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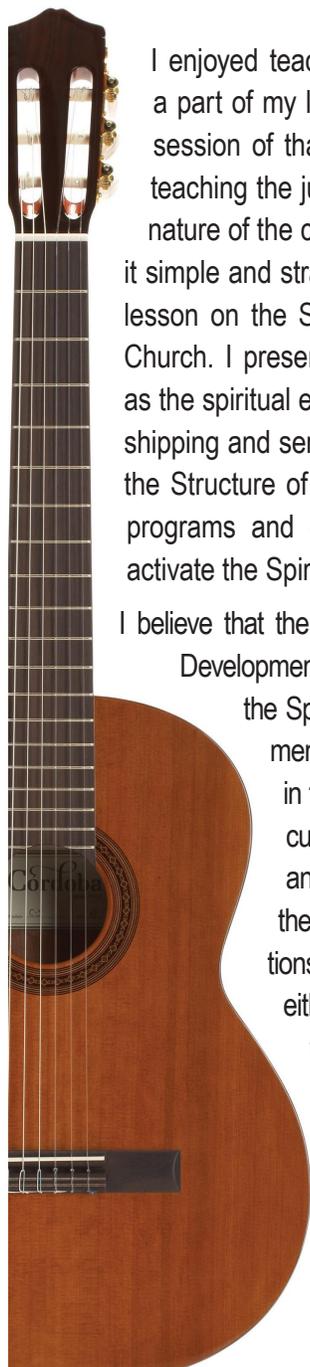
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## CM COMMENTS

# The Spirit and Structure of Church Development

By Conference Minister Ron Hamilton



I enjoyed teaching a Pastor's Class as a part of my local church ministry. One session of that Pastor's Class involved teaching the junior high youth about the nature of the church. In an effort to keep it simple and straightforward, I prepared a lesson on the Spirit and Structure of the Church. I presented the concept of Spirit as the spiritual energy and passion of worshipping and serving the Lord. In contrast, the Structure of the church related to the programs and organizational support to activate the Spirit of the church.

I believe that the CCCC ministry of Church Development is designed to strengthen the Spirit and the Structure of our member churches. One lesson in the *LifeFlow* curriculum focuses on the Static (structure) and Dynamic (spirit) nature of the church. The material cautions against an imbalance in either direction but also shares that perfect balance is not possible since it is so dependent on the work of the Holy Spirit. One of our mentors, Mike Perkinson, taught us that balancing the Static and the Dynamic is like tuning

the strings on a guitar that are so dependent on the conditions of the room.

The leaders of a healthy disciple-making church are constantly trusting God to fine tune their ministry. It takes both Spirit and Structure to live in obedience to Jesus as we "love God...love others...and, as we go, make disciples." This requires both a spiritual fervor and an organizational structure to move forward. A church that is imbalanced on either part cannot be effective. For example, churches can have a passion for reaching the next generation of children and youth. But, this cannot happen without devoted and trained leaders. While prayerfully presenting the needs of the next generation, a church also needs to have the leadership training in place to provide the support structure for this to happen. Healthy churches strategically work to involve their members in the ministry.

There is no perfect program for church development. However, the CCCC approach helps church leaders assess their ability to effectively serve Jesus in their community. The material guides members through the Spirit and Structure of practical church ministry and engages people in the process. Members of our team also walk alongside the church leaders to provide coaching on ways to fully implement a ministry that touches and changes the lives of people with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is hope that the Spirit and the Structure of our churches can be strengthened in a way that honors our Lord Jesus! ♦



## NE REGIONAL NEWS

# Church Development in the Northeast

By Terry Shanahan, NE Regional Minister

***Although a focus on development does not guarantee increased attendance it is as important for the hundred member church as it is for the fifteen hundred member church.***

*“Development n.*

1. Act of developing or being developed.”

Development of our existing churches is a necessary and ongoing process. It is very similar to our own sanctification process after experiencing conversion. Similar in that a church never arrives at a place of full or complete development any more than we arrive at a place of complete sanctification in this life.

The work of development is never a completed work, but ongoing for the life of the church. Whether a church is involved in a particular process such as the CCCC *LifeFlow* process, or involved in their own model of development, the goal is the same. In obedience to Christ, the church lives out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, and is committed to revitalizing their church by making healthy disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Northeast we have great testimonies of churches who were once unhealthy, but are now vibrant, healthy, disciple making churches. The East Franklin Union Church in East Franklin, VT sits in a community of less than thirteen hundred people. In recent memory they were a summer only church down to seven parishioners. They joined the CCCC two years ago as a year-round church with an average attendance of one hundred. This was not accomplished by bus loads of people moving to East Franklin, Vermont and looking for a church. This was accomplished by the people of God turning their hearts to Him and reaching their community for Christ.

Over a period of forty years, Free Christian Church in Andover, MA has grown from fifty or so parishioners to fifteen hundred folks worshipping at two campuses. They are in a continual process of developing their church. Every few years they have taken the Natural Church Development Survey to identify their strengths and weaknesses and work on areas of concern. Although a focus on development does not guarantee increased attendance, it is as important for the hundred member church as it is for the fifteen hundred member church.

One of our vibrant disciple-making churches in the Northeast is First Congregational Church in Barrington, NH. On a summer Sunday after doing pulpit supply at this obviously alive church, I asked a random parishioner at coffee hour if she could describe her church to me in just one sentence. She replied without hesitation, “We are a disciple-making church.” Oh, if all of our churches would say that!

Although testimonies exist in the Northeast of several revitalized churches, there are still many that are not engaged in an intentional process of development and disciple making. Whether churches are participating in *LifeFlow* or some other process, development is something that all churches need to be engaged in. It is not a question of knowing if your church is ready for development. It is a question of how do we begin and how do we continue to develop into the church that God has called us to be!

In His Joy, Terry ♦

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

# Developing the Church for a Greater Harvest

By John Kimball, Director of Church Development



The local church is Jesus' primary expression of his love, grace and truth to the world. When a local congregation is healthy, it actively serves the people of its community, intercedes powerfully for their needs, and lovingly shares God's Word (especially the gospel) so that hearts are aligned and the gentle rule and reign of Christ is extended. Just as the Christian life is a daily pursuit of purposeful engagement with the Savior on the individual level, so too "church life" is a continuous process of growth and change that leads to greater spiritual depth and a truly profound impact on the surrounding world.

The CCCC Church Development Team exists to help local pastors and churches foster ever-deepening spirituality and ever-increasing spiritual fruit for Christ's kingdom. We come alongside and help bring alignment in critical areas of ecclesiology, discipleship, leader development and direct engagement of the community through both intercession and evangelism. While the principles we apply are biblical and common to every church, the actual approach is unique to each congregation. Every local body develops its own vision and mission strategy based upon its own divine design and community needs and distinctives.

Beginning with just a Director in 2007 and adding three team members in 2008, the CCCC Church Development Team is now made up

of 15 co-laborers around the country and expanding every year. We continue to adapt our process over time to make it more local and to build critical relationships through clusters of pastors and churches in close geographical proximity. Our hope is that these clusters will be more focused on relationships and harvest engagement than on the task of teaching our process. Church development is not a program that can be completed, but is a way of church life that is continuously cultivated over time for an ever-expanding kingdom impact.

Could your church use a ministry shot in the arm? Are you seeing an increasing number of mature, Christ-like disciples being raised within your congregation? Is the gospel of Christ leading people to real salvation-encounters with Him on a regular basis through your church's ministry? Are your members actively serving out in the community to share the love and grace of Christ with those who desperately need Him? The CCCC Church Development Process can help in all these areas and more.

Would you like more information? Please call the Conference Office at (651) 739-1474 and let's talk about how the CCCC might come alongside your church for a more fruitful harvest. ♦

*Church development is not a program that can be completed, but is a way of church life that is continuously cultivated over time*



## CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

## Learn About *LifeFlow*: *Crossing, Peacemaking, Infusion (Part I)*



By **Tim Franklin**, Pastor, Congregational Church of Bridport, CT

Participation in the introductory workshop called **CROSSING** is the first step to learn more about the CCC *LifeFlow* Church Development process. The foundational concepts of *LifeFlow*,

including the Irreducible Core of loving God, loving others, and making disciples are presented. Participants explore the New Testament church paradigm and are challenged to consider how their church is like or unlike the church of the book of Acts. Investigating how Jesus taught and made disciples often leads to the discovery that Jesus' methods and priorities are different than ours, and we are challenged to consider ways in which we need to change.

After a Crossing workshop, many pastors and churches have questions and a growing dissatisfaction with the current state of their lives and ministry. When that is the case, the next step in the process is the **Vista Assessment**. A church development coach meets with the pastor and church leaders to develop a picture of the current state of the church through the Natural Church Development survey taken by the pastor and congregation. In separate instances, the pastor and Church leaders and influencers sit down with the coach for a wide-ranging interview. The coach compiles survey and interview information into a summary document which is then presented to the pastor and church leaders. The assessment identifies areas of strength and weakness and points to ways in which engaging in *LifeFlow* can help a church move forward in spiritual vitality, relational priority, and ministry fruitfulness. At this point the church is invited to officially enter into *LifeFlow*, committing themselves to a three to five year process of focused engagement with the Church Development Team with the goal of becoming a healthy, reproducing church.

As the Holy Spirit works in a church to bring health and wholeness, changes will be necessary. Changes are uncomfortable and can lead to conflict stemming from miscommunication, fear, or clashing values and priorities. Whatever the source, conflict

## Learn About *LifeFlow*: *Horizon, Pilgrimage, Journey, Engage (Part II)*



By **Dave Eisley**,  
Pastor, Community Baptist Church,  
Oshkosh, WI

Healthy churches have a firm grasp on God's unique call and placement in His harvest field.

The following modules of the *LifeFlow* process of Church Development help congregations to strengthen this "grasp" and grow in important aspects of church health by identifying Biblical concepts to learn and to apply.

**HORIZON:** What are your Values? Your Vision? Your Mission? These are much more than organizational buzzwords, they are absolutely essential to the work of Church Development! The Horizon Module of the *LifeFlow* process focuses on helping the local Church develop a plan to love God, love people and make disciples as you go, rooted in Biblical principles. Values are those measured, non-negotiable truths at the core of the life of the congregation. Vision is the unique view of God's preferred future for the life of the congregation going forward. Mission is derived from a congregation's core values and vision for that which the Lord wants to do through their ministry together. When prayerfully considered, these aid the church in building a structure and strategy by which to accomplish great things - in alignment with God's plan.

**PILGRIMAGE:** When we say we "make disciples", what does that really mean in the life of a local church? In the *LifeFlow* process, making disciples the way Jesus did is at the very center of what we want to help churches accomplish. In the Pilgrimage module, the Pastor and leadership of the local church are equipped to understand and to build a procedure for making individual disciples, and a process to implement Biblical disciple-making church wide, with the goal of seeing people come to maturity in Christ.

**JOURNEY:** Does your church have a plan to develop those who are to be the future leaders of the congregation? When mature disciples of Jesus are developing their walk with Him, many of them are ready and eager to take the "next step." The Journey module helps the local church to take these budding leaders, and

## AROUND THE CONFERENCE



## Not Your Average Revitalization

By Rev. Susan E. Moody, *Pastor, Chester Congregational Church, Chester, VT*

I was sitting at my desk in Boxford, MA the first time I ever heard of Chester, VT. I was telling Terry Shanahan that I was looking for a new job, and he said “Well, there’s this little church in Chester, VT looking for an interim...” Little did I know how much those few words would change my whole life! Five months later the Congregational Church of Chester, VT called me to be their interim pastor.

At that time, attendance averaged 12 people on a Sunday morning and the median age of those attending was about 70. This 240 year-old church, with a building that can seat 200, was struggling and wondering what God wanted for their future. Their former pastor had decided to retire and due to the attendance, they had been faced with a decision: close the church and use its assets to begin new works other places, or call an interim and wait for God to direct their future.

When we began our journey, the official Church Development process of the CCCC was not available to us, because the church was just too small. But we implemented some of the facets of revitalization, guided by John Kimball:

- We set about organizing physical spaces around the church. Emptying storage closets of remnants from “the good old days,” helped people understand the need to make room for the future God had in store.
- We reviewed the history of the church, and then joined together in corporate repentance, taking ownership and asking forgiveness for how sin had hindered the work of the Kingdom of God. It did not matter whether it was our sin or someone else’s, we simply repented.
- We studied Peacemaker by Ken Sande and lovingly confronted a church culture of non-confrontation. People have applied these principles in their businesses and families too, and the results have been amazing.
- We took the Natural Church Development survey. We expected it to emphasize our obstacles, but the results

actually showed that the Holy Spirit was actively at work here. The survey refocused and reenergized us.

- We studied the Irreducible Core of Christianity. As we looked at what it meant to love God, love others, and make disciples, we found opportunities to do Kingdom Work within the congregation and around town.

As a result of working hard and opening our hearts to God, a lot has happened in 3 years:

- 20-25 people now come each Sunday when we gather.
- We have started a prayer list and offer intercessory prayer ministry to the folks in town.
- 5 new members joined our membership.
- We baptized 3 adults this summer, the average age of whom was 75!
- We have financially supported a church planter with a major 3-year repeating gift.
- We have held Bible Studies both at church and at the Senior Circle Apartments.
- We have grown deeper in our individual relationships with God, and learned to listen to the Holy Spirit.
- We have become a true church family rather than just fellow pew-sitters.

And just recently the congregation voted to continue to pursue revitalization! We still need to grow stronger before we can officially enter the CCCC Church Development process, but God is already working in the deep places of people’s hearts.

It is amazing to see how much God has changed the spiritual DNA of the Congregational Church of Chester, VT and her people in the last three years. As we continue to focus on loving God, loving others, and making disciples, we wait with anticipation to see what God does next! ♦

*LIFEFLOW cont from pg 4*

from change is inevitable. As a result, the first module of *LifeFlow* is the PEACEMAKER SEMINAR. The entire congregation is encouraged to attend so that each member can be equipped to handle the everyday conflicts of their own lives as well as conflicts that arise in the church. Participants learn about the nature of conflict and are introduced to the principles of Biblical peacemaking. Churches are encouraged to continue to learn more about peacemaking and to develop their own peacemaker's covenant.

Once a culture of Biblical peacemaking begins to take root in the church, the next module is INFUSION. At this point the Church Development Coach helps the pastor and church leaders to start digging deeper into some of the ideas that were introduced in Crossing. Together they rediscover and dig into core New Testament concepts including church, disciple, community, kingdom, and gospel. Coming to a shared understanding of these terms lays the foundation for pastors, leaders, and church members to put these concepts into practice as the *LifeFlow* teaching begins to inform the way we live and love together. ♦

*LIFEFLOW (PART II) cont from pg 4*

continue their discipleship by focusing on the "fields that are ripe for harvest." Helping maturing disciples to understand who they are in Christ, how God has uniquely shaped them to serve Him, and what role the Lord is calling them to take responsibility for in His harvest field is central to this home-grown leadership development process.

ENGAGE: Why has God placed "your" church in its current location? What does the church do to reach out into the community? These questions have everything to do with the goal of the Church Development process! The Engage module, the last in the *LifeFlow* process, takes into consideration all of the Biblical principles taught and the unique local application of them to answer these questions. The aim of the church moves from not only those in the pews, but also to those who are "outside" and need Jesus. The congregation will truly see what God is doing in the community around them, and partner with Him to be instruments of His love and grace. And people are reached, become disciples, grow in Christian maturity, and reach still others for Christ, growing and multiplying His Church! ♦

## AROUND THE WORLD

# God at Work to Bring Healing

By **Eve K.**, *CCCC International Worker serving with Wycliffe in West Asia*

From September 19th to 24th, we held the next level of Scripture based trauma healing training I've talked so much about. Three of the facilitators flew in just for this training. The facilitators were one of the authors of the books we use, her good friend and coworker, my good friend from graduate school and coworker, and myself.

Over half of the participants were invited by new partners who speak the language Jesus spoke, and the majority language of the larger area.

The conference got off to a rough start ... [because the material was] challenging for the translators. However, the participants were generously gracious and everyone stuck with us to the end.

Thankfully, someone "just happened" to know a translator who recently finished his doctorate in linguistics and "just happened" to be available for the remainder of the conference time! His translation work and input improved the conference incredibly.

A few participants were forcibly displaced from their homes within the past year. Others are leaders of their congregations. Others work for Non Governmental Organizations. Helping to facilitate this group was a humbling honor.

Throughout, I was amazed by the participants' interest in and engagement with the materials, Scripture, and each other. Most of us in the training come from amazingly different backgrounds, many of which historically do not get along. We not only grew through friendly interaction but even joined together in singing in four different languages of very different styles.

Now, some of the participants (myself included) are hoping to facilitate more small groups focused on trauma healing. Until January, my main focus continues to be language learning. I am deeply thankful for continued growing friendships with the neighbor I mentioned and my other dear friends. Some conversations are increasingly challenging but I'm thankful for the ways I see God growing me. ♦

NEWS & UPDATES

# Seasons of Change

By **Kim Gardell,**

*Communication Coordinator*

You don't have to be involved in Church Development to experience change. It a constant in all of life. The beauty of the foliage this time of year reminds us that God intended change. Sometimes one season moves into another without much fanfare, but sometimes change needs to be acknowledged.



Rev. Ken McGarvey

The FORESEE is entering a season of change. Moving into the future, new things will be implemented while others will cease. Two familiar faces who have long and faithfully given their time and talents to write columns and produce this newsletter are no longer continuing in those capacities. Ken McGarvey has stepped down as Editor, and Betty Mitchell will no longer write the Health Updates.



Mrs. Betty Mitchell

We have been blessed by their diligent faithfulness over the many years that they have been a part of producing the FORESEE. We want to acknowledge and thank them for their good work, and prayerfully wish God's blessing and direction in "the good works He has prepared beforehand for [them] to walk in" as we all move ahead in a season of change. ♦

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome your contributions! If you have comments on what you read here, please e-mail them

to

*communication@cccusa.com.*

If you have other comments or articles you wish to contribute, including

"Something to Think About,"

please send them to the same e-mail address.

CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES

### PASTORAL CHANGES

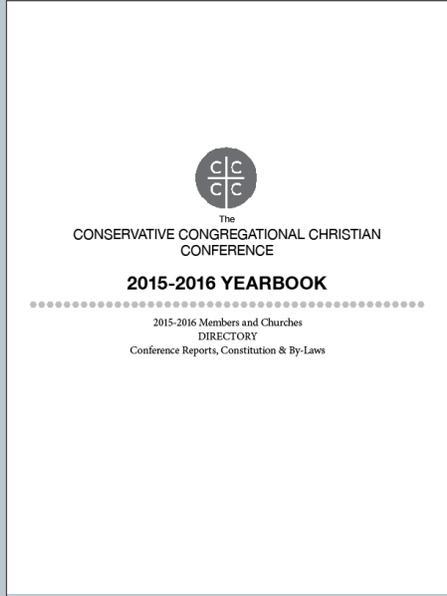
Cambridge, NY Coila Church \*  
Peter Bailey

### PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Bethune, CO Hope Congregational Church\*
- Flagler, CO First Congregational of Flagler-Arriba\*
- Greeley, CO St Paul's Congregational Church\*  
*(Part-time Associate Pastor)*
- Hudson, IA Community Church of Hudson\*
- Sherman, CT Sherman Congregational Church\*  
*(Part-time Youth Pastor)*
- Sulphur Springs, IN Sulphur Springs Christian\*  
*(Family Life Minister)*
- Beverly, MA Pilgrim Church\* *(Part-time)*
- Haverhill, MA West Congregational Church\*  
*(Senior Pastor)*
- Heath, MA Union Evangelical Church of Heath *(Part-time)*
- Kingston, MA Mayflower Congregational\*
- North Dighton, MA West Dighton Christian Church\*
- Taunton, MA Union Congregational Church\*
- Cook, MN Ashawa Chapel\* *(Part-time)*
- Eure, NC Eure Christian Church  
(Independent)
- Lakeview, NY Lakeview Community Church\*
- Middletown, NY First Congregational Church\*  
*(Part-time)*
- Lima, OH First Evangelical & Reformed Church\*
- Coventry, RI Church of the Apostles\*
- Suffolk, VA Cyprus Chapel Christian Church\*
- Jericho Center, VT Jericho Congregational Church\*
- Cheney, WA Cheney Community Church  
(Independent) *(Part-time)*
- Wilton, WI Faith Congregational Church\*

\* = Conference member  
+ = In process

# These Resources Available at [www.ccccusa.com](http://www.ccccusa.com)



To find these and other resources, go to [www.ccccusa.com](http://www.ccccusa.com) and click on the RESOURCES tab.

- CCC 2015-2016 Yearbook- August
- Note: This file is protected, CCC members please refer to the September mailing for the password.)
- Monday Prayer Guide- Self-print: Color or B&W
- World Relief Syrian Refugee Crisis Bulletin Insert



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