

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



FEC Offers Pastoral Support Through THRIVE Program

Our ministry leaders and teachers do so much to build up the body of Christ. Now, with a two-year FEC program called THRIVE, these leaders can receive encouragement and support designed just for them through “soul care.”

Why is “soul care” important? Pastor Wes Hoffmire, Care and Community Pastor at Crossroads Church in Napoleon, Ohio, says trials, isolation, stress, and burnout are common struggles for today’s pastors. “There’s a lot of ministry leaders burning it at both ends,” he says. “Pastors and leaders have a desire to lead their church well and to serve the Lord well.” In those conditions, it can be hard for ministry leaders to slow down and seek help.

This is where THRIVE steps in.

THRIVE is a two-year program that includes a retreat twice a year, connecting attendees with other leaders and unpacking the various forms of support for credentialed ministry leaders and their spouses. This holistic approach covers areas like mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical, but also technological

and familial health. Each THRIVE cohort is regional so leaders can connect with other ministry partners who are geographically close enough to stay in touch between retreats.

Pastor Wes, who went through this restorative program after serving in ministry for 14 years found it profoundly supportive. It gave him a stronger connection with other pastors and helped him grow more compassionate for other leaders, particularly those in isolation. Now, he meets regularly with three others from his retreats via Zoom, text messages, and occasional lunches together. “There’s been a brotherhood in the group that’s been really helpful.”

“Life in general can wear you down in a way you don’t even realize,” says Pastor Wes. “It doesn’t really matter where you are in the continuum of health; THRIVE is there to be taken advantage of.”

If you are a pastor or leader in ministry interested in THRIVE or other support resources from FEC, you can find additional information at <https://fecministries.org/thrive>

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Life Community Church Becomes a Multilingual Ministry in Hilliard, Ohio

Life Community Church (LCC) began with the mission that life happens in groups. As the church in Hilliard, Ohio has grown, these smaller groups within the body have become a closely knit brotherhood of believers. Now, a group of Spanish-speaking individuals have also found a home within the family of LCC.

Pastor Armando Leczano, now the Multicultural and Mission Support pastor at LCC, connected with LCC and saw a solution to a need. "The first step was being together," Pastor Armando says. "The church needs to be a representation of the community." So they began displaying worship lyrics in English and Spanish, hosting karaoke nights at the church in Spanish, and memorizing scripture together in Spanish.

One Sunday at LCC, a Mexican woman told Pastor Armando, "I don't understand all the service, but I find people there who love me. I'm so grateful to be there." In turn, she has begun inviting people to church. To celebrate and continue this initiative, Pastor Armando will deliver a message at this month's FEC conference entirely in Spanish with a translator at his side. "I'm so excited about this because it's a great opportunity...When I see the church in Revelation, I see it speaking many languages, a multicultural church."

This will be the first multilingual message given at an FEC conference, which takes place on July 27th and 28th in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



ZEC Ministries Brings the Gospel to India Through VBS Camps

God is doing amazing things in India. Hundreds of children hear the good news of Jesus Christ every year through VBS camps conducted by Zion Evangelist and Care Ministries (ZEC) and its founders, Syam and Esther. The couple started ZEC in 2005 because of their heart for the poor and needy. Now the team of more than 70 workers and volunteers serves children all across Visakhapatnam in south-eastern India.

Through the years, many children came to Christ, became VBS volunteers, and even church planters. In a predominately Hindu region with little resources for education, Syam became like a "traveling seminary," as Pastor Craig Smith, Missions Pastor at Northwoods Church in Peoria, Illinois says. During his visits to India, Pastor Craig saw how God nurtured Syam and Esther's missional efforts. "They'd see hundreds and hundreds of children weeping and responding to the good news of Jesus."

ZEC Ministries now sends volunteers to conduct VBS camps within churches they launched. To create a deeper, more relational connection, "rooftop Bible clubs" began. These regular meetings attract upwards of 50 children, so they meet on flat rooftops and study God's word.

"It's what helps them continue to sew seeds in their Christian life through participation in these clubs," says Pastor Craig.

Syam, Esther, and their sons, Judah and Jesse, who are also going into ministry, will be at the FEC conference this month on July 27th and 28th in Fort Wayne, Indiana. We praise God for how he has used generational discipleship in both ZEC Ministries and Syam and Esther's family.

