

# September 2021

first day of fall: September 22



## LOPC NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2021

From Jeff Birch, Senior Pastor

### The Church as Witnesses

The dictionary definition of a witness is “to see, hear, or know by personal presence and perception.” Also, “to testify to, give or afford evidence of.” In Isaiah 43:10 we read, ***“You are my witnesses, declared the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.”***

The church receives this role as the new Israel right before Jesus’ ascension when He commissions His apostles in Acts 1:8. ***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere - in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”***

As the church, the new Israel, we receive the same call and commission that they did: to witness to the reality of God. Having seen, heard and known by personal presence and perception, we are to testify, to give and to afford evidence of the reality of God. Our lives and testimony, in other words, our words and deeds, life

and actions, should give evidence that there is no other God, that there never has been and there never will be. As Isaiah puts it, we have been chosen to know God, believe in God, and understand that God alone is God.

Amazing! What a call! What a commission! Our lives, our relationships, our attitudes, our actions, our demeanors, our words, everything about us is called to represent to the world that God is God. That is what it means to be different. To be set apart. To be holy.

What are some of the implications of this role? I have to be careful here, for there are so many, but for now let me mention just a couple. First, everything we do has a missional aspect to it. That is, everything we do, both as individuals and as a body, is done representing God. We embody the reality and truth of God everywhere in our daily lives.

That means we represent God to a watching world at home, in our neighborhood, at school or work, in what we say or do in all our social networking. This means we should always be checking our attitudes, words and actions. What does what we say or how we come across reveal about God? We are always witnessing to the God we profess, either truthfully to who He really is, or we are giving a false or distorted witness.

Also, this means that everything we do is for the purpose of bringing and representing God to others. We do not do anything for ourselves. Our decisions, if they are to glorify God, should be governed by how they affect others. We should be asking questions like, *Will what we are doing reveal and proclaim God to our community? Will this help Greene County and Putnam County to come to know the reality of God?*

This lies at the heart of what Paul spoke to the Ephesians about when he said, ***“So that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.”*** (Ephesians 3:10)

As it says in Isaiah, we are God’s servants, chosen to know, believe and understand that He is God. What an awesome privilege to be chosen to be kingdom servants - to display through our ministry of word and ministry of deed the manifold wisdom of God.

Pastor Jeff Birch

## Thank You, Deacons!

On Thursday, August 26, Pastor Jeff Birch and wife, Evie, were treated not only to the delivery of long-awaited furniture but also to a group of deacons who showed up in force to put everything together. Thank you to these hard-working servants for their time and skills!



## Car Decals Available

Our new logo is now available as a 4" circular car decal, and best of all, it's free! Pick one up in the Narthex.



## Women's Ministry

### From the President

On August 5th, we were blessed with a successful event called "T.E.A. Time With Evie." Over 40 ladies came out to get to know our new pastor's wife, Evie Birch, and to socialize with each other as we enjoyed tea/coffee and goodies. The message that Evie presented was so inspiring. We found out that TEA stands for





Transformation, Exonerated, and Adore. I loved learning that God actually “adores” us as his children. Evie said, “I had a great time and look forward to many years of friendship and ministry with the women of LOPC.” Praise God for sending Jeff and Evie to us! We also are excited to worship with them as our spiritual leaders for many years to come.

The next event we have planned for our ladies is a trip to the Holy Monastery in Conyers, GA, in October. We'll have a specific date for you soon and hope to have a large group go with us.

*Brenda Roberts*

*President, LOPC Women's Ministry*



Women's Council Members (L to R): Donna Jean Kendall, Lynne Fowlkes, Jackie Barnett, Brenda Roberts





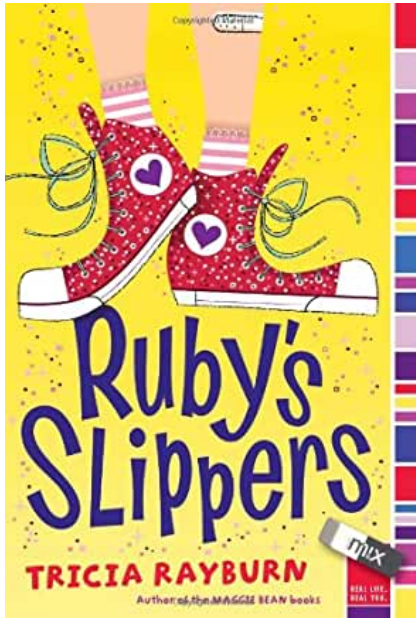


## Mid-morning Ladies' Bible Study

Beginning September 1, the Mid-morning Ladies' Bible Study will move their weekly meetings from Thursdays to **Wednesday mornings at 10 am in Rooms 110-112**. For more information or to register, contact Sue Burmeister.



## Book Binders



Book Binders officially restarted by meeting for cake and discussion at the church on Friday, August 13, from 10 – 11. As always, all women of the church are welcome to join us to read the books and to join us for discussion when convenient. Meetings this year will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month at the church in Room 110. The first selection will be *Ruby's Slippers* by Tricia Raeburn. This is a light start to our new year with a modern tale that parallels *The Wizard of Oz*. Our goal this year as Christian readers is to alternate light books with challenging ones. Join us for our September 17 meeting at the church in Room 110 from 10-11 am as we share our insights into Ruby's adventures in her red Converse "slippers."





Our newsletters don't normally feature cakes, but this work of art was made from scratch and decorated by our own Jan Harris. Jan decided to use the Covid lockdown to pursue confection perfection, and her labor of love was the undisputed star of the show at the recent Book Binders meeting. Office staff quickly volunteered as quality control, and we can all vouch for the fact that it tasted as good as it looked.

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## 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.





## Community Bible Study (CBS)



# COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

- **Ladies' CBS begins September 2**  
\*Children's classes also available.
- **Men's CBS begins September 14**

### **Ladies' Community Bible Study (CBS)**

All ladies and children are invited to join the Lake Oconee Community Bible Study as they begin their new 30-week in person sessions on Thursday, September 2, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at LOPC. This year, the CBS Lake Oconee class will be studying the books of Daniel and Revelation. This interdenominational Bible study includes women of all ages and varying backgrounds. We have classes for children and youth, ranging from preschool through high school. Pre-registration is recommended. Cost is \$35 for adult and \$10 for a child. Register online at (<https://lakeoconee.cbsclass.org>) or contact Robin Forbes at (770) 856-7127.

### **Men's Community Bible Study (CBS)**

Men: Come, join us as we continue the Men's Community Bible Study in the Lake

Oconee area. We will meet on Tuesday evenings at LOPC from 7:00 to 8:15 pm. This year we'll be studying the books of *Daniel* and *Hebrews* from the *Engaging God's Word* series. The study of the book of *Daniel* will begin Tuesday, September 14, for 12 weeks and then we study the book of *Hebrews* for 18 weeks (finishes in early May 2022). CBS is an interdenominational Bible Study open to all men in our community. The book cost \$21. For more information or to preregister, contact Tom Childers at 678-428-6538 or [tomchilders@plantationcable.net](mailto:tomchilders@plantationcable.net).

## Church App

  
**Join realm<sup>®</sup>**  
*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@lakeoconeeepca](https://facebook.com/lakeoconeeepca)



[twitter.com@lakeoconeeepca](https://twitter.com/lakeoconeeepca)

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





## MNA Disaster Response



# Sheds of HOPE

July-August 2021 Fundraiser Total



### SHEDS OF HOPE FUNDRAISER

The Sheds of HOPE fundraiser has come to an end, and **we will soon have an eblast update to share more details about the fundraiser total.** Thank you to everyone who has contributed to, prayed for, and supported this ministry!

The next shed build is scheduled for September 20 – 23. If you would like to help,



volunteers are welcome!

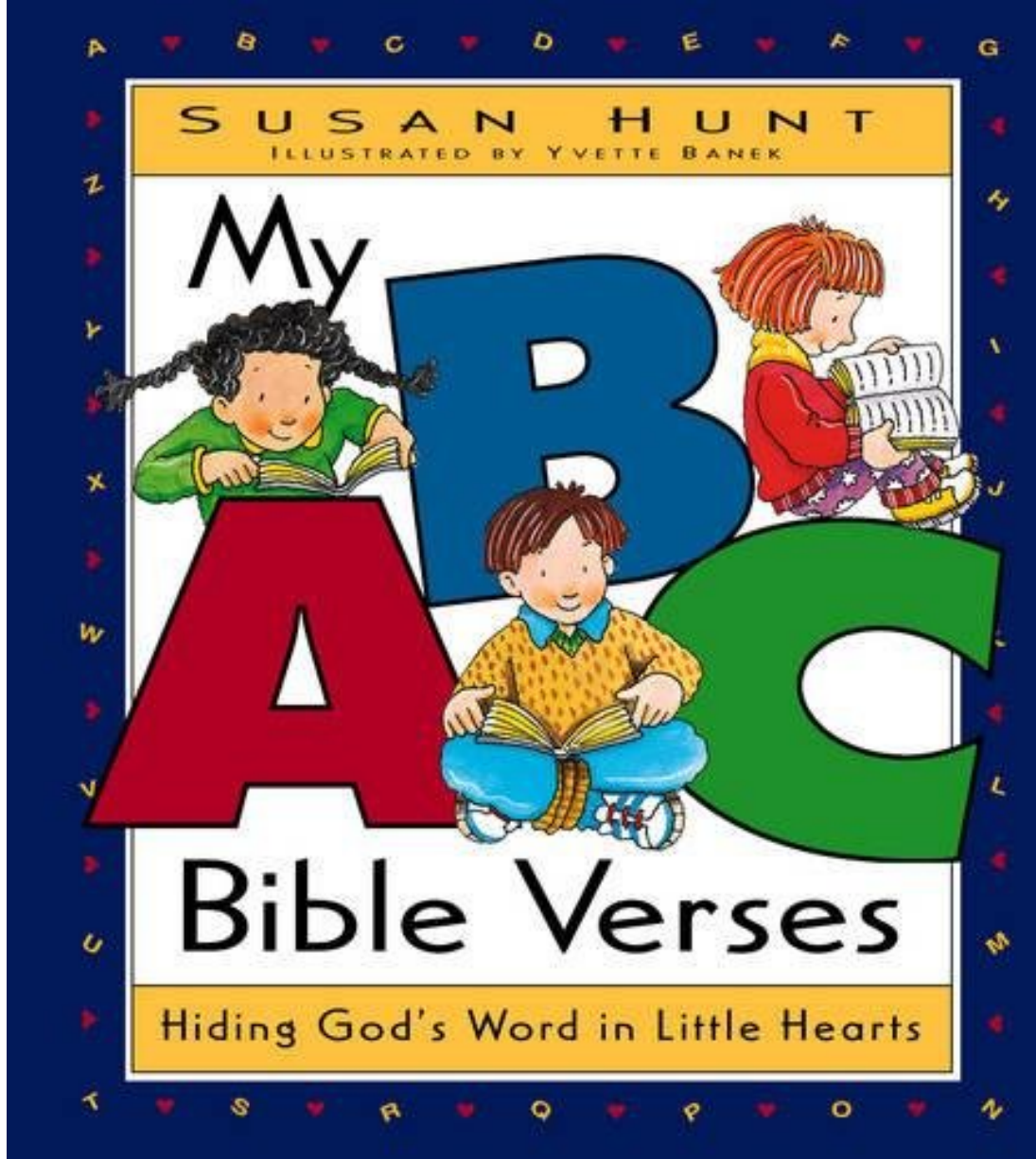
[Click here](#) for a video introduction to Sheds of HOPE. For more information, please contact Dick Forrester at [dhforrester@icloud.com](mailto:dhforrester@icloud.com)

## 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 are using Susan Hunt's **My ABC Bible Verses** for curriculum.

*Knowing the Bible can help you know God better. Here is a colorful, story-filled way for even the youngest child to take God's Word to heart—and learn the alphabet too! Presented in an easy-to-use story format that applies individual Bible verses to real-life situations, this illustrated book for 3- to 7-year-olds is perfect for reading to your children or grandchildren, and great for use in churches, Christian schools, Bible clubs, or home schools. It can also be easily adapted for family devotions with young children. The ABCs are building blocks to your child's formal education. And these verses are the building blocks of the soul—the building blocks that can lead to eternal life.*

-Crossway.org

*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...*

*Psalms 78:5-7a*

# Sunday Nursery Update

Beginning September 5, our Sunday nursery will be suspended for a period of time. This decision has been made by Session after considering the following:

- The current nursery director, Johna Unger, is stepping down effective this Sunday. LOPC has been blessed to have Johna serve faithfully in this position for ten years. During the past several months, we tried to find volunteer(s) to serve as nursery director without success.
- An analysis of the nursery usage revealed only seven (7) children were in the nursery since reopening on June 6<sup>th</sup>, for a total of 12 Sundays. Eight (8) of those Sundays (67 %) had zero attendance, including the last six consecutive Sundays. It is likely the last six Sundays' zero (0) attendance reflect parent/grandparents' reluctance to place children in the nursery due to the Covid Delta variant.
- In addition, the two (2) nursery workers currently employed have given us notice that they will be working fewer Sundays starting in September.

Coupling these facts with the cost of paying two (2) nursery workers each Sunday, the decision was made to pause the nursery. Consideration will be given to reopening the nursery contingent on the return to Sunday school. The date for re-opening Sunday school has not been determined. In the meantime, if you are interested in serving as nursery director or nursery worker please call (706-484-0600) or email the church office at [lopc@lopc-pca.org](mailto:lopc@lopc-pca.org).

## 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.