

The Scroll

Reaching Up. Reaching Out.

November 2011

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Grace is The Reason to Be Thankful

By Phil Shahbaz, Pastor of Community Life

Two years ago, in November of 2009, my wife Amy called me in the middle of the day. I was not able to pick up the phone. She left me a message that was somewhat calm, clearly restrained, and laced with urgency. She said that she had just left the doctor's office with our son, Jordan, that his check-up revealed something wrong, and that she was advised to rush to Huntington Hospital in Pasadena. I immediately rushed to the red Volkswagen, floored the V6, and drove as though the CHP did not exist. Simultaneously, Amy drove west on the 210 freeway while I rushed north on the 134. A few hours later, our two-and-a-half year-old son, Jordan, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Life with cancer had begun.

Amy and I suffered that day, but we did not suffer as much as our son, nor did we continue to suffer as much as he did. In the first few days he was quickly subjected to tests, scans, pokes, prods, blood draws, blood transfusions, and scary adults wearing masks. He received a bone marrow biopsy to confirm his diagnosis, then fitted with a PICC line – a port on his arm which would allow chemotherapy to be administered. This would be Jordan's second PICC line; once as an infant and now as a toddler. He would learn to live with the second PICC line attached to his arm for the next nine months.

His first month was a steady stream of chemotherapy, steroids, spinal taps, and other medications in an effort to put his cancer in remission. He quickly lost his hair, lost his ability to walk, and lost his joyful and curious personality. Three months into the diagnosis, we had essentially lost our son. The next nine months would come with new kinds of chemotherapy, more spinal taps, and a new list of required meds.

At the one-year mark, his chemotherapy appointments went from once a week to once a month, and his PICC line was removed. We slowly saw our son come back to us. His hair came back, his strength came back, and his personality came back. Today he is still in the same routine, two years into a three-and-a-half-year process. He is once again a joyful and curious boy, but he has some delays. His gross and fine motor skills are behind and his ability to process information is not what it was, but our son is alive and this November our family can be thankful.

As I reflect, I look back to the moment that I heard Amy's message as the pivotal and defining moment of Jordan's diagnosis. When I heard her message, my instant response was to call out to God for "grace." Specifically, my prayer was, "Lord, whatever grace you have left over for me, please pass it to Jordan." Grace has been the key word and grace remains the key word.

Throughout this process, I have done my best to strive for a true application of authentic Christian faith in my life. As a result, I have learned a few things that I

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2426 N. Euclid Ave.
Upland, CA 91784
Ph: 909.981.4848
Fax: 909.931.0498
Email: lbfchurch@lbfchurch.com
Web: lbfchurch.com

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believe are timely and relevant as we approach the holiday that reminds us to give thanks.

#1: My wife and I are not the only ones who have suffered. My son Jordan, amidst all that he has been through, is not the only one who has suffered. There are many others who suffer, and suffer still. In the two years since Jordan’s diagnosis, there are thousands of families around the world and at home who have lost a child to cancer, other diseases, or other illnesses. At our church alone, there are dozens of men and women who live with cancer daily. There families who have lost their jobs, lost their homes, and lost their relationships. Each one of us has something in our lives that hurts and that is 100% valid. I would be deceived by the enemy to believe that my life is worse then yours. I understand now that I have it worse than some people and some people have it worse then me. My hope is that this understanding has allowed me to better receive God’s grace as well as be an instrument of God’s grace in the lives of others.

#2: God did not cause my son’s cancer, nor did He cause your hardship, if you have one. I believe in a God that loves me and loves my son so much that He suffered and died for us. My God is Jesus and He is the author of grace, mercy, compassion, and above all, love. How can the author of love also be the author of suffering? Death, hardship, and suffering come from the enemy and have been administered through the means of a fallen world. Grace, mercy, compassion, and love are the defining characteristics of our God and they serve as solace and comfort amidst the hardship and suffering.

#3: I believe that God performs miracles, but I am not asking God to cure my son through a miracle. Am I so narcissistic that I would believe



that God would perform a miracle in my awful situation but not in yours? Are you not deserving of a miracle as well? What about the thousands of children around the world whose lives were relegated to being born, starving, then dying? Were they not deserving of a miracle? I do believe in the healing power of Jesus Christ, and I believe God’s hand has been put to task on my son in what I believe is a far greater way. A miracle is when God makes the impossible, possible.

In the past two years, if we have spoken face-to-face and if you have asked me about Jordan’s heath, it’s likely that I asked you to pray for “grace.” As I stated above, it was clear to me from the moment that Amy called on the way to the hospital with Jordan, that “grace” was the key word.

If Jordan had woken up suddenly in the past two years without cancer, that would have been a miracle, but Jordan has been undergoing treatment now for two years. His treatment is due to a disease that is 85% curable.

If I were to ask you to pray for a miracle, I would take for granted the thousands of children who suffered and died as a result of cancer. I would take for granted the thousands of parents

who suffered taking care of their child, and suffer still due to the loss of their child. I would take for granted the thousands of doctors who have dedicated their lives to researching and curing this disease. And I would take for granted the thousands of people who have donated to organizations whose goal is to cure this disease. I don’t take any of those things for granted. They are exactly what God’s grace looks like once it reaches us.

All around our family people have sacrificed so that my son would be healed. Make no mistake, this is God’s grace personified and made tangible. When Jordan is finally finished with his treatment, he will be healed under the watchful eye of his loving Savior and under the umbrella of His grace.

It is November, the season to give thanks, and as a result, my family and I would like to thank you for praying for our son, supporting us physically, and supporting us emotionally. It was God’s grace, channeled through you, that has helped to sustain our family over the past two years. Keep in mind, if times are tough in your life, the evidence of God’s grace may be waiting to be discovered. Happy Thanksgiving. 🍂

YOUTH CULTURE CORNER

By Matt Sasso, Pastor of Student Ministries

Is your student trusting God with the critical areas of their lives? Here at Exit 83 Youth Ministry we have several core values. One of them is that students know that God can be trusted. As a youth leader I desperately want students to understand this incredibly important value. In my opinion, if we want to know how the ministry is doing, this is one of the questions that we need to ask. Our goal is to help students develop lasting faith in their adolescent years and in order for this to happen, we want them to trust God.

We do not want to get students to trust what we say about God, but rather trust God Himself. Today our students are faced with a changing culture and in this culture, Christ-centered values and living lives for Jesus are not highly accepted among others. For many students this challenges their faith in God, and it causes them to question what we know about God to be true. While teenagers may not see it this way, their choices are really about their trust in God.

We want students to believe two main things: that Jesus is the Son of God and the way He wants us to live is not just a suggestion. Students need to believe that they have a Savior. What they have heard about Jesus is not something made up; He is real. Jesus was not just a historical figure, but is the divine Son of God who gives them real life. And the way that Jesus has called us to live is not just a good idea, it is what He really wants from us. While at times this way of life is challenging, and seems impossible in our culture, it is possible. Simply put, Hebrews 4:14 says, “Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” We want our students to know that God can be trusted with every area of their lives.

When we talk about authentic faith with our students, we talk about being secure in their relationship with the Father. We want them to be so secure that if they hear something about God that is in conflict with their previously developed view of God, that they are able to trust God despite the pressure to abandon their faith.

As a parent, we’d like to encourage you to try something; something as simple as talking to your students about their faith. The worst thing we can do is assume that they believe something just because they have grown up in a Christian family or attended a church for a long period of time. One way to start is to talk to them about the things that they see you doing. Help them see why you believe what you believe. You might be surprised how your openness will inspire them to talk to you about their faith. 🍂



Harvest Party Serves Our Community

By Dale Palmer, Director of His Kids Children’s Ministries



As we enter this season of thanksgiving, I am personally grateful and thankful for everyone who participated in Harvest Party this year!

Thank you to everyone who helped pull it all together – the help given to set up and tear down, the parking team who kept everyone safe crossing Euclid, the decorating team that made our place so welcoming, and the many servants’ hearts that helped make the night a success! Without you, the party could not have happened. Also, thank you for the candy that was brought in by so many families!

Certainly our community and church is blessed because of the coming together of so many people to provide an incredible alternative in His honor! Thank you, LBF, for being His light in the darkness. 🍂

Giving Update

Fiscal Year July 11-June 12
Total Budget: \$1,600,000

	Budget Goal	Giving Rec'd
Aug.	\$126,216	\$110,875
Sept.	\$124,366	\$107,261
YTD	\$381,880	\$345,453

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*Online giving is available at lbfchurch.com/give.

*Offering boxes are mounted on walls by exit doors.

LBF Global: Welcome Home Team Kenya!

By Carol Hawkins, Missions Coordinator



I recently had the opportunity to meet with Kenya team leaders, Noel and Debbie Norton. It was exciting to hear their stories of the trip to Kenya that they led in August. One of the things they mentioned several times was how supportive you, the LBF family, were. Thank you for caring for this ministry and for sharing resources, prayers, and encouragement to help make it happen. You were part of Team Kenya too, even if you didn't actually get on that airplane. There were many projects that the team participated in, including a building project and helping out in schools and an eye clinic.

Here are some thoughts from Noel and Debbie – and Team Kenya:



“We are going to have a toilet and shower in our house – are going to be just like Parliament!” exclaimed one of the nursing staff. The Chebaiywa Clinic staff housing now has indoor plumbing. We finished the nurse’s quarters (except for some unpainted but primed interior walls), and were also able to install tile flooring for Michelle and William Kiprop’s home. Michelle serves full time as a Nurse Practitioner at the clinic.

“While the men on Team Kenya worked alongside the ‘fundies’ (Kenyan construction workers),

the women were blessed to serve in the clinic, visit the ‘Living Room’ (a hospice care facility), teach at Chebaiywa Primary School (the local public school), and teach VBS songs to the selected choir groups from both the public school and the children’s home. These songs were performed at the local Church on Sunday morning.

“A few of our team, Debbie, Laurie, and Adam, were able to assist an Optometry Team from the clinic in an all-day outreach that administered vision testing and consults with the optometrist and provided reading glasses, eye medications, and even prescriptions for special glasses. This all took place in a village about two hours away from where we were headquartered. ‘What a blessing it was to see the joy in the people’s faces, knowing they were seeing clearly and able to read again!’ proclaimed the team.

“To have children come up to you, take hold of your hand and smile with a bashful grin of delight was a nightly blessing for us! Every evening at the Children’s Home, we would join the children (about 90), in one of the family’s meeting huts for devotions. The children would start off with amazing praise songs, led by an older child. At first we would watch and listen in awe. Soon we would all be worshipping together, swaying within their musical rhythm, and thinking, ‘All God’s children singing glory, glory alleluia, He reigns, He reigns.’ As the songs came to an end, one of us would pray, one of us would read a biblical parable, followed by some teaching and discussion. Then as soon as the closing prayer was finished, we

would find both of our hands being grasped by little ones, and their precious faces looking up at us with joy and love. We realized that this was a blessed experience that we will never forget!

“Developing relationships with the Kipkaren ELI (Empowering Lives International) Training Center staff, the parents at the Children’s Home, the



Chebaiywa Clinic staff and the Living Room staff proved to be a wonderful and fulfilling gift from God. To see how God is using them to better other people’s lives is very life-changing for us. We witnessed godly hearts serving with joy. We are honored to know them and now they are in our hearts and prayers.

“We are thankful to God for our LBF Church family and friends. We were given such an awesome opportunity to serve in Kenya. We needed your help and you responded with such love and generosity. You answered God’s call, making it possible for us to answer His call. Thank you for being God’s senders.”

Thank you, LBF, for your prayers, support, and partnership. You’re making a difference for eternity. 🙏

Will the Real Dan Franklin Please Stand Up?

By Dan Franklin, Teaching Pastor

I grew up in Newbury Park in Southern California. I have an older sister, Ami, and a younger brother, Chris. I have awesome parents who introduced me and my siblings to Jesus and His church at an early age. They also homeschooled the three of us through elementary school.

As a kid I loved baseball and soccer. I also loved to write stories. At about seven years old I authored “Boy Astronaut,” a story about me and a bunch of my friends having adventures in outer space. This epic tale spawned several sequels. My favorite book was *The Phantom Tollbooth* and my favorite movie was “The Wolf Man.”

I had a really enjoyable high school experience, playing water polo, participating in drama, and serving as a leader at my church’s youth ministry. As my senior year came around, I realized that I had really been living my life, hoping to keep Jesus in the passenger seat next to me. I wanted Him in the car with me, protecting me and giving me good advice, but I still wanted to drive. That year God really brought me to my knees and I began to enjoy a deeper and more vital walk with Jesus.

After high school, I headed to The Master’s College, where I began as an English major (looking to follow up on my early success as an author). I had a wonderful time in college, learning the Bible, making lifelong friendships, and playing a lot of ultimate frisbee. After a semester in Israel during my Sophomore year, I changed my major to Biblical Studies, sensing that God was moving me toward full-time vocational ministry. I ended up

graduating in 2000 with a bachelor’s in Biblical Studies.

During my senior year at college, I began dating the beautiful Karina Alcorn. It wasn’t long into the relationship before I knew that I wanted to marry her. Thankfully, she felt the same way and we became engaged the following November and then got married in June of 2001. Karina is a beautiful, warm, smart, and gracious woman who has blessed my life over the past decade.

After serving as a youth pastor for a couple of years and then finishing a year of seminary, Karina and I moved up to Oregon to finish up seminary. Meanwhile I was hired on as a college pastor at Good Shepherd Community Church, where Karina grew up. In the eight years that I served at Good

Shepherd, I finished seminary and experienced the births of my first two sons, Matt and Jack. We are currently awaiting the arrival of our third son, David. God has richly blessed me and my family, showing us again and again that He is trustworthy.

Here are a few more things about me: I love to play tennis, ride my bike, watch movies, and play cards. My favorite movie is “Big Fish.” My favorite book is *The Man Who Was Thursday* by G.K. Chesterton. My favorite television show is “24.” My favorite sports teams are the Los Angeles Lakers, the Los Angeles Dodgers, and the Buffalo Bills. My favorite band is U2. And my favorite Bible passage is Matthew 11:28, where Jesus says, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” 🙏



God has richly blessed me and my family, showing us again and again that He is trustworthy.

Next Stop for Exit 83

By Matt Sasso, Pastor of Student Ministries

We see our lives as a constant journey and we hope to help students see their journey connected to God’s plan. In order to do this we are making a stop on our journey as a youth ministry to teach them more about their faith. On November 12, we are asking students to spend three hours of their Saturday to help people. Now up until that day, we will be collecting supplies to pass out with sack lunches to homeless people in surrounding areas. If you are the parent of a junior high or high school student, this is a simple way for them to put their faith into action and learn what it means to serve others. Talk with them about it and ask them if they have signed up to help. We are praying that God will do something amazing in them that day! 🏹



Youth Ministry Calendar

November 1 – 1st Tuesday is a night where we encourage our jr. high students to invite their friends who would not normally go to church. We have some sort of free food, game, worship, and gospel message.

November 2 – 1st Wednesday is a night where we encourage our high school students to invite their friends who would not normally go to church. We have some sort of free food, game, worship, and gospel message.

November 6 – High School Girls Bible Study 4-5:30 p.m.

November 8 – Junior High Youth Night 7-8:30 p.m. in The Garage

November 9 – High School Youth Night 7-9 p.m. in The Garage

November 12 – Homeless Service Opportunity where students will pass out food and supplies to people in need in surrounding areas. From 10 a.m.-1 p.m., contact Pastor Matt for details.

November 13 – High School Girls Bible Study 4-5:30 p.m.

November 15 – Junior High Youth Night 7-8:30 p.m. in The Garage

November 16 – High School Youth Night 7-9 p.m. in The Garage

November 18 – High School All Nighter 7 p.m.-8 a.m. in The Garage. Medical release forms required. Cost is \$10/student.

November 20 – High School Girls Bible Study 4-5:30 p.m.

November 20 – The Third is an event for jr. high students. 12:30-3:30 p.m. in The Garage

November 22 – Junior High Youth Night 7-8:30 p.m. in The Garage

November 23 – High School Youth Night 7-9 p.m. in The Garage

November 27 – High School Girls Bible Study will meet in the Worship Center for SNL @ 6 p.m.

November 29 – Junior High Youth Night 7-8:30 p.m. in The Garage

November 30 – High School Youth Night 7-9 p.m. in The Garage

November Anniversaries

- 1 Ron & Debbie Smith, 24 years
- 2 Ray & Maria Dunlap, 26 years
- 2 Ray & Betty Schnell, 49 years
- 5 Darin & Angela Ross, 6 years
- 6 Don & Kimberly Allen, 18 years
- 7 Mike & Sandra Maggard, 30 years
- 7 Scott & Cathy Carter, 2 years
- 7 Gilbert & Michelle Rodriguez, 2 years
- 8 Mike & Brenda Dyar, 25 years
- 8 Jennifer Parenti, 8 years
- 10 Mike & Wendy Weaver, 10 years
- 11 Mike & Ana Pari, 22 years
- 12 Bill & Rusty Ozanne, 62 years
- 12 Frank & Linda Wood, 17 years
- 14 John & Leticia Walton, 19 years
- 14 Greg & Lisa Crosmer, 24 years
- 15 Jack & Shirley Preston, 37 years
- 15 Jay & Lynn Moore, 31 years
- 16 Donald & Saralee Duffy, 56 years
- 16 John & Deborah Hall, 38 years
- 16 Klyde & Rita Wilson, 26 years
- 19 Charles & Laura Pierce, 34 years
- 20 Dennis & LaMoine Farrar, 52 years
- 20 Larry & Kim Methvin, 18 years
- 20 Marvin & Joanne Walters, 35 years
- 20 Neal & Mildred Hinkle, 55 years
- 21 Paul & Cindy Ward, 55 years
- 22 Joe & Kristin Morris, 8 years
- 23 John & Bobbie Kerns, 38 years
- 23 Doug & Lari Lainson, 22 years
- 25 Luis & Maria Gutierrez, 44 years
- 26 Carlos & Deanna Silva, 34 years
- 26 Paul & Idelle Wooton, 56 years
- 26 Thai & Jennifer Nguyen, 5 years
- 27 Mark & Joelle Bohren, 18 years
- 29 Ray & Colleen Richmond, 31 years
- 30 Brent & Susan Williams, 26 years
- 30 Gary & Cindy Littleton, 22 years

If any anniversary information is not correct, please contact the church office.

In Memory

Helen Vignoli Davis
1959-October 16, 2011
Survived by Pete & Nora Vignoli, parents

Birth Announcement

Gabriel Alexander Orantes
October 8, 2011 – 7 lbs., 14 oz., 20 in.
Born to Eddie & Angel Orantes

Worship Team Member Spotlight

By Jeff Taylor, Pastor of Teaching & Worship

This month our Worship Team Member Spotlight shines on Gary Littleton. Gary has a tremendous heart for people and a massive desire to serve God through music in worship. Gary’s fun-loving and caring attitude is such a huge asset (beside being one of our only male vocalists!). Please be sure to introduce yourself to Gary when you see him...he loves to hug.



Name: Gary Littleton

Role you play in the worship ministry: Vocalist

How long have you been on the worship team at

LBF? 18 months

Why are you part of the worship ministry? I love to sing for the Lord, using the talents (which are limited, I know) He has given me.

What are some of your favorites...?

- Food:** In-N-Out, Italian, southern, and Mexican food
- Book:** The Shack, Too Busy Not to Pray, and Holy Bible
- Movie:** Airplane, Lord of the Rings, The Bourne Identity, and The

Bourne Supremacy (I’m sure you can see how I can relate to Jason Bourne?)

Song: Garth Brooks’ “ A Dream is Like a River” (sung to my kids at bed time when they were little. Not now though; they tell me that I’m not allowed in their rooms.)

Worship song: Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

Band/Musician: Lincoln Brewster, Mercy Me, Third Day, David Crowder, Hillsong United, and of course, Jeff Taylor

Hobby: Music, some Golf, some fishing and taunting anyone I can.

What animal would you say your personality is best described as?

Must I say it? Okay, a MONKEY – a fun-loving, everybody-finds-cute, not-too-obnoxious monkey.

What is your earliest childhood memory? Watching my kid sister play in a mud puddle out front of our house. She is still seen occasionally doing the same thing. Disturbing!

What is something that everyone should know about you? I love to joke around and have fun.

What is one of your defining characteristics? Friendly and easygoing

What is the thing in your life you would say is your greatest accomplishment? Raising six kids with my wife, Cindy, who by the way, is a incredible loving mother and wife (points for Gary).

When you are in front of large groups of people, a common thing for you to think is... Where am I? How did I get here?

What is something you still hope to accomplish in your life? I hope to run a marathon, a triathlon, and serve on a mission trip.

What is a talent you do not possess that you wish you did? I would love to play guitar.

What is the best way for someone to encourage you? To pray for me. I shy away from praise from people, because I feel unworthy of such attention.

What is a favorite quote or Bible verse that has impacted your life? 2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 🏹



Thanksgiving OUTreach

For most Americans, turkey is a tradition on Thanksgiving. We’d like to help those in our community that desire to celebrate with the scrumptious bird but have no means to provide their own. But we need you to make it happen! You can participate by donating a **cooked and carved turkey** and leaving it in the Worship Center kitchen on or before Wednesday, November 23. Call Diane Rotolo @ 920-9877 for more info.



2426 N. Euclid Ave.
Upland, CA 91784

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Reaching Up. Reaching Out.

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Thanksgiving Love Feast

Sunday, November 20 • 5:30 p.m. • Worship Center

Tickets are \$5/adult and \$3/child and can be purchased on the patio between services.
We also need volunteers from either 5-6:30 or 6:30-8 p.m. Sign up to volunteer on your K.I.T. card!



2426 N. Euclid Ave.
Upland, CA 91784

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