



# ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

WELCOME TO LONG BEACH ALLIANCE ONLINE CHURCH  
SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020



# COMMUNION SUNDAY

*Next week!*

Please contact the office

**[office@lbac.org](mailto:office@lbac.org)**

if you'd like a communion kit  
dropped off at your house.



**DON'T FORGET...  
REACH OUT  
AND CONNECT!**

Check in with  
your family, the church  
family, friends, and  
neighbors!

**MAY 29-31 2020**

**FAMILY CAMP**

11 RV/Camping Spaces, 120 people, \$15/person  
Sign ups are limited!

Contact Meghan Brearley, 562.708.9261, to sign up TODAY!

SAVE THE DATE



**American  
Red Cross**

*Blood Drive*

**Sunday, June 7 in the GYM**



## **LBAC Year-to-Date Financial Report**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget %</u>
Weekly:	\$12,715.40	\$15,618.88	122.8%
Month-to-Date:	\$25,430.80	\$51,238.05	201.5%
Year-to-Date:	\$419,608.20	\$421,133.52	100.4%
Disbursed YTD:	\$373,576.00	GF Balance: \$47,557.52	

# LBAC's Family Calendar & Events

**Sunday, April 26**

9:30AM At Home Worship Service

**Sunday, May 3**

9:30AM At Home Worship Service

No activities  
or events  
allowed at  
church at  
this time,  
as per city  
and state  
restrictions.

## MISSIONS

<http://www.lbac.org/missions>

## GROWTH GROUPS

<http://www.lbac.org/gg>

Mid-week Adult Bible Studies

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/children>

Sunday Mornings: Gospel Project @ 9:30AM  
Fun N Funky @ 11:15AM

## AWANA

<http://www.lbac.org/awana>

Wednesday Nights September through May

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/youth>

The Process High School~ Tuesdays @ 7:00PM  
Junior High Live ~ Thursdays @ 7:00PM

## WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/women>

Women's Ministry Event Information

Contact: deya@charter.net

Lydia House Meals Ministry

Contact: mcoliver789@msn.com

Women Connecting with Missions

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month @ 7:00PM

Crafty Women

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month @ 10:00AM

## MEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/men>

Contact: mensministry@lbac.org

## long beach alliance church offices

3331 palo verde avenue • long beach, ca • 90808-4113

phone: 562.420.1478 • office@lbac.org • www.lbac.org

church office hours: tuesday-thursday, 10:00AM-5:00PM

[www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch](http://www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch)

## church staff team

meghan brearley, children's director  
562.708.9261 • meghan@lbac.org

jesse duckett, youth pastor  
562.454.7122 • jesse@lbac.org

tina rand, receptionist & treasurer  
562.420.1478 • tina@lbac.org

scott trickett, associate pastor  
562.972.5306 • scott@lbac.org

michelle crammer, office manager  
917.288.3424 • michelle@lbac.org

chris lankford, lead pastor  
562.685.4132 • chris@lbac.org

kyle rand, facility needs  
562.900.0921 • kyle@lbac.org

ben shaw, worship & celebration intern  
562.420.1478 • ben@lbac.org





# Endless Possibilities:

## Finding the **Red Thread**

LONG BEACH ALLIANCE CHURCH • APRIL 26, 2020 • PASTOR CHRIS LANKFORD

### 1) International Intersections

- A. Last week we got to take a look at a great conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). Today, we will be taking a look at another Bible story to learn some additional characteristics about both sharing our faith in Jesus Christ with those who do not know God and also the content of our message about having faith in Jesus.
- B. Today's Bible story (Acts 8:26-40) is about a God-fearing Ethiopian Royal Treasurer who had visited Jerusalem but was traveling back home, and Philip, a well-known leader in the church of Jerusalem, one of seven respected and godly men chosen by the people of the church to serve people in need so that the apostles could be freed up for "prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:1-7).
- C. I want you to pay close attention to how God speaks to and directs His followers. Many people talk about hearing a message from God, and this is a story in which God speaks and directs.
- D. I also want to invite you to pay close attention to Philip's skill of explaining the meaning of the Bible. I often hear people say, 'the stories about Jesus and the rest of that New Testament stuff are great, easy to read, and I understand what's going on... But that Old Testament stuff? What is God up to there; I just don't get it?! Why are things so different?' This is a story providing clear and concise answers for those types of commonly asked questions!
- E. Finally, for the sake of context, our Ethiopian Treasurer, who is from Africa (deeper detail on next page), is almost certainly a black man who converted to Judaism (a "God-fearer") and is traveling from a spiritual journey to the Holy Land back to his home. This story is part of a section of the book of Acts explaining how the 'Jesus-story' spread through the world, and as was often the case, the story of Philip and the Ethiopian provides us with insight and wisdom for our own modern-day multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Gospel encounters.

### 2) Responding To God's Leading (*Acts 8:26-40*)

- A. There are numerous times in the Bible when an angel of the Lord delivers a message (Luke 1:11-13; Matthew 1:20-21; Acts 5:19-20; Hebrews 13:1-3). Usually angels deliver messages which are very difficult to believe, the kinds of messages a person would naturally second-guess or doubt, if it were not for angelic intervention.

Philip was led by an angel of God to go down from Jerusalem to the city of Gaza (2,400 foot elevation drop) where the Spirit of God sent him to a God-fearing convert to Judaism (most probably a Gentile proselyte) who was making the five-month trip back to Ethiopia ("Cush" in the OT, to the Nubian Kingdom capital of Meroë, located in the modern country of Sudan, about 160 miles North of the modern-day capital of Karthoum). Philip meets an Ethiopian Royal Treasurer



and shares the Gospel with him beginning in an OT passage from Isaiah 53. The Ethiopian is so delighted in receiving the Good News, he immediately responds by being baptized and worships God (Acts 8:26-40). Philip continues on his evangelistic journey to the North, ending up in the seaside port city of Caesarea (about 55 miles to the North, named in honor of Caesar Augustus), where he settles and raises a family. We encounter him again (20 years later) as a host for the Apostle Paul toward the end of Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 21:8ff). (Courtesy ESV Bible Atlas)

- B. It might not seem like it for you or me, but going to a foreign royal ambassador who was a black man from Africa with the Gospel of Jesus Christ would have been ‘out-of-the-box’ for a faithful Christ-follower. The early Christian context was still that the Messiah had only come to save the Jews. The angel delivers this message, because other means wouldn’t have been sufficiently convincing!
- C. But God is in the process of expanding the Gospel horizons of the church to reach outward to ‘the ends of the earth’ (note Acts 1:8). The Ethiopian is (quite literally) from a location to the South that was at the end of the known world. He is a direct fulfillment of God’s purposes to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20).
- D. Philip provides us with a great example of being prepared to go where God leads, to do what God leads, and to say what God leads. Going, doing, saying... are all characteristics of disciples of Jesus Christ. Philip’s faithfulness moves the Gospel into a new nation!

### 3) Finding the Red Thread

- A. Philip had studied and understood the Bible well-enough to be able to explain its theme, even when that theme had been largely missed by the religious leaders of Judaism (Acts 8:32-33, from Isaiah 53:7-8).
- B. Even though the time of Jesus’ crucifixion, burial, and resurrection from death to life had only happened a short time earlier (probably within 1-2 years), Philip was able to see and know – and lead others to know and see the ‘red thread’ of Messiah through the Scriptures, which all reveal their fulfillment in Messiah Jesus (John 5:39).
- C. There are very few talents as needed and as effective as being able to ‘see Jesus’ in every part of the Scriptures! This was a gift for the Ethiopian Treasurer because all he had were the OT Scriptures. Often, we rely so heavily on the NT Scriptures, we ignore the first two-thirds of the Bible, unintentionally communicating to ourselves and also to others that they are two different stories. But they are not! This is one story written by God, with Jesus as its central theme!

### 4) The Importance of Displaying Your Faith

- A. Philip (who will forever be known as ‘the evangelist,’ Acts 21:8), clearly proclaimed the Gospel and the need for the Ethiopian to be washed ‘white as snow’ by the blood of Jesus’ sacrifice (Isaiah 1:8; Psalm 51:7) and renewed to new life in the Spirit of God (Titus 3:5).
- B. New identity in Christ (Galatians 2:20) is not just something believed, it is something displayed – to God first, and to the world. Knowing this importance, the Ethiopian is baptized in a nearby pool of water, and then... Philip is miraculously sent to the North, and the Ethiopian heads home to the South, and the Gospel expands with them!