



**Life Counseling**  
MINISTRIES

*I have come that  
they may have **Life**  
and have it more abundantly.*

*John 10:10*

Volume 38, No. 4

December 2024



For

unto us

*a Child is Born...*

and the government

shall be upon His shoulder

and His name

*shall be called*

Wonderful Counsellor

**THE MIGHTY GOD**

*The Everlasting Father*

**THE PRINCE OF PEACE**

ISAIAH 9:6





## Immanuel—God with Us... In Our Anger

Michael Hochstetler, Counselor

*Editor's Note: The holiday season brings with it feelings of joy, love, and togetherness—but it can also stir up challenging emotions, like anger. Whether due to stress, unmet expectations, or the complexities*

*of family gatherings, anger is a normal part of our human experience, even during this season of peace and goodwill.*

"Is it wrong to be angry?" I've heard this question often. The Bible tells us to put away anger, but it also tells us to "be angry and sin not." How should we think about this topic? While it might be easy to label all anger as good or bad, perhaps we should first ask, "What kind of anger are we talking about?" Join me in briefly pondering a few of the "flavors" of anger.

### Addictive Anger

While anger is often (correctly) thought of as a response to pain, it can also be driven by unhealthy desire. The ugly truth is many people enjoy being angry. We should avoid making harmful, broad-stroke judgments about anyone who is angry; hurting people should never be told that they "just want to be angry." We should, however, be willing to search our own hearts.

The Bible lists anger as one of the "lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21). Like any form of lust, anger can literally become addictive. Outrage, in particular, seems to be habit-forming, especially in the age of social media when tech companies deliberately program digital platforms with the intention of stoking outrage. Addiction to outrage is much harder to recognize when it seems to be backed up by truth, or morality. It is more difficult to repent of sinful anger if I am convinced I am right.

### Suppressed Anger

On the other hand, many people are uncomfortable with anger. Anger seems to be the one emotion they cannot name, feel, or express. As a result, that anger simmers beneath the surface, creating emotional damage and eventually spilling out in ways that confuse everyone involved. Suppressed anger is often taken out

on the "wrong" people—usually those closest to us. Sometimes suppressed anger is the result of someone trying to be conscientious, believing they must block all negative thoughts or emotions about others. While well-intentioned, this comes with a high emotional price. Anger turned inward can lead to depression or to physical health problems. Other times, it can become passive-aggressive anger—subtle forms of payback that allow us to posture as loving while inwardly harboring judgment.

### A Cry-for-Help Anger

When a person acts in anger, it is easy to focus on their wrong behavior and miss the pain or fear that may be driving it. Anger and irritability can be a symptom of untreated depression. Chronic anxiety can spill over into angry outbursts. Unprocessed grief often manifests as anger. When someone seems angry for no apparent reason, it is helpful to ask, "What might this person need to grieve?"

This "cry-for-help" type of anger is especially relevant when it comes to children and youth, who do not always know how to express their feelings. While we need to guide their behavior, it is tragic when angry teenagers are simply labelled as rebellious with little thought given to the built-up hurt and pain; the desperate cry for help is so easily missed.

There are more "flavors" of anger that could be discussed, but the important point is that not all anger is the same and knowing what type of anger one deals with is part of the healing process. Naming an emotion is often the first step in surrendering it to Christ. If you find yourself struggling with this particular emotion, perhaps it would be helpful to pray, "Lord, what kind of angry am I?" And then ask Him to come be with you in that anger.

As we celebrate the holidays, let's remember that finding peace begins within. By understanding the roots of our emotions, including anger, we can create space for kindness, resilience, and genuine connection.

## LETTING GO:

*A Portrait of a Woman at Rest*

This course offers married women practical Biblical tips on how to be happy, respectful, empowered wives. This online, six-week intensive course involves daily interactive emails, one group Zoom call per week, and journaling homework.

Coaches: Cathie Gingerich and Sharon Kuepfer

### NEXT COURSE DATES

January 6 – February 17, 2025

March 17 – April 28, 2025

May 26 – July 7, 2025

For more information, contact Janice at [jmiller@life-ministries.com](mailto:jmiller@life-ministries.com)  
Phone: 717-871-0540

*Upcoming Events*

### Annual Banquet - March 24, 2025

Please register to attend.

Call: 717-871-0540

Email: [info@life-ministries.com](mailto:info@life-ministries.com)

Register online: [www.life-ministries.com](http://www.life-ministries.com)

Registration opens January 6, 2025

### Father/Son Retreat

July date TBA. Registration opens March 1, 2025

### Rocky Mountain Men's Retreat

July date TBA. Registration opens March 1, 2025



## Musings on the Word *Contain*

Naomi Zimmerman, Counselor

Recently my young adult daughter, who does not live at home, called me and said, “I’m coming home this afternoon. I might need an extra hour.”

“Oh?” I asked.

“I need someone to contain me.”

Wow! What does that mean? To *contain* is to hold (someone or something) within. To *contain* is to create a big enough space to hold what another is experiencing and feeling. It offers presence and safety; to be with.

When my daughter arrived, she placed her arms around my neck, and I placed my arms around her neck. We held each other close for several seconds – “to hold someone.” We laughed and talked and told each other about recent events in our lives. We went to the garden and gathered a few things to prepare a meal. Then she started talking about desires she had that were not fulfilled...confusion in a relationship... decisions that needed to be made about her future... loneliness...tears...times of blessings...times of joy.

“I need you to contain me.” It is easy to give a hug and to hold physically, but how do I hold these things that my daughter is bringing to me now?

I visualize a container in front of me. As she talks, I let every word drop into this container—word after word, emotion after emotion, longings and desires.

Sometimes I want to stop the words before they get into the container. I want to throw them right back, adding my words of accusation or condemnation. Other times I internalize what is in the container, letting it define me.

I’m aware of my thoughts and feelings—anger, fear, joy, gratitude. *Life is not always fair. Why is life so difficult?* The pressure to say something, do something, fix something rises within me.

Then I think of Immanuel—God with us—the One whose right hand “holds me fast” (Psalm 139:10 NIV). *How do I experience Father God holding me?* I

ponder as I ask Him to help me sift through what is in the container.

*How is God with me? How is God with my daughter?* I become curious about the ways He is containing her.

Will God really “dwell on the earth with men”? Solomon prayed, “The heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain you!” (2 Chronicles 6:18 NIV). This God Who cannot be contained stoops down to look on the heavens and earth (Psalm 113:6 NIV). He sends Immanuel so He might be with us. Because of Immanuel, I am contained. Because of Immanuel, I can contain my daughter.

This adaptation of A.A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh helps illustrate what it means to “be with:”

*"Today was a Difficult Day," said Pooh.*

*There was a pause.*

*"Do you want to talk about it?" asked Piglet.*

*"No," said Pooh after a bit. "No, I don't think I do."*

*"That's okay," said Piglet, and he came and sat beside his friend.*

*"What are you doing?" asked Pooh.*

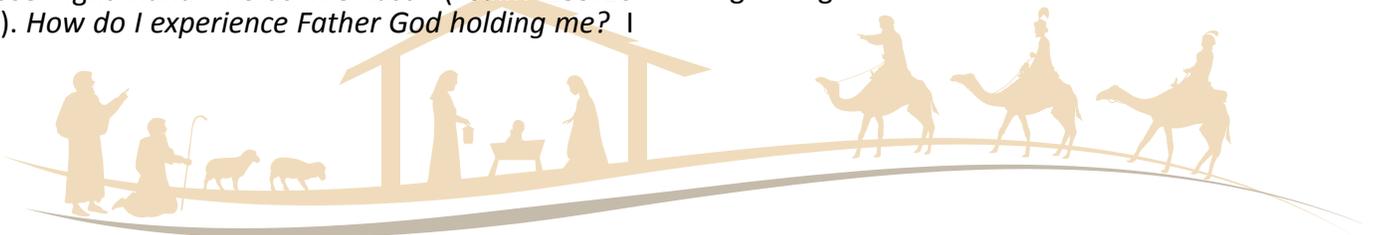
*"Nothing, really," said Piglet. "Only, I know what Difficult Days are like. I quite often don't feel like talking about it on my Difficult Days either.*

*"But goodness," continued Piglet, "Difficult Days are so much easier when you know you've got someone there for you. And I'll always be here for you, Pooh."*

*And as Pooh sat there, working through in his head his Difficult Day, while the solid, reliable Piglet sat next to him quietly, swinging his little legs...he thought that his best friend had never been more right.*

In silence, swinging his little legs, Piglet contained Pooh. “I will always be here for you, Pooh.”

Jesus says, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20, NIV). He is always big enough to contain us.



## Financial Report

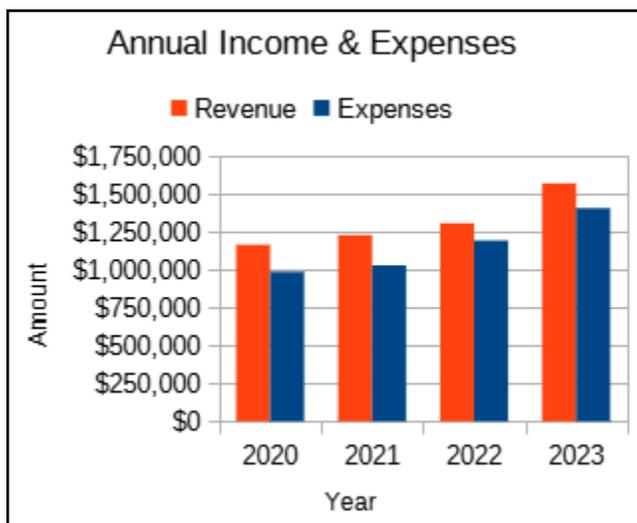
Adam Lehigh, Business Manager

As you can see from the bar graph, income for 2020-2023 consistently exceeded expenses. Thanks to each one who helped make that possible!

This year, however, donations are significantly lower, and we are facing a possible shortfall at the end of the year. If this trend continues next year, we may need to spend a significant amount of what we've saved up prior years to continue operations. We appreciate your prayers and consideration.

We are also looking for new personnel to fill two key roles: Office Manager and Public Relations Director. Please pray with us about this need. Anyone interested in these positions is invited to contact our office.

Thank you for your interest and prayers.



## PRAYER & PRAISE

### Praise God for...

- For the coming of our righteous King who will reign forever!
- For His daily provision of grace and sustenance for our needs here at LCM
- For an engaging group of Core 1/Lab 1 students eager to grow and learn

### Pray for...

- Needs for a Public Relations Director and Office Manager
- Health and stamina for our staff
- Wisdom for the board and administration as they lead the ministry



## From the Thrift Shoppe



Hello from the Leola Thrift Shoppe, and a huge thanks to many of you who have volunteered here over the last 12 months.

We have had an extra busy season keeping up with our "Best Kept Secret" tour and now anticipate the hustle and bustle of the coming Christmas season. We enjoy the God-stories customers tell us about finding just the things they were looking for or the surprise of the treasures at a great price.

We are in need of volunteers who could help part-time or even just stop by and say, "I have a few hours to help;" We will welcome you with open arms and you will be blessed!

Merry Christmas!

Call Rosanna Stoltzfus at 717-209-1598 to volunteer.

## CONTACT US

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Life Counseling Ministries is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to provide counseling for individuals, marriages, families, and church leaders. LCM also offers training and teaching through workshops and seminars. This newsletter is published quarterly and is available to interested persons at no cost.

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