

CHICAGO DISTRICT EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2008
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AGENTS FOR CHANGE by Earl Ferguson, Director of Mentoring

Have you noticed what has become the political equivalent to the Gregorian chant at this year's Democratic and Republican primary debates? Candidates from both parties have repeated it endlessly and their rallies throb with it. The word is **c-h-a-n-g-e**. As I listen, I come away with the impression that none of them know exactly what "change" looks like, they just know that the American electorate wants it and so they promise it.


Let me tell you about a group of people that **DO** know what change is about. It is those guys and gals out there on the front line. No, I'm not talking about Iraq. I'm talking about those who are out on the front lines for Jesus. I am talking about those who are establishing beach-heads of evangelism in Chicago and its suburbs. These men and women tirelessly and often at great sacrifice are reclaiming territory from the enemy. **They are leading people to Jesus, the greatest change agent I know. I am sure you already know who I am talking about. You are right, some of God's finest...our CDEA EVANGELISTS!**

Thanks for your faithful support of this ministry!

Love in Jesus....Dr. Earl Ferguson, CDEA Mentoring Ministry



Impact's mothers and babies at Christmas.

 **Impact Christian Church, Merrillville, IN**— What will the New Year bring? That question is an exciting one to think of as Impact Christian Church moves forward. God has blessed us in such a mighty and real way already and we anxiously anticipate what He is going to do in 2008. One of the amazing things happening at Impact Christian Church is the amount of babies being born. There was a segment in our Christmas program in which Cindy Brice (our nursery worker) **got up with all the babies and their mothers**. To see the amount of children we continue to have on Sunday mornings is truly a blessing. We have such a great children's ministry staff that is dedicated to helping these young ones know who Jesus is. **Steve Szoke—wrestlingminister@yahoo.com**

Common Ground Christian Community Church, Plymouth, IN— In November, Common Ground served more than 140 people from the community through our second annual Fall Feast Thanksgiving Dinner Outreach. This was more than double the number served the year before. In December, we held our third bi-lingual worship service with the Latino congregation that shares our facility. Over 150 Spanish and English speaking people celebrated the birth of Christ together on the Sunday before Christmas. The Bread of Life Food Pantry, which is now supported by several different congregations in Plymouth, continues to expand. **We served over 80 families through our first distribution in January**. We have also had several visitors over the past few months and three or four families appear close to choosing Common Ground as their home church. The mission of Common Ground is: **To Be and To Make Disciples of Jesus**. This will be our focus throughout 2008. **Nate Babcock—commongroundCDEA@yahoo.com**



 **Crossroads Christian Church, Joliet, IL**— For 2008 we are working for continued growth, both in spirit and in numbers. We are developing our ministry teams, empowering volunteers, launching community groups, and quickly running out of space. In fact, **we are already maximizing our current space, and we will need to launch a second worship service in the near future**. We have added Christine Murray to our staff to assist in various ministries and to man the front office. She has a children's ministry degree and a sweet spirit to boot!

We have built several partnerships with community organizations such as the Joliet Area Christian Cooperative, a home-school group of about 100 families that meets at Crossroads every Thursday and the Menta Group, which provides Christmas presents for 25 under-privileged families who live in downtown Joliet.

We celebrated the Holidays with a four-week sermon series called "Approaching Christmas," focusing on the idea that even Santa plays second-fiddle to the Savior. We hosted a grand Christmas feast on Dec. 9 with nearly 200 people attending, and we held a Christmas Eve Service by Candlelight with more than 225 people in attendance. It was quite an exciting Christmas celebration! **Matt Summers—matt@crossroadsofjoliet.org**

Adventure Christian Church, Bradley, IL One of the barriers conquered in 2007 was turning 4 years old. We all know the difficulties our new churches face regarding the first five years of life. This year was a turning point for Adventure in several ways. In August, we moved from our original planting point (Movies 10 in Bradley) to a state of the art facility in the fastest growing part of Bourbonnais. This move resulted in cutting our weekly worship rental expense in half. **Another victory is that we celebrated our 4th birthday with the largest offering in the history of our church.** This helped us take care of several of the moving expenses we incurred. After our move we saw a dramatic increase in attendance by 35% and our offering average increased bringing us closer to meeting our weekly need. One final victory is that our overall spending for the year came under what we anticipated while, at the same time, our projected income was about \$10,000 more than we expected. (This shows growth from the previous year, during a time when many churches across the country have experienced financial difficulties). These barriers that we've overcome are evidence to me that God is actively working through our church. **Andy Hamilton**



LifeBridge Christian Church, Valparaiso, IN—The air was a bitter cold that cut right through several layers of clothing. It blew the overnight snow into drifts that topped three feet in places. Churches called off services all around Valparaiso, IN – but not Life Bridge. The congregation wanted to brave the elements to participate in services. 95 people made it through the snow that day. Ice storms the two weeks before couldn't stop the 140 and 147 people who refused to let the elements stop them. Street construction, flooding, snow and ice all provided challenges for Life Bridge in November and December, but nothing could stop the power of God's Spirit working in and through His people. **God has built a solid church.** Now, His church is seeking His direction. As we begin growing again in numbers (186 & 205 in January), we desire to grow in health as well. We are embarking on a journey with God and one another. Natural Church Development (NCD) is processes that will help us evaluate the health of Life Bridge, and then implement the changes necessary to become a stronger, healthier community. As in all things, may this harvest bring Him Glory. **Pete Kersker**

SummitView Christian Church, Algonquin, IL- On Jan 20th, we met at Heineman Middle School for the last time. As we've talked, although the time or location of our young church family may be changing, the dream to bring a risk-taking, Spirit-led, reproducing church to McHenry County remains unchanged. We believe there is a refreshing and unique dynamic to who we are and the vision God has given us; that God will continue to reach unchurched people and help them find their way back to God. **Beginning Jan. 27th, we are adjusting our weekly schedule in a way that will enable us to best utilize the personnel and financial resources** currently available to SummitView as one church in two locations. Sunday morning services will be in Hoffman Estates with Algonquin meeting Sunday evening. Over the past weeks, we have been exploring alternate spaces to meet in the Algonquin area. We have been in discussion with a church (not far from Heineman School) that has expressed initial interest and openness to allowing us to use their building for a weekly service in the afternoon or early evening. Please pray for God's leading in this new direction. **Dave Rudin**



From the Church Planter's Blog

Sunday, a man showed up by himself. He had attended the Fire-Pro wrestling event the night before and was curious to come and check out the possibility of a wrestler, a preacher and a new church all being tied together. He walked slowly in the door and was greeted by several people. As one of the greeters that day I pointed him the direction of the coffee and cookies, to which he declined. With still a few minutes before worship would start, I watched as he went over and sat by himself toward the back. It appeared he didn't know anyone else already there, but had come strictly by himself. A few minutes later, he got up and walked back out to his car. I noticed him leave and couldn't make my way to him because of already talking to someone else. After worship had started, I noted that somehow this young man had re-entered the building and was seated again where I had seen him earlier. During the meet/greet time I went over and again greeted him, expressing concern that I thought he was leaving. He replied, "Oh, no, I just went to get my Mountain Dew. I wouldn't miss this."

NEW CDEA MAILING ADDRESS. The new mailing address for the CDEA will be:
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