

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



THE HILLS OF THE FEC, PART 2

The Hills We Stand On are where grace and truth intersect to make us FEC. We believe the Scriptures present God's sovereignty and human responsibility as non-contradictory components of justification.

We hold communion and baptism to be ordinances, yet do not define the frequency of communion nor the mode of baptism. We teach the gifting of the Spirit, yet allow Scripture alone to limit how gifting is expressed locally.

The FEC is complementarian believing that while God equips both men and women for ministry, He has made distinctions in their roles. Thus, the FEC grants pastoral licenses to qualified men and ministry licenses to qualified men and women allowing the local church to determine how each will serve.

We believe in the physical return of Christ, yet do not prescribe an exclusive rapture-millennium belief. We believe in a plurality of leadership, but not a sole form of church governance.

The Hills We Dialogue On are comprised of practices that vary significantly. They include (but are not limited to): the approach to preaching (expository or topical), practice of tithing, expression of worship, implementation of church discipline, and requirements for membership. We expect local bodies to allow Scripture to guide their decisions.

Finally, we come to the Mole Hills. Churches have complete freedom to determine their own style of worship (traditional or contemporary), focus of ministry (believers or seekers), Bible translation, chosen attire for worship, etc. There is a recognition that each body will make decisions based upon their local ministry context.

- Mark Biehl, FEC Elder Board Chairman



Northwood School of Ministry Trains Pastors, Prepares Church Planters

Early in life, Tanner Smith heard, "You're going to grow up and be just like your dad." Even though he grew up in a pastor's family, he wanted to be a pro baseball player. However, during high school, he experienced a life-changing encounter with God and a call to plant churches. Now, through the Northwoods School of Ministry, Peoria, he and other young leaders are preparing for ministry.

In college, Tanner pursued a bachelor's degree in preaching to prepare for his future in ministry. After graduating from college, he accepted a job in youth ministry with Northwoods Church, Galesburg campus. Even though he believed that God had given him a vision for church planting, he was also sure that God wanted him to accept the youth ministry position.

During that time, Northwoods was developing their vision to plant 20 churches by 2030 and invest in young ministry leaders through a ministry school. The 2-year program would provide a Master of Arts in General Ministries from Lincoln Christian University and practical ministry experiences from Northwoods Church. By the time the ministry school opened in 2018, Tanner and 7 other students filled their first class.

Now in his second year, Tanner is mapping his church planting path with FEC. Looking back, he sees God's fingerprints in the design. At Northwoods, he is developing into a leader who is equipped to do what God has called him to do.

Southside Community Church Celebrates First Baptisms

On Sunday, July 7, Southside Community Church in Wooster, OH, baptized six people. What makes this particular baptism unique is that it marked their first baptisms after launching the new church in November 2018. Pastor Greg Grimwood and his wife, Cara, have seen steady church growth in their community, but they know that kingdom growth isn't based on numbers but on changed lives.

Each of the six people baptized told his or her story to the crowd that had gathered. Three of them came to Southside with a family member who has helped launch or serve the new church. Greg also baptized his two daughters, Abby and McKenzie.

The sixth person, Donald, had recently decided to follow Jesus after building a relationship with Alex Kacere, Southside's associate pastor. The two men met on a hiking trail near Wooster and struck up a friendship. Since Donald was curious about God, he and Alex began meeting to talk and to read the Bible together.

Greg Grimwood and his team are committed to a steady faithfulness as Southside approaches its one-year anniversary. "There's nothing dramatic in it. We want to keep seeing this kind of fruit. It's exciting. We keep showing up, and God continues to be faithful." Eugene Peterson's words, "A long obedience in the same direction," inspire him to persevere.

