

The LCF Connection

September 2011

Fifty LCFers Be The Church

By Andrew Sharp

As the rain, thunder and lightning moved out from the London area early on Sunday, September 4, hundreds of people in blue shirts moved in, although occasionally there was some mix-up and the rain and people ended up in the same place. That did not keep the blue-attired people from area churches from painting, weeding, and serving in other ways for the “Be the Church” event. About 50 people from LCF were part of the 250 total from nine different churches who participated.

Going out in about 20 teams, they visited elderly in nursing homes, weeded flowers, trimmed hedges, made repairs, leveled gravel at a Habitat for Humanity house, painted in the new community center (formerly the middle school), and more. Clete Yoder from LCF served



as project coordinator. After work, there were hamburgers and hot dogs at Cowling Park, where the rain made things cozy in the limited space available under a roof and encouraged sharing of umbrellas.

The churches spent time worshipping together before the projects, and praying together afterward. In the morning after worship, Gary Noble, pastor of Restoration Worship Center in London, gave a short message about a “new kind of normal” where brothers and sisters in Christ work together to serve God and the community. That was followed by communion. After lunch, people went on a prayer walk around the elementary, middle and high schools to pray for students, their parents, their teachers, and others in their lives.



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

www.lcfweb.org

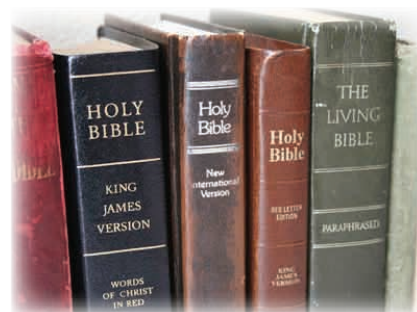
London Christian Fellowship seeks to develop authentic and passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

Is Somebody Tampering with Your Bible?

By Reuben Sairs

All translators walk a tight rope, making thorny decisions about how to render the scriptures readable in a target language. Strict word for word translation and using the original word order are simply out of the question—it cannot be done. That would look something like this: “Thus for loved the God the world so that the son the only begotten gave in order all those believing in him not die but would have life eternal.” That’s Greek. Hebrew would be far worse.

This is not a new issue, and there will always be arguments as to whether someone has crossed the line and put an interpretation where a translation ought to be. That’s a question in two controversial revisions to the New International Version (NIV), the most purchased Bible in English. These revisions are the TNIV and the 2011 edition. One issue in these revisions is that of gender.



Gender usage can be a thorny issue. Are we brothers, or brothers and sisters? Are we sons or children of God? Are we mankind or humankind? Most people don’t mind modifying mankind to humankind, just like they don’t mind—even if they find it a little clumsy—having spokespersons rather than spokesmen. The list of such potential changes in the scriptures is long, and NIV translators have decided to make some of them.

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Things Charley Taught Me

A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz



I learned some things Thursday evening at Charley Gregg's "celebration of life" service. I learned that I didn't know Charley as well as I thought I did. As I talked with his friends and family last week and listened to the sharing during the service, I felt like I had missed out on some things. I knew Charley had a servant heart, but I had no idea how many different people he had served, from neighbors to family to different community organizations. I knew Charley had a good sense of humor, but I didn't realize how crazy he was until I talked with his best friend, Jeff.



I miss Charley for a lot of reasons: his ready smile, his unassuming attitude, his generosity, his willingness to serve, and I could go on. Even as we were scrambling to find chairs at his service, I realized this is where Charley would be, doing things in the background, setting up chairs, helping people find seats. I was supposed to work with him at the Farm Science Review this past week. I thought of him often on that day and wondered what we would have talked about. Maybe I would have heard some of those same stories people shared about him. This might be what I'll miss most—the opportunity to get to know him better, to hear about his life, and to really listen.

God spoke very clearly to me at Charley's "celebration of life service." I felt he was showing me that the best way to spend our lives on this earth is to give them to other people, just as Jesus did. A few weeks ago Charley lamented to Sandy that he felt like a failure, that he hadn't really amassed much financial gain. But if you were at the service, you know differently. Packed into our building with more than 200 people, you understood that Charley invested his life where it counts, into the lives of others. Jesus calls us to the same thing. "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."

I came away with a new appreciation of the difference one person can make in the lives of others. I came away encouraged and renewed in my desire to reach out and touch someone with the love of Jesus. I came away reminded that now is the time to listen, to share, to connect, to give those words of appreciation, to hear those stories, to laugh together and to cry together. Now is the time to draw near to those people God has placed in our lives and really, truly care for them.

Leadership Team Notes

Ideas and thoughts from recent meetings

Route 40 and 42 Interchange Reconstruction

Richard Troyer and Kelvin Snider (with assistance from Jack Rosati) are negotiating with the Ohio Department of Transportation for better compensation for a piece of church property the department wants for interchange reconstruction, in light of the lower resale value the church property will have without access to Route 42. They are waiting on final figures from the appraiser so they can write a request to ODOT.

Building Project

Weaver Construction estimates the cost of the new building project will be \$1.35 million, up from initial estimates of \$1.25 million, even with the money-saving changes that were implemented. They are still looking into ways to cut costs, and Richard Troyer said he was hopeful there would be some. The team approved Weaver Construction drawing up final plans that incorporate recent changes that would include a little more space, saying it is important to come close to doubling the capacity of the current building. They hope there will be additional donations when they present the plans to the congregation and encourage pledges. The goal is to break ground by spring of 2012.

New Elders

In early October, the team will take nominations for 2 new elders and hold a confirmation vote by the beginning of November. People will be asked to make two nominations. One elder will serve a 3-year term and the other a 2-year term. They may use "the lot" to decide which new elder gets which term.

Church Planting

Ryan and Kris Freed have been considering the idea of church planting. The leadership team is excited about the idea of planting a church. It is part of the long-term vision for LCF once the congregation gets bigger. For various reasons, they feel that planting a church as a congregation is premature at this time, but they were supportive of Ryan and Kris if they feel this is something God is asking them to do.

Small Groups

Keith and Shannon Scheffel have expressed a desire to take a break from leading their small group. Rob will try to find others who would be willing to serve as leaders. The team will give people the opportunity to sign up to be a part of a new or existing small group, encouraging everyone to participate as a way to deepen fellowship in the church body.

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Comments on “Are We Missing Something?” from the August Connection, and the blog post mentioned in the article, “Bad Christian Art,” by Tony Woodlief

I agree wholeheartedly with your article [Are We Missing Something] and the attached link. I am sad that some Christian art and creative expression is so sterile, unrealistically “wholesome”, sitcom-y and unreal. I think peachy, everything-is-perfect, we-have-all-answers kind of writing is so misleading—very close to a lie. It also seems like it must be a turnoff to unbelievers living in a very broken, messed up world. I think it is pride in large part—trying to present Christianity as this rosy perfection rather than ourselves as broken people, still struggling with all the same things but with grace and peace and help in our lives to do it. I appreciate Christian art, music and writing that is based in reality, includes struggle and imperfection, and points to God rather than perfect people. I just wish there was more of it!!

Thanks for this month’s Connection! I like knowing the church news like the upcoming retreat, and also learning more about a church member—really good to hear what is going on in Larissa’s life this month.

- Candice Mast, from Thailand

I’m one of those people who is not creative or artistic. I have an appreciation for that ability in others as well as all the other abilities God has blessed people with. The beauty in the world and in the body of Christ has much to do with the diversity of gifts and abilities.

[Woodlief] makes some interesting points, but personally I don’t connect with it that well. I don’t like the sanitized versions of American christianity either, that portray following Christ as some sappy “do this and your life will be better” type picture. However, I am first and foremost, a follower of Christ. That means that there are some types of really “good” art that I’m simply not going to watch, read, look at, or listen to....and I’m good with that.

To me it still comes down to a person answering the question “Who’s calling the shots?” Is it truly Jesus? Do our lives, the things we do, our abilities, our leisure, our enjoyment, our work; do they all bring honor and glory to our Lord and Savior?

- Rob Swartz, from Ohio

Do you want a chance to write an opinion piece in the Connection? If you have been thinking about a topic and want to share with the rest of us, email connection@lcfweb.org with your proposal. If it’s not out of place (My Favorite Trucks) or heretical (Greed: Beneficial in Moderation), we’d like to make a place for it.

If writing a whole article is not for you, but you want to make a point or comment on something you read in the Connection, simply send a letter to the editor at connection@lcfweb.org.

Bible continued from page 1...

The issues in these revisions can get trickier than examples like “mankind” versus “humankind.” What if a translator, motivated by other concerns, consciously or subconsciously translates key verses with regard to gender in ways that further one position over another?

Gender language changes in the new translations seem to me to be an effort at reform through discovering meanings that were never suggested until churches began re-thinking their position on women in primary congregational leadership. The new translations are a little too convenient and well-timed in that regard. Of course, I doubt very much that a Bible translator would consciously try to deceive, but while motives matter in crime and psychology, they probably don’t matter much in this case. With regard to the NIV 2011, is someone tampering with your Bible? I’d say probably, but innocently.



The Bible isn’t just another book. Christians think it is the word of God, so straining over the details is worth the effort.

Even if language changes, it probably doesn’t change the way you think about or perceive the reality described by the language. This is a technical discussion among psycholinguists and theorists. I remember the discussions in class long ago about languages that divided the color spectrum up differently. Did it affect the way that people saw the colors? My conclusion is that you can’t really change—or preserve—the way we see things by manipulating language. In most cases it is the wrong tool for both preservationists and reformers.

I don’t think there is any easy way to settle these discussions, but I do prefer to discuss them with:

- People who believe that the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- People who grant the Bible the final word of authority.
- Those who actually read the Bible and draw regular nourishment from it.
- Those who believe that while the Bible is the perfect word of God, its readers are often a motley crew whom the Holy Spirit is trying to rescue from their own blindness.
- People who believe the Bible has a lot to say about how we discuss issues, giving no room for our usual anger and arrogance.
- People who know there are other issues more important and pressing.

For the record on the gender issue, I hold the more traditional position with regard to women in primary church leadership. The Bible teaches us that humans are male and female and innately different. God has, for reasons he hasn’t really shared with me, called us to different roles in church and family. Functioning correctly, it is meant to be beautiful, but a lot of people have experienced it as oppression and backwardness. To be biblical is to make sure that doesn’t happen. I have no time for mere human traditions that are unnecessary and harmful and limit both genders. God wants women and men to blossom, not fade.

2011 LCF Camp-Out

August 27-28, 2011



Leadership Team Notes continued...

Miscellaneous Notes

The youth are studying Judges and Romans. They are planning for a trip next summer with Group Work Camp.

Three groups of women are starting up that will be doing Beth Moore's Bible study on the patriarchs.

The leadership team was encouraged to see the way the church body pulled together to help in many ways with Charley Gregg's funeral last week. About 200 people attended; about 148 in the sanctuary and 50 in the foyer and kitchen.

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

- Abraham and Naomy Ndungu: (Ryan and Kris)
- Kirk and Amy Nichols (Richard and Robin)
- Jennifer Nutt (Reuben and Vicki)
- Eric and Brittany Parsons (Keith and Shannon)
- Yazmin Perdomo (Rob and Doris)

Upcoming Events

October 30: Communion

The LCF Connection

A monthly newsletter designed to enhance communication at London Christian Fellowship

What did you think? If any of the stories in this Connection sparked an idea or opinion you'd like to share, email us at connection@lcfweb.org. Editor: Andrew Sharp; Layout: Doris Swartz

If you prefer that we do not use photos of you in the Connection, you may opt out by emailing us at connection@lcfweb.org.