

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



Churches Leaders Gather for 2021 Conference

With a rich past, reaching back more than 100 years, FEC is working to meet new challenges like those encountered in 2020 while staying rooted in biblical truth. The fellowship's annual conference provides a gathering place for leadership development and relational connection as the fellowship grows, both geographically and numerically. From July 22-23, over 250 church leaders came together in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and were challenged to 'build bridges' in their local communities.

The theme, "Building Bridges," highlighted the need for leaders and churches to interact with their local communities. On Thursday, Dr. Walter Kim, the National Association of Evangelicals President, challenged leaders to invest in people by doing what Jesus would do in their communities--loving and listening. On Friday, Dave Runyon, co-author of *The Art of Neighboring*, asked church leaders, "What if Jesus meant that we should love our actual neighbors?" He quizzed the group about identifying their neighbors by name. In addition to Dr. Kim and Runyon, FEC Pastor Greg Grimwood shared his personal journey of rediscovering balance in ministry. In the final session, Tom

Bennardo, FEC Executive Director of Church Multiplication and Leadership, encouraged leaders to start living out the kingdom of God from their own hearts before leading others to do it.

Two changes in the conference schedule included creating more time for attendees to interact and moving the annual business meeting to a later date. In response to feedback, the schedule allowed for a longer lunch break and an early-morning interactive connection time. On Thursday evening, attendees enjoyed dinner from local food trucks and a live band.

Rocky Rocholl, FEC President since 2010, hopes that this year's conference challenged leaders to care for their souls and to build bridges in their communities. With the challenges of ministry and cultural change in mind, he said, "We want our ministry people to be prepared when another wave of difficulty like 2020 hits." And, in a culture that is deeply divided, leaders who build bridges in local communities will be able to carry out the FEC vision far into the future to "establish reproducing churches worldwide."



NW Ohio Couple Provides Weekend Getaways for Pastors

Northwest Ohio natives, Ron and Cathy King built a house in the middle of a cornfield near their hometown of Archbold. Soon after they settled in, they realized that the peace and beauty of rural Ohio would be inviting to other people, too. That's when they began inviting people to stay in their home. The Kings love to encourage people, especially pastors, so this year they decided to open their home to FEC pastors and their wives for a one or two-night getaway fit for "a king."

Their passion for ministry people was born 30 years ago during a marriage retreat for missionaries in Central America. Cathy recalls how tired the missionaries seemed, and one remarked that he had forgotten how to laugh. Since that time, the Kings have been finding ways to provide rest and rejuvenation for church leaders. Then, last year, they decided to host pastors in their home's private guest suite. During their stay, guests enjoy pampering like a candlelight dinner. The serene environment provides needed rest, but the 109-acre property also provides plenty of fun for skeet shooting, riding 4-wheelers, or taking long walks.

Cathy says that their goal is "to love on and spoil their guests." "When we have people here and God lets us be used in this way to encourage and empower His people, especially those who are called to bring good news, we are humbled."

Pine Hills Resident Program Prepares Church Planters

Pine Hills Church has been actively planting churches since 2015 when they launched Lifegate Denver, Pine Hills Kendallville, City Church Fort Wayne, and partnered to plant Kingdom Collective Fort Wayne. This year, they took on a new initiative in the effort to plant more churches: Training residents.

In 2019, Pastor Mike Drury challenged the Pine Hills body to plant 10 new churches and reach 10% of their growing community in the next 10 years. Recognizing the need to identify and train more church planters to accomplish the vision, the church has developed a new residency program. This year, three men are a part of the program: Hugo Reyes, Kyle (Rachel) Stoker, and Robert (Lori) Kee. The entire program consists of two sessions, spanning one to two years, and encompasses three aspects of development: personal, pastoral, and practical. Each aspect of the program requires reading, church-based experiences, and building new relationships. In addition to their ministry roles and learning, each resident is cared for by a team of people.

Veteran ministry leader, Colleen Senestraro, developed and oversees the residency program. Colleen has been investing in people at Pine Hills Church for 14 years, first as the Connect Director and now as the Multiplication Executive. Through their residents, Pine Hills has taken a step toward accomplishing their 10-year vision.

