



Fruits of our Faith

A Beacon for Renewal



Providing assistance for church development is one service of the NACCC's

Congregational Church Development (CCD) division. A new church in Bonita Springs, Florida – the Lighthouse Fellowship Congregational Church – is a recent recipient of a \$7,000 CCD grant for church renewal. This new church also has received financial and moral support from two nearby NACCC churches: First Congregational Church of Naples and First Congregational Church of Cape Coral.

This new church, an outgrowth of a Bible Study Group, was founded as the Lighthouse Fellowship Chapel in 2008. Their part-time pastor, Rev. Dennis Wilson, works full-time as a hospice chaplain. They joined the NACCC, along

with six other churches, at the 2011 Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona.

In addition to their Bible Study, the church has a Young Adult and College Ministry and Prayer Shawl Ministry.

They also support local, national and international missions.

Locally, they have participated with the Cape Coral church in sponsoring a concert, and for the past two years, have shared a Maundy Thursday service with the Naples church. This year's service was in the form of a drama entitled *The Last Supper*, a Living Portrait, based on the Leonardo da Vinci painting, and received local newspaper coverage.



Rev. Wilson

The church is located in an area that has a mixture of retirees from northern states, business professionals, tourists and a growing Hispanic population. Its summer congregation of 25-30 members grows to 35-45 when the "snowbirds" return in winter. Because many of their local communities are "gated", they have little opportunity for door-to-door outreach. The church's CCD grant will enable them to spread their good news through direct mail promotions that reach the retiring baby boomers now entering their community.

This closely-knit church family currently worships on Sundays at the Bonita Springs Lions Club, where they rent one room. Their space



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NACCC's Congregational Church Development (CCD) division supports church growth through partnerships with clergy and lay leaders, as well as state and regional associations. In

this issue of *Fruits of Our Faith*, you will learn how one of our new member churches is undergoing renewal and revisit a CCD revitalization project in Nebraska that was previously featured in the

September 2009 issue of this newsletter. To learn more about CCD projects, please visit our website at www.naccc.org.



Planting and Nurturing
Congregational Christian Churches

Congregational Church Development Supports Church Growth through:

- *New Church Planting*
- *Revitalization of Congregations*
- *Building & Renovation Projects*
- *Workshops & Training Resources*



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*Bringing together Congregational Christian Churches
for mutual care and outreach to our world
in the name of Jesus Christ.*

Please visit us on the web at
www.naccc.org

*Congregational Church Development receives support from the Fund for Congregational Growth and Development, one of two initiatives funded by the NACCC's **Branching Out** campaign for church leadership and growth. To find out how you can help nurture the Fund for Congregational Growth and Development, please contact our Director of Development and Marketing, Crissy Zitka, at 800-262-1620 x20 or email czitka@naccc.org, or our Development and Marketing Assistant, Diana David, at 800-262-1620 x25 or email ddavid@naccc.org.*



"Congregational Church Development is pleased to provide resources and encouragement for church revitalization projects and church planting. Through strategic partnerships and continuing education, we strive to cultivate the vitality of the Congregational Way."

Mark Jurewicz, Chair

A Beacon for Renewal *(Continued)*

is limited, with no office, children's church, nursery or youth ministry. They envision moving to a more permanent facility with street visibility, but due to high real estate costs in the area, this is a longer-term goal.

Your prayers and support will help encourage the Lighthouse Fellowship Congregational Church grow and realize their vision.



The Lighthouse Fellowship Congregation

For more information about the Lighthouse Fellowship Congregational Church and how you can help, please visit their website at www.lighthousefcc.com.

Happy 140th Birthday!

A CCD project we previously featured – First Congregational Church of Ashland, Nebraska – is now observing her 140th birthday. This church, established by a group of eight under the direction of Rev. Asa Farwell in 1871, is now led by Pastor Abel Sisco. They began renewing their ministry two years ago with funding provided by a covenanted partnership between the NACCC and the Iowa/Nebraska Association. The congregation is holding multiple events to celebrate, starting with a reunion picnic in May,

from which three former attendees have returned. On August 3-5, the church hosted Vacation Bible School (VBS) for the second consecutive year, with a 50% attendance increase. Two outreach events for the greater Ashland community followed: a Saturday showing of the movie *Soul Surfer*, and a Sunday modern worship music concert with a cookout. In October, a festival with an outdoor neighborhood s'mores party in the backyard is planned to spread news of their life as a local church.

New Development Director

We are pleased to welcome Christina "Crissy" Zitka as our Director of Development and Marketing. Crissy brings over 15 years of nonprofit management and fundraising experience to the NACCC. Most recently, she served a faith-based organization as Director of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI), a \$45 million effort to end malaria



deaths in Africa by 2015. LMI is a pan-Lutheran partnership between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), Lutheran World Relief and the United Nations Foundation. Prior to LMI, Crissy was LMCS' Director of Missionary Support for World Mission outreach efforts. This program provided \$7.5 million in funding each year to more than 40 career and 80 long-term missionaries.