


# Connections

LAKEWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH AUGUST 2023 VOL XIII: ISSUE 8 LBCPC.org




## Back to School


**Register for AWANA  
@ Wet Wednesday  
August 30**



Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me  
and keep all my commands always, so that it may  
go well with them and their children.



Deut. 5:29



# *A Message from* **Andrew Spires**

LEAD PASTOR



How many of you know that God's way is so much higher, and so much better than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9)? This was obviously the case for our summer mission plans this year. Last year, we began the process of planning for a return (post-Covid) to the international mission field. We began to talk with our mission partners around the world and began to prayerfully consider where to go and serve. We made a plan to return to Belize, one of our recurrent mission partners, due to the larger numbers that we had interested in going. Despite seeing rising prices of fuel, airline tickets, in-country travel, and accommodations, we trusted the Lord and made the best plan we could. Fast forward to late winter of 2023. I received a call from our Belize missionary, Dr. Paul Whisnant, saying that he didn't feel good about continuing the process for a trip in 2023. Not only was inflation affecting everything, but shortages of food and medicine within the country of Belize were making people desperate. Crime rates had risen, certain parts of the country were still under Covid lockdown, and he didn't feel comfortable bringing a group. Now, we always listen to our missionaries, as they are the ones on the ground with their finger on the pulse of the people and the nation. So, regrettably, we pulled the plug on that trip by missionary suggestion.

I was not happy. Here we were, ready, with a team excited to go and serve abroad but without a clear path forward. I began to pray. Meanwhile, in February, another pastor friend of mine and I traveled to one of our stateside mission partners in New Mexico to plan our stateside mission trip. Things moved swiftly, and we laid the foundation for that trip. I announced the New Mexico trip and many of the international folks signed up for that one. I began to think we would not be able to get on the international mission

field in 2023 as a church. Then God laid some short-term missionary friends of mine on my heart who have a church in Thomaston, Ga. I had been with them several times in the past to the country of Jamaica, but it had been several years. I called to check in with them and to see if they had any plans to take anyone from their church to Jamaica in 2023. They said no, they had no plans. In fact, their hearts were heavy, just like mine, that they had been unable since Covid to maintain their footprint in the island nation. I asked if they had any desire to organize a combined effort with Lakewood and their church for the summer of 2023. Initially, they gave me the let me pray about it answer, and I thought there was nothing there. A couple of weeks went by, and I received a call from their pastor saying we would love to partner with your church on a Jamaica mission trip in July of 2023.

Fast forward again to this summer. Again the Lord adjusted our plans, this time with New Mexico. We had planned and arranged a date and promoted it to our people when I got a call from one of our partner pastors there. The field that we had reserved had double-booked our camp and another event for the same week and wanted to adjust our date by a couple of weeks. At the same time, we were trying to reconcile our church schedule with the other church, which is always hard. By God's grace, we were able to work out both trips with only one week in between them both. We presented Jamaica and fifteen students and adults from our church signed up along with eight from the other church for a total of twenty-three. We went and God again changed our plans. I had not planned to preach very much, the other pastor was going to do the main preaching each day. However, on the day we arrived, a pregnant woman in his church was killed in an automobile crash

and he had to fly back home to comfort the family and do the funeral. Again, God's plan was different and better. Long story short, we went from village to village, and place to place, we met physical needs and I preached the Gospel daily. God opened hearts and minds and dozens of people realized their desperate need to be born again. Praise God for His faithfulness. The team functioned so well together that you could not tell it was two separate churches. We were one body, with one purpose, to glorify Christ, and He alone was exalted.

In New Mexico, we worked with other local church volunteers to put on a morning sports camp. Twice each morning we would pause for a timeout or huddle. We used the FCA theme "Greater" taken from John 3:30 to impress upon a racially diverse group of Caucasian, Latino, and Native American kids that Christ must increase (become greater), and we must decrease. John 3:30 is also my life verse. The third day of sports camp was the day set aside to ask the question. We were all given wristbands with four emojis on them. One was a heart, that God so loved the world that He sent His only Son so that whoever believed in Him should not perish but have eternal life. The next emoji was a division symbol. That our sin has separated us from a holy God and the wages of those sins is death. The next was a cross. That Jesus loved us so much that he came and died on the cross and rose again to bridge that divide and restore right relationship between God and man. The final emoji is a question mark. We asked the kids a question;

"Do you believe in God's love, His Son, that came and died on the cross and rose again, and gave us the way back to the Father?" "Do you believe Jesus is greater, and that you must become less?" Again, by God's grace, many kids responded to the life-saving message of the Gospel. We also held a vacation bible school each afternoon on the reservation. We had the opportunity to work with a small group of Native American kids who desperately needed love and attention. David and Lesley Stephens led this effort and did a great job in leading each day. Those kids had a blast, and we were able to accomplish some needed work projects at the church as well led by my wife Paige and Michael Barnett, the family pastor from Bethesda Baptist Church in Ellerslie. They, along with others, worked hard to paint and put up trim in bathrooms and the hallways of the church building. Again, God be praised for His plans and His results.

So, the moral of the story is to trust God for His will and His way. Remember, they are always better than ours. Rest in Him, even when He interrupts your best efforts, and watch Him move. Always remember, the results are up to Him. Often when we relax and submit to His will, He will do great things as He did in and through us this summer. I'm praying for more of you to join us in the mission field in 2024. We will go wherever God leads.

God bless,  
drew  
John 3:30

**ATTENTION:**

**CHURCH  
SECURITY  
TEAM**

Meeting | August 2nd & 3rd | 7PM

Choose which meeting works best for you

*Upstairs South Building  
First classroom on right*



# Opportunities this month

*Virginia Kennedy*

*Women's Missions*

Wednesday | 8/2 @ 10:30am

*Sister 2 Sister*

Monday | 8/14 @ 6:00pm

Home of Onezima Everitt

*Churchwide Work Days*

Friday & Saturday | 8/18 & 19

8am - 1pm | Breakfast provided

*Jane Ellen Gaines Baptist Women*

Thursday | 8/24 @ 6:30pm

Fellowship Hall

# A Message from Israel Jane

INTERIM STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR  
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Through all the challenges and uncertainties in life, we can find peace in knowing that our Heavenly Father keeps every promise He's ever made in His Word. As the psalmist declared in Psalm 37:25, *"I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread."*

In the Bible, we find numerous examples where God's faithfulness brings peace to the most tumultuous of life's storms. Take comfort in Philippians 4:13, where we are reminded that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength. No matter the trials that come our way, we can lean on God's power to overcome and find victory in every circumstance.

In a small village, a young woman named Sarah faced insurmountable challenges, but she held firm to her unwavering trust in God. She lost her job and struggled to provide for her family, many times unsure of where their next meal would come from. Despite these difficult circumstances, Sarah clung to the promise found in Matthew 6:26, *"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them."*

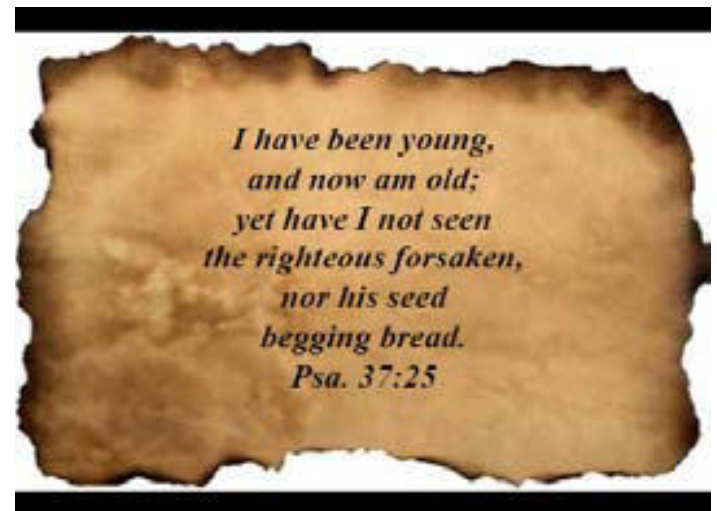
One day, as Sarah prayed with tears in her eyes, a stranger knocked on her door, carrying a bag filled with groceries and supplies. The visitor explained that God had placed it on their heart to help someone in need, and they were led to Sarah's doorstep. Overwhelmed with gratitude, Sarah knew that God had provided for her family's needs, just as He promised.

In the midst of her hardships, Sarah learned to rely on God's faithfulness, finding strength and encouragement through the support of her church community and the reassurance of God's Word. Her story became a testimony of God's unfailing love and the power of trusting in Him. We all know stories just like this one, some of us have lived these stories.

So as we journey through life, let's anchor our hearts in the unchanging truth of God's faithfulness. No matter the circumstances, we can find hope and strength in His promises. God's faithfulness endures forever, guiding us through every season of life.

*"Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations."* - Deuteronomy 7:9

May we continue to seek Him, trust Him, and find our joy in His faithfulness, knowing that He is always with us, leading us through each step of our journey.



# Lakewood Happenings

## August 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		6:15pm Alleluia Choir  1	10:30am VK/WMU 7:00pm Security Team Meeting 7:00pm Long Range Planning Team Meeting  2	7:00pm Security Team Meeting  3	4	5
6	10:30am Amen Choir  7	6:15pm Alleluia Choir  8	9	10	5:30pm Senior Game Night  11	12
5:00pm Deacons Meeting  13	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm Sister 2 Sister O. Everritt  14	6:15pm Alleluia Choir  15	7:00pm Finance Meeting  16	17	8:00am Work Day  18	8:00am Work Day  19
20	10:30am Amen Choir  21	6:15pm Alleluia Choir  22	23	6:30pm JEG/BW - F/H  24	25	11:00am Feed the Homeless  26
27	10:30am Amen Choir  28	6:15pm Alleluia Choir  29	6:00pm Wet Wednesday Register for AWANA  30	31		

## June Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
6/4	\$29,266.30	\$310.00	\$2,401.97	\$1,993.04	\$33,971.31
6/11	\$19,425.37	-	\$14,265.82	\$3,104.50	\$26,795.69
6/18	\$14,905.19	-	\$4,505.50	\$485.00	\$19,895.69
6/25	\$12,457.94	\$9.47	\$559.00	\$70.00	\$13,096.41

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

#### SUNDAY

8:45am Worship  
10:00am Bible Fellowship  
11:00am Worship

#### WEDNESDAY

6:00pm Wet Wednesday  
6:00pm Bible Study  
6:30pm Youth Worship

# *A Message from* **David Stephens**

CHILDREN'S PASTOR



Summer time is coming to an end. We are now preparing for back to school and maybe a little bit more order to the schedule. Time flies when you are having fun. Time flies when you are super busy. What is it about "time" that impacts our perceptions of our surroundings to such depth? When we want more time with a person or a surrounding we are sad to go. Maybe we believe we've been shorted or let down by time. Or maybe we've been given the time and we are stressing on how to best use it. Maybe, like me, you feel a little guilty because you took time to stop and rest, but now the list of things that need to be accomplished seems to have doubled right under your nose. We challenge ourselves to take time for study of the word of God, take time for worship, take time for family, take time for relationships with our spouse, kids and friends, take time for our careers. We must take time for these things, but how often do you take time for your soul? Are you even able to be quiet and stop all the noise around you and refill your soul with God? How you do this is unique to you, but I will tell you that it is worth discovering if you have not already. Know that what this looks like can change with time. Jesus went to a solitary place and he prayed. When we were in New Mexico we took a trip to go see some really old Native American carvings. We had a short hike up a rock formation to get to where the carvings were. They were neat, but I will admit I was more impressed by the view of our surroundings. It did remind me of the many hikes I went on in Phoenix, AZ. This rock formation had a great view so you could look out and see the various other rock formations and the looming mountain ranges in the distant background. The wind is at work, and you can see the beauty of God's creation all around you. For me I could sit in a setting like that for hours all by myself refilling my soul with the wonder of God's creation. Now on this trip, time would not allow that to happen and just because the needs

of the collective group takes priority doesn't mean you have to give up your personal time in the moment. It just means you need to be able to see beyond the moment taking a "snapshot" of the experience to remember later. I pray that as we close out the summer of 2023 that you will be able to take the time to look at what God has done and is continuing to do in and through you. Now is the time to push forward. Our kids are entering a new school year with a little more wisdom and maturity. I pray God will be at the center of their world. As parents and leaders we must be the example of continued maturity in our walk with God. Our kids need to see our pursuit of a deeper relationship with Jesus. Let's enter into this new school year on fire!

## Calendar

*August 6*

**Move up Sunday**

**( all but kindergarten will be moving up to their new rooms )**

*August 30*

**Final Wet Wednesday & AWANA registration. This is our end of summer BASH, expect a HUGE water slide and fun treats.**

**(This summer the kids are helping with LOAF ministry, please take one of the Reusable Publix bags and return it AUG 30 filled with nonperishable good)**

*September 6*

**Fall AWANA session starts 6-7:30PM**

**In Memory of:**

***Betty Johnson***  
For Loaf  
from Pat Holland

For Bereavement  
from Glenda Medley

***Homer Gray***  
For Loaf  
from Margaret Wilson

For Amen Choir  
from Mr. & Mrs. Bill McCarley

***Joann Young***  
For Loaf  
from Brenda Slappey  
Mr. & Mrs. Bill McCarley

For Bereavement  
from Glenda Medley

***Pansy Slocumb***  
For Orchestra  
from Dr. Lamar Carden

**In Honor of:**

***Mary Alice Roney***  
For Amen Choir  
from Myra Currier

**SENIOR  
GAME NIGHT**

**Friday, August 11  
5:30pm in F/H**

**WELCOME  
NEW MEMBER**

**Vanessa Oboh-Watts  
& Family**

**Amy Lewis**

MINISTERIAL STAFF

***Andrew Spires***  
LEAD PASTOR  
ANDREW@LBCPC.ORG

***Charles Keown***  
WORSHIP & SENIOR  
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HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM  
FRI 8:30AM-12PM