

## A Shameless Plug for CMC's Annual Conference\*

*By Andrew Sharp*

Every summer, Conservative Mennonite Conference's annual meetings come whooshing by at the end of July like a sudden summer storm (refreshing or menacing, depending on your perspective and the amount of work you have to do to prepare for it). This event goes by the slightly repetitive name of the Annual Conference of Conservative Mennonite Conference.

My guess is most people at LCF fit into three categories: those who go every year, those who have attended LCF for a while but never go, and those who are new and don't know what Conference is. If you're not in any of those categories, you should know that you are ruining my theory and making my life more difficult, so I will ignore you (a venerable and proven research method).

While some of those who go every year no doubt do so out of an abiding love for the event, many have to go because of their employment with CMC, Rosedale Bible College, or Rosedale Mennonite Missions. Perhaps they love going as well, but it doesn't really matter in the end. They go.

Then there are those who have been attending LCF for some time, but rarely go to Conference. Maybe the idea of attending a meeting of church executives doesn't sound appealing. They like LCF, but really don't feel the need to connect with the broader organization of churches that LCF is a part of.

And newcomers may not have any idea of that broader organization. They like the church, but get confused about all the acronyms that get thrown around—CMC, RMM, MMA, RBC, AFL-CIO, MSNBC, etc.

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## Bethel Camp Update

*By Kimberly Miller*

As a kid I looked forward to summer break. It was not because I didn't like school—I loved school. But summer meant camp, and camp meant lots of fun with lots of friends. I grew up just down the road from Bethel Camp in Kentucky and my church, Caney Creek, was closely connected with the camp. My mom would take her Sunday School class to Day Camp and even though I was too young to be a camper I got to go along. Since then I have spent at least a week of my summers



at camp as either a camper, staff member, or both.

During those weeks of camp I learned so much about God, myself and friends. The chapel is where I see my 12-year-old self standing making that first commitment to Christ. Late-night talks in the cabins still connect me to several close friends and numerous talks with staff continue to encourage me in my walk with Christ.

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

# Review Time (Hooray)

A Message from the Pastor  
By Rob Swartz



I don't really like reviews. I don't like receiving them or giving them. And I don't think I am alone in this. Most people look at reviews in a negative light. Reviews are where you are told all the things you are doing wrong, right? Who wants to hear that? In fact, imperfect people reviewing imperfect people can at times be counter-productive and even destructive. But even though there are risks, we as a leadership team decided that pastoral reviews would be a good idea.

While I don't care for reviews, I see them as valuable. For one, I believe they can increase our effectiveness as a congregation. They provide one more opportunity to keep communication open between the leadership and the congregation, and reflect the accountability that leaders have to their congregation. They also create a time to celebrate the things that are going well. At the same time, we can reflect on how we could improve as a congregation and how leadership could help with that.

There are always areas we could improve. Some we are aware of. Others we are often blind to without the input of others to help us see them. Of course, as we give and receive input we must always understand that we all have flaws. There are no perfect pastors or perfect congregations. Reviews are not a chance to say everything that's on your mind—discretion is necessary. Answer the question "What comments would help us do the ministry God has called us to?"

That brings me to your part in a review...filling it out honestly. We want to know what you think, so take the opportunity. Fill it out! It is one way that you can be involved in helping LCF be effective in the work of God's kingdom. In fact, we want you to give input at any time, not just during review time. If you have a concern or a word of encouragement, share it!

So, when you see the review in the next month or so, think carefully about it, pray about it, and give your input. It may not be the most enjoyable process, but it could provide those of us who are leaders with valuable information on what is going well and also where we need to improve.

Thanks in advance for your thoughtful and honest input. May God bless and multiply our efforts in His kingdom work at London Christian Fellowship!

# Elders' Notes

*Ideas and thoughts from recent meetings*

The elders reviewed and approved new Sunday school material that Phyllis Swartz designed and Molly Rosati illustrated. It is a two-sided sheet that shows the order of the books of the Bible, a timeline, maps, and more, designed to go with the current Sunday school curriculum. It will be put in a "hornbook" (an antique way of displaying learning material behind a transparent sheet in a wooden frame). Phyllis will teach an elementary class this fall to try out the material.

Kevin and Kristen Duncan have asked to be released from their responsibilities of leading the junior youth. The junior youth group suggested names of two couples who they think would be good replacements. The leadership team approved the names and Molly will contact them to see if either or both would be interested in serving in this way. They may also try to see if there would be a young adult willing to help out.

Lisa Wilt will soon be ending her term as nursery coordinator but so far no one has expressed any interest in this responsibility. Molly will continue trying to find someone.

Anna Rosati already has all the teachers she needs lined up for the fall Sunday school quarter.

Kirby and Holly Miller and Jeff and Karen Helmuth have transferred their memberships to Shiloh Mennonite Church.

The post-high small group has decided to form two smaller groups, which will meet together as a larger group once a month. Pray for unity and discernment as they continue to iron out the details.

16 people asked for an assigned prayer partner, so there are 8 new prayer partner pairs.

The leadership team will be encouraged to participate in the pastoral reviews with the congregation. Richard, Keith and church overseer Roger Hazen will be the only ones to see the results that come in.

Doris researched color copier options for the church and recommended two of them to the leadership team. They cost \$6,877 and \$7,745, respectively. The elders approved purchasing either of the copiers, after final approval from the finance team. Doris will check with Lifepoint Family Center to see if they can use the old copier.

The leadership team reviewed the Benevolence Fund Policy that the team (Andrew and Stephanie Sharp, Bob Zachrich, Levi Miller and Ryan Freed) has put together.

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# Word of the Month

By Reuben Sairs

דַּעַת (da`at)—“knowledge”

I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out *knowledge and* discretion. (Proverbs 8:12)

The Hebrew word for knowledge in this verse from Proverbs is da`at. It is also the word for knowledge used in the phrase “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” in Genesis 2. There are several related words in the Old Testament and sorting them out is quite a study! Hebrew has word roots, and this particular one appears in various forms many different times. In Proverbs 8:12 it is a general term for knowledge. It can also mean technical know-how, as was needed to build the tabernacle and temple.

How hard do we have to work at possessing knowledge? Is it a natural talent—something we are born with? Do we get knowledge by bumbling along? Is it a matter of moral intuition? “I just know in my heart, I’m right.”\* I personally think knowledge is worth much more effort than we usually give. Proverbs says “Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.” (8:10)

How do we acquire it then? There is only one way I know of—processing experience with the right attitude. This right attitude includes reverence, faith in God and a will to put knowledge into practice.

We can jump ahead, of course, by learning from the experience of others. That’s why education, teachers, reading and consulting can be such powerful tools. Why take the time to “reinvent the wheel?” Why learn the hard way, if you can learn from someone else and their mistakes? The world really does have the potential, though not always realized, to advance and become a better place—the know-how part of knowledge can accumulate over generations. The attitude part, though, has to be supplied by each individual.

\*famous last words

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*Elders...continued from page 2*

They were pleased with the job the team did compiling, clarifying and organizing information. The elders made a few slight changes and approved the policy as amended.

If the Adult Discipleship Class runs for three quarters during the upcoming school year (September 5 – May 29), there will need to be an adult class teacher for about twice as many Sundays as last year (39 instead of 16). This would require some additional planning work and recruiting more volunteers. The leadership team will continue to discuss whether to move ahead with this change.

The team is praying specifically for the following people this month:

Charley and Sandy Gregg (Ryan and Kris)  
Marcus and Brenda Freed (Richard and Robin)  
Dale and Sharon Headings (Reuben and Vicki)  
Gary and Dina Hoffman (Keith and Shannon)  
Phil and Becky Hostetler (Rob and Doris)

## Looking Ahead...

July 18: Communion  
July 29 - August 1: CMC Conference at Cedarville  
August 6: LCF softball tournament  
August 28-29: LCF annual camp-out

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*Conference...continued from page 1*

I think Conference has something to offer all these groups. Regular Conference-goers enjoy seeing old friends, sharing ideas about faith with many other believers, and keeping up with where the Conference is going. Those who rarely go might also enjoy the chance to make new connections, be encouraged in faith, and find out more about the group of churches that influences LCF. Newcomers might also enjoy this chance to understand their church better by learning a lot about the bigger collections of ideas and people that help shape us.

This year’s conference (July 29-August 1) is a special one, celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CMC. In addition to the usual speakers and activities, there will be lots of extras—games, dramas, activities—that give a taste of that century of history.

LCF is a group of believers who live life together, encourage each other, and have a shared history. The conference is an extension of that, a place for entire churches to interact, encourage each other, and hold each other accountable. So it’s not just a bunch of church executives trying not to fall asleep while they decide who’s going to be the moderator for the year. Although that happens too.

The location this year is Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio, so if you’re interested in going it’s a good year to check it out. For more information, pick up a program booklet from the table in the back.

*\*This article was written without coercion from the author’s employers and/or the publishers of the Connection.*

# My Take

Thoughts about Strive,  
the men's discipleship group

## Dan Frederick

Strive has been a great facilitator of growth both for my spiritual walk and in my relationships with others. It has stretched and challenged me through accountability and has helped me to get closer to my goals. Although it offers more than this, for me being consistently challenged by other Christians is the most exciting and rewarding part. I look back and see improvement in my spiritual life, and I can attribute it to Strive.



## Preston Yoder

I love how Strive brings men together to focus on spiritual growth. As men we sometimes avoid talking about deeper things in our lives, like our relationship with God. Strive opens the door wide for this discussion and encourages us to walk through it. In the process we bond as a group and deepen our relationships with God.



*Bethel Camp...continued from page 1*

Bethel Camp was so influential in my life because people sacrificed their time to be there. That is what continues to draw me back. This summer I was privileged to spend a week there and give back a little of what has been given to me. I considered it even more of a privilege to be a counselor and have three girls from LCF in my cabin—Danae Swartz, Harmony Troyer and Grace Ndungu.

As much as I wanted to give back that week I went into the week filling empty and wondering what I had to offer anyone. The theme for the summer is prayer, and I knew that as much as anyone I needed encouragement in this area. I questioned my ability to lead if I was struggling to spend time with the Father. Thankfully, our God does not require us to have everything figured out before he uses us. We only have to be willing. Even more wonderful than that, as he uses us he teaches us.

Each morning I led the girls in devotions about prayer. We would read passages of Scripture together and then go off by ourselves and ask God to speak to us. When we came back together we would share about what we heard. I am not sure the girls realized it at the time, but God spoke to me through them. He reminded me of his love, grace, and what he has done in my life. I specifically remember one morning God reminding me how much I have to be thankful for, and it had nothing to do with material possessions. If everything I have was taken from me I still would have the gift of Jesus Christ and that is more than enough to praise Him for.

At the end of the week we were all exhausted and had filled our laundry bags to overflowing. We had gone on creek hikes, made new friends, and struggled through the shaving cream blast. More important than all that though, I believe each of us met God. For some it resulted in immediate change, for others of us it was a small step in a gradual change. I am still struggling to spend time with the Father and praise Him for *all* He has done for me. Thankfully though, He is still using me.



## LCF Softball Update

After starting the season 0-6, the softball team caught fire and went on a one-game winning streak, beating Journey of Faith 15-1. They have five regular-season games to go, so they are on pace to finish 6-6.



# 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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