

## Recent Church Visits

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I really do love the opportunity to witness what God is doing through the Churches of God across the United States as well as the rest of the world. This week I thought I'd share from a couple of my most recent visits around the General Conference.

This past Sunday I visited the Movement Church (<http://www.movementfindlay.com>) here in Findlay for their one-year celebration. Pastor Eric and Kate Ferguson and their team have just done a tremendous job and I expect that God will continue to use Movement in exciting ways. Since I live in Findlay, I've watched as Movement has worked hard to love and serve the community and people of Findlay. It's a significant milestone for a new church plant to make it to their first birthday and it was a great celebration of what God has done both in and through the people and ministry of Movement Church over the past year.



A couple of weeks ago I traveled to Muncie, IN to celebrate with Urban Light Community Church (<http://www.urbanlightmuncie.com>) on their ten year celebration as a congregation. Pastor Andrew and Leslie Draper planted Urban Light along with a team of others back in 2005 with a goal of seeing people reconciled to God and to one another. This multi-cultural church has a dynamic ministry in south-central Muncie: lives have been transformed by the Good News of Jesus Christ, local leaders have been redeemed and raised up to serve Christ, and individuals have found freedom from addiction and brokenness through the ministry of Urban

Light. Their work reaches beyond the congregation with the Urban Light Christian Development Corporation (<http://www.urbanlightcdc.org>) and Inspire Academy: A School of Inquiry (<https://iasik12-et.schoolloop.com>).

The Sunday before that I had the honor of worshipping with the Middletown First Church of God (<http://www.middletowncog.org>) in Middletown, PA, which is led by Pastor Kimberly Shifler. This congregation is just a little older than the other two. It was planted by John Winebrenner out of a tent revival meeting that was held in 1827! It's one of the oldest congregations in the denomination. Middletown isn't basking in their memories or glories of the past – I was so encouraged by the tremendous ministry of the congregation. For several years now they have partnered with the Betesda Church of God, a Latino congregation, by allowing them to use building space for their worship

gathering and other activities. Their Wednesday Night Live program is reaching out and touching families and children throughout their community. The Bethel is adjacent to the Penn State University – Harrisburg Campus and I was so encouraged by the work this congregation is doing and planning to do to reach out to both foreign and domestic college students from that campus.



Three different congregations all at different points in their journeys: 1 year-old, 10 years-old and 188 years old; but all having fruitful ministry and seeing lives transformed by the Good News of Jesus. Here are a couple of the commonalities I noticed among the three different congregations:

1. They all have a heart for their local communities and are seeking to understand how their congregations can love their neighbors and be a blessing to those around them. In each of these congregations you can see that they are working to understand what's going on in their local community and what that requires of their ministries to be able to love and serve others in a relevant and meaningful way.
2. They all are future focused. A church that only has a year of memory or a decade of memory might not have as many challenges with this, but for a congregation that is nearly 200 years-old, this is a big deal! Each of these local congregations were pressing forward, looking to the future instead of just reveling in the past! May their tribe increase!
3. They all had a healthy sense of dissatisfaction. In each of these congregations, there was a sense of holy discontent or faith-filled anticipation of what God was wanting to accomplish in them and through them in the next year, ten years or one hundred and eighty-eight years. They aren't content to just rest on what's been accomplished thus far, but were pressing ahead, understanding that our Lord has more work for them to do!

My prayer today is that we would continue to see God work across the CGGC so that we would be faithful to the work he's called us to do --- through churches that are only one year-old or ten years-old or one hundred and eighty-eight years-old. Would you pray with me that God would continue to position us to bear fruit for his kingdom? Pray that the Lord would stir in us a holy dissatisfaction in the status quo, that he would burden our hearts for our neighbors who do not yet know him and position us to love and serve them, for their well-being and for the Glory of God!

Christ's Peace,

**Lance**

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## **Celina First Church of God Seeking Pastor**

**Celina First Church of God** is currently seeking a **Pastor** to continue leading the congregation into deeper Christ-centered relationships, loving evangelistic hearts, and passionate intentional outreach to make positive impacts on the local community.

The ideal candidate will have a seminary degree (or be working towards it), be biblically grounded, compassionate, and personable. Experience in the service as Pastor is required.

The church is located on a 12.36-acre campus in the city of Celina, Oh. Our 22,000 square foot facility, built in 1989, has undergone recent renovations and is debt free. Our 2014 average Sunday morning worship attendance was 159, and there is high potential for growth.

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in this ministry opportunity – or would like additional information – please contact us or send your resume to this address; [celinafirst.search@gmail.com](mailto:celinafirst.search@gmail.com) prior to October 30, 2015.



[www.celinafirst.com](http://www.celinafirst.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/CelinaFirstChurchofGod>

### ***Our Purpose***

***“Partnering with God to make more and better disciples.”***

### ***Our Vision***

***“We want to be a church who daily experiences Jesus, resulting in a divine empowerment that changes lives”***