



LOPC NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

From Jeff Birch, Senior Pastor

Father of Mercies

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too," (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).

As I write this, Evie and I have been impacted by the news of recent events, we struggle to know exactly how to respond and how to feel. Yes, we pray, but we long for so much more. Evie and I were blessed to spend almost two weeks several years ago in Ukraine ministering with and among the lovely believers in that country. So, we know many personally who are currently going through this terrible affliction.

In the midst of our own feeling of helplessness and powerlessness, Evie came across this prayer that was written by a dear friend and former staff member of Campus Outreach, Ashley Marivittori Gorman. The prayer begins, "Father of

mercies: I don't know what to do, but I know that your reflexive compassion for the downtrodden, blindsided, wounded, oppressed, and mourning is not in short supply tonight. I pray it would pour out in undeniable ways on the men, women, and children who have no other hope but your help. Flood them with your consolation that is both tender and strong in our weakest moments. As I know well, there is no presence like yours. And so, I petition you to show yourself as the God of all comfort you are."

This prayer beautifully expresses the heart of what the Apostle Paul was conveying to the church at Corinth. There is so much we don't know. There is so much we don't understand. We struggle with wanting to do something, feel somehow in control, but we feel helpless and powerless. But we're not. We know the heart of God. We know that God is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. We know that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. And we know that prayer calls down the King's power to intervene in the affairs of life.

So, we are not powerless. We pray. We repent of our self-reliance and our attempts at controlling. We repent at our incessant need to understand everything. Lord, we boldly come before your throne of grace, knowing that as we pray you are changing us, changing your people, making us the outpost of heaven in the midst of terrible darkness.

This was originally going to be a very different article. I was going to write about the coming of spring, my favorite time of year, with some of my favorite sporting events. I love March Madness in college basketball, the start of baseball season, and that wonderful golf tournament just to our east, the Masters. But obviously, circumstances dictate something very different.

There is one thing I do want to mention to you briefly. And this is wonderful news. I am very excited to share with you that the session has approved the addition of two staff members to come alongside and serve in our ministry. The first will be a full time Assistant Pastor to work in the areas of discipleship, evangelism, outreach, and shepherding. And the second will be a full time Youth and Families Director to serve our youth, children, and their families. Basically, overseeing the work of serving those from birth to age eighteen and their families.

This is very exciting, as we want our ministry to reach younger families and to advance God's kingdom by serving our community. The session is unified in its commitment to reach younger families and see the church grow, and we are calling on all of us to face this challenge together. We are asking that you pray about the calling of these two staff additions, for wisdom for the session as we seek the right person for each position. And, as this will involve an increase in our budget, we are asking for you to get behind this vision with your prayers and support.

It is such a joy and privilege to be able to serve with and among you. I consider it an honor to be your pastor, and I am excited for what God has in store for us. Even as we are honest about events in our world, we know that there is also much to be hopeful about. I can't help but think this is what it means to be the church in the world.

Jeff

Community Bible Reading Plan

Community Bible Reading Plan

LO

Lake Oconee
Presbyterian Church

PC

PARTNER WITH US AS WE READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2022:



hard copies
(available at the church)



weekly eblast



weekly Facebook
post

Daylight Saving Begins

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

daylight saving begins



**SATURDAY
MARCH 12**

**SPRING FORWARD
ONE HOUR**

Inquirers' Class



INQUIRERS' CLASS

New to LOPC?



Interested in church membership?

Want to know more about being a Christian?

Join us for the Inquirers' Class!

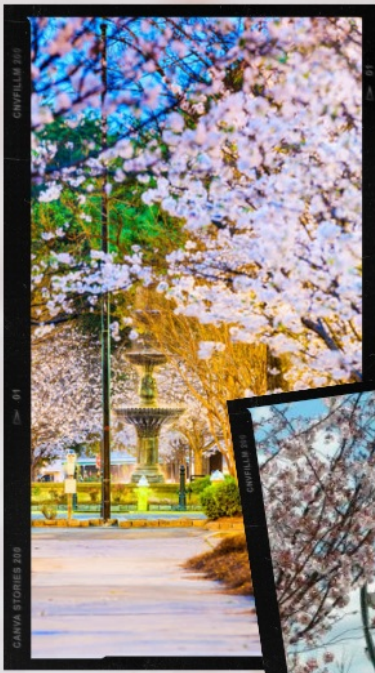
Friday, April 1 (6 - 9 pm)

Saturday, April 2 (9 am - 3 pm)

  Contact the church office to register.

Are you new to LOPC, or maybe you're ready to take the next step? The Inquirer's Class is a great place to start. The next class will meet Friday, April 1 (6:00-9:00 p.m.) and Saturday, April 2 (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.). There is no pressure to join the church, although the class is a prerequisite for membership at Lake Oconee Presbyterian Church. Contact the church (lopc@lopc-pca.org or 706-484-0600) to register and for more information. Childcare is available upon request.

Women's Ministry



Cherry Blossom Festival

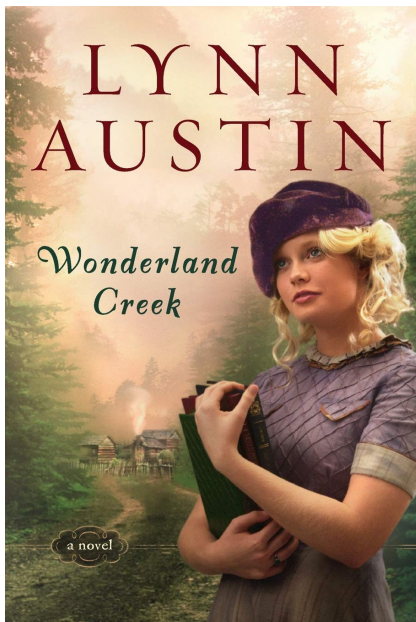
THURSDAY, MARCH 24

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN MACON



- 9:30 AM: MEET @ LOPC
- 10:00 AM: DEPART
- \$5 ENTRANCE FEE
- LUNCH IN MACON

Book Binders



Book Binders met on February 17 for a discussion of Charles Martin's *The Water Keeper*. We continue to be astounded with the variety and the inventiveness of fiction by Christian writers. For our **March 18** meeting, we will talk about *Wonderland Creek* by Lynn Austin, a novel about the packhorse librarians of Kentucky during the depression. Come join us, even on the spur of the moment. Our discussions are lively, and you can join in even if you haven't read the particular book we are talking about.

Mary Ann Johnson

Meal Support

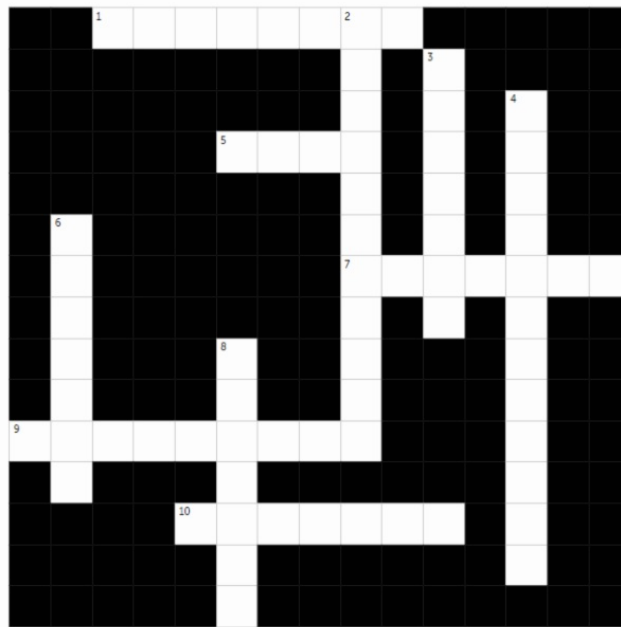
The Women's Ministry will coordinate meals to be provided for those in need

due to illness, injury, recovery from hospitalization, or after childbirth.



Digital Crossword Fun

MARCH FACTS



- | ACROSS | DOWN |
|---|--|
| 1 birth flower for March | 2 Roman calendar equivalent to the 15th of March and day on which Julius Caesar was assassinated |
| 5 Roman god of war from which March gets its name | 3 reason St. Patrick was kidnapped and taken to Ireland |
| 7 first day of Spring 2022 | 4 the NCAA college basketball tournament |
| 9 staff leader with a birthday on March 4 | 6 social media platform founded in March 2006 |
| 10 daylight saving begins | 8 birth country of St. Patrick (hint: not Ireland) |

We've created a digital crossword puzzle to test your March knowledge!

Know enough about English missionaries and LOPC staff birthdays to give this game a try? Play online or print for a hard copy version. [Click here to get started!](#) Answer key can be found at the bottom of the newsletter.

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 social media!

facebook

[facebook.com@lakeoconeepca](https://facebook.com/lakeoconeepca)



[instagram.com@lakeoconeepca](https://instagram.com/lakeoconeepca)

MNA Disaster Response



Sheds of Hope

The next Sheds of HOPE build is scheduled for **March 28, 29, 30 and April 1**.
Volunteers are welcome, and experience isn't required, though it's helpful!
For more information about Sheds of HOPE, contact Dick Forrester.

SHEDS



OF

HOPE



Youth Ministry



The LOPC Youth Group meets on **Sundays from 5-7 pm at LOPC** where there is food, fun, and Bible Study - and we WANT YOU to join us! We are looking for all middle and high school kids in and out of LOPC. Youth Group is for rising 6th grade students through high school.

Children's Ministry



During the Doxology, children ages 4-6 are dismissed for Children's Worship. We will be using curriculum from **Teach Me to Worship** through April 2022.

Teach Me to Worship is adapted from a curriculum originally developed by the staff at Orangewood Presbyterian Church in Maitland, FL. The curriculum presents and explains common elements of worship that the universal church has used throughout the ages. The material is available in PDF format which allows ministry leaders to download and print the material according to their schedule and need. A subscription to the curriculum includes unlimited access to the curriculum, handouts and activities for the children, letters to parents, training videos and worship music.

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

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.

Newsletter Archive

Missed a newsletter? [Use this link](#) to visit the archive at the member portal on our website. If you don't have the password, contact the church office, and we'll be happy to provide it.

Crossword Answer Key

