



The Face of LCI

“When faced with terminal cancer, you quickly see that you come to the end of yourself and that is where God shines”

Kathy Smith

Living Well in Life and in Death

We honor the life of Trey Smith in this issue. Trey, an LCI board member, passed from death to eternal life this past September after 21 months of battling lung cancer. We invite you to take a moment to reflect on the words of Kathy Smith, Trey’s wife.

“People don’t die this way. I have never seen anyone die like this,” said an oncologist friend of Trey and Kathy Smith. Trey prepared his family for his death and walked openly and courageously with them through the journey. It was remarkably different.

While Trey worked full-time until a week and a half before he died, he also found time to plan his funeral, he sent letters to twelve close friends, wrote love letters to Kathy and his four children, prepared wedding prayers for his children, and sent his family daily devotions for the last six months. “Trey started doing the devotions as a written legacy for his children.” But, as Kathy recalls, “I think in the end, that is where God ministered to Trey.”

“I am very content to live in the day now. Learning to trust God for my day brings great freedom and peace. We were not wired that way. We were big planners, had busy careers, and were high-energy people. Trusting God is a process of continually surrendering everything to God and choosing to do it over and over again. We would ask, ‘How can we glorify God in this disease?’ and ‘What can we be thankful for?’”

There are countless threads of God’s provisions woven into Trey and Kathy’s lives during this difficult journey – through family, deep friendships, and how the Holy Spirit prompted others on their behalf. “God met each one of our needs. God was in the details. It was so comforting to know that God was going ahead and taking care of us. You do learn that God’s grace is sufficient. We can ‘walk by faith and not by sight.’ And, for planners, that is really hard,” said Kathy.

Trey and Kathy Smith served as LCI Board members for the past three years and Kathy participated in the Level 1 Training. Although Trey never participated in the LCI Training, his life



Trey with wife Kathy (far right) and their four children

captured the heart of the LCI mission – helping others understand and use the suffering in their own lives to grow in a deeper relationship with God and with others.

Trey and Kathy were told from the beginning that the cancer was terminal. In fact, the doctors told Trey that he would live between 8-10 months. He lived for 21 months. “When you are told you have 8 months to live, you have to come to terms with dying or you are going to miss out on the rest of your life. Trey quickly came to peace with the reality of his cancer and it gave him the freedom to live well as he died,” shares Kathy.

“In the beginning I was full of fear. How am I going to live without the love of my life? I don’t want to do it! I was delivered of that fear. I have sorrow, I have grief, I have deep sadness, and I have great joy. I don’t have one minute of fear and that is a gift from God. I am content to wait on what God has for me,” reflects Kathy. Trey and Kathy’s children also followed their parents’ example in waiting on God. “You can choose to live in faith or fear – we chose faith,” shared Kristen Smith, along with her two sisters, Julia and Kimberly, when they spoke with Kathy at a local Women’s Church Retreat in 2006.

“When faced with terminal cancer, you quickly see that you come to the end of yourself and that is where God shines,” reflects Kathy. “It was during

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LCI Update

Level 1 Training sessions were held this fall at McLean Presbyterian Church in McLean, VA and at MidAtlantic Community Church in Crofton, Maryland. There were over 75 individuals that participated in the Level 1 Training.

Below: The group from McLean Presbyterian.



LCI held another level 2 training group which met throughout the summer with eight individuals. One participant shared, "What I walked away with, from Level 2 training, is that it is all about relationships. We get hurt in relationships, and God heals us in relationships. Seeing God in my story was very powerful!"

Since the Level 1 Training was a larger group, this November, LCI



Participants at the MidAtlantic Community Church Level 1 training held in October in Crofton, Maryland.

decided to adjust the Level 2 format to allow more individuals the opportunity to attend this next training session. Bill Clark teaches for the first hour and then the next hour is structured in a small group setting with a leader facilitating the group discussion.

Meet LCI's New & Retiring Board Members

We welcome LCI's two newest board members, Becky Coram and Rick Clark.

"My first experience with LCI was as a scared, vulnerable, hopeful young woman. 12 yrs later, co-leading Level 1 for the first time, I found myself to be a scared, vulnerable, hopeful older woman, amazed at my journey and that God has given me something to offer. It made me smile." **Becky Coram**

Becky and her husband, Rusty, along with their two young children, moved to Northern Virginia in 1992 to start a seeker-friendly church plant, New Hope Church in Lorton, VA. They have been a part of this growing ministry for the past 15 years. In addition to participating in the LCI Training, Becky has co-led Level 1 small groups and has been a counselor for two and half years.

"I was invited to join the LCI Board not so much for my spiritual guidance or counseling abilities, but for my experience and knowledge in marketing. And I am glad to have this to offer the organization as I believe very strongly in the LCI Mission. And there may have been just a small amount of nepotism (and pride therein) involved." **Rick Clark**

Rick, a graphic artist, is Bill Clark's brother. He and his wife, Bunnie (an elementary school teacher for over 30 years), have lived in the Springfield area since the early 70s. They have been part of a couples Bible study group for most of that time and feel blessed to have the continuous support of a group of adults who love God and each other.

A great deal of gratitude and also a good deal of sorrow is being felt as Mary and Jack Wolfe say their goodbyes to the LCI Board.

Mary has been on the LCI Board since 2001. Mary has served on the Executive Committee as Secretary of the Board and also serves as a lay counselor at Reston Bible Church. Jack Wolfe has served on the Board since 2004 and directed the LCI Golf Tournament for four years.

"Mary and Jack have played an instrumental role in the success of the organization. Mary has been on the Board since its inception, and has served in numerous roles, all with dedication, enthusiasm, and a sincerity of heart. Both Mary and Jack organized LCI's annual golf outing. All of us with a heart for LCI, and all the people that LCI touches in many important ways, owe a heartfelt thank you to Mary and Jack." Lou Giuliano, Chairman, LCI Board.

The Board of Directors has responsibility for strategic oversight and governance for LCI as well as fiduciary responsibility for the organizations financial conduct. Currently, the Board is made up of individuals and couples that have had a direct relationship with LCI.

Being primarily a volunteer organization, the Board also provides hands-on operation of LCI. Through its Committee structure, the Board plays a direct role in developing LCI's basic operating model. The Board's Committees focus on the following areas: Ministry, Communications, Finance, Administration, and Fundraising.



Becky Coram



Rick Clark



Jack and Mary Wolfe

The LCI Structure

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, to preach good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives, to release prisoners from darkness, comfort all who mourn ... they will be called of oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.”

Isaiah 61:1-3

This Scripture reveals that Jesus is close to the poor, brokenhearted, captives, prisoners, mourners, grievers. The image is what we seek to do in LCI — be Jesus to those who suffer because that is what Jesus has done for us.

Consultation Groups

“Facilitated by a professional counselor, lay counselors bearing fruit in their own lives, caring for others in their church community in a counseling role.”

Level Two Training

“Training in the counseling process for those growing in wisdom and maturity in their ability to interact with others.”

Level One Training

“Learning to understand people: behavior, relational styles, goals – the roots of our experience in the world.”

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these days that the Word of God became like Manna and Living Water. It was choosing to trust – where am I going to put my fears and thoughts and emotions right now in this moment?”

“During our 21-month journey, we desperately wanted to see God use His power to cure the cancer,” shares Kathy. But, a friend reminded

Kathy that the bigger miracle was already occurring when she could still trust God without Trey’s healing. Kathy reminds us, “The miracle is that we can know God in a deeper and more intimate way through the pain and suffering.”

Trey and Kathy lived life well even as Trey

died. They made memories together – laughed, cried, read Scripture, spent time with their family, and even had dance parties. “Watching him die brought home the point, one minute you are breathing and the next second you are not. We don’t really see death up close in America and I think if we did, we would live differently. It is very clear that everything that you work for and invest in, isn’t as important as the soul. If we place our whole focus on this earth and don’t invest in things that are eternal, we are missing out.” It is clear from the profound impact of Trey’s life and faith that he invested in the eternal. He did *not* miss out.

Trey and Kathy established the Trey and Kathy Smith Lung Cancer Research Endowment at John Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center to provide young investigators the opportunity to progress in finding a cure for lung cancer. Gifts can be made online at www.hopkinskimmelcancercenter.org/contributions or checks can be made payable to John Hopkins Medicine and mailed to Michael Hibler, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Building, 401 North Broadway, Suite 1210, Baltimore, MD, 21231. Michael can be contacted at 410-614-4679 or hiblemi@jhmi.edu.



Trey planned a 30th anniversary party in July to celebrate Kathy and Trey’s love.

We all came to know Trey as an enthusiastic, faithful contributor to LCI. Kathy and Trey freely shared their journey of the last two years and it has been an inspiration to all of us. To me, he was the epitome of Philippians 3:11 ... “for I have learned to be content in all circumstances.” Not only was Trey content in his circumstances, he steadfastly used them for God’s glory.

Lou Giuliano
Chairman, LCI Board



The Director's Couch



Just yesterday, a friend of mine pointed out the following verses in Philemon,

"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints." (4-7)

The verses fit my friend well. But as I pondered the verses, what came to mind were my experiences with Trey Smith.

Three encounters with Trey stand out for me. The first was in the lobby of our church, Reston Bible, when I first saw Trey and Kathy with a foster baby. I had no idea that they had taken in more than 20 foster babies over the years, loved and cared for them (in a manner that only God and the Smiths would remember), and then given them up to the eventual permanent adoptive parents. Remembering how "hard" I thought having two babies was (in terms of sleep, care, vigilance, etc.), I was touched by their generosity and compassion, especially given Trey's first battle with cancer.

The second encounter was at one of our LCI Board meetings in the spring. I think only 10 or 11 of us came, two for the first time. Trey shared easily and deeply about his current cancer and how he and Kathy deal with it. His "live for today" spirit was so contagious. That's what made me think about the last line in the Philemon passage. Trey (and Kathy) refreshed our hearts! Cancer was a reason to be more alive, more present, more in love, more connected to God and others.

My third "encounter" was at the funeral for Trey. I have only been to a handful of funerals and they have not been memorable in a positive way – until this one. First, I had never been to a funeral planned by the one whose life was celebrated! He ministered to all of us from the grave, so to speak! Second, the images shared by Trey's brothers,

pastor, and children, and the poem which Kathy read, were a moving testimony to the way in which Trey lived his life. In the funeral, I heard about the number of people in the Navy, at IBM and other jobs, in his neighborhoods, and in his immediate and extended family with whom Trey had shared stories, laughter, fun and games, science, adventures and most of all, his relationship with Christ. Obviously, Trey was "active in sharing his faith, in his love for the saints, and in his awareness of every good thing we have in Christ." Finally, Mike Minter, the pastor at RBC, shared this passage from Psalm 116: *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*. He pointed out that death is hardly precious to any of us still "living." But from the Lord's perspective, death is a homecoming. He is delighted to welcome his adopted children into his heavenly home, and they are thrilled to be there.

I confess I do not live life to the fullest, I do not live as if I have only months to live, I worry about way too much, and tend to think about the good things I don't have or the good things I fear will be lost. And until meeting Trey and Kathy, I rarely met or saw folks who were much different than I tend to be. They are and they have left an indelible imprint on my soul.

Since Christmas is upon us, I close with this "you have to think about it" quote which is included in Brennan Manning's *Reflections for Ragamuffins* for today, December 5, 2007:

"Jesus 'Christmases' in us whenever people come home to themselves in our presence, and when they feel a little less hopeful and joyful because we are absent."

Here's hoping that each of us has people in our lives who refresh us, who help us come home to where life is best lived and who encourage us to hope for where life is ultimately designed to be lived, forever. And by God's grace and our courage, may we be that for others.

From all of us at LCI...*Merry Christmas!*



Shown here, Libby Conrad, with her fiancé. Libby has been a friend to LCI for many years and she married Steve Canizzarro on December 8, 2007! Libby shared her journey in an article for the LCI newsletter in the fall of 2005, read this article on the LCI website.

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LCI News Staff:

Becky Coram
Cheryl South
Cyndi Wagner

Photos by Cindy Hunter

Design and production by Rick Clark
Illustration & Design.

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Our Mission

The Lay Counselor Institute (LCI) is a non-profit organization that assists the local church in establishing and growing an effective ministry of biblical counseling by identifying and training caring and gifted believers who are grounded in their knowledge of the Bible and committed to biblical counseling.