

Family Reunions, Barbeques, and Two Weeks in Thailand

By Andrew Sharp

It may be painful to think too much about summer right now, when it's cold enough that if you pour water out of a glass, by the time it hits the ground you'll be back inside already. But even though summer is still a distant dream, the time to make summer plans is coming up quickly.



One plan that may be of interest is available through Rosedale Mennonite Missions. It's called eX-voto, a short missions trip for small groups of four to eight people. The trips available this year are to Bangladesh, Thailand, and Haiti.

Why eX-voto starts with a small "e" is a mystery, but the meaning of the name itself is simple enough. It's Latin and (according to RMM) means "a sacrifice offered to God either to fulfill a vow or as an expression of desire or gratitude." Although they could have made this up, Latin literacy being what it is these days, they probably can be trusted.

These outreaches last about two weeks, so they are similar to other short-term summer trips, but smaller and more suitable for families or couples. Todd Miller, who is director of RMM's short-term missions department, said eX-voto is a great opportunity for people at LCF to see what's happening on the mission field first hand and help out with the work. And since Tom and Candice Mast are in Thailand, he said, that trip would make sense for people from this church. It would "be a huge encouragement to [their] family," he said.

The main focus of the Thailand trip will be intercessory prayer for the people in areas where RMM missionaries are working, as well as prayer for the missionaries themselves. Other possibilities include investigating new ways to do outreach among

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Hebrew Word of the Month

By Reuben Sairs



"lev" – the heart

We will see a lot of hearts around Valentine's Day. We know exactly what they symbolize—love and feelings of love. It can get pretty gushy. It seems clear to us—we think with our brains and we feel with our hearts. Of course, all of that is a little poetic. We know that biologically the brain is gray matter and sits in the skull. A real heart is in the chest and would make a scary valentine.

The word "heart" is mentioned many times in the Bible with regard to our approach to God. If the Bible tells us to love God with all our heart (Deuteronomy 6:5), what does it mean? The Bible doesn't use this word the way we do. In Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, the word *lev* represents more than an organ that pumps blood, and more than the seat of our emotions. According to *Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies*, the Hebrews regard *lev* or "heart" in a more general sense, as being also "the seat of the intellect." It includes all of the following:

- mind, purpose, and intention.
- understanding, knowledge, and insight.
- courage and spirit.

As you read your Bible and find passages addressed to your heart, to read them correctly you need to think beyond feelings and add ideas that we usually link to the will, to the intellect and to our attitudes.

London Christian Fellowship
215 US Rt. 42 NE
London, OH 43140
(740) 852-4268

www.lcfweb.org

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

Where are We Going?

Notes on Elders' Meeting, Part I

By Rob Swartz



The elders' team was excited to see the great turnout for our "Where Are We Going?" meeting on January 10. We enjoyed hearing the many ideas and seeing enthusiasm for the ministry at London Christian Fellowship. Thanks again to each of you who came out and participated and for those who have given comments since then. Each of those comments will help us as we make decisions about how God would want LCF to function and grow.

A couple of weeks ago we took an entire Saturday to pray, to process the input and see where God might be leading us. In the next several Connections I will be sharing some of the ideas that have emerged and are still emerging from those discussions. These are ideas in process and we continue to welcome your input as we present some of these thoughts and plans.

Building Program

We remain committed to the building program and want to provide proper leadership in seeing the project through to completion. It is important that we keep this process moving along. We need to have more verbal announcements just to keep the congregation aware of where things are at.

Richard Troyer would like to have someone else added to the fundraising team to replace him, since he has taken on elder responsibilities. He will call a team meeting to put a plan in place.

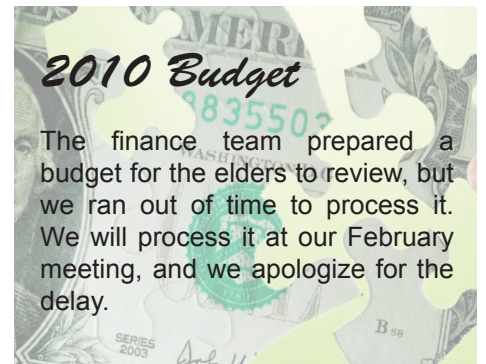


It was suggested that perhaps each small group could work together on organizing a fundraiser. We probably can only handle two or three big fundraisers as an entire church.

It would be good to have some visible sign of progress that people could add to—

as individuals, families, or groups—whenever they raise money for the building fund. Some suggestions for this are:

- bringing the money they've earned or are donating on a specific Sunday and everyone emptying their "cans" into a building fund bank.
- using the bulletin board as a place for people to pin up a paper brick with their name and fundraising activity on it. Eventually there would be a wall of bricks that would fill the bulletin board.



Miscellaneous Notes

- Elizabeth Yoder has agreed to serve as worship team leader.
- We are very appreciative of the repair work that Kelvin and the Buildings and Grounds team are doing to the interior of the church.
- Jared Stutzman is planning a men's whitewater rafting trip for this spring, which will be a good event for inviting unchurched friends.
- We are thankful for the new small group Keith and Shannon started and continue to encourage LCF attendees to be involved in a small group.

Church Structure

Communication – A theme that seemed to emerge was that we need to do a better job communicating. We believe “The Connection” has been one step in improving communication and we are grateful to Andrew and Doris for putting that together. However, some areas still need work.

We need to clarify job descriptions for the various ministry teams and make them available for people to see—perhaps on a bulletin board, in a binder, in a PDF file, etc.

We want to have better communication with the church but don't feel we should add another team in order to have a communication team. Doris already does much of that.

Someone suggested better visuals in the lobby and we like that idea. It would be great if someone would like to lend his or her creativity to that end.

In defining the ministry teams and roles, we need to state terms more clearly. We would like to have the team leaders commit to a three-year term beginning in January. The team members could commit for a year at a time, renewable each year.

Pastors – The arrangement of love offerings as the method of financial support for our associate pastors is scheduled to run through this year. Over the next several months we will begin processing with the congregation a more permanent plan to have in place by the beginning of next year. By the end of March the elders will communicate a plan and timeline for this process to the congregation.

The elders' team will be praying specifically for the following people this month:

- Jennifer Nutt (Ryan and Kris)
- Kelli Reed (Richard and Robin)
- Tom and Lois Reninger (Reuben and Vicki)
- Abraham and Naomy Ndungu (Keith and Shannon)
- Jessica and Dwayne Rich (Rob and Doris)

Note: Part II will be featured in the March issue of the LCF Connection.

Moderators – In an effort to encourage leadership development and provide opportunities for future leaders, I will encourage the guys in STRIVE and others with leadership abilities to serve as the opening moderator on Sunday mornings. We may still need to use elders to help moderate some of the time, but we want to provide more opportunities for new leaders to develop.

Service fair – We like the idea of having a service fair sometime in the fall, where all the ministry teams could share a little about what they do. They could have tables with signup sheets where people could volunteer. The tables would also have the detailed job descriptions and any criteria (such as whether church membership is required, etc.). For example, the Children's Ministry Team would have signup sheets for people to serve as Sunday school teachers, nursery workers, junior youth leaders, etc. For a fair like this, we would encourage every person who attends LCF to come and sign up to help out in some way. This would serve as one of our two annual congregational meetings.



Wanted: Assistant Editor for the Connection

We'd love to have an assistant editor to help with story ideas, writing, proofreading, and the various other tasks that go into putting the newsletter together.

Qualifications:

An interest in writing
Human (no pets or wild animals, please)
Ability to speak some English

Perks:

You can write stuff
Lots of free merchandise from local businesses*
Competitive salary**
Fame and fortune in the church newsletter industry

*you are responsible to find businesses willing to participate in the program

**when compared to other volunteer work

If you are interested, talk to Andrew or Doris, or send an email to connection@lcfweb.org.



Getting to Know... *Kelli Reed*

What do you like to do when you have free time?

Hmmm, free time? I like to hang out with Austyn as much as I can. Or hang out with my friends and catch up on things that are happening in our lives. I like to draw, play softball, and I have discovered that I like to cook!

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

I think I would like to live in Australia. It is a beautiful place and it would be totally different from city living, but I think I would love it. And the fact that I could see kangaroos every day is a plus.

Movie or book?

I would have to say a movie. I don't like to read much and I feel more emotional during movies than I do books. I like to see it happening rather than have to picture what is happening.

Would you rather tell a joke or laugh at one?

Definitely laugh at one. It is much more fun to hear a joke and laugh, because if you are the one telling it, you don't know if they are laughing at the joke or at you.

Which are worse, spiders or snakes?

I dislike them both very much, but I guess I will have to say snakes because they can bite and wrap themselves around you and I can't kill them with my shoe. And I definitely can't outrun a snake like I can a spider.

What's something people might not know about you?

While in the army, I graduated in the top 5% of my platoon and I was the only girl to get a perfect score in my PT (Physical Training) test. A perfect score is 320 and none of the girls reached 315. It was an amazing feeling!

Do you like winter or summer better?

I would definitely have to say summer. I do not like being cold and I don't like the snow much. I would much rather see the sun every day and flip flops every day of my life!



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university students there, or helping the Thailand REACH team teach English at a Buddhist school.

The Bangladesh team would focus on working with believers and seekers. They would take part in English Bible camps, helping out with worship and Bible studies, prayer walking, and more.

In Haiti, the team would focus on earthquake relief work.

These missions trips take place June 25-July 11, and range in cost from \$2,300-\$2,900 depending on location. The registration deadline is May 1.

"Even if you haven't considered it before, seriously pray about it," Todd said. "You might be called 'for such a time as this.'"

For more information, talk to Todd, go to www.sendme.org or email send@rmmoffice.org.

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.
Editor: Andrew Sharp; Layout: Doris Swartz

Small Group Update

From Charley Gregg

Charley and Sandy Gregg; Bob and Bettyjo Zachrich; Marcus and Brenda Freed; Steve and Phyllis Swartz, and Karla Knief.

Our Bible study group meets every Monday evening at 7:30 p.m. Usually we do not meet when there is Thursday Night Prayer and Praise at the church. Recent additions to the group include Karla Knief and Steve and Phyllis Swartz. We currently rotate meeting at each others homes. We are completing our study on building a stronger relationship with God, and plan to begin a new program in the early spring. In the interest of thrift, we have found some good "pre-owned" lesson plans online, sometimes for one cent plus shipping.