

The LCF Connection

September 2010

2010 Retreat Voted Best of the Year

by Andrew Sharp

The results on this year's church retreat are in, and I am pleased to report that it was voted the best retreat in nearly a year. Voters also rated the new organizers of the event "overwhelmingly adequate."* The retreat was in a new location and about a month earlier than usual (August 28-29). The location was a campground owned by the family of Sharon Headings, just outside Plain City. It featured a small kitchen, a large tent with tables, a fire pit, a creek, and (crucial to the success of any campout) large quantities of grassy area.



There were several reasons the event was so popular. One was that the main feature of the weekend was eating food, huge piles of it. Fans of macaroni salad were especially in luck. After meals, various running games and other activities were

conveniently scheduled to help people to work up hunger for the next large meal, or if that were not possible, to at least make them feel slightly queasy. At least one of these goals was almost always achieved.



Another great feature of the weekend was that it was tent camping only. A few people were wondering if this would be an improvement over cabins, but strangely they didn't get a chance to find out because things came up and they had to go home for the night. But tent camping is clearly better than sleeping in a cabin. For one thing, cabins tend to ruin that camping feel by keeping out rain and wind. (Although sadly there was no real camping weather anyway). You also don't have to read 16 years' worth of camper graffiti punctuated with dried bubble gum, or lie awake wondering if cabin rats have to grow larger and more fierce to survive in the harsh environment. Another thing—has anyone else noticed that those cabins look identical at 7 in the morning when you're coming back from the bathroom? Anybody could make a mistake and go into the wrong cabin...

Inside this Issue

2010 Retreat Voted Best of the Year	1
What is a Ministry Fair?	2
Word of the Month	2
Welcome to Youth and Jr. Youth	2
Getting to know Abraham Ndungu	3
My Take - Adult Discipleship Class	4
"Remember Us"	4

One other popular addition to the weekend was a creek. Almost everyone spent some time in or around the water. Testing showed that the Percentage of Time In the Water was inversely proportional to age, with some of the younger campers spending as much as 93% of the weekend in the stream (much to the chagrin of a harassed minnow and crayfish population). Fortunately, the water was tolerably crystal clear, by Ohio standards.

It was also nice to be able to stay a little longer on Sunday. Technically, I had to

Continued on page 3...


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.



What is a Ministry Fair?

A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz



On Sunday, September 19 we will be having our first ministry fair. Since this is the first one, I want to explain what it is all about, why it's important, and why you should come. The ministry fair is about carrying out the work that God has given us to do at London Christian Fellowship—our ministry. How does God want to use us this coming year as individuals and as a church?

A healthy church is one in which the work of ministry is shared across the entire congregation. Each person has an important role to play, and we want to give you an opportunity to see how you can contribute your gifts in serving others, taking on new roles and exploring new ways to serve. We especially hope those who are already carrying significant responsibilities and need an extra hand will get some help. In short, we hope to see everyone in our congregation actively involved in ministry.

To facilitate this we will give a short presentation about the different ministry areas and ways that you can be involved. You will also have the opportunity to talk with ministry team leaders and members to find out more about what they do. There will be opportunity to sign up to help in a variety of ways, as well as to nominate anyone you think would be good for a particular job.

We want to finish our evening with a meal together celebrating and recognizing the people who have contributed this past year. It is such an encouragement to see people, young, old, and middle-aged, step up faithfully to carry out the Lord's work. May the Lord richly bless you for your service to the kingdom and your partnership in the work at LCF. We can look forward to what God has in store for us this coming year and pray that our work would bear much fruit.

LCF Ministry Fair
 Sunday, September 19, 2010
 5:00 p.m.
We hope to see you there!

The LCF Youth Group welcomes:

- Mariah Homier
- Grace Ndungu
- Justin Scheffel
- Danae Swartz
- Harmony Troyer



The Junior Youth Group welcomes:

- Layne Headings
- Shepherd Ndungu
- Austin Wilt
- Jesse Miller

Word of the Month

By Reuben Sairs

ανωθεν (anohen) —“again”

In the Gospel of John, Jesus told Nicodemus, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” Some Christians refer to themselves as “born-again” Christians, but as opposed to what? There is no such thing as a “not-born-again” Christian.

The word “again” seems like it would be pretty easy to translate, but it's not! There are a few translations that render the Greek word ανωθεν (*anohen*) differently. For example, *The Message* says, “Take it from me: Unless a person is born from above, it's not possible to see what I'm pointing to—to God's kingdom.” *The New Revised Standard Version* also goes this route. “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Many editions will put an asterisk after this verse and give an alternate translation.

These versions aren't taking liberties with the translation. Depending on its context, the word can be translated “anew,” “from the top,” “from the very first,” “again,” “from above,” or “from the beginning.” How do translators settle these kinds of issues? One way is to look at the writings of early Bible commentators who still spoke Greek, but even they don't always give a good answer. Some words have meanings that change according to context so that even native speakers don't agree on the exact meaning. This is one of them.

Since Jesus went on to elaborate a little on the Holy Spirit and birth, the translation of this word doesn't seem to me to be a big problem. Whichever way I take it, I draw the same conclusion from the rest of what Jesus said. I must look to Jesus in faith, and the Holy Spirit will mysteriously do something to me that will cause me to see things that I previously couldn't, and put me on the road to eternal life. I will be changed. When this happens to any person, he or she is born again (or “from above,” or “anew.”)

I think everyone experiences this new birth a little differently, although the same thing is happening to each of them. For some people, this touch of God through the Holy Spirit is very dramatic and sudden and a quite obvious change—they can tell you when it happened. For others, who have grown up in the faith, it is experienced gently, slowly and they don't really remember a time when God wasn't there. The important thing is to make sure you have put your faith in Jesus, and to trust that if you did you became a new person—just like you were born again. Which, in fact, you were.

Getting to Know... Abraham Ndungu

Where did you grow up?

In the central part of Kenya, about one and a half hours north of Nairobi, Kenya's capital city. Our nearest town was Thika.

What did you do for fun when you were a kid?

Sliding downhill either on our bottoms, on a home-made cart (no engine) or on a banana tree stem. I still miss the fun. Given a chance I would still do it, even at my age.

What is your favorite food?

Mukimo. This is a mixture of potatoes, green bananas (plantains), pumpkin leaves, red beans and maize all mashed together (with the water drained out of the cooked mixture before it is mashed).

What is something you have never done but would like to do someday?

Travel to other parts of the U.S. as well as to other parts of the world I have not been to—especially South and Central America.

Do you have any pets? What is your favorite pet?

No. None—but maybe a goat kid, so that when it matures I can eat it.

What do you like to do for fun now?

Walking, hiking, playing cards and putting together puzzles.

What are some of the jobs you have had?

Teaching in high school, in a university and in a Bible College. And administration (academic dean).

Did you go to college anywhere? What did you study?

The University of Nairobi (Kenya)—a bachelor's degree in sociology and economics and a master's degree in urban and regional planning. Also, Tongji University (China)—doctorate in urban planning and design. Regions Beyond Bible College and Rosedale Bible Institute (diploma in biblical studies); the Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute, (certificate in air pollution management technologies); Linköping University (Sweden, ecological sanitation).

What are some of your goals for the future?

My main goal is to help promote speedy realization of the biblical mandate of the Great Commission. I prayerfully hope to achieve this through pursuing seminary studies and helping promote integration of church growth, missions and development—particularly in developing countries. Also, to help promote training of church leadership in Kenya and Africa.



From left: Grace, Abraham, Shepherd, Naomy and Danny Ndungu



2010 Retreat continued from page 1...

stay longer this year and help clean up, but I would have stayed anyway. There's no need for a hasty retreat...

It remains to be seen if the location was popular enough to become a tradition. Some of the more pessimistic people pointed out that if it had rained, we would have all had to crowd under the tent and sit there watching water drip through the leaks. But I would remind these people that this is exactly what camping is all about, anyway.

*Results are projected as the vote was not actually taken.

My Take—Adult Discipleship Class



Keith Scheffel

One of the things I really like about it is that it provides an opportunity to take an in-depth look at Scripture in an interactive format. We get to hear thoughts and questions from a wide spectrum of perspectives which periodically provide me with “aha” moments of new understandings.



Colleen Wolford

I look forward to the adult discipleship class because Reuben brings us an educated and well-analyzed view of biblical topics. Many times he makes me see things in a new way and I like the way he includes some of the original biblical language.



DeAnn Miller

I look forward to hearing Reuben’s take on the scripture, and to the lively discussion which is very stimulating. I don’t want to miss a class. The coffee and pastries add a lot to the fellowship of the morning and should be continued.



Tonya Brenneman

I love the informality of it, and the give and take between us and the teacher.

LCF’s Adult Discipleship Class is held each Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. Reuben Sairs is currently teaching from the book of Isaiah.



"Remember Us"



Vicki Sairs wrote the historical drama “Remember Us” for the CMC Conference in July, where several people from LCF performed it. It was a big hit, and due to many requests there will be a second performance. It will take place at Shiloh Mennonite Church in Resaca on Sunday, October 3 at 7 p.m. It’s also a fundraiser for the LCF building fund, so plan to come and invite any friends or family to join you.



Sunday, October 3, 7:00 p.m.
at Shiloh Mennonite Church

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