

LOPC NEWSLETTER JULY 2023



From Mike Palombo, Assistant Pastor

*Senior Pastor, Jeff Birch, is enjoying some vacation time. He will return to the office on Tuesday, July 11.

Household Convictions

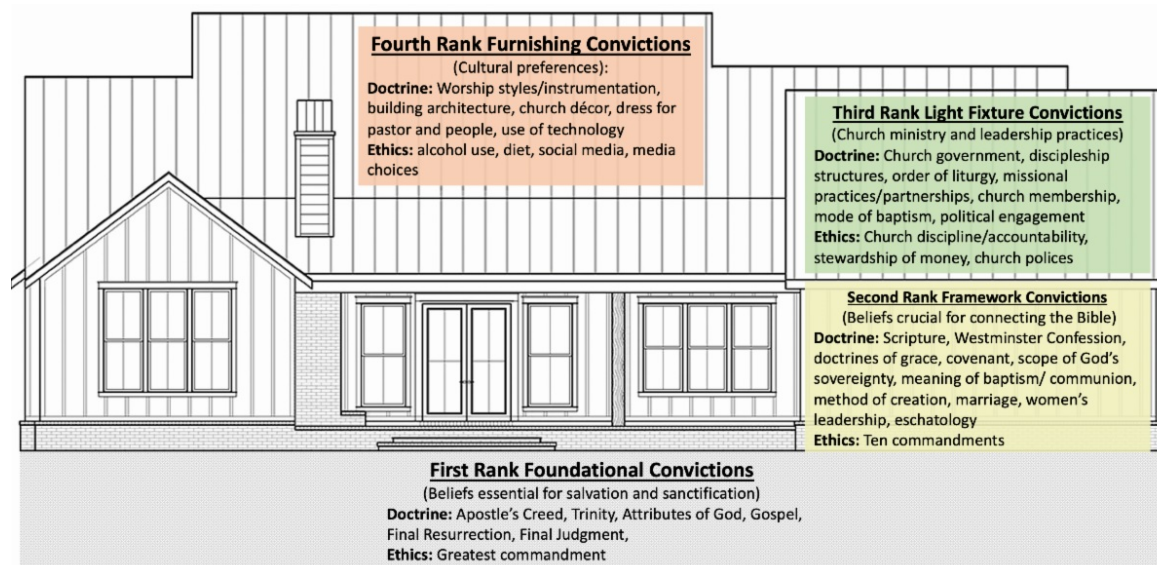
In Romans 14:1-9, we discussed the call to love across the divide. Some hold stricter convictions and some more lenient convictions regarding doctrine and morality, and we need to learn how to welcome one another in our differences. We discussed the importance of identifying where we agree, understanding each other's differences, and respectfully dialoging about those differences. In this month's news article, I want to take some time to flesh out those differences that often divide Christians and give you a word picture that will clarify a hierarchy of importance regarding our differences. As we develop and discuss our different convictions, it will be important that we remember both truth and grace, courage and gentleness, and listening while discussing. Since there are a number of new houses being built around me, I figured I would use a house metaphor to describe our different convictions.

In 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, Paul compares Christian growth to building a house. **“10** According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. **11** For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is

laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Here, Paul declares that the church is built up by the grace of God and careful, skillful work of master builders, those set aside with appropriate training in the Word of God for the work of God. The church is the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus as the chief cornerstone. This multiethnic church is joined together in unity with many people built into one temple in the Lord. We are all collectively, “being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit,” (Ephesians 2:22). The foundation has been laid by Christ alone as the savior of His church, but we must build on that foundation and seek to grow and understand the world based on the Word of God.

This house metaphor will clarify in order of rank the different type of convictions we have as we seek to build up the church. A house is built upon a strong foundation which provides the ground level bedrock support of the whole structure. The framework of the house provides additional support and structure to the whole building. The light fixture types and placement determine how the light shines within the building. Then the owner of the house fills it with different furnishings based on his/her taste, cultural preferences, and eye for beauty. We will look at Foundational convictions which are essential to our salvation and sanctification, framework convictions which help us connect certain truths of the Bible together, light fixture convictions which clarify different ways each individual church seeks to shine the light of Christ in its congregation and community, and furnishing convictions which demonstrate the specific cultural preferences of a congregation.



[To view the above image in higher resolution, click anywhere in this text box.](#)

First Rank Foundational Convictions

The First Rank Foundational Convictions demonstrates the most important convictions which divide someone from either being a Christian or a non-Christian. These are first order convictions about the essential truths of the Gospel by which we are saved and the most pressing moral commitments we practice as disciples of Christ. Paul says that, “I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with

the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,” (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). These Gospel truths unite all churches everywhere in Christ and should be the glue which binds the universal church together. The ethical call to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and the call to love our neighbor as ourselves is the greatest ethical commandment Jesus called us to follow.

Second Rank Framework Convictions

Whereas as all churches agree on these crucial points of the Gospel, other churches disagree on what I call Second Rank Framework Convictions. These are Biblical convictions which are crucial to connecting the Bible. Some churches have different views on the inerrancy of Scripture and how the Old Testament connects with the New Testament. There are different views regarding God’s covenant relationship in the Old and New Testament and how sacraments are understood in that connection. Though we agree on the accomplishment of Christ’s redemption, there can be disagreements on how that redemption is applied (the doctrines of grace emphasize God’s sovereign decree and work enabling belief for His elect and Arminianism emphasizing man’s free choice to understand, discern and choose Christ for himself). We all agree God created everything but disagree on the method of creation (Ex-nihilo, theistic evolution, etc.), the roles given to men and women based on creation in the home and the church, and ways in which Jesus will finally come back and renew the creation at His return. Many hold to the Ten Commandments as an ethical guide for Christians, but have different convictions about certain ones regarding present use of the Sabbath and what depictions of God would violate the second commandment, etc.

Third Rank Light Fixture Convictions

Then we have differences in church ministry and leadership practices. Every church ministers the Word of God as the lamp to our feet and light to our path and shines forth the light of the world, Jesus Christ. But they specifically shine this light in different ways because of practical ministry decisions by the church leadership. These Light Fixture Convictions show ways we differ in how to minister this light to the congregation and community through distinct leadership, worship, discipleship and missional practices. All churches seek to keep things “decent and in order.” but follow distinct ethical practices of church discipline, accountability, and stewardship policies.

Fourth Rank Furnishing Convictions

Lastly, and of lowest importance, is the Fourth Rank Furnishing Convictions. As churches minister to distinct people, from distinct backgrounds, with distinct preferences, decisions need to be made regarding how we connect with their cultural preferences. This fourth-tier category identifies convictions for the best way to reach and engage people in worship and community that connects with their sense of beauty, belonging, and interests. This can be as direct as referring to what furniture we have in the building, to what worship style we play in the music, to how little and how much technology we use. As we seek to start another service, we are asking Fourth Rank questions about how we can better reach a distinct culture in Lake country who may have different cultural preferences.

With all of these differences, we must remember that we all truly are part of one

household of God, united to one family in Christ. We must learn how to get along across these differences. We will welcome people into our particular building and community who don't always agree on every jot and tittle. We also love our sister churches in our community that hold different convictions. We unite with these different churches on one foundation in Christ, as we disciple based on our specific Framework, Fixture, and Furnishing Convictions. And we celebrate the work of God in our church and in our community at-large. As my previous denomination's motto states, *in essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity*. May we continue to love across the divide as we unite on the main thing, understand our differences, and live on mission together for the expansion of God's house!

Learning to love together,
Pastor Mike Palombo

Special Pulpit Guest on July 9!

**MINISTRY
TO
STATE**

Special Pulpit Guest: Chuck Garriott

**Chuck &
Debby
Garriott**

SUNDAY, JULY 9, 2023: THE GOSPEL CHALLENGE

This Sunday, we welcome Chuck Garriott as our special guest. Chuck is the founder and executive director of Mission to North America's (MNA) Ministry to State, which works within government communities to create a culture of study, prayer, and formation with those called to public service. Ministry to State operates in Washington D.C., state capitols, and international locations and provides in-person office hours, Bible studies, online resources, and a summer ministry to interns. Chuck and his wife, Debby, will share about their work in Washington D.C. during a 9:15 am presentation, and Chuck will be in the pulpit during the 10:30 am worship service. As we have given focused attention to our country during the Fourth of July holiday, come and hear the work the Lord is doing to reach and disciple leaders in our country through Mission to the State.

Crowning of a New Cornhole Champ

--	--	--



Congratulations to Bill McCartney, winner of the Patriotic Picnic Cornhole Tournament 2023! Bill took home the cornhole signet ring, and we suspect that he will be back next year to defend his title. In the meantime, the ring sits atop the McCartney mantle and is delicately polished once a week.



Bob Patton edged out Pastor Mike Palombo to claim the Runner-Up position in the Cornhole Tournament. Though he is smiling in this photo, Bob is strategizing for complete domination at next year's tournament. Mike Palombo is also training for a comeback that will involve never-before-seen techniques and Biblically-sound trash talk.

July 16: A Night of Hymns & Stories



HYMNS & STORIES TOUR 2023

with KEVIN & COOPER TWIT

 founder of *Indelible Grace Music*

Join us **Sunday, July 16, at 6:00 p.m. at LOPC** for "Hymns & Stories" led by Kevin Twit, founder of Indelible Grace Music. Kevin and his son, Cooper, will lead us in singing and will share the stories behind the hymns.

The gospel depth and rich meaning of the hymns we'll be singing make this evening a wonderful opportunity to invite friends, and it's **FREE**. Following the concert, there will be a "Merch & Mingle" opportunity with Kevin & Cooper Twit.

Missional Community Lifestyle Training



As we launch our small group ministry in the fall called Missional Community Groups, we are providing a time of envisioning and training every third Wednesday of the month through August (July 19, Aug 16) from 5:30-7:00pm. Missional Community is a family of disciples sent on mission to grow, serve, and go make disciples. On July 19, we will discuss growing as disciples. This is for those interested in leading or attending a group. We will share a meal together at 5:30pm with the church providing the meat (tacos) and attendees providing a side to share. See the signup sheet in the Narthex to register.

Summer 2023: Family Fun Night(s)

KIDS CLUB
 AT LOPC

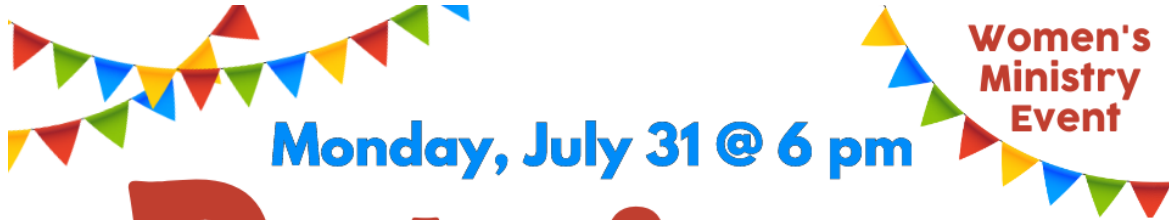
FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

- ✓ FREE DINNER
- ✓ FUN ACTIVITIES
- ✓ FOR KIDS & FAMILIES OF ALL AGES
- ✓ REGISTRATION APPRECIATED
- ✓ TOTALLY FREE!

JULY 28:
BURGERS & BUILDING

REGISTER AT:
LOPC-PCA.ORG

Families of all ages are invited to join us for Family Fun Night of the summer on **Friday, July 28, at 5:30 pm!** The theme is "burgers and building." This is for both our church family and the community, so please invite friends and neighbors! An eblast with a registration link will be coming out soon.



Pastor & Potluck *at the pavilion*



**Special Guest:
Mike Palombo**

Ladies, make your plans now to attend our *Pastor & Potluck at the Pavilion* on **Monday, July 31, 6:00 p.m.** Pastor Mike Palombo will be our guest speaker. If you participated in the Secret Sister program, you don't want to miss the big reveal during this event. Sign up in the narthex to help provide dishes to share. All ladies are invited and welcome to attend!

Women Connecting to Women in Prayer

As we continue to be faithful to the biblical command to "pray without ceasing..." (1 Thessalonians 5:17), we are being blessed with many prayer needs. We are grateful there are so many opportunities to share this ministry with our women. Join us on **July 11th, at 1:00 pm in room 109** for another faithful time of prayer. Sue Burmeister will be the facilitator.



Women's Prayer Ministry

Meal Support

The Women's Ministry will coordinate meals to be provided for those in need due to illness, injury, recovery from hospitalization, or after childbirth.



Church App

Join realm[®]
and stay connected!

*Call or come by the church office for assistance
with installing the church's mobile APP!*

Check us out on podcasts and social media!



MISSED A SERMON? SHARE A SERMON!



@LAKE OCONEE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

facebook

facebook.com@lakeoconeepca



instagram.com@lakeoconeepca

MNA Disaster Response



Sheds of HOPE

The next Sheds of HOPE build is scheduled for September 11-15. Newcomers are welcome, and woodworking skills are always appreciated but not necessary! We'd love to have you join us!

Children's Ministry



During the Doxology, children ages 4 years - 2nd grade are dismissed for Children's Worship. We will be using the curriculum from Grapevine Studies. Grapevine's mission and vision are to, "Provide teachers a tool to confidently teach God's Word to their students while introducing them to the Gospel. We believe all students can understand the Bible and respond to the Gospel. Our desire is to see all students learn the process of Bible study in order to become confident and skilled in studying and eventually teaching God's Word."

God established a testimony...which he commanded our fathers to teach to their

children that the next generation might know...so that they should set their hope
in God and not forget the works of God...
Psalm 78:5-7a

July Calendar of Events

The best way to see upcoming LOPC events is by visiting our website. You can view upcoming events in three user-friendly formats.



Click on any of these three for viewing options.

Featured Events | **Calendar View** | List View

March 2022 Filter by Category

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">01 Early Morning Ladies' Bible Study(CBS) Men's Community Bible Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none">02 Mid-Morning Ladies' Bible StudyParker Home Fellowship Group (HFC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">03 (CBS) Ladies' Community Bible StudyChoir Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">04 Bulletin Helpers	5

Love God, Love One Another,
Love the Community

Our Vision

Lake Oconee Presbyterian Church exists to worship God, nurture and equip God's people, and mobilize the church to build his kingdom.

Lake Oconee Presbyterian Church | 113 Scott Rd., Eatonton, GA 31024

[Unsubscribe lopc@lopc-pca.org](mailto:unsubscribe@lopc-pca.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by lopc@lopc-pca.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!