

## Nothing is Too Hard for Daddy

By Nate Miller

“Our daddy can do anything,” Abigail blurted. “Yeah,” Elijah added, “he is so strong he can even pick up the house.” Our four and five year-olds’ confidence in their daddy’s capabilities was clearly misplaced. Confidence firmly fixed in our Heavenly Father is not. He does indeed seem to be demonstrating the ability to do anything by lifting up our house and moving us to the Middle East.

We, with our children, are experiencing the beginning tremors of this pending transition. While realistic about the challenges we face in this move, we find comfort in particular qualities found in the One who is sending us. For us right now, the qualities that bring us hope are the stability and power found in God’s person.

Some measure of stability is important for all families everywhere. Changing language, country, and culture challenges this sense of permanence. In the transitional chaos ahead, we hope to somehow cobble together a healthy atmosphere for our little children even as we as parents feel unsettled ourselves.

Searching for stability, we would perhaps remain immobilized except for a steadfastness found in our Heavenly Father. We proclaim our trust with the exultant psalmist, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower,” (Psalm 18:2). As the LORD leads us overseas into a situation beyond our natural capacities, He speaks to our heart and reminds us He can satisfy

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*Editor’s note: We all have opportunities to share our faith, but many times it’s hard to take advantage of them and know what to say. I asked Steve to share some ways he’s found to tell others about his faith, and he graciously agreed to do so. Everyone will have different opportunities and circumstances, but we can glean some ideas from Steve’s experience.*

## Reflections on Sharing Faith

By Steve Swartz

I’ve shared Christ in the wrong way, for the wrong reasons, and at the wrong times. And I’ve often not shared Christ when I should have. But I keep asking God to pick me back up again and help me be generous in telling others how much I love Him and what He has done for me. And He has helped me do so:

### In our neighborhood

Phyllis and I interact with neighbors when we can, looking for ways to talk about the goodness of Jesus. One way to connect is by welcoming new neighbors (fresh-baked bread from Phyllis starts great friendships). Last spring we invited all of our neighbors to a block party potluck, and spent the evening with three young

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*London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.*

# A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz



It's taken me a little while to get used to the concept of Facebook "friends." I don't tend to use the word "friend" loosely, but in the world of Facebook it's different. A "friend" appears to be any casual acquaintance from now or twenty years ago, or even a friend of that acquaintance. In general, Facebook protocol seems to dictate that you should be friends with everyone who wants to be your friend. This isn't necessarily bad, but it just seems a little weird.

Sometimes there doesn't seem to be a connection at all. Someone asked to be my friend recently and I had no idea who they were. I felt bad. Was this a friend I had forgotten? I let the friend request sit there for a couple days wondering what I should do and finally clicked on "Ignore".

My son Kevin thinks it's cool to rack up "friends." There's some status in getting as many friends as you can, I guess. I doubt he will catch my nephew Jimmy who has 999 "friends" the last time I checked...sorry, make that 1003.

Don't get me wrong. I like the opportunity that Facebook provides me to keep in touch with people all over the world and acquaintances from way back. It can be fun and interesting, but it really makes me think about what a friend is.

I have a pastor friend who was recently talking about a Facebook experience. His brother "suggested" a "friend" from high school. This "friend" immediately started a theological argument with him through Facebook, pummeling him with derogatory messages about his simple reply to a seemingly harmless question. The pastor tried to respond kindly, but eventually had to click on the "Remove Friend" button. You'd think that if someone agreed to be your "friend" they wouldn't act like that.

So what do real friends look like? They are the ones who have walked beside you during difficult times. They have faithfully encouraged you and challenged you. They have seen the messiness of your life and love you anyway. For these friends, we should be eternally grateful.

Relationships with these friends go far beyond those on Facebook or friendship as it is normally defined. They live up to a higher calling, a higher definition of friendship—the call of Christ to love one another as he has loved us. Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

So take a moment to honor friends like these. Drop them a note of appreciation. Take them out for dinner or go golfing together. Take the time to reciprocate the love that has been shown to you in a way they can understand. Who knows, maybe even a simple note on Facebook would be the ticket.

# Elders' Notes

*Ideas and thoughts from recent meetings*

## Helping the poor

At their last meeting, the elders' team continued to discuss the church's responsibility to the poor and how to be involved in the social needs of the community and the world. "We talked about the challenge of distinguishing real need from those who are just milking the system. Some of us have been burned and find it difficult to know how to respond," Rob said.

The conclusion was that there are hard issues, but they want to know how Jesus desires the church to respond. One thing the elders want to do is identify agencies that are already doing a good job at meeting needs, like Lifepointe Family Center or the H.E.L.P. House, and encourage people to volunteer for them.

Rob said he would also be interested in seeing what people in the congregation are being led to. "Maybe God is speaking to someone else at LCF about this that could shed some practical light on what we can do."

## Worship team vacancy

A new worship team leader is needed. The leader would provide vision for the team in ways like introducing new music, getting new people involved in the team, and adjusting the music style as needed. He or she would also be responsible for administrative duties like putting together the worship schedule and organizing the music. If anyone is interested in doing this, they can talk to Rob.

## Question of the week

As part of the increased effort to get congregational input, a "question of the week" has been included in recent bulletins on the comment card. Responses are welcome.

## Pastoral roles

The elders decided to change Ryan and Reuben's titles from "Youth Pastor" and "Teaching Pastor," respectively, to "Associate Pastor." The idea is that the new title would be less limiting both now and in the future for associate pastors.

The next step in this process is to come up with job descriptions for the pastoral roles that can be distributed to the congregation for review. The elders would like to see a general job description for the lead pastor and one for associate pastors, ideally kept short and simple. Rob will get input from Reuben and Ryan and start developing these job descriptions in the next few weeks.

It was also decided that things like vacation time, sick leave, and severance terms should be written in a contractual letter of intent. This document would be written by the elders for the benefit of the pastors and would not need to be a public document for the congregation.

## Getting to Know... *John McConnell*

### **What brings you to the Columbus area?**

School. I'm going to DeVry University, Columbus campus. I get my degree on June 21 of this year, in network and communications management.

### **Where did you grow up?**

Richmond, Ohio. It's in the Pittsburgh/Wheeling area, about an hour west of Pittsburgh. I lived on a farm. You could say it was country, but I lived only a mile away from a gas station.

### **If you could have any job, what would it be?**

A CIO or chief information officer. Basically, the head executive of the IT department of a company.

### **You've lived in city and country, which do you like better?**

I guess I like the city better. That's just because I've lived here less. Everything's so much faster to get to.

### **What do you like to do in your spare time?**

Normally when I have spare time, I like watching TV and surfing the internet. I like to surf around the DeVry website to get inspiration and find new technologies. Recently I found a technology that would synch my cell phone's contacts and calendar with my Google account.

### **What's a goal you have for the future?**

Have a family, settle down, and get a good job.

### **What was your favorite family tradition growing up?**

Reunions. We had lots and lots of food and played sports. Both sides of the family had reunions. We played things like cornhole, or baseball and football.



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our hunger for stability. His strength promises us a place of refuge. This brings us hope as we realistically anticipate the challenges inherent in transitioning to the Middle East.

God's power represents another aspect of His character that is especially meaningful to us as He moves our home. From our perch in the United States we look at a Middle East boiling with war and hatred, and wonder as we take our children's tiny hands to wade into a jumbled mess. Some of this chaos will no doubt meddle with our family.

Uniquely touching, then, to our hearts is the fact that God cares about our distresses, present and future, and is strong enough to help us. Able to "bend the heavens....and come down" (Psalm 18:9) in response to the distress cries of His people, God's power to take action on our behalf brings us optimism, empowering comfort, and great hope.

Our schedule has us leaving, if our budget is fully-funded, at July's end. Anticipating strong spiritual opposition as well as many emotional and spiritual challenges associated with transition, we field to the Middle East placing our hope in God's character.

As a couple, we are finding God's invitation to come to come to Him for strengthening stability particularly sweet. We simply trust our strong Daddy can do anything, even lift up our home and safely move us to the Middle East.

*Nate and Suetta Miller and their children Elijah, Abigail, Hannah and Hadassah attended LCF while Nate taught a class at Rosedale Bible College during the winter term. They are planning to begin a four-year assignment in the Middle East through Eastern Mennonite Missions.*

families and two older couples like us. We enjoyed the great food and conversation and made friendships which still continue.

### As I travel

When I fly on airplanes, at times I find my seatmate is receptive to spiritual matters. I once was able to talk and pray at length with a man hurting from a failed marriage. Another time I listened to a Buddhist from India describe his faith and reciprocated with how I have experienced Jesus.

### In my family

My brother, faltering in faith, was also experiencing marriage problems. With fear and much prayer, I reached out to him. I shared about my own struggles to be a good husband. My daughter Ann Marie gave her uncle a college chapel tape with a testimony of how God restored a marriage. Amazingly, through these and other means, God restored his marriage.

### In my counseling practice

On my application forms are two questions: "Is your spiritual life important to you?" and "Do you want it to be a part of your counseling?" Most people answer "no" to one or both of the questions. But when the answers to both questions are "yes", I can appropriately share concepts of how God can meet their needs, whether it is through salvation or the ongoing life of discipleship.

But recently, God has impressed on me that sharing my faith is not primarily what I do so much as it is an extension of who I am in Christ. Reuben emphasized that in his Sunday school class. That class and this scripture have impacted me: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life." (1 John 1:1)

I've heard, seen and touched many good things in my walk with Jesus, not the least of which is salvation. And, as I live out my salvation, Jesus provides what I need in abundance. All I need to do is talk about it.



Pictured above: A recent block party at Amherst Meadows neighborhood.

## Building Fund Update



Keith reports that not many people have responded to the request for pledges to the building fund, but the contractors are still requesting payment for any services.

Although God can rain down cash from the skies or make other arrangements, He has not promised to do this, so the funding committee still recommends making pledges. If you have been planning to pledge but haven't gotten around to it, it would probably cheer the committee up if you let them know. You can pick up a commitment form in the lobby and place it in the offering or put it in Keith's mailbox.

### The numbers

Groups, or "giving units," who have made pledges: 13

Amount pledged per month: \$2,800

Estimated need per month: \$5,500

Current monthly income to the fund after projected interest is added: \$3,900

Current fund: \$368,666

Estimated time to reach goal of \$500,000 before beginning construction: 36 months

Target date to reach \$500,000: December 2010 (18 months)

## The LCF Connection

A monthly newsletter designed to enhance communication at London Christian Fellowship

If you'd like to make comments on any of the stories or "LCF Connection" in general, email us at: [connection@lcfweb.org](mailto:connection@lcfweb.org).  
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