

# FELLOWSHIP NEWS



## PASTORS FIND REST & RENEWAL AT MIRACLE CAMP

When a pastor feels depleted or discouraged, who does he turn to? Who pastors the pastor? In his book, *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry* (2012), Paul Tripp addresses the serious problems of isolation and identity that church leaders face. He writes, "There is a debilitating myth that is widely accepted across the evangelical church culture. It is that pastors, being knowledgeable and mature, do not need pastoring. The vast majority of church attenders assume that their pastors are spiritually healthy." Recognizing their own need for rest, pastors recently found an opportunity at Miracle Camp.

Last month, October 1-3, Miracle Camp in Lawton, Michigan, hosted 45 pastors. The 50-acre, wooded property and lake were the ideal setting for pastors to slow down and connect with one another. The Pastor's Retreat provided a way for Miracle Camp to fulfill its mission since it exists to invest in and serve local churches and their leaders. Tripp's book,

*Dangerous Calling*, provided inspiration for the retreat.

Beginning on Monday evening, Matt Boyers, senior pastor of Crossroads Evangelical Church, Wauseon, Ohio, reminded church leaders to find rest and refreshment in Jesus. Jonathan Farrell, senior pastor of Grace Church in Morton, Illinois, said, "For the last two years our pastoral team has found this to be a refreshing time away; we've appreciated the sessions, with Mike Drury last year and Matt Boyers this year, but we've also appreciated the short season of being away, with one another, and spending time with the Lord in the gorgeous setting that is Miracle Camp!"

Whether a pastor finds rest and support at a retreat like this one or elsewhere, churches should encourage their leaders to seek out opportunities to renew their love for Jesus and their calling. Paul Tripp emphasizes this need: "Pastors cannot give to others what they do not have themselves."



## Life Community Lives Out the Gospel in Maine

In a 2016, the Pew Research Center published a list that ranked U.S. states from the most religious to the least religious. Maine shared the bottom of the list with four other New England states. Life Community Church, a small but thriving community in Gardiner, Maine, remains undaunted by the statistics. FEC recently welcomed Life Community Church at the annual conference in August.

The church began ten years ago when a local businessman, Steve McGee, became a Christian and started a small group in his construction office. From that small group of men, Life Community Church began with the help of Pastor Tim Knowles at Moss Brook Church in South Paris, Maine. Small groups, called Life Groups, have been a cornerstone of their ministry. Ramsey Tripp began leading the church two years ago while maintaining his film and video production business full time.

Although the church meets on Sunday mornings, most ministry takes place throughout the week in Life Groups or in the community. Tripp says, "Ministry isn't an event, but rather, it's connecting with people and sharing life with them."

Life Community has used temporary facilities to meet for ten years. Recently, they found a permanent location and have been raising money to purchase it. Their goal is to raise an additional \$55,000 by December 1 to complete the purchase.

## 5 Tool Ministries: Reaching the Youth Sport Culture

Youth sports in America has become a big industry. In 2013, an ESPN article estimated that "21.47 million kids between 6 and 17" were involved in a sport. A large percentage of those kids played on a club team that traveled during the summer or on weekends. When Jason Rains's son began playing on a baseball travel team, he saw an opportunity to reach out to families in that group. In 2016, Rains, the pastor of Grace Crossing in Moundridge, Kansas, started 5 Tool Ministries, an online community that reaches out to athletes and their families.

5 Tool Ministries equips athletes for a successful life in five important areas: confidence, composure, character, chemistry, and courage. Jason knows that young athletes are dealing with pressure to perform and temptation, and he said, "I want to breath faith and positive thinking into those places." Athletes and families can access Jason's messages during traditional worship times or whenever they are available to watch it on Facebook or at [www.fivetoolministries.com](http://www.fivetoolministries.com).

Even though his son is no longer on a club team, former teammates have reached out to him for advice, and he baptized his son's coach. In the last two years, the online community has grown to 500 views each week including college athletes, doctors, nurses, and band members.

