

# The LCF Connection

January 2012

## What Just Happened? 2011 in Review

By Andrew Sharp

I can't party like I used to. I'm still recovering from the late nights and the high calories of the holidays—the 2010 ones. Which is why I went to bed before 10 p.m. on New Year's Eve this year. It hardly seemed appropriate to celebrate the coming of a new year when the old one had just arrived seemingly a couple of months ago.

The speed of the passing months is a good reason to take a deep breath and look back at some of the highlights from last year, before we go plunging headlong into a new one. So here is a look at a few of the events at London Christian Fellowship—the good and the painful.



### January

Levi Miller and Larissa Swartz kicked off the new year right, going down to Nicaragua with a “medical eye team” for two weeks. The exact details escape me at the moment, but it involved something along the lines of passing out free medical eyes to people who could not otherwise afford their own. Noble work. Levi and Larissa might be able to give more details.

At the same time, the LCF basketball team was dominating the court during weekly games in Mount Sterling, sinking multiple shots in every game they played.

The STRIVE men's group kept up its tradition of meeting on Saturday mornings, a tradition that continued throughout the year, although sometimes they mixed it up and held the event once every five months.

### February

By February 4, shrewd observers like myself knew something was up with Twila Snider when a bridal shower was held for her. By March, she was married to Brad Maust. I knew it!

Rob Swartz attended a conference for CMC pastors. This event was not sold out, even though it was held in Kansas and involved reading informational handouts and voting on budgets.

The youth group provided free babysitting for a night, which was a great idea, but more than a year too early for me and Steph. (Hint).

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

## "Judging Tim Tebow"

### A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz

How's your “Tebowing” going? The term “Tebowing” is a reference to Tim Tebow's down-on-one-knee prayer posture that he exhibits on the football field after his team, the Denver Broncos, scores a touchdown or wins a game. These and other actions have created quite a stir of discussion in secular media as well as in the church. “Tebowing” in jest has swept across the nation through websites like YouTube and Facebook.



After Denver won in spectacular fashion against the Steelers in the first round of the playoffs last week, Tebow once again took this posture of passionate prayer in the end zone. The commentators after the game were quite amused and each one struck the pose.

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The whole story raises interesting questions. Does God care much about football and whether the Denver Broncos win? How should Christians live their lives out in this world—bold and outspoken like Tebow or as the “quiet in the land” as Mennonites have been known to be? These are issues worth talking about and Tebow gives us a good opportunity.

If I were his buddy, I would want to ask him a few questions. I think it’s great that Tebow is giving God thanks and honoring him in his success, but how about doing it when he throws an interception and when his team loses? In *everything* give thanks, right? Or maybe he should think about giving thanks to God in private?

On the other hand, I would encourage us not to be unnecessarily harsh. It’s easy to take shots at famous Christians, or be the “armchair quarterback” (so to speak). We say things like, “I can’t imagine why they’re doing that!” or “I would do things this way.” But we often don’t have enough context about people or their situations to make those kinds of statements and they do little to build up the body of Christ. Humility, gentleness, and respect are the name of the game as we relate to, and talk about each other. We’re on the same team!

Do I agree with everything Tebow is doing? Not necessarily. I don’t know that writing “John 3:16” in the eyeball beneath his eyes is going to help anyone come to know Christ. And thanking God for “helping” to win a football game seems to trivialize God in many ways.

At the same time, I believe God cares about football just as he cares about all aspects of our lives. It is “in him that we live and move and have our being”. He blesses some with athletic skills, others with skills in music and so on. We do our best to use those skills for the glory of God. God uses football and many other things in this world to proclaim his name and to draw people to himself.

In the end, I can appreciate Tim Tebow’s boldness in expressing his faith. I choose to express mine a bit differently, and I feel uncomfortable and disagree sometimes with his methods. But I’m not sure I would have felt any different about people in the New Testament like Paul or Stephen. Their actions sometimes seem pretty crazy and even counterproductive at times.

I believe Tim Tebow truly is trying his best to live his life for Christ as a passionate young man thrust into the intense national spotlight. Is he getting it all right? Probably not, but then again, who is? Regardless, I believe God is using him and I am glad for his passion for the Lord and his desire to share his faith. May we be inspired to do the same.

# Leadership Team Notes

*Ideas and thoughts from recent meetings*

## Elder Selection

The leadership team is continuing to work through the process of selecting new elders to serve. They recognize the process is taking some time to complete, but also are committed to spending adequate time with the nominations. They ask the church to pray that the leaders God would want to serve at this time would be clearly identified and confirmed.

## 2012 Budget

The team reviewed and approved the proposed 2012 budget from the finance team. They expressed appreciation for the great job Phil Hostetler and the finance team have done in putting together this budget. Once the new elders are on board, they will select one of them to serve on the finance team.

## Building Project Update

Richard Troyer is expecting information about the revised cost of the project soon, along with updated drawings.

## LCF Directory

The team approved the following policy for the LCF Directory: The directory will be published twice a year (printed each January and e-mailed as a PDF file each July). It will include the contact information, birthdays, and current addresses for members and regular attenders. In an effort to keep the directory current, when people have not attended LCF for one year their information will be omitted from the next directory. A pictorial directory will be printed every other year.

## Be the Church

Rob noted that plans are being made to have the 2012 “Be the Church” in the spring this year instead of over Labor Day weekend. The tentative date is set for Saturday, May 19th.

## Youth Updates

The youth raised almost \$1,000 for MCC with their recent 30-hour famine. They plan to take a mission trip in June to St. Louis to work with Group Missions Trips.

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

- Denny and Lisa Wilt (Ryan and Kris)
- Dave and Colleen Wolford (Richard and Robin)
- Cletus Yoder (Reuben and Vicki)
- Preston and Elizabeth Yoder (Rob and Doris)

## Looking Ahead...

- Jan. 22 Communion during our Sunday morning service
- Feb. 11 LCF Social at Rosedale Bible College gym, 4-9 p.m.
- March 25 Bowling, 2-4 p.m.



# Update from Shaun & Joy Freed

Greetings from Xenia! It is a pleasure to provide you all with an update on our lives. In addition to Shaun and Joy, our family now consists of a crazy mutt, Philo, two high-energy little girls (Elena, 4, and Greta, 2), and will soon include a baby boy—due any day. (Arrival date and name pending).



Joy keeps quite busy with the girls and household duties. There is a lot of weekly chauffeuring for preschool, library visits, ballet class, and grocery trips. She posts pictures and stories to our blog (feel free to check it out at [www.shunjoy.blogspot.com](http://www.shunjoy.blogspot.com)). The girls are both crazy about books, playing outside, “pretending,” and creating works of art at the kitchen table. Shaun is still working in Dayton for an engineering team at Wyle Laboratories that delivers robotic inspections of jet engine parts to the U.S. Air Force. In December 2010, he graduated from The University of Dayton with a Ph.D. in Materials Engineering. He’s glad to finally be done with all those classes! In his spare time he enjoys playing guitar, has been slowly making a violin, dreams of all the fun plants he can grow in the summer (or inside in the winter), and also recently completed his first marathon.

In late 2006 we moved from Springfield to Xenia, which also led to us needing to look for a new church here in the Xenia community. The transition to our new church family at Bethel Community Church has been a good growing experience, but not always easy. It allows you to see things from a new perspective when you’re an outsider looking in on the well-established families and ministries of a church. Even after five years, we are still searching for ways to best “fit in” and serve the church. Over the years we have been able to serve as instrumentalists during church worship, lead and help with a variety of youth and children’s activities, participate in church board meetings (Shaun) and women’s ministry activities (Joy), and aid with computer and media problems (Shaun).

We still have a soft spot in our hearts for LCF and the larger conference. We miss you all and remember with deep appreciation our time and opportunities with your church family. One of LCF’s great strengths over the years has been in allowing average people to grow and develop ministry skills – both to serve LCF and also later at other locations where God calls them. It is a significant achievement for a church to be able to train people with skills and then send them out into a world with needs. Thank you!



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The church pulled together in support of Karissa Yoder, a student at Rosedale Bible College who was involved in a serious car accident. Volunteers took part in a benefit concert and bake sale at Shiloh Mennonite Church.

## March

The church had a bowling day at Goshen Lanes in Mechanicsburg. It was a success, not least because no one developed a serious infection

from wearing rented bowling shoes—damp from the sweat of 6,428 feet—and using bowling balls still slightly greasy with pizza grease from the last bowler. Ahh, bowling.

The more technology-minded individuals put together a Computer Repair Day for the community, aided by a few willing volunteers serving as greeters. The segments of the community that came in seemed appreciative and have not reported any malfunctions or severe electrical fires since, so the day can safely be called a complete success.



On March 26, Twila Snider married Brad Maust (see February)

## April

In April, the youth had a garage sale, which Steph and I used as an opportunity to get rid of our malicious coffee maker, which featured a coffee pot that dumped 83% of the coffee in a mug and the rest on the floor/carpet. Ryan and Kris Freed bought it, which worried us because we value their friendship, but the coffee pot miraculously started to behave thereafter. Or so they claim.

Reuben started teaching an Adult Discipleship Class on God, but ran out of time to finish. It was generally agreed that he got a decent start, however.

At the end of the month, volunteers had a work day and painted the church a nice shade of Faded Ivory Off White Stormy Eggshell, if I remember the name of the paint correctly.

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**May**

The biggest event of May was the culmination of months of work in an auction and dinner fundraiser for the building fund, which raised \$14,886 toward the new facility. There was a dedication ceremony for Korban Freed, and there were getting-out-of-school ceremonies for Rachel Troyer, Danny Ndungu, and Emily Zachrich.



**June**

In June, Hans Stutzman graduated from The Ohio State University with a degree in Get Me Out of Ohio Fast. He quickly found a job in that field.

The younger types cannoned around all over the place, with the Junior Youth going to Bethel Camp and the youth topping that with LIFT at RBC AND a trip to Bethel Camp.

**July**

The middle of summer saw several of the children consuming their fill of shaving cream and soap at RBC's Choral Camp. Nine people attended Xenos Summer Institute without consuming anything that nutritious.



**August**

The church began an end of summer that was tarnished with sad goodbyes, as Todd and DeAnn Miller and their family moved to Kentucky, where Todd began a new job as an associate pastor.

A staggering number of people attended the Conservative Mennonite Conference Annual Conference in Frostburg, Maryland, apparently under the impression that an event with "conference" appearing twice in the name would be twice as much fun.



At the end of the month, the church enjoyed a camp out by Little Darby Creek.

**September**

About 50 LCFers participated in "Be the Church" Sunday, donning bright blue shirts and joining other local fellowships in volunteer projects around the community.



Soon after, the church was stunned by another goodbye, the death of Charley Gregg at age 50 of a heart attack. He left a void in the church family

that will never be filled in quite the same way. The church was packed to overflowing for his funeral with people from all over Ohio. There will be a memorial for Charley when the new building is constructed, and the church fantasy football league joined together to make sure that Charley's team won the championship.



Reuben began Adult Discipleship Class on speeches and sermons from Acts. Better prepared this time, he got a little farther than on the previous topic (see April).

**October**

In October, Hans Stutzman and Kimberly Miller got married in Kentucky. Everyone was happy about this until they realized that Hans and Kim intended to move away after they got married. At that point, it was too late to stop them.



**November**

The youth raised almost \$1,000 for the hungry in Africa by doing without food for 30 hours themselves.

At the end of the month was the traditional singing of Christmas carols at London's Old Fashioned Christmas, followed by cinnamon rolls at Steve and Phyllis Swartz's house.

**December**

At the beginning of the month was the traditional stuffing of the RBC Chorus into all available openings, from which they serenaded the congregation.

The church made a final attempt to lure Hans and Kimberly Stutzman back with a potluck celebration of their wedding, but it was too little, too late.



The LCF Family Christmas, was held, appropriately, on Christmas, and featured LCF's first children's Christmas program to include multiple Marys. News reporter Bryce Swartz narrated, giving the church a glimpse of what was happening backstage (If you haven't seen it, you can check out "A Backstage Christmas" from LCF's library.)

That brought us all to the New Year's Eve party (not a typo), a celebration of the year ending and all of us growing older and the sun slowly dying out.



And also, I should add, a year that God was faithful to the church through both the good times and the bad. Happy 2012 everyone!

*The LCF Connection*

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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](mailto:connection@lcfweb.org). Editor: Andrew Sharp; Layout: Doris Swartz

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