomed people to join (or start) a group for fellowship and service. By the end of 2024 there were 12 groups with over 100 people participating.

Monday Men's Group

The Monday Men's Group enjoyed a variety of activities during 2024 and included book studies, service opportunities, and an assortment of Guys Nights Out to foster community. This has been a vital program for our community.



LOPCiders (Quilters) and Chicks with Sticks (Knitters)

Quilters and knitters continued to produce amazing items with love and support for many families in need. Knitters made 3,305 layettes for Hillcrest Layette Program,

738 Scent Hearts for Children's Hospital, and 78 hats, scarves, & gloves for Winter Nights/Loaves & Fishes, and the Quilters added 274 donated quilts for a grand total of 4,395 items. These groups are tremendous!

Some of our longstanding fellowship groups of the Voyagers Ships (7), Presbyterian Women's Circles (2), Freebirds Empty Nesters, and book groups continued to foster community for the church.

An enormous thanks to all Fellowship Team volunteers and group leaders who made all of these events and groups possible.

finance

Submitted by Jim Nagle

We are truly fortunate and thankful for everyone who gave their time, talent, and treasure to LOPC in 2024. Total Giving of \$4,229,854 exceeded the budgeted giving by \$484,778. Year end giving came in especially strong with the Faith Component of \$218,145 exceeding the budgeted goal of \$175,000. The total giving number also includes a special gift of \$175,000 that was designated for the Kurth Memorial Garden expansion.

Expenses in 2024 included \$3,544,581 for Ministry Operations and \$304,237 for Mission & Special Gifts of \$304,237. The expenses for 2024 also included a special disbursement of \$300,000 for investment in Pastor Housing and is reflected on LOPC's investment on the balance sheet for it's portion of ownership in pastor housing.

The Mission and Special Gifts were \$130,182 more than budgeted, and the funds were deployed for global and local organizations. The larger gifts went Atfaluna School for Deaf, Congo Education, Zimbabwe, Ahli Arab Hospital, Habitat for Humanity, Monument Crisis Center and Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

Statement of Giving & Expense			
December 31, 2024			
	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Fav (Unfav)
Congregational Giving:			
Pledge Income	\$ 2,340,747	\$ 2,203,000	\$ 137,747
Non Pledge, Loose Offerings, Other	688,029	432,000	256,029
Bequests	4,172	-	4,172
Faith Component	218,147	175,000	43,147
Congregational Giving w/o Special Gifts	3,251,095	2,810,000	441,095
Giving: Mission & Special Gifts & Offerings	304,237	174,055	130,182
Total Congregational Giving:	3,555,332	2,984,055	571,277
Session Emerging Needs Fund	-	160,161	(160,161)
Seedlings	162,997	144,100	18,897
Investment & Other Income	86,860	35,500	51,360
Foundation Support	424,665	421,260	3,405
Total Giving:	4,229,854	3,745,076	484,778
Expense: Ministry Teams Spending	3,544,581	3,571,021	(26,440)
Mission & Special Gifts	304,237	174,055	130,182
Investment in Pastor Housing	300,000	-	300,000
Total Expense:	4,148,818	3,745,076	403,742
Contributions in excess of Expenses:	\$ 81,036	\$ -	\$ 81,036

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 2024 fiscal year that ended September 30, 2024, the Foundation appropriated:

- \$425,000 for LOPC's ministries;
- \$185,000 for facilities-related projects.

Grants for LOPC's 2024 operating budget included \$190,000 in general ministry expenditures relating to church staff salary support, mission partners, deacons, spiritual formation, family ministry, children, and youth.

The Foundation closed its 2024 fiscal year with \$13.9 million of invested net assets, including: \$4.7 million in unrestricted funds supporting general ministry, \$7.6 million of restricted facilities funds, and \$1.6 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.

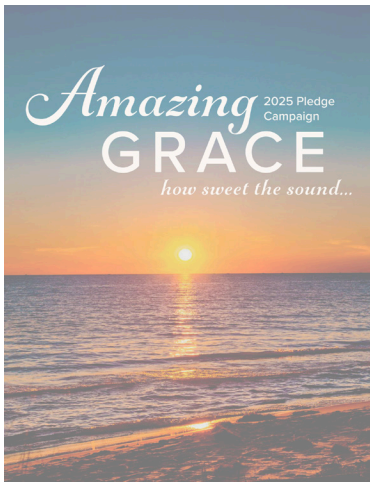
In fiscal year 2024, the Foundation welcomed \$297,700 in both direct and legacy gifts. We are tremendously grateful for, and enriched by, the generosity of those who have contributed to support the many ministries and missions at LOPC.

In October, the Foundation sponsored lunch for the congregation at LOPC's Fall Fest, where we served meals for 350 and had the opportunity to introduce ourselves and our work. In the spring, trustees made presentations at Deacon and Session meetings, educating church leaders on the Foundation's mission. Our team also created two motion graphic videos to share in worship, including testimonials of why individuals decided to leave a legacy gift to the Foundation.

If you have included the Foundation in your estate planning, please let us know so we can thank you. If you would like to make a direct gift or arrange a legacy gift and join other Friends of the Foundation, please contact any of the 2025 Trustees: Jim Beckemeyer, Lois Boyd, Jen Crocker, Linda Fodrini-Johnson, Andy Gill, Gwenn Lennox, Linda Rosenthal, Mike Ross, or Mark Weaver.

generosity team

Submitted by Linus Eukel



Pledging is an integral part of our spiritual life and a way to plan strategically and estimate giving for the coming year. It allows us to set a goal with God for giving. It also helps LOPC staff and ministry teams plan meaningful ministry throughout the year with a thoughtful 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 adequate support for our mission partners. In October, 2024, the current pledge campaign, "Amazing Grace," was launched to gather support and funding for 2025 ministry. The printed materials and three videos that accompanied the sermon series highlighted ministry

impacts in 2024. Our goals for 2025 included a request to consider the impacts of rising costs when determining an amount to pledge. Through the end of December, LOPC received pledges totaling \$1,815,578 from 274 households. This amount is nearly identical to what was pledged at the same time in the previous year. To meet rising costs and community needs, LOPC asked 75% of pledging households to increase their pledge, 25% more attendees to become pledging households, and 100% of our members to participate in annual pledge giving to help LOPC gracefully grow its budget and positive ministry outcomes. As there is still work to be done to reach our goal, those who have not yet pledged are asked to prayerfully consider the amount that they can give in 2025. We are grateful to the Presbyterian Foundation for completing a giving analysis of our church for calendar year 2023. Their evaluation provides insights into the nature of LOPC giving in comparison to national denominational averages and helps provide strategic perspectives around how to encourage even greater support from our congregation over the coming years.

membership & connecting

Submitted by Patrick Chen and Patrick Morrissey

2024 saw more and more members returning to in-person worship in the sanctuary. The Membership Team hosted three in-person new member classes in 2024. The single 90-minute class supplemented with videos for at-home viewing followed by a welcome reception one week later continued to be the standard format of new member initiation. We also introduced a class of new members to the congregation during a worship service. The ministry welcomed a total of 55 new members in 2024 including seven from a youth confirmation class. This represents a 175% increase

compared to 2023, and the highest annual membership total since 2019.

In December, the team completed the annual membership rolls maintenance project; 61 members were removed (37 requested to be removed/letters of transfer out and 24 deceased members.) Total active membership at LOPC is 1,663 members.

We continued to develop the Next Steps program, a program to assist new members with becoming engaged with the LOPC community and programs. This program includes connecting over lunches and social

mixers as well as encouraging early participation in events and service opportunities sponsored by Fellowship, Spiritual Formation, Children/Youth, and Mission. For those who attended the new membership classes but were not ready to officially join, we continued to communicate with them and extend open invitations to explore the life of the church. The Membership Team remained committed to helping seekers and new members find LOPC a welcoming church where they can freely Attend, Connect, Serve, and Give.

MIS (mission in society)

Submitted by Chris Johnson and Juanita Kizor

Our mission team, mission partners, and LOPC community continued to engage in mission and service in a meaningful way in 2024. Our mission partner, Atfaluna was severely impacted by the war in Gaza, which ultimately led to the destruction of the school. In spite of this huge loss, the school, along with other NGO's in the region, continue to provide services for those students that are disabled and their families. Atfaluna continues to engage children in learning as well as providing water and food as resources are scarce. In response, LOPC raised over \$48,000 for Atfaluna as well as \$16,000 from an offering later in the year for Ahli Arab Hospital for the purchase of new medical equipment and supplies. Mission elder and Atfaluna liaison, Chris Johnson, has been keeping the congregation informed of what is going on in Gaza with several guest speaker and 11:11 events.

In the first quarter of 2024 a group of 14 adults went on a mission trip to visit Children of Faith Missions in India from February 22 to March 5. The adults participated in various activities with the students as well as improvement



projects on their campus and were truly impacted by their experience with the students!

LOPC addressed local needs as well, through its annual *love does* program. Annually *love does* kicks off on *love does* day with a special offering in February supporting a local partner followed by multiple service opportunities throughout the year. In total we had over 250 volunteers for our *love does* projects throughout the year.

This year, in partnership with Fellowship ministry, we kicked off Community Groups, which provide the opportunity for groups of people to participate in both fellowship and service opportunities throughout the year. Many of these groups participated in serving at Winter Nights Family Shelter and various *love does* opportunities.

In late October, Winter Nights, a two-week housing program providing shelter to families during the fall and winter, arrived on the LOPC campus. Guests were warmly welcomed by the LOPC community, and church volunteers helped cook and serve meals, and play games, and do activities with the children.

Throughout the year the congregation continued to give generously to our special offerings that serve to educate our congregation about the great work of our mission partners and give people an opportunity to give. Our total special offering giving, including planned special offerings and responses to global or national disasters was over \$100,000 for the year.

We thank the congregation for partnering with mission in 2024!

operations

Submitted by Jeff Budke

New projects, Kurth Memorial Garden expansion and refurbishment, maintenance, and repairs, have made 2024 one of the busiest years on record for the Operations and Facilities team.

Many of the larger maintenance and replacement projects were funded by the Foundation, with total capital grants close to \$348,500. We are very grateful to the Foundation for their support.

Those projects included:

- Replacement of one Mitsubishi HVAC unit in the Ministry Center.
- Concrete replacement of a large area north of the Sanctuary.
- Replacement of carpet for 7 staff offices in the east portion of the Ministry Center; with the addition of the receptionist and volunteer areas.
- Complete replacement of the Ministry Center roof and sealing of gutters.
- Refinishing of the Sanctuary doors.
- Re-staining the exterior of the Chapel building.
- Replacement of the AC unit for the Server room.
- Repainting one vacant staff office in the Ministry Center.
- Replacement of the Chapel HVAC.
- Upgrading the AV in the Oak room with a 98" large screen TV and new audio.

In June, Kurth Memorial Garden began a large project of expansion and refurbishment. The expansion added a total of 96 single niches; and 228 double niches. Refurbishment of the existing garden included sandblasting and replastering of cement walls; resealing the flower beds and re-landscaping; polishing and resetting loose fountain tiles; refinishing and



sealing existing benches; and minor electrical work. Again, thank you to the Foundation for a special grant of \$200,000 for this work. The entire project was completed in November.

IT and Office projects included:

- The transfer of our phone service and basic wifi from Comcast to New Horizon Communications (NHC). This will hopefully give us better service at a reduced rate.
- The purchase of several new laptops, desktops, and monitors to replace outdated models.
- Hosting a CPR class in February for ushers, custodians, Thursday Fellowship volunteers, and select staff.
- Working with Joffe Emergency Services to develop a multi-faceted safety plan for the campus.

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

- Replacement of the kitchen digital

keylock system.

- Replacement of our washing machine, with thanks to Seedlings for their help.
- Replacement of the Deacon Freezer.
- Trimming of our heritage oak tree by an arborist.
- Replacing the screen in the Sanctuary

Other maintenance items included:

- Honeybee removal and relocation from the soffit on backside of the Chapel.
- Goats in early July to clear the hillside of grass and vegetation.
- Removal by PG&E, at no charge, of two large pine trees along Knox Drive that were diseased.

We are extremely grateful for Rich Lewis and our Thursday Work Crew volunteers. With their expertise they repaired or replaced countless

personnel

Submitted by Royce Nicolaisen

In 2024 the Personnel Team reviewed policies relating to clergy benefits, such as the sabbatical, housing, and study leave policies, in addition to policies relating to regular staff. The team paid particular attention to assessing how we presently address the financial gap of living in the bay area for both lay and pastoral staff.

2024 staff transitions included the following:

- In January, Pastor Jane Mackenzie joined LOPC staff as a temporary part-time pastor.
- In February, Emily Austin, who was previously 50% campus operations coordinator and 50% children's ministry director, transitioned to being a full time children's ministry co-director (alongside children's ministry co-director, Susan Wentworth).
- In April, Tom Galbraith was hired for the part time campus operations coordinator position.
- In June, Treasurer Staci Johnston announced her plans to retire and recruiting efforts began to find her replacement.
- In July, Pastor Lauren Gully returned from maternity leave and made the decision to decrease her schedule from 40 hours to 30 hours per week to allow more time to be with her baby.
- In late summer, youth directors Keris Dahlkamp and Junha Kim left LOPC to pursue other opportunities. Fortunately, Pastor Jaime Polson stepped in as interim youth ministry director until a permanent director could be hired.
- In October, Suzanne Ferraro was hired to serve as LOPC's new treasurer.
- In the fall, LOPC's Pastor Housing Fund contributed to the purchase of a home for Pastor Chris Baldwin and his family. This is an important benefit to support and retain our clergy. The personnel team will continue to research new options to deal with housing cost support for future pastors. We presently do not have adequate funding and plans to deal with addressing housing needs for new clergy in the future.

REET (racial equity and engagement team)

Submitted by Andrea Hilsabeck



The Racial Equity and Engagement Team hosted an informational session advocating for the exoneration of the Port Chicago 50 on January 28, 2024. The session was led by LOPC member and attorney Jonathon Lee. Approximately 50 members were in attendance. The REET requested and session approved a vote in favor of supporting Jonathon's coalition for full exoneration of these 50 men. In June, the Navy exonerated the Port Chicago 50! On September 29, LOPC

hosted a celebration for the community supporters of the exoneration of the Port Chicago 50. On October 24, the Port Chicago Task Force had a celebration attended by Pastor Lauren, REET member Sue Gibbons, and Jonathon Lee. The REET helped with the travel expenses for two daughters of one of the exonerated men that was honored.

During the month of May, the REET celebrated Asian American Heritage month at each of the May Sunday

services. Asian American members participated in the call to worship and/or said the Lord's Prayer in Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean. The floral team made beautiful Asian themed arrangements. Asian treats were served on the plaza after each service. On May 19, we held an 11:11 to share the documentary Children of the Camps about six Japanese Americans who were imprisoned as children in the U.S. internment camps during WWII. Question prompts at each table were discussed after the film.

On October 5, several members of LOPC attended a conference about reparations at Allen Temple. The featured speaker was author Joel Goza, who discussed his newest book titled *Rebirth of a Nation*. Jonathan Lee participated as a panelist. The discussion was an insightful challenge to look at the issue of reparations with a fresh perspective.

seedlings

Submitted by Coleen Moulton

Seedlings continued to remain a premiere preschool in the Lamorinda area while serving over 100 children in 2024. As we began our 40th year of operation, we proudly welcomed 30 new families to our campus. Under the leadership of Director Coleen Moulton and Assistant Director Kathy LaPlante, a parent and staff-led board of directors, along with 19 dedicated teachers, Seedlings continues to excel in providing a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for children aged six months to five years to play, learn, and grow.

In April, we invited families back to campus for our 19th annual Spring Showcase and Art Show. Teachers collaborated for months with children in their classes, from infants to pre-kindergartners, to create stunning masterpieces displayed throughout 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 visited their future classrooms as well.

This year, we expanded our popular October Trunk or Treat event to combine it with Wheel Day to create a new event: TRUCK or Treat. We welcomed various community vehicles like a fire truck, police car and cyber truck for children to explore, in addition to family trunks for trick-or-treating. We opened this event up to the Lamorinda community, attracting over 300 visitors

for this fun event! Seedlings continued to focus on being a “front porch” ministry by bringing families to our campus.

Mission work and spiritual formation has been highlighted this year as we welcomed the Children's Ministry team into our classrooms to connect and get to know the children. We also participated in the White Pony giving tree and diaper drive in the spring, furthering our community outreach efforts.

seniors

Submitted by Sally Roberts

First Friday Forum had an active team of seven volunteers who explored timely topics of interest for the six speakers scheduled the

first Friday of the month, January through June. Speakers covered a wide range of topics: a travelogue through Iraq, challenges to American

democracy, ethics of work in Silicon Valley, untangling Alzheimer's, prison education, and those forgotten on the western portion of the transcontinental railroad.



LOPC Rossmoor Parish celebrated spring with a gathering at Stanley Dollar Clubhouse in April. The gathering was held on a Sunday afternoon with light snacks and beverages offered. Just over 40 were in attendance. Two representatives from the mission team shared information about an upcoming mission project with a robust question and answer session.

Workshops for those with a new diagnosis of MCI (three weekly sessions) were held twice this year. With the expertise of Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MFT, CMC, leading the classes, couples were able to learn, share, and explore the tools needed to navigate the journey facing many seniors. At the completion of each MCI class, Pastor Jane Doty MacKenzie formed a follow-up support group for the MCI individuals and led several six-week sessions. While there are support groups for spouses and caregivers, there are few, if any, groups for those who have MCI. This is filling a very unique niche of care for our seniors who are facing changes and challenges.

Tuesdays at Two: Our Faith Journey of Aging was held for five sessions via Zoom. The group of 12 enthusiastically embraced this opportunity to share the challenges and triumphs of aging. This class was led by an LOPC Stephen Minister.

Bereavement and grief classes were offered twice this past year. Held in-person at LOPC for nine weeks, these classes provided a safe space for individuals experiencing loss of a

spouse to share their emotions, learn healthy coping mechanisms, and gain validation from others going through similar experiences.

Thursday Fellowship celebrated its 45th year at LOPC! Meeting weekly, guests and volunteers gathered to make connections, enjoy lunch together, participate in an activity, and enjoy a program after lunch.

Participation grew tremendously in 2024 with 65 – 70 attending each week. One participant aptly described Thursday Fellowship as “a place where I can belong and participate in activities with people who fill up my life today!” A large volunteer base with volunteers planning and scheduling the activities ensure the success of this program.



spiritual formation

Submitted by Jeff Eyet and Pat Stevens

Spiritual Formation continued to sponsor the ongoing programs of Women’s Spiritual Journey Group and Companions for the Journey in 2024. Women’s Spiritual Journey Group, with over 40 participants, began studying Richard Rohr’s book *Falling Upward*. Companions offered two monthly sessions, a Monday evening session and a Thursday morning session.

New programming in 2024 included Alpha, a basics of faith video series. The program, a potential “next step” for new members, was offered three times in 2024 with small but stable attendance. The program will continue to be offered in 2025 while increasing attempts at outreach.

Pastor Jane MacKenzie offered two class series during 2024, Throughlines in the spring and Praying the Psalms in the fall. Attendees appreciated that the classes incorporated time for personal reflection, group sharing, and the learning of new spiritual practices.

A one-day labyrinth workshop was offered in the fall. An outside facilitator gave a presentation on the background and symbolism of the labyrinth and led the group in a meditative walk.

New programming also included Men’s Friday Fellowship, which offered monthly guest speakers. The level of interest shown warrants a continuation of this program in the new year. Other Spiritual Formation offerings included

Lenten and Advent studies, the summer movies series (highlighted by the visit of Buster Posey), and ongoing book study groups.

Spiritual Formation continued to discern how it can best offer space, healing, and nurturing for the community. It also continued to seek effective avenues for integrating new church members in ways that can respond to a variety of spiritual backgrounds and interests. In furtherance of these goals, Spiritual Formation continues with outreach efforts to potential new team members who can bring their own unique interests and gifts to our Spiritual Formation ministry.

worship & music

Submitted by Bettie Graves



As we stand at the beginning of a new year it is important to take a bit of time and examine where we journeyed in 2024. We welcomed Pastor Jane MacKenzie as a temporary pastor to support the LOPC community as part of our ministry team. Jane has been a wonderful resource for us all.

We journeyed through Lent with the Gospel According to Mark. Many signed up to receive the daily email that included a reading and a short devotional. This study was used as the topic material for our Sunday sermon series.

On Sunday, February 4 we had the honor of hosting Dr. Jonathan Lee Walton, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, for a special Sunday worship service. Dr. Walton is a social ethicist and religious educator known for engaging American evangelical traditions.

Again on March 10, Dr. Anne Stewart, Executive VP of Princeton Seminary and project director of Iron Sharpening Iron, joined us at LOPC. Dr. Stewart preached on Sunday and also spoke at a special gathering of women of the church on Saturday.

The April – May sermon series was titled, “The Church Empowered.” It was a snapshot of the early Christian communities based on the Book of Acts. Also in May, there was a spring concert called, “LOPC Sounds of

Spring.” All proceeds, after cost, went to our mission partner, Children of Faith Missions in India. These proceeds helped to support the music program at Children of Faith. A second concert, “Sounds of the Season,” was held in the fall, and all proceeds, after cost, went to our mission partner, Atfaluna in Gaza.

In July and August we once again celebrated our Summer Movie Nights. The Summer movie series is used as the basis for the “Faith at the Movies” sermon series. We enjoyed, *Barbie*; *Apollo 13*; *Wonka*; and finally *The Sandlot*.

In September the worship and music team did a worship service questionnaire. Session was considering adding a second service as a result of increasing worship attendance. During some seasons our worship numbers do approach the need for an added service. But for much of the year our congregation told us they would rather have one full service with the members all worshipping together, rather than two partially full services. We maintain a strong online presence on Sunday morning.

On November 3 a special service was held titled, “A Musical Remembrance for All Souls.” The LOPC Chamber Singers with an orchestra performed Durufles’s Requiem. We listened to this beautiful piece of music and

lighted candles in memory of family and friends who are no longer with us. We leaned into God’s promise of life beyond our lives here on earth.

As always we appreciate the work of the music department and the many ways the choir supports worship services at LOPC. In December the choir presented their Christmas concert, “Twelve Days of Christmas.” Our choir has about 53 members and their regular choir season is September – June 1. We also appreciate the work of the Chamber Singers and the beauty they bring with their musical offerings under the direction of Bryan Dunnewald.

It takes many volunteers to keep the Worship and Music ministries running smoothly. We appreciate each team and sub-team and appreciate the work that they do. The creative worship team who lift up words, music and ideas of people around the world. The implementation team and the various sub-teams, the hospitality team who provide ushers and greeters and make us all feel welcomed, the flower team who create the beautiful floral arrangements, the sanctuary guild who help to keep the pews in order. The Music and Worship Team leadership are grateful for the time, energy, and passion that staff and volunteers give to make worship and music at LOPC a special and meaningful experience.

youth

Submitted by Nancy Grabow and Leslie Vallee



The LOPC Youth Ministry had a fun filled year of learning, serving, and worshipping together. At Youth on Wednesdays (YOW), for middle schoolers, we began the year with Big Games Night, and in March we decorated cards and made spring baskets for the children at Hope Solutions. For high schoolers, By the Way (BTW) welcomed a number of guest speakers, and in March we celebrated confirmation for eight high school students — our largest

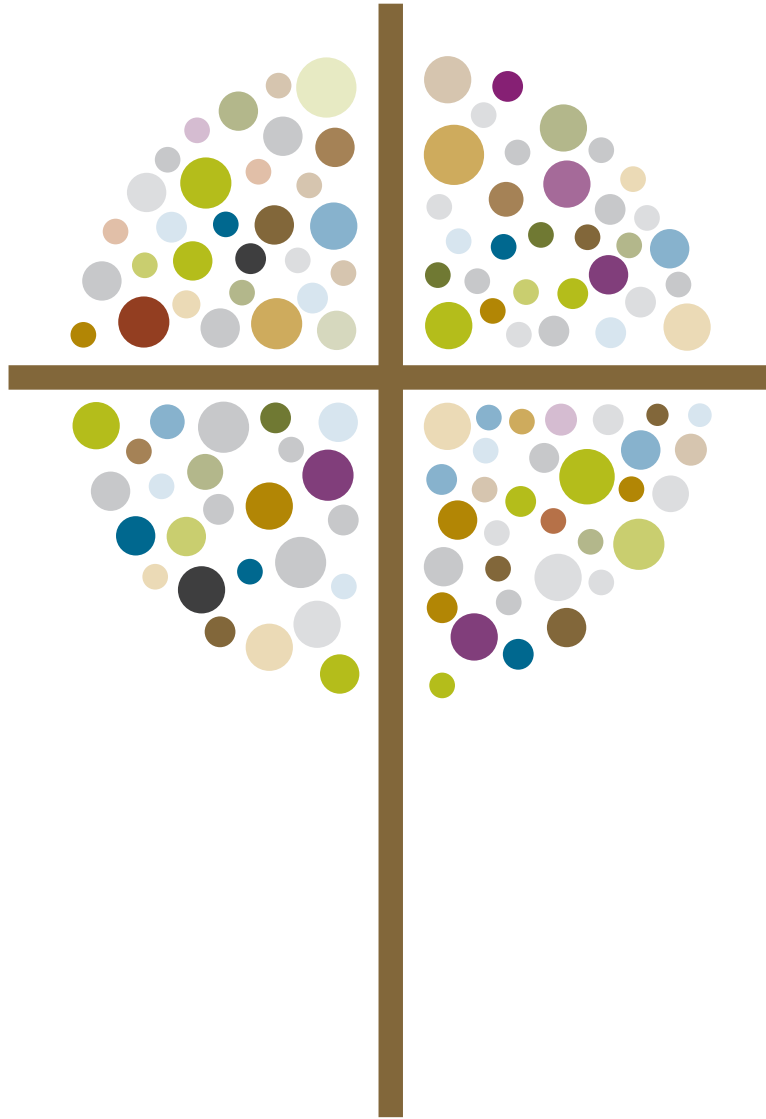
confirmation class in years!

During the summer months we had about 30 students participate in Service Squad, the summer-learning program for youth completing 5th and 6th grade where we volunteered at different organizations in Contra Costa County. For 7th and 8th graders, the service learning trip to the Yakima Reservation in Washington state was canceled and instead the youth directors organized some local “Through the Tunnel” service learning

opportunities. For BTW, the service learning trip to Salinas was a success. The youth served at Dorothy’s Kitchen and Los Padres Elementary School. About 10 high school youth participated in the Salinas trip.

2024 was also a year of transition for the Youth Ministry program at LOPC. Both youth directors, Keris Dahlkamp and Junha Kim, left LOPC in August to pursue new opportunities. Pastor Jaime and the youth advisors led YOW and BTW during the fall months. An offer of employment for the youth director position was extended to Cynthia Purvis, who began to meet with youth and families towards the end of the year. Attendance at YOW was good, averaging 30 – 40 students per week while participation in BTW has dropped to 6 – 12 students depending on other commitments the high school students had. Advisor Libby Lowell stepped up and took on more of a leadership role for BTW and helped with organizing games, worship, and events. Thank you to all the advisors who volunteer at YOW and BTW!





Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church
2024 Annual Report

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