



HARD QUESTIONS

lead to *help and hope* in Flanagan, Illinois

Flanagan, Illinois, is a lot like many small Midwest towns, where the population is shifting, economics are diminishing, and church attendance is in rapid decline. But where others might see despair, Salem Church in Gridley, Illinois, sees hope. One of FEC's oldest churches, Salem Church has been considering how it might effectively minister to the next generation for some time now. After 60 days of prayer, several conversations with Rocky Rocholl, FEC president, and some deep soul searching, the answer was clear. They needed to plant a church. What wasn't clear was how to do it.

Enter Dan Mays, a seminary student who grew up in Flanagan and has a heart for renewal in his

hometown. "I really felt that God was pushing me to plant a church," says Dan. "The fact that FEC wanted to plant a church in my hometown was pretty providential." The rest, as they say, is history. "People of our church have always enthusiastically supported individuals who have entered full-time Christian service, with missionaries all over the world," says Mike Friend, longtime Flanagan resident and board chair at Salem Church. "Now, we can do even more, since the mission is only five miles away." In fact, the response from Salem members has been overwhelmingly positive. "We see this as an opportunity to make a great impact for the kingdom of God," says Stuart Rex, Salem Church pastor. The new church launches January 29, 2017, so please be in prayer...and stay tuned!



Marriage Retreat

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Engage Sunday gains momentum in Fort Wayne and surrounding communities

Back by popular demand, Engage Sunday has once again made a significant impact across northeast Indiana. With 1,600 people participating from five Fort Wayne FEC churches plus five Kendallville-area churches on Sunday, August 21, the impact was bound to be big. According to Steve Shaffer, executive pastor at Pine Hills Church, the general consensus was overwhelmingly positive. “It was exciting to be the hands and feet of Jesus throughout Allen and Noble Counties on one specific day,” he says. Whether people were painting fire hydrants, creating NICU care packages, or stocking food pantries, everyone enjoyed the chance to engage the community outside the church walls. The day wrapped up with fun, food, and games at Riverside

Gardens Park in Leo and at First Christian Church in Kendallville. Festivities at both locations culminated in a special service of worship and celebration. [To see the complete list of organizations served, along with some great photos, visit \[engagesunday.com\]\(http://engagesunday.com\).](#)



Central city location creates challenges and opportunities for new church plant

Any way you slice it, the 46807 zip code in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is one diverse community, with a wide range of ages, races, income levels, and religious affiliations. And that’s just fine for Chris Freeman, who is slated to launch Pine Hills City Church in this neighborhood on November 13. Chris and his wife, Madison, are excited about connecting people to Jesus in this densely populated region in Fort Wayne’s central city. “We have found people in this community to be overwhelmingly receptive and supportive,” he says. Others might see the religious diversity as a deal breaker, with Muslims, Jews, and Unitarians close by. But Chris sees an opportunity. “It’s really encouraging that people are seeking,” he says. “This is a community that could use a strong evangelical church.” **Please join us in praying for a good facility for the church plant, and be sure to look for more news about Pine Hills City Church at pinehillchurch.com/pine-hills-city-church.**

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Kansas churches show signs of growth
How three recent church plants in the heartland continue effective ministry in Jesus’ name

Building up the body through evangelism and pastoral care. It’s a common theme for three young FEC churches in Kansas — each planted less than four years ago. For Adam Utecht at Grace Community Fellowship, that means equipping lay people to minister through the highly effective Stephen Ministry program. For Landon Jordan at New Anthem Community Church and Jason Rains at Grace Crossing, baptisms are a sure sign that their evangelism strategies are working, with more than 90 baptisms at Grace Crossing in the last four years and 20 baptisms at New Anthem in the last year alone. In each church, lives are being transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ. Even better, these churches are discussing plans to reproduce themselves in the near future, with the potential for even more people to connect with Jesus in new and powerful ways. **You can learn more about each ministry at fecministries.org/churches.**

