

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



FEC President Shares Key Takeaway from ILLUMINE Conference

In July, over 70 churches were represented at this year's FEC conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Nearly 300 ministry leaders and their spouses gathered for two days of fellowship, prayer, reflection, and renewal. FEC President, Rocky Rocholl, left feeling energized, empowered, and encouraged by the time together. "With our theme of being light, we left knowing that we are not as powerless as we often feel. We are a small fellowship of churches, but we have the light of Jesus Christ and that light is powerful."

A key word Rocky connects with this year's conference is "unity." The body of Christ was represented at the conference with greater diversity than he's ever seen in his time with the FEC - diverse in age, nationality, ethnicity, language, and culture, yet deeply unified as one family. As the fellowship plans out the next few years, our hope is to continue to see more diversity and to raise up the next generation of leaders. "Fifty-seven percent of our churches

are being led by pastors who are 42 or less," Rocky says. Seeing the energy in the conference room as leaders, both young and old, gathered together, makes Rocky more excited than ever.

A brief walk around the conference room would also show how God has grown the fellowship into a more culturally diverse family. In the last five years, the FEC has welcomed Arabic, Hispanic, and Burmese churches, and Rocky says this is just the start. "We've been around over 150 years," Rocky says, "but I truly believe our best days are ahead of us."

It all comes back to the light. "We need to embrace the truth that light overcomes the darkness," says Rocky. "Jesus Christ is the light that we carry. We should feel empowered by that." With all the division and turmoil around us, we may think we can't overcome it, but all we need to do is live like Christ called us to. He will do the rest.

Get the latest news and stories in your inbox!
Join the FEC e-news list: fecministries.org/enews

FELLOWSHIP NEWS



FEC President Shares Key Takeaway from ILLUMINE Conference

In July, over 70 churches were represented at this year's FEC conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Nearly 300 ministry leaders and their spouses gathered for two days of fellowship, prayer, reflection, and renewal. FEC President, Rocky Rocholl, left feeling energized, empowered, and encouraged by the time together. "With our theme of being light, we left knowing that we are not as powerless as we often feel. We are a small fellowship of churches, but we have the light of Jesus Christ and that light is powerful."

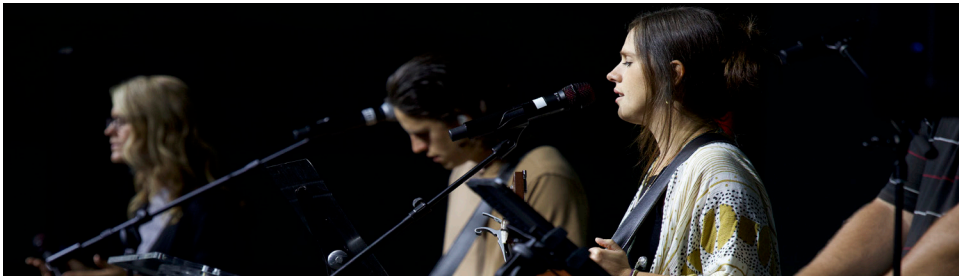
A key word Rocky connects with this year's conference is "unity." The body of Christ was represented at the conference with greater diversity than he's ever seen in his time with the FEC - diverse in age, nationality, ethnicity, language, and culture, yet deeply unified as one family. As the fellowship plans out the next few years, our hope is to continue to see more diversity and to raise up the next generation of leaders. "Fifty-seven percent of our churches

are being led by pastors who are 42 or less," Rocky says. Seeing the energy in the conference room as leaders, both young and old, gathered together, makes Rocky more excited than ever.

A brief walk around the conference room would also show how God has grown the fellowship into a more culturally diverse family. In the last five years, the FEC has welcomed Arabic, Hispanic, and Burmese churches, and Rocky says this is just the start. "We've been around over 150 years," Rocky says, "but I truly believe our best days are ahead of us."

It all comes back to the light. "We need to embrace the truth that light overcomes the darkness," says Rocky. "Jesus Christ is the light that we carry. We should feel empowered by that." With all the division and turmoil around us, we may think we can't overcome it, but all we need to do is live like Christ called us to. He will do the rest.

Get the latest news and stories in your inbox!
Join the FEC e-news list: fecministries.org/enews



Crossroads Worship Pastor Collaborates with Five FEC Churches to Lead Worship at ILLUMINE Conference

Kevin Boyers from Crossroads Evangelical Church in Wauseon, Ohio led worship at this summer's FEC Conference. This was his first time leading, but he knows firsthand the value of worshipping together with his fellow pastors after attending the 2022 FEC Conference in Denver. "It was awesome to be led since, as a worship leader, you don't get that opportunity much."

Despite how intimidating it felt to be asked to lead this year, Kevin experienced "leading a family." He grew especially close to his band, comprised of singers and musicians from five different FEC churches. "It was a cool way to meet other worship leaders. Everybody got it. Everybody knew what to do. It was not only the people's talent, but their heart was in it too."

During one worship session, the team felt the Spirit move, so they led the attendees in an impromptu time of prayer and reflection. Kevin found great encouragement when he saw seasoned pastors and leaders come forward to bow at the altar, surrendering their burdens into the Father's hands.

FEC conferences draw in a vast array of leaders and their spouses from across the United States and the globe. What Kevin saw during worship was unity, humility, and fellowship. "It reminds you that it's not about you. It was really cool to come together and acknowledge that Christ is the foundation of everybody's church." This conference gave everyone a chance to discuss ideas, express thoughts, and leave "with a new energy," said Kevin. It was, in a word, refreshing.

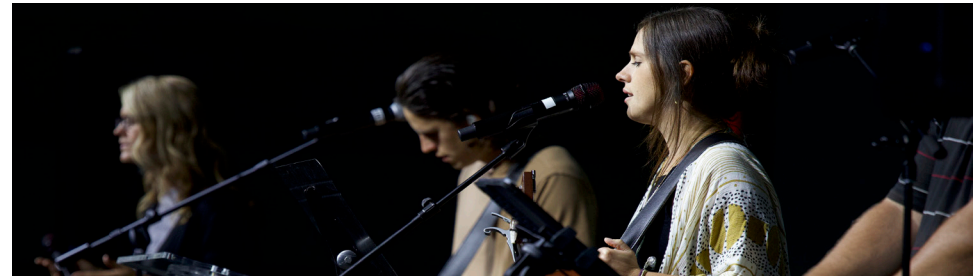
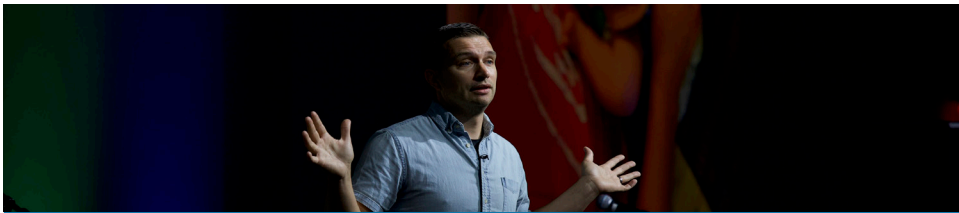
Keynote Speaker Caleb Barrows Highlights God's Mercy at FEC Conference

Pastor Caleb Barrows of King's Cross Church in Lyons, Kansas has attended FEC's annual leadership conference for years, but this year, he stepped into the role of keynote speaker for the first time. Humbled by the opportunity, Caleb set his aim to "speak some life to my brothers and sisters." He understands how much effort goes into building up others and how draining that can be. His keynote was a reminder that our ministries are through God's mercy, so therefore "we do not lose heart" (2 Corinthians 4:1).

The heart of Caleb's message was encouragement to keep connecting with God. It can be easy to give more time to ministry and less time to communion with God. But communion is what God is primarily after, Caleb says. "I really have to find joy in my day to day through abiding in Jesus. At my core, my identity can't be in ministry."

The message wasn't just for other leaders, however. As he preached, he knew God was telling him, "I need you to hear this, Caleb."

Being together with old and new friends, discussing common challenges, and encouraging one another made the conference feel like a family reunion. "There's a real joy in it." One connection was with a young man Caleb previously disciplined. This young man is now discipling someone else. "As we generate this kind of community, it makes me really excited to see what God is going to do in the next 10 years in the FEC."



Crossroads Worship Pastor Collaborates with Five FEC Churches to Lead Worship at ILLUMINE Conference

Kevin Boyers from Crossroads Evangelical Church in Wauseon, Ohio led worship at this summer's FEC Conference. This was his first time leading, but he knows firsthand the value of worshipping together with his fellow pastors after attending the 2022 FEC Conference in Denver. "It was awesome to be led since, as a worship leader, you don't get that opportunity much."

Despite how intimidating it felt to be asked to lead this year, Kevin experienced "leading a family." He grew especially close to his band, comprised of singers and musicians from five different FEC churches. "It was a cool way to meet other worship leaders. Everybody got it. Everybody knew what to do. It was not only the people's talent, but their heart was in it too."

During one worship session, the team felt the Spirit move, so they led the attendees in an impromptu time of prayer and reflection. Kevin found great encouragement when he saw seasoned pastors and leaders come forward to bow at the altar, surrendering their burdens into the Father's hands.

FEC conferences draw in a vast array of leaders and their spouses from across the United States and the globe. What Kevin saw during worship was unity, humility, and fellowship. "It reminds you that it's not about you. It was really cool to come together and acknowledge that Christ is the foundation of everybody's church." This conference gave everyone a chance to discuss ideas, express thoughts, and leave "with a new energy," said Kevin. It was, in a word, refreshing.

Keynote Speaker Caleb Barrows Highlights God's Mercy at FEC Conference

Pastor Caleb Barrows of King's Cross Church in Lyons, Kansas has attended FEC's annual leadership conference for years, but this year, he stepped into the role of keynote speaker for the first time. Humbled by the opportunity, Caleb set his aim to "speak some life to my brothers and sisters." He understands how much effort goes into building up others and how draining that can be. His keynote was a reminder that our ministries are through God's mercy, so therefore "we do not lose heart" (2 Corinthians 4:1).

The heart of Caleb's message was encouragement to keep connecting with God. It can be easy to give more time to ministry and less time to communion with God. But communion is what God is primarily after, Caleb says. "I really have to find joy in my day to day through abiding in Jesus. At my core, my identity can't be in ministry."

The message wasn't just for other leaders, however. As he preached, he knew God was telling him, "I need you to hear this, Caleb."

Being together with old and new friends, discussing common challenges, and encouraging one another made the conference feel like a family reunion. "There's a real joy in it." One connection was with a young man Caleb previously disciplined. This young man is now discipling someone else. "As we generate this kind of community, it makes me really excited to see what God is going to do in the next 10 years in the FEC."

