

LAFAYETTE-ORINDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

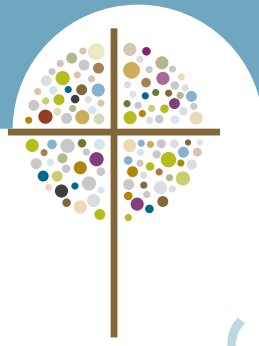
FEBRUARY 2025

FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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

LOPC.ORG



Love One Another

By Lauren Gully – Pastor, Mission & Outreach

Whenever we're in February, all I can think about is love! As we journey together through this lovely season, I am reminded of Jesus' powerful words: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34) Love is the foundation of our faith and the most compelling evidence of Christ's presence in our lives.



True love is not just a feeling; it is an action. It is patience when others test our limits, kindness when the world feels harsh, and forgiveness when hurt runs deep. Love is choosing to see the image of God in every person, even when it's challenging.

Our love for God and one another should spill over into how we serve our neighbors. This month, I encourage us all to reflect on how we can embody God's love in tangible ways. Let us move beyond words and take steps to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

To that end, I invite you to join us in *love does*, starting on February 23 after the worship service. This is our annual kick-off to inspire a community that does tangible acts of love all year long. For more information about this not-to-miss event see page 4 of this issue, there are ways to get involved for all ages and abilities!

Through these acts of service, we not only meet the needs of others but also experience the joy of living out God's love. As we serve, we draw closer to one another and deepen our understanding of what it means to be the body of Christ.

Let us commit to loving boldly and serving joyfully. Together, we can reflect God's light and love in our world!

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Please send requests for submissions to:
communications@lopc.org
 no later than February 1 for the March/April issue.



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

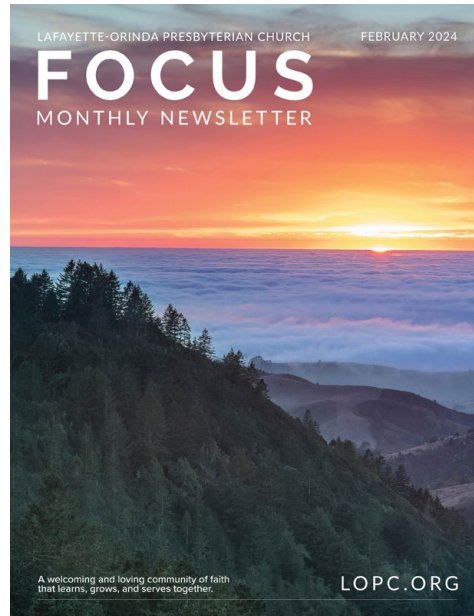
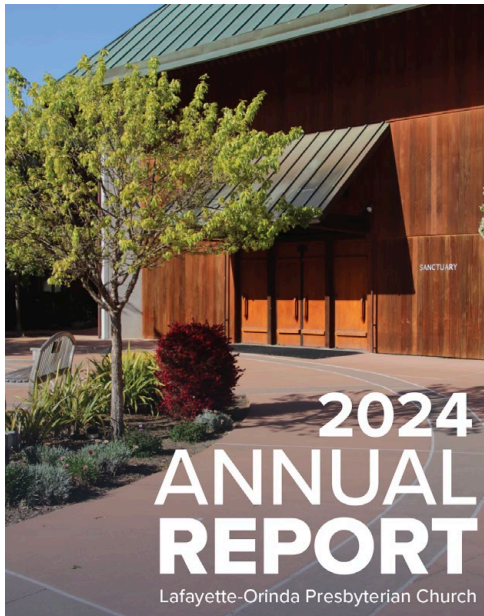
Need to reach us?

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This February, the Racial Equity and Engagement team is working with worship in celebrating Black History Month. Throughout the month we will have music, prayers, and readings from African American contributors. Stay tuned in worship and Connections for other ways that we are celebrating Black History Month as a congregation!



Annual Meeting

February 2 at 11:00 a.m.
in the Sanctuary

We will review the past year, vote on pastors' salaries, and approve CNC nominations. All are welcome but only LOPC members may vote.

The 2024 Annual Report is available at lopc.org/publications.

CNC nominee information is available at lopc.org/leadership.

FOCUS Announcement

After several years of discussion and evaluation, we think the time has come to reduce our dependence on print media and make an intentional move to promote digital forms of communication. The cost to the church, as well as environmental impact to the planet, provides good impetus to move *FOCUS* magazine to bi-monthly status. This means we will still produce our high-quality magazine in print form to be distributed to members and friends of LOPC, but reduced to six issues per year. Beginning in March, *FOCUS* will be produced every other month, rather than monthly. In conjunction with this move, we will be strengthening and improving our digital forms of communication to keep our members and friends well informed and inspired!

If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Ball at elizabeth@lopc.org.



Living Questions

Winter Sermon Series

2/2: *If mortals die, will they live again?*

2/9: *How can young people keep their way pure?*

2/16: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*

2/23: *Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.*

3/2: *Am I In the Place of God?*

the GENEROSITY corner

Our youth, our future...

Part II – continued from August 2024 Focus

By Alan Coe, Generosity Team Member



“The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” -Deuteronomy 31:3

This verse is LOPC member Graham Wiseman’s favorite. Graham and his wife, Carrie (both deacons), lost their son, Colin, at the age of 15. Colin lost his battle with depression and died by suicide. Upon reflection, Graham said that “God brought calm into our hearts in just the right way. Jesus was at the table with us. I was not alone.”

Graham does not want others to be alone either. He left the corporate world and together with Gail Miller founded the non-profit BeingWellCA in June of 2019.



“BeingWellCA’s mission is to reduce anxiety, depression, and suicide ideation in our youth. We do this by providing schools, parents, students, and communities with workshops, tool kits, and trainings to improve mental health support.”

Graham has spoken to over 10,000 students about life’s choices. Most importantly, with two other Acalanes parents, Graham helped establish five on-campus wellness centers within the Acalanes Union High School District. In the San Ramon School District, the number is thirty. Students know that they can go to these wellness centers on a confidential basis to talk to someone that cares deeply for them and their mental health. There are licensed clinicians on site that are available for guidance and support.

Graham, a former rugby coach, explains that in rugby there is an expression “WITH YOU” that is yelled by a teammate running behind the ball carrier to let him know that help is

present. When Colin passed, his sister, Nicole, was 13 and at Stanley Middle School. Her fellow students didn’t know what to say to her, so they said nothing. There was no one that said, “WITH YOU.” The on-campus wellness centers are now there to be with other Nicoles or Colins that need to talk to someone about whatever issues they are facing.

Are the efforts by BeingWellCA and organizations like Challenge Success making a difference? A survey by the CA Healthy Kids organization said that ten years ago 24% of our youth had self-reported having thoughts of suicide during the past twelve-month period. Today, that percentage is down to 14%. That is progress, yet still a frightening number.

Graham points to the highly successful non-profit MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) as an organization that has had an enormous impact on changing the culture relating drinking and driving. The goal is to change the culture surrounding mental health issues in our youth by creating safe avenues for our children to talk about whatever is troubling them. Parents, educators, and students all need to be engaged.

At LOPC there are multiple avenues to bring forward concerns involving the mental health of our youth. Church deacons stand ready to help as does our pastoral staff and Stephen Ministers.

We thank Graham and so many others for the gift of their time and talents to love and care for our youth. Be on



the lookout for a new DMV-issued specialized license plate that is part of the plan to change culture and bring the discussion about mental health out of the darkness.

love does

love protects, love hopes, love never fails

**love does
Congregational
Day of Service –
February 23!**

Every February, LOPC invites the entire congregation to put “love into action” through LOPC’s aptly named service program *love does*. *love does* is a call to action for our community to look outside our busy lives and dedicate one day to service. We are encouraged to select an activity that day to participate in. Despite having service opportunities throughout the year, this day is special because we work together, side by side, to collectively make an impact in the greater community. This year *love does* day is **February 23 following Worship**. There will be service projects on-campus and off-campus at various LOPC mission partner locations throughout Contra Costa County. Family, friends, and neighbors welcome!

ON-CAMPUS:



Package Diapers

Sort and package diapers to be distributed to families that are struggling with food insecurity.

Assemble Carts

Assemble 60 shopping carts to be used by the clients of MCC who do not have transportation.



Make Polar Fleece Blankets

Work together on creating 60 polar fleece blankets for abused children who visit Calico to achieve justice and healing through their one-time testimony of abuse in front of welfare workers, prosecutors, and law enforcement officers.



Hygiene Kit Assembly



Work separately but together to assemble hygiene kits that will be distributed at Trinity Center to those experiencing homelessness and to Church World Services (CWS) to support newly arrived refugees.

OFF-CAMPUS:



Habitat for Humanity

16 and over ONLY

Join others at Esperanza Place in Walnut Creek to help work on the next phase of the development with LOPC’s Brian O’Shea leading the effort.



White Pony Express

Work at White Pony Express to help repackage donated food from grocery stores and bakeries to be distributed to those in the community who are food insecure.



Loaves and Fishes

Help Loaves and Fishes deep clean their Martinez kitchen that serves clients a hot meal 7 days per week with the exception of eight annual holidays.



Organize and Deep Clean a Transitional Housing Unit

16 and over ONLY

Join others at a STAND! transitional home to deep clean their community kitchen and reorganize their pantry and garage.

AT-HOME PROJECTS:



Hygiene Kits

Assemble hygiene kits for those who are homeless.

Breakfast Bag Assembly

Work separately but together to assemble breakfast bags that provide a meal for those struggling with food insecurity.

**For more details & to sign up,
go to lopc.org/lovedoes.**

mission



LOPC Local Mission Partners

Since its founding, LOPC has been deeply committed to mission and service work in our community and abroad. LOPC strives to be an integral partner to our local community and serve the many wonderful local non-profits that support our immediate area. A key aspect to what makes our work successful is the participation of our members and friends in these organizations throughout our community! So many of you love and regularly serve at one of our local mission partners. Below is a summary of the local organizations that our church has a deep partnership with in hopes that you might get a better sense of the scope of their work.



The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano made a promise 50 years ago that no one in those counties would go hungry. They have fulfilled that promise by meeting much of the hunger need in our

area, partnering with schools, Loaves and Fishes, Monument Crisis Center, and many other organizations. Together they are closing the “meal gap.” Feeding America says families need help with 169 meals per year. In the past three years there have been 884,000 more meals provided by agency partners through their capacity building and 34 new partner agencies. They have upgraded equipment to work faster and provide new programs. The Food Bank is always welcome to volunteers of family, kids, individuals, and groups. It is a place to have a direct impact on our local community.

Visit the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano at foodbankccs.org.



Monument Crisis Center (MCC) provides food, education assistance, referrals for families and individuals in crisis situations, and promotes awareness of needs and available

resources to at-risk and low-income people in Contra Costa County. MCC has 6 core programs: 1) food distribution; 2) resource and referral; 3) health and wellness; 4) youth education and empowerment; 5) Senior Moments; and 6) community engagement and workforce development.

Visit MCC at monumentcrisiscenter.org for a detailed explanation of all programs.

Affiliated Ministries

love does organizes special projects for these affiliated partners during the year as the need arises.

- Trinity Center
- Primera Iglesia
- White Pony Express
- Operation Dignity



Stand! promotes safe and strong families. Their approach to eliminating family violence is well-rounded

and community wide. In addition to providing a complete spectrum of prevention, intervention, and treatment programs, they also enlist the efforts of local residents, partners, and institutions, all of whom are striving to stop domestic violence and child abuse. Stand! works closely with LOPC's other mission partners as an efficient network to provide fast, effective, and confidential help to victims of abuse in our community. As a founding member of the Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse initiative, cross-sector organizing works to help solve issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. The mission of the Alliance to End Abuse is to "affect a systems change that reduces interpersonal violence by fostering the development and implementation of collaborative, coordinated, and integrated services, support interventions, and prevention activities." Stand! cannot achieve their mission without the help of every individual, every faith community, every neighborhood, and every business. LOPC has been fortunate to be able to serve Stand! in several capacities. At our 2024 love does kickoff event, our team of volunteers painted their community room, cleaned and organized their storage facility, and deep-cleaned their kitchen. With a generous grant from an LOPC member, we were able to pay to replace a server and several laptops used for clients.

Please watch for this year's love does special offering that will benefit STAND!

Visit STAND! at standffov.org.



Hope Solutions' primary focus is housing and support services as it continues to expand its services throughout the county. From originally serving 27 families at the Garden apartments, a development founded in part by LOPC, Hope Solutions now serves 3,500 of our community's most vulnerable neighbors. Due to the need

for more affordable housing, Hope Solutions is conducting a \$7 million capital campaign, with huge support from LOPC. Hope Solutions has seen how lives are transformed when people have a permanent place to call home and services they need to live with dignity. This combination leads to improved physical and mental health, economic security, stronger family ties, and safer communities for all. Our community is about 34,000 affordable housing units short, and 10,000 seek housing support from Hope Solutions every year. The first project to break ground is Hope Village in Walnut Creek in partnership with Grace Presbyterian Church where there are six 272 sq foot studio cottages. Hope Village opened in December and is awaiting clients, and two other cottage communities — one in Pittsburg for homeless youth and another in Antioch for families — are close behind.

Other projects are detailed on their website at hopesolutions.org.

February Donation Opportunities:

Seedlings Diaper Drive for Monument Crisis Center

Many families who are struggling financially are overwhelmed by the expense of diapers and sometimes have to make the choice between buying food or buying diapers. Diapers of all sizes are needed. Full and partial packages of diapers are gladly accepted.

Donations will be accepted February 1 – 22. Look for the box in the CLC lobby labeled "Seedlings Diaper Drive for MCC" or drop off in the Ministry Center.

Youth Homes Clothing Drive

Cleaning out your closet and want to donate your clothing to a worthwhile cause? Youth Homes supports foster youth by repurposing clothing, home goods, and jewelry. All donations must be stain-free, laundered, and in good condition. A Youth Homes trailer will be on campus at the end of January and will accept donations for several weeks.

Gather your items now and stay tuned for exact dates and times for drop-off.

YOUTH



LIGHTHOUSE
at Hope Solutions

Lighthouse Service-Learning Program

Saturdays, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
February 8, March 15, and May 3

Join us for Lighthouse, a youth service program in support of Hope Solutions! Throughout the year, middle and high school

students will have the opportunity to connect with local youth at the Hope Solutions community center in Concord. Activities include fun games, arts and crafts, and lunch.

Drop-off and pick-up will be at LOPC. While we'd love for you to join us for every session, please feel free to attend whenever your schedule allows. Parents and caregivers are welcome to participate (though not required), and we will also need volunteers to help with carpooling.

Advance registration is requested at lopc.org/registrations. Contact Michelle Browning at michelle@lopc.org for more information.

BTW *By the Way*

Sundays, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
For youth in 9th – 12th grades.

YOW *Youth on Wednesday*

Wednesdays, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
For youth in 5th – 8th grades.

Come connect with each other through games, worship, Bible-based devotions, and small group discussions.

For more information contact Cynthia Purvis at cynthia@lopc.org.

Youth Alive

Sundays, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

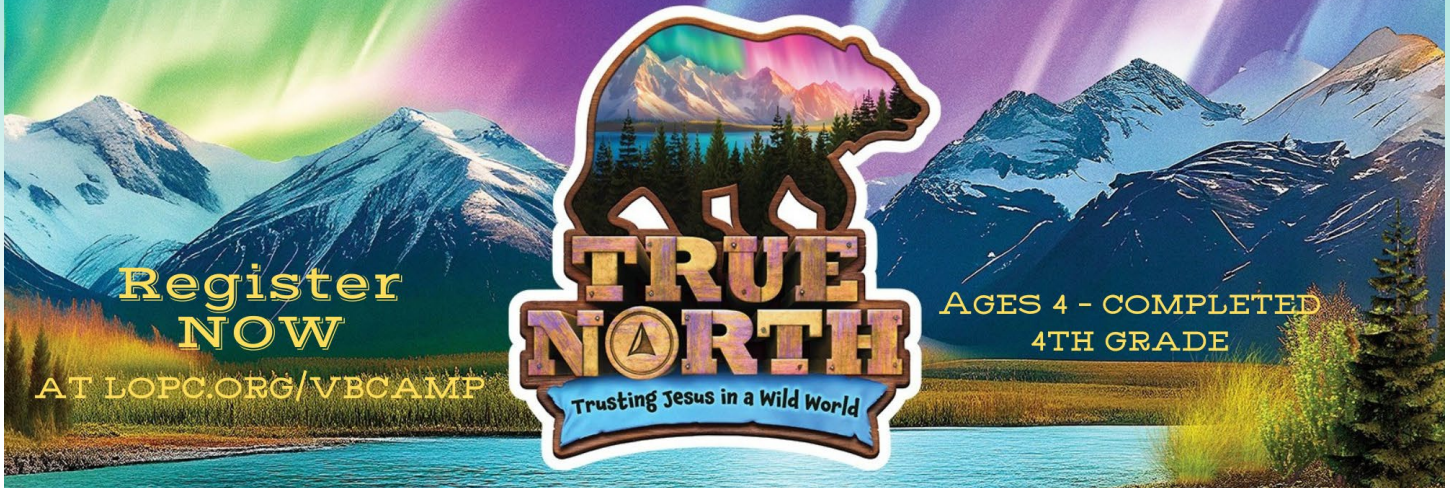
Youth in 5th – 8th grade take part in fun games, activities, and Bible-based discussions relevant to their lives while connecting with peers. Students learn about how God has connected with people in Scripture and how we continue to see God at work in our lives today. Youth Alive is located in the Upper Youth Room (CLC 201).

CHILDREN

MEET NEW TRAIL BUDDIES AND NAVIGATE A WILD ADVENTURE!

June 9 - 13, 2025

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.



Vacation Bible Camp 2025

Trek with us on the ultimate Alaskan Adventure where northern lights glow over majestic mountains, racing rivers, and glistening glaciers. As kids trek through the tundra, they'll explore what's true in our wild world today — Jesus is our True North! June 9 – 13, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. For kids ages 4 through completed 4th grade.

Registration is open! Register now at lopc.org/vbcamp. Questions? Email Emily Austin at emily@lopc.org.

Volunteer with Us!

Are you looking for a fun and meaningful way to kick off your summer? Look no further than becoming a volunteer for this year's Vacation Bible Camp at LOPC. There are many opportunities to serve, from crew leader to hospitality greeter, set/prop builder to rotation leader or assistant. There really is something for everyone at every skill level, and it takes many hands to make this memorable experience happen for the kids. Come make a difference and let God's light shine through you as we point the way towards True North.

Apply to volunteer: lopc.org/vbcamp.

Questions? Email Susan Wentworth at susan@lopc.org

Children's Ministry

The Garden

Sundays during Worship

- Children 6 months – toddlers in CLC Nursery* & Toddler Rooms
- Pre-K – 1st in CLC Room 204
- 2nd – 4th in CLC Room 205

Kid-friendly time for growing friendship with Jesus and with one another.

* limited space

Sunday Morning Infant Care

If your child is younger than one year old, please contact Susan Wentworth at susan@lopc.org prior to attending on a Sunday to make special arrangements.

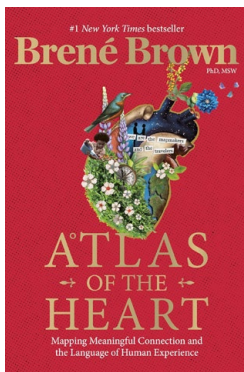
community

Young Families Connect

First Sunday of the month following Worship

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

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



Book Groups

Join one of LOPC's book groups! Looking ahead, here are the upcoming selections for each group:

Fourth Friday Book Group

February 28 – *Atlas of the Heart* by Brené Brown

March 28 – *American Nations* by Colin Woodard

April 25 – *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett

This group meets on Zoom at 4:00 p.m. To join the Friday book club, please contact Catherine Coleman at awaitingword@gmail.com.

Fourth Monday Book Group

February 24 – *Welcome to Glorious Tuga* by Francesca Segal

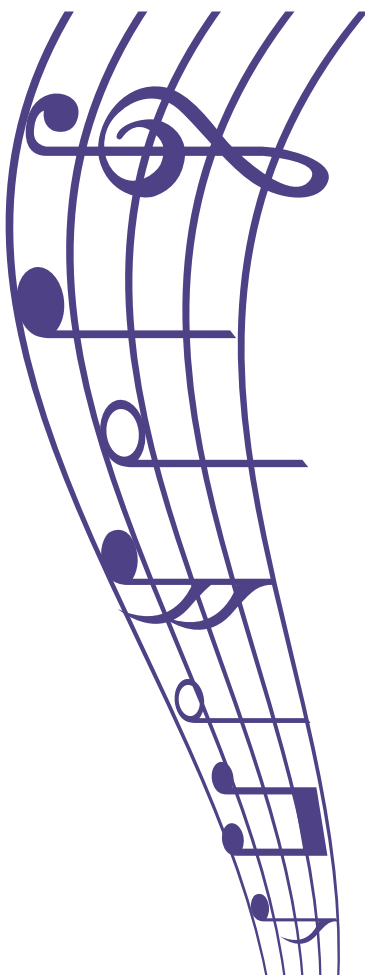
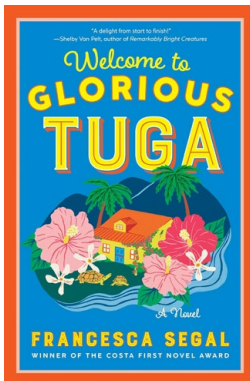
March 24 – *The Women* by Kristin Hannah

This group meets on Zoom at 2:00 p.m. To join the Monday book club, please contact Leslie Finertie at leslie-finertie@comcast.net.



We are excited to connect with you!

Get in touch here and let us know how you might like to get involved!



Watch music come alive!

CHOIR RETREAT & WORKSHOP

February 8, 2025
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
LOPC Sanctuary

Experience a fun, dynamic rehearsal with the LOPC Chancel Choir

Register at lopc.org/registrations

And don't miss McCormick's organ improvisations in worship on February 9!



Robert McCormick

Internationally renowned choral conductor and organist

Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, CA

session

December Session Highlights

By Mark Weaver, Clerk of Session



At the final meeting of 2024, a session met in the festive splendor of Elder Andrea Hilsabeck’s home for a holiday potluck, followed by a special time of listening to reflections from departing Elders on their time of service on session. Thank you, Pat Stevens, Pat Morrissey, Cheryl

Miller, Jeff Patton, and Mark Weaver, for your service to LOPC over the past three years!

The consent agenda was reviewed and approved, and included the following motions: a) approve clergy housing designations; b) approve CNC nominations for vacant church leadership positions (to be presented to the congregation on February 2); and c) approve designated gifts made to the church.

In his final report as clerk of session, Mark Weaver announced that Sally Roberts and Bettie Graves had been elected as at-large members of the Session Planning Council (SPC). They will join 2025 Clerk of Session Chris Johnson, Pastor Peter Whitelock, and Finance Elder Jim Nagle who also serve on SPC.

Pastor Chris Baldwin reported that in 2024 we had our largest year of new members since 2019, as 55 people joined the Church. Combined with a reduction of 61 members this past year (primarily due to deaths and moves out of the area), LOPC now has 1,663 members. Staying roughly flat in membership at a time when most churches are struggling with significant declines in membership is a positive sign for our church and a testament to the good work our Pastors and teams are doing in God’s name.

Session thanked Pastor Jaime Polson for her leadership in youth ministry during the fall following the departure of two youth directors in 2024. The middle school youth group (YOW) has increased to 55 participants! New Youth Director Cynthia Purvis started in January 2025, and there are high hopes for an even stronger youth program moving forward.

In her personnel report, Jaime informed session that Dave Engelbrekston is retiring from his operations role in the spring. Meanwhile, Michelle Browning will become the new program manager for mission. Robin Freeberg has transitioned from mission to assist with youth and senior ministry. Finally, it was announced that Pastor Peter’s review will be presented in January during Executive Session.

We closed, as always, with the Lord’s Prayer.

care

Workshop for those with a New Diagnosis of MCI or Dementia

This is a class for those with a new diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) or early dementia. The class is open to the individual with the diagnosis and their primary care partner. This is not a general education class.

Participants will have a short interview with our presenter to see if the class is appropriate for them at this time. Classes will be held in person from 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at LOPC. There are limited spaces available and no fees. This is a community service of the Senior Ministry of LOPC.

February 18: “What is Dementia?” and Brain Health Ideas: In this class, we will discuss what the different dementias are and how lifestyle changes can help improve functioning and quality of life.

February 25: The Emotional & Spiritual Journey: In this class, we will talk about how the diagnosis is affecting the individual and the care partner. We will also look at how the spiritual journey (using mindfulness) can assist with keeping a focus on hope, joy, and peace.

March 3: What Type of Road Map is Needed for This Journey? Planning done early reduces stress. We will cover legal issues, housing, financial concerns, and local support systems.

Each class will consist of equal time for questions and support. Committing to all three classes is highly recommended. Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MFT, CMC, will be the instructor. Linda has over 40 years’ experience working with individuals and their families when dementia is an issue. The goal is reducing anxiety and replacing it with the peace that knowledge can bring.

Contact Cathy Scheve at cathy@lopc.org to arrange for a short interview with Linda Fodrini-Johnson to see if these classes will meet your needs.



Memory Matters: When to Worry and What to Do

February 9 at 11:11 a.m.

Learn about memory loss and how to recognize when it may be a cause for concern. Discover what you can do to retain memory and how, even with a diagnosis of Mild Cognitive Impairment, you can make behavioral changes that could change the trajectory of a progressive issue. We will discuss diagnosis, treatment, and support systems. Presenter will be Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, who has 40 years’ experience working with families when someone is challenged by memory.

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

On January 9, Thursday Fellowship returned from the holiday break, and guests and volunteers were thrilled to be back! It was a month filled with a variety of programs starting with Syria T. Berry and Michael Kistner for the first two meetings. They are regulars at Thursday Fellowship, and they bring everyone joy with their musical talents. Guests sing along, and there might be some dancing in the aisles!

On January 23, we had another fun Bingo Day. There were prizes galore and some very serious competitors. We celebrated and learned a lot about the Chinese New Year on January 30. All the programs were uniquely special, and it was a great start to the new year.

February promises to be full of fun. We look forward to celebrating Valentine's Day with some special activities, and the afternoon programs this month are wonderfully varied, entertaining and educating us all.



Looking forward to February:

- **February 6:** Rossmoor Square Dancers.
- **February 13:** Valentines Day Party.
- **February 20:** Mike Kistner plays guitar as we sing along.
- **February 27:** Presentation by Ann Schulenberger, a local ceramic artist will share her art pieces and her journey through the creative arts.

If you are looking for a new activity in the new year, we welcome you to join us. Come as a guest and bring a friend. If you are interested in volunteering please reach out to Julie Peterson, Thursday Fellowship Coordinator. We are especially looking for drivers to transport guests to LOPC on Thursday mornings at 11:00 a.m.

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.**



seedlings



IT'S SEEDLINGS REGISTRATION TIME!

By Coleen Moulton

This month marks the start of our registration for the 2025 – 2026 school year, beginning with currently enrolled families, followed by LOPC members, those on our waiting list, and finally the wider community.

Seedlings, our infant, toddler, and preschool program, serves about 100 families annually with a staff of 20 early childhood professionals. There are over 50 children on our waiting list, and we are able to enroll about two-thirds of those families each school year. This program acts as a ministry, fostering connections between families and the church, creating opportunities for families who might not otherwise visit our campus to connect with the church through our school.

For families currently enrolled in the Seedlings program, registration is done by priority numbers. Children of

Seedlings/LOPC staff are accommodated first, then the children of board members. Priority is then determined by family enrollment dates: the date which your oldest child first began at Seedlings (continuous enrollment is required.) In cases where families share the same family start date, church members are accommodated first and then a lottery system is used to assign numbers.

Our celebrated Summer at Seedlings program is scheduled to kickoff on June 3 this year. Registration for our currently enrolled families will open on February 27. Please note that space is limited to current families and students enrolled in the upcoming school year program.

All registration is done online. Email Seedlings for more information: seedlings@lopc.org.

staff announcements



We are happy to announce that **Michelle Browning** has accepted the position of Program Manager, Mission. In this role, she will serve as the primary liaison between LOPC and our mission partners, oversee church-wide mission and service-learning opportunities, and develop programs to strengthen community involvement and member engagement. With nearly seven years at LOPC, Michelle's previous role involved providing program support across various ministries, most recently working with Pastor Chris Baldwin. Throughout her time here, she has consistently demonstrated a deep passion for and commitment to mission and service.



In more good news, **Robin Freeberg**, who has been on staff the past 17 years, has stepped into a new role which was recently developed, Program Coordinator for Youth and Senior Ministry. Robin has provided invaluable ministry program support and thoughtful care to the various ministry areas that she has supported in the past, most recently with Mission. We want to recognize Robin's demonstrated passion for mission work and love of service, which she will continue to provide with the younger generation at LOPC. We are grateful that Robin will be sharing her gifts with our community with Youth Ministry. She will also work closely with Julie Peterson, Thursday Fellowship Coordinator, to provide program coordination support for senior programs.

finance

Thank you for 2024 Giving

Thank you to everyone for your continued generosity to LOPC. The final numbers for 2024 have not yet been finalized, but we can report that overall giving for 2024 finished strong and the Faith Component for 2024 surpassed its goal.

What is Per Capita?

Per Capita is a Latin phrase that means “for each head.” We use it to refer to an annual fee that our congregation pays to higher levels of the Presbyterian Church based upon the number of active members at LOPC. For 2025, the Per Capita amount is \$40.00 per family member, or \$80.00 per couple. Our goal is to double member participation in 2025 to 15%. We want to encourage more members to make an extra per capita contribution to help defray this church expense in addition to their other giving. Please write “Per Capita” on the memo line of a check or give online at lopc.org/givingw. LOPC budgeted \$66,760 in 2025 for our Per Capita obligation. We are hopeful the congregation remembers to donate to Per Capita, as we no longer use pledge envelopes. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a significant portion of this could be covered by members' extra contributions, enabling us to add additional support to LOPC ministries?

Giving through Fellowship One

Each year, Finance needs approval from donors to continue credit card giving through Fellowship One's recurring payment option.

Please inform Farah Mohammadzai, LOPC's Accountant, farah@lopc.org x253, of your intentions, so she can make sure your giving is correct in 2025. Thank you.

Finance Announcement

LOPC received two generous gifts in December 2024, currently we are unable to determine the donor.

1. VITRUS \$10,140.53 41 shares of stock on Dec 09, 2024
2. UNITED WAY check \$10,000 on Dec 30, 2024

Please contact Farah Mohammadzai farah@lopc.org if the gift is from you, so we can thank you properly and include on your year-end giving statement. Thank you!

New Ways to Give

Gifts to LOPC can now be made through Venmo and Paypal in addition to credit or debit card, and bank ACH. One-time gifts can be made with Apple Pay and Google Pay.



Please visit lopc.org/waystogive to learn more!


hold in PRAYER

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

Larry Rose, who passed November 1. A service will be held on March 1 at 1:00 p.m.

Ben Hemphill, who passed on November 6. A service will be held on March 29 at 1:00 p.m.

Karen Broderick, daughter of Verna Broderick, who passed on December 18.



Yes! I would like to donate to the Per Capita fund.

Did you know that LOPC pays an annual fee to PCUSA for each member of our congregation? In 2025, LOPC is responsible for contributing \$40 per member or \$80 per couple. If you are able, we ask that you consider covering this fee with an additional gift.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

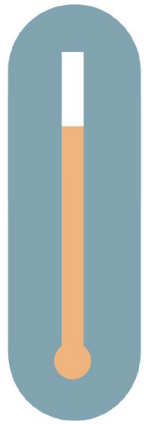
Please return this form to the LOPC Ministry Center at 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette, CA 94549 or make your donation online at lopc.org/giving.

Questions? Contact Suzanne Ferraro, Treasurer, at suzanne@lopc.org

Amazing GRACE

2025 Pledge Campaign
how sweet the sound...

2025 Pledge Campaign



So far, our community has pledged **\$1,880,048*** for 2025. Our goal is **\$2,500,000.**

*as of 1/13/24

2025 Pledge Campaign

LOPC is blessed to have a congregation filled with so many people giving generously of their time, talents, and treasure. Your gifts make our ministry thrive, and we really do make a difference in this world. Please join us during this annual pledge season. We ask that you take this time now to prayerfully consider your gifts for the coming year.

Visit lopc.org/pledge to learn more about how to pledge and why. For questions, please contact LOPC treasurer, Suzanne Ferraro at suzanne@lopc.org.

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, or scan the code on your mobile device.



FIRST FRIDAY FORUM

Unlocking the Science of Sensitive Kids with Dr. W. Thomas Boyce

February 7 at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary and online



Why do siblings differ even though they share the same parents and environment? Why do some children appear to flourish despite facing serious

obstacles, sometimes even tragedies, yet others wither when confronted with stress, and sometimes end up severely troubled? Dr. W. Thomas Boyce answers these questions in his popular book, *The Orchid and the Dandelion*, and will address these topics and more at the February 7 First Friday Forum.

After finishing his medical training at the Indiana School of Medicine, he began his calling as a pediatrician in a variety of practices, including a Navajo reservation, and soon became intrigued with the ways in which the variety of afflictions he confronted seem to stem not only from the diseases he treated, but also to the personalities of his little patients as they were shaped by early environmental influences. Captivated by this variability, he began a productive career as a pediatric researcher, pursuing innumerable studies of typical "dandelion" kids and their rarer sensitive "orchids." His book and his FFF presentation will review some of the major findings of how nature, nurture, and the timing of how genetic and environmental influences interweave during childhood to form the people we become as adults.

Dr. Boyce is an eminent scholar, having published over 200 publications and has been awarded several honors such as from the UC-Berkeley School of Public Health, and the MacArthur Foundation, and since the publication of the book, he has given many talks and interviews. But Dr. Boyce also speaks directly to the personal challenges of raising children and addresses these with great honesty and compassion. This is a perfect event for parents, grandparents, teachers and all those who engage with children at any level. What a marvelous opportunity for the Lamorinda community to attend his presentation this February!

"Seriously good. . . . A book for parents bewildered by their impossibly spirited children, for teachers [and] psychologists wanting insight into individual differences."
—*Psychology Today*

The Orchid and the Dandelion

Why Sensitive Children Face Challenges and How All Can Thrive



W. Thomas Boyce, MD



**LAFAYETTE-ORINDA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

49 Knox Drive
Lafayette, CA 94549



info@lopc.org
925-283-8722

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LOPC FOUNDATION



Is one of your New Year's resolutions to update (or create) your estate plans? If YES, please consider naming the LOPC Foundation as a part of your legacy giving and join those of us who want to make a lasting impact on our LOPC community.

To learn more about the Foundation, please visit lopc.org/foundation or reach out to a Foundation Trustee.

