

Maine church explores new works in nearby communities

Moss Brook Community has experienced steady growth in the past 3½ years, looks to establish network of FEC churches.

By Kristi Reimer, *FECConnections* editor

In South Paris, Maine, pastors Mike Booker and Tim Knowles call Moss Brook Community Church “FEC East.” And they’re only partly joking. Their dream is to establish a network of churches in that part of the country, and they’ve been praying toward this for years. With FEC’s support and God’s guidance, this vision could soon become a reality.

If Moss Brook is any indication, the communities of southwestern Maine are ready for this to happen, too. The church has been growing steadily for the last 3½ years (Sunday morning attendance is now at about 200), and the new people are mostly unchurched—or, as Mike Booker says, “de-churched.”

“There’s a whole segment of the community that has at one time gone to church,” Mike says, “but at some point something happened—they got burned, there was a scandal, or they thought it was irrelevant. So they said, ‘I’ve had it. I’m done with church.’”

When these people show up at Moss Brook, they find something very different from what they may have been used to at previous churches. For one, the atmosphere is casual. “There’s not a tie or skirt in the

place,” Mike says. Also, the pastors and worship leaders try to make everything they do relevant and intensely practical. This means staying away from “churchy” language.

“We talk about things like redemption and sanctification, but if we use those words, people don’t know what they mean,” Mike says. “Instead we talk about being connected to God, his desire to have a relationship with

us, what it means to walk with God and for him to influence our lives.”

Mike explains that people are often on edge when they walk into a church for the first time after not having attended for many years. “They don’t know if they’re going to fit in,” he says. “We try to make it clear that we’re normal,

we’re people, but we believe that a relationship with Christ helps us do life when we have struggles.”

The church meets in a high school auditorium. Besides the comfortable seating, nice stage and lighting and affordable rent, another advantage is that newcomers are familiar with the high school environment, which helps them feel more comfortable than they might in a traditional church building.



The children's ministry at Moss Brook Community Church in Maine has 20 to 30 kids participating per week.

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One indication of Moss Brook's vitality is the number of people who have been baptized. Last year, approximately 15 people were baptized, and another baptism is planned for this spring. When the weather is favorable, the service is held at a lakeside camp. Otherwise a local hotel owner lets the church use his indoor pool.

"Whenever we have a baptism, we tell people to invite anybody," Mike says. "There's a lot of whooping and hollering, clapping and cheering. We always have something afterward, like a potluck or a barbecue, and we explain as best we can what's going on if people have questions. We've had some good responses."



Moss Brook has made small groups a central part of its focus.

Another reflection of the church's growth has been the development of its children's ministry. Moss Brook Club House started two years ago and met one Sunday a month. The class encompassed kids ages 5 to 11—too big of an age span, leaders knew, but that's what the church could offer at the time. Soon they moved to two Sundays a month, and then three Sundays.

In February of this year, a couple of church members who wanted to reach older kids started Moss Brook Hangout, a ministry for 10- to 13-year-olds that meets three times a month during the adult service. Between the two groups, the ministry has 20 to 30 kids participating, depending on the week.

"Now we're talking about a preschool ministry for 4- and 5-year-olds," Mike says. "When folks come to me and say we need this or that, I say, 'OK, let's talk about it.' We don't force these things to happen; we wait until God brings us the people. And he has."

Moss Brook sets up all its ministries and service groups in teams: worship, sound and AV, nursery, hospitality table, drama and kids' ministries—everything is organized by a team of volunteers. "That way no one gets fried—hopefully," Mike says.

In fact, these teams can actually be outreach opportunities. "Obviously our teaching and worship teams have to consist of believers," he says, "but if someone who isn't necessarily a Christ-follower wants

to help unload a trailer, that's fine. It gives them a chance to be around believers and figure out what we're all about."

In keeping with their long-term vision, Mike and his longtime friend and fellow pastor Tim Knowles are exploring opportunities to plant churches in nearby communities. "We've had a desire from the beginning not to be one church but a network," Mike says. "And we've known that Tim, with his entrepreneurial nature and church-planting abilities, would eventually move on."


Right now the communities of Gardner and Rumford are the most likely possibilities for new churches: Tim and Mike have connected with small groups of Christians who are meeting regularly in each town. "We're praying and talking about the possibilities," Mike says. "It could be a year before anything develops. We just want to see where God's working and how he wants us to proceed. We might need to be ready to jump in with both feet—or we might need to wait and be patient."

Mike says that the support of FEC has been crucial in Moss Brook's own growth and the process of exploring the development of new churches. Scott Wagener, FEC's Director of Church Planting, visits several times a year, and other leaders have been free with time, resources and encouragement. "We're thankful for FEC," Mike says. "Everyone who's been in on the ground floor of this church knows that without them, we wouldn't be where we are now. When we came out here, we knew we didn't have any experience or wisdom. FEC has been that for us."

But ultimately, Mike says, it's not his work, or Tim's, or FEC's. It's God's. "It's what God wants to do, and if we can just stay out of the way and be used by him, we're grateful," he says. "People are coming to Christ. And that's what matters." ■

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*Mike Booker
Pastor, Moss Brook
Community Church*



acts 1:8
and you will be my witnesses...

Featuring:

Worship Service • Friday, August 3

Celebrate the goodness of our God and praise his holy name. Learn what it means to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

*Guest speaker: Brent Preston,
FEC Missionary, Ukraine*

- > prayer & worship
- > quizzing
- > delegate sessions
- > workshops
- > fellowship



Brent Preston is a missionary in Ukraine where he lives with his wife, Nicole, and their children: Steel (6), Stone (4), and Katie (1). Brent and Nicole are involved in church planting as well as training Russians in evangelism, discipling and church planting. He is originally from Sterling Evangelical Bible Church in Sterling, Kansas.

Join us at Convention
August 2-4, 2007
Northwoods Community Church
Peoria, Illinois

REGISTER NOW
FEC Convention 2007



fecministries.org

2007 Conve

A call to action

FEC's annual convention focuses on being Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.

In Acts 1:8 we are called to be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. But what exactly does that mean? Convention 2007 is a time to find out—and to take off and run with Vision 2020. God is already opening doors of opportunity for FEC at home and abroad, and this is your chance to find out how you can participate. We hope you will come to Northwoods Community Church in Peoria, Illinois, in August prepared for an exciting time of connection, growth, and fellowship. During our time together you will be called to action: to pray earnestly, to give generously and to help plan our course for the coming year.

*Ready to sign up for
Convention 2007?
You'll find the
registration form
on page 6.*

Friday Praise Service: Responding to the call

Brent Preston, an FEC missionary and church planter in Ukraine, will challenge our hearts to respond obediently to the Scripture of Acts 1:8. The service is an open invitation to take part in Christ's call to be witnesses for him. We invite you to come and worship. The service will conclude with communion, and a time of fellowship will follow.

Women's Luncheon: "Women in Missions"

On Saturday, come and hear some up close and personal vignettes by several of our own women who serve in International Ministries. Nicole Preston, Lynnette Hyde, Sandy Lugbill and Jill Jeran will share how Christ has touched their lives, and Jill Jeran will provide special music. The luncheon will start at 12:30 p.m. Childcare will be available for infants through age 5, and day camp for kindergartners through grade six. The cost is \$12 per person. A ticket must be purchased prior to the event on the registration form.

Concurrent Sessions

On Friday morning, sessions will be offered to help increase awareness of ministry within FEC. These

sessions will include these topics: Financial Planning and Pension by Denny Zimmerman, International Ministries by Earl Cecil, and Church Planting by Scott Wagoner. Make your selections on the registration form. This will help us to prepare for these sessions.

Men's Breakfast

Join the men of Northwoods for a breakfast on Saturday morning beginning at 7:40 a.m.—a time taken from 1 Chronicles 7:40. Be challenged to become a man of Asher. Brent Preston will be our guest speaker. Cost for the breakfast is \$7. Plan to attend and purchase your ticket now using the registration form.

Quizzing

Beginning on Thursday night and running through Saturday afternoon, FEC quiz teams will be competing for the title of junior high and senior high champion. Brackets listing the quizzes with the time and location will be posted in Quiz Central. Be sure to attend the competition and support the teams from your home church. Childcare is provided during Children's Ministry hours.

Day Camp

A day camp will be provided for children from kindergarten through grade 6 on Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$10 with lunch provided. The day camp will allow parents to attend delegate sessions, and mothers will be able to attend the women's luncheon.

Saturday Evening

The convention will close Saturday evening as we join Northwoods Community Church for its service. Rev. Cal Rychener will be speaking Saturday night and Sunday.

Sunday

You are invited and encouraged to attend a local FEC church in the area. There are several FEC churches in central Illinois who welcome your attendance. This is a great opportunity for you to learn more about a sister church in FEC. A list of churches in the area and the times of service will be included in your registration packet. ■

Fellowship of Evangelical Churches Convention Schedule

Thursday, August 2

3–8 p.m.	Registration
5 p.m.	Quizmasters Meeting
5:45–8 p.m.	Children's Ministry (<i>infant through grade 6</i>)
6–8 p.m.	FEC Ministers' Association Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Meeting for quiz coaches and teams
7 p.m.	Quizzing
8:30 p.m.	Tour of Northwoods Community Church

Friday, August 3

8 a.m.–noon	FEC Board of Elders meeting
8 a.m.–7 p.m.	Registration
8:30 a.m.–noon	Quizzing
9 a.m.	Prayer Room
9:30–11:45 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions
Noon	Lunch (<i>included with registration</i>)
1–5 p.m.	Quizzing
1–5:30 p.m.	Delegate Sessions I and II
1–5:30 p.m.	Children's Ministry (<i>infant through grade 6</i>)
5:15 p.m.	Dinner Buffet (<i>included with registration</i>)
6:45–8:30 p.m.	Children's Ministry (<i>infant through grade 6</i>)
7–8:30 p.m.	Worship and Communion—Brent Preston
8:30 p.m.	Social (<i>included with registration</i>)

Saturday, August 4

7:40–9 a.m.	Men's Prayer Breakfast (<i>purchased ticket required</i>)
8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	Registration
9 a.m.	Prayer Room
9–11:45 a.m.	Quizzing
9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.	Day camp for kindergarten through grade 6 (<i>purchased ticket required</i>)
9:45–11:45 a.m.	Delegate Session III
Noon	Optional lunch for those not attending the Women's Luncheon (<i>purchased ticket required</i>)
12:15–2:30 p.m.	Children's Ministry (<i>infant through age 5</i>)
12:30–2:30 p.m.	Women's Luncheon—"Women in Missions" (<i>purchased ticket required</i>)
2:30 p.m.	Quiz Finals (<i>awards program to follow immediately</i>)
6–7:10 p.m.	Children's Ministry (<i>infant through grade 6</i>)
6–7:10 p.m.	Northwoods Worship Service
7:30 p.m.	Dinner for General Board, Board of Elders, and FEC staff

Sunday, August 5

Please join one of our FEC churches. A listing of area churches and times of service will be included in your convention packet.

You will be
my witnesses
in Jerusalem,
and in all
Judea and
Samaría,
and to the
ends of
the earth.

~ Acts 1:8 ~

2007 FEC Convention Registration

Step 1 Basic Registration

Last name: _____ First name: _____

Spouse's name (if attending): _____

Name, age, and grade completed for child(ren) attending: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Work phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Church or organization: _____

In case of emergency, contact: _____

Phone: _____

Do you have any disabilities that require special accommodation? Yes No

Please describe specific needs: _____

Concurrent Sessions: Indicate the number of people planning to attend each session.

Friday, 9:30–10:30 a.m. Financial Planning/Pension _____

Friday, 10:45–11:45 a.m. International Ministries _____

Friday, 10:45–11:45 a.m. Church Planting _____

Step 2 Basic Registration Fees

Includes Friday's concurrent sessions, lunch, dinner, and evening social, and Friday and Saturday delegate sessions. Choose either family package or individual registration.

	Price	Quantity
Family value package	\$110	_____
Individual registration:		
• Adults (18 and older)	\$60	_____
• Teens (non-quizzers)	\$30	_____
• Children (age 6–12)	\$5	_____
Registration total	\$	_____

Step 3 Additional Costs

Tickets for activities (required prior to event)

	Price	Quantity
Men's Breakfast	\$7	_____
Day Camp (K–Grade 6, lunch)	\$10	_____
Saturday Women's Luncheon	\$12	_____
Saturday Lunch	\$7	_____

Additional ticket total \$ _____

Step 4 Fee Totals

Registration total

\$ _____

Additional ticket total

\$ _____

Total due to FEC

\$ _____

Make checks payable to FEC.

FEC Convention
will be held at
**Northwoods
Community Church**
10700 N. Allen Road
Peoria, IL 61615

Register by July 20, 2007 via:

Mail: 1420 Kerrway Court,
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Fax: (260) 420-1905

E-Mail: FECBonnie@aol.com

Web: www.fecministries.org

Cancellation Policy

Should you need to cancel, please contact us by telephone at (260) 423-3649 or fax at (260) 420-1905, visit our website at www.fecministries.org, or e-mail FECBonnie@aol.com **no later than July 27, 2007**. You will receive a refund, less \$25 per person.

Suggested Hotels

The following hotels have a block of rooms reserved at a special rate, but **you must register at the hotel of your choice by July 1 to get this rate**. Please contact the hotel directly to make your reservations.

AmericInn of Peoria

9106 N. Lindbergh Dr.
Peoria, IL 61615
(309) 692-9200

Jameson Inn & Suites

4112 N. Brandywine Drive
Peoria, IL 61614
(309) 685-2556

SpringHill Suites (Marriott)

2701 West Lake Ave.
Peoria, IL 61615
(309) 681-2700

Ramada Inn (Quizzers only)

4400 N. Brandywine Drive
Peoria, IL 61614
(309) 686-8000

Feel free to make copies of this form.

FEC Happenings

A changing of the guard

Jim Dinius retires as FEC Business Manager; Jonathan Hyde takes his place.

By Ron Habegger, FEC president

On January 31, 2007, Jim Dinius retired as FEC's Business Manager, a position in which he served for 16 years. On the same day, Jonathan Hyde became the next Business Manager, and a change of the guard was complete. We are grateful for the services of both men.

Ironically, when Jim first joined the team at the Resource Center, he hired Jonathan to mow the lawn. It reminds me of Joel 2:28: "Your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions." Is it possible that while Jonathan was mowing the lawn, Jim was dreaming of his retirement beside the pool, while Jonathan had visions of replacing Jim?

Jim joined FEC in 1991, after 27 successful years with Aetna Life Insurance. Upon his retirement from Aetna, we were fortunate that Jim's best years were ahead of him. During his FEC tenure, Jim provided

financial counsel, organized and automated our financial records, and made us a more efficient office. Whether he was installing a new computer system or changing light bulbs, Jim's approach to work was the same: He honored God by serving others.

Jim and his wife, Judy, live in Harlan, Indiana, where he plans to spend his retirement enjoying his woodworking craft and spending time with his grandchildren and family. Jim and Judy have two married children, John and Julie, and six grandchildren.

We welcome Jonathan, son of Harry and Lynnette Hyde. Jonathan is married to Abby and served the past 5½ years as youth pastor at Crossview Church in Grabill, Indiana. Jonathan and Abby are the parents of a 20-month-old daughter, Mackenzie, and a son to be born in May. Jonathan is working on an MBA from Taylor University. ■

China trip: A time of prayer and growth

By Marla Witzig, Grace Evangelical Church, Morton, Illinois

*"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands...Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."
Psalm 19:1, 4*

This verse came to life when I, along with five other college students and two adult leaders, traveled to Hong Kong and Southern China in late December to January 10. Our team's foremost goal was to see the Chinese culture in terms of social, economic, political, family and religious influences, including the role Christianity plays in daily life.

We absorbed as much of the Chinese culture as we could in the short time we were there. Walking the streets of the cities brought a greater awareness of the spiritual warfare in this country; almost every shop displayed an altar honoring ancestors or foreign gods. Visiting a temple in Hong Kong one day, we observed masses of people bringing gifts and performing ceremonial acts to praise false idols. The experience was sobering. I could not help but think of Old Testament stories where the people foolishly honored false gods instead of God. Our team took this experience as a chance to prayer-walk around the temple grounds.

Praying "onsite with insight" is the best way to define prayer-walking, and our team prayer-walked in many places while in China.

Another team goal was to see business as mission (BAM) in action. This unique evangelizing strategy involves running a successful business with the "behind-the-scenes" purpose of reaching unbelievers for Christ. An FEC worker served as our guide and introduced us to Soaring Glory, an awning factory he oversees as a BAM project. We met some of the Christians who worked at the factory or attended the Open Church (the only one in a city of over 250,000 people). To hear of the family pressures and societal obstacles they face because of their beliefs was disheartening, but seeing the joy on their faces because of Jesus Christ's love challenged and energized me to be a more active Christian.

China's population continues to skyrocket, and with that grows the number of people who need to hear the love of Jesus Christ. There is no language, culture, race or land where our Father's love cannot reach. Let us raise up believers who are faithful to the call to serve him worldwide as well as within our schools, workplaces and communities. ■



1420 Kerrway Court
Fort Wayne, IN 46805

President's Corner

Are we the real deal?



When John the Baptist was in prison and heard what Jesus was doing, he sent his disciples to Jesus to inquire, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" (Matthew 11:3). John wondered if Jesus was the real deal.

We live in a world where the real deal is becoming increasingly difficult to identify.

With generic drugs, designer clothing copies, and counterfeit goods, it's hard to recognize the original. We've even created an acceptable name for these products: "knock-offs." The *Asian Times* has reported that manufacturers are now producing cheap knockoffs so cleverly packaged that they're difficult to distinguish from the genuine article. Many of these counterfeits end up on the global market, and it can be impossible for distributors to tell whether they're receiving bootleg or bona fide products.

What about the church today? Are we the real deal in our communities and around the world, or should people expect someone else? I believe this question is worth looking into—for both churches and individuals.

When Jesus responded to John's disciples, he did not make any claims about his rightful position, his name, his birth, or even his baptism, in which John participated.

Rather, he said, "Go back and tell John what you hear and see; the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor" (Matthew 11:4). In making this claim, Jesus was doing more than quoting the prophet Isaiah. To be sure, his fulfillment of the words of the prophets is evidence of his authenticity; but more than that, his actions provide a picture of what the church should look like today. Every community, every town and village that Jesus entered was affected by his presence. Some people were healed, some received renewed physical life, and others received eternal life through the Son.

Without question, the church is the body of Christ. He is the head, and we are the real deal. But how does our community see us? Do they see us as exclusive, unwelcoming? Do they see us as a social group or club? Or do they see us as people dealing with real issues and finding real answers in the person of Jesus Christ? Are we serving our communities the way Christ served the villages he visited? My prayer is that we, the churches of FEC, penetrate and enlighten our communities with servants' hearts. Then we can say to unsaved neighbors and an unsaved world, "See and hear and know the real Messiah has come that you may have life and have it to the full."