

Growing churches today to bring generations alive in Christ tomorrow



FUNDING THE FUTURE

Each year, Christian Evangelistic Mission invests in church planting in several ways. We give annual salary support to the pastors who start new churches or new campus sites for healthy existing churches. We provide one-time gifts to church planting projects so they can get up and going. We invest in church residencies to train future pastors. Last, in partnership with Nexus and the Bonhoeffer Project, we provide scholarships to men and women to build a disciple-making plan for their ministry context.

While regular monthly gifts and one-time support to CEM throughout the year cover overall funding to complete our mission, the Harvest Offering funds go toward specific, time-bound projects for the upcoming year. Last year, the Harvest Offering topped \$75,000 and provided salary support for two new churches, three part-time residencies, and 13 Bonhoeffer Project scholarships for discipleship training. Wow! That's the direct impact of Harvest Offering donations last year!

This year's challenge is to go beyond our 2022 goal (\$75,000) and raise \$85,000 by the end of 2023. As of mid-November, donors have given nearly \$38,000 total, and we have another \$12,000 committed to the Harvest Offering to round out November. \$50,000 has been raised, praise God!

WILL YOU HELP US RAISE THE REMAINING \$35,000?

There are two ways to give to the Harvest Offering:

- BY CHECK – Please include “Harvest Offering” on your check memo line and send to:

Christian Evangelistic Mission
PO Box 1445
Ankeny, IA 50021

- ONLINE – Donations can be given online at cemchurchplanting.org/donate/harvest-offering

Funding the Future

\$85,000

FOR



PROJECTS FOR 2024:

\$36,000 for church planting projects (see article on pg. 3)

\$36,000 for three new church planter residencies

\$13,000 for Bonhoeffer Project Scholarships – 20 people in disciple-making intensive

EVENTS IN REVIEW



CATALYST

On November 3rd and 4th, CEM held their 5th Annual Catalyst Conference in Marion, Iowa. Guest speaker Guy Hammond equipped attendees with tools to bridge the gap between Christians and the LGBTQ community. Guy shared his own story of same-sex attraction and how God led him away from the homosexual lifestyle to follow Christ completely. He teaches Christian audiences how to instill compassion, grace, and biblical truth when communicating with others who experience same-sex attraction.

Guy explained pro-gay theology and compared it to what the bible teaches instead. He presented ways to respectfully and lovingly share our faith with same-sex attracted people. Parents and youth leaders learned how to guide kids through the confusion they may face at school and or social groups. Finally, Guy shared what ministry leaders need to know regarding transgenderism issues churches may face.

Our gracious hosts, Antioch Christian Church, welcomed people from across the state to their main campus and live-streamed the conference for those who lived further away. Five churches hosted the live stream for registered attendees; another 20+ individuals joined from their homes. We also had 30 pastors join

Guy Hammond for a special luncheon. **Thank you, Antioch, for your hospitality!**

In total, over 130 people were blessed by Guy Hammond's teaching! His content has spurred quality conversations among Iowa church leaders, and several churches have invited him back to Iowa.

The Hammonds have given CEM exclusive permission to share the conference recording with anyone who has registered, either past or future (fee is \$25/person). Please email Suzi Steele at suzi@cemchurchplanting.org to inquire and receive instructions.



CONNECT BANQUET

On Tuesday, September 12, 2023, over 85 CEM supporters gathered in Fort Dodge at Northfield Church of Christ to worship and celebrate God's goodness. Because a good celebration is incomplete without food, chicken cordon bleu sandwiches and cheesy potatoes were served with delicious local desserts to finish the meal. Connect Banquet attendees heard from CEM staff and board members, and everyone joined together in worship led by CEM's 2023 Church Planting Residents, Todd

Dempster, John Frerichs, and Nathan Lichter. Executive Director Chad Halbach shared a short message from 1 Kings 18:41-42 about God sending a powerful storm to a drought-filled region that produced a flood with large hail, or as we call it in Iowa, "golf-ball sized." CEM is expectantly watching the horizon, anticipating a "heavy rain" from God that will multiply disciple-making in our region's churches. We are excited to see how God will use CEM to grow His church and leaders this coming year. Join us in praying for God's excellent provision and consider how you can partner with CEM financially as we strive to bring generations alive in Christ tomorrow.

A REFLECTION



The Christmas decorations are going up at my house in Duncombe, Iowa. The lights and wreaths have been hung on the fence and around the eaves of the home with the timer set from dusk till dawn. A beautiful tree stands in the corner, the nativity set is displayed in the window, and the music of the season rings out from Alexa.

I love this time of year and all the reminders of the arrival of Christ. But my favorite thing about Christmas is attending a Christmas Eve candlelight service. Even after four decades of watching the light pass from person to person, I still marvel at the profound experience of seeing people's faces aglow with the amazing light of Christ.

As I look forward to that unique experience this year, I also think about the people who haven't yet experienced Christ's light. I dream of future individuals and families that will come to learn of Jesus through the 20 churches we will start over the next decade. We are on a mission at CEM to send 40 disciple-makers into 20 communities by 2033.

This year, we took our first steps in that direction as we recruited, trained, equipped, and sent three residents into our region's mission field. We also provided training through our discipleship initiative (Bonhoeffer Project) for 13 regional leaders. We are



poised to launch a new church in the first quarter of 2024 partnering with Connection Christian Church in Columbus, Nebraska. It has indeed been an excellent year for our work at CEM.

If you have contributed to CEM, I want to thank you on behalf of the thousands who will celebrate Christmas showered by the light of Christ. I also want to invite you to give generously during this season as we remember the birth of Jesus. With your support, we are growing churches today to bring generations alive in Christ tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Chad Halbach
CEM Executive Director

BONHOEFFER PROJECT RECAP

Christians generally agree that we are all to make disciples who follow Christ (Matt 28:18-20). However, the intention to make disciples requires a plan. If there is no plan, we don't really intend to do it. The Bonhoeffer Project helps each participant craft a biblically sound plan that fits their ministry context.

After a 10-month commitment to intensive study on disciple-making, eleven men and two women completed the Bonhoeffer Project in November 2023. The process includes studying the Gospels, reading three additional books, 30 hours of cohort training, monthly homework, and designing a disciple-making plan to be implemented in the participant's ministry context. The culminating result of CEM's first year

of cohorts means eleven churches will benefit from implementing these plans. The greater narrative of the Bonhoeffer Project is that every follower of Christ is making disciples who make disciples.

Are you interested in joining a Bonhoeffer Project Cohort?

Men's and women's cohorts will begin in March 2024. Please get in touch with Chad Halbach at (515) 297-4560 or email him at chad@cemchurchplanting.org if interested.





PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
IOWA CITY, IA
PERMIT NO. 200

PO Box 1445
Ankeny, IA 50021

Growing churches today to bring generations alive in Christ tomorrow

Merry Christmas

We pray you are blessed by God's presence this Christmas season. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope (Romans 15:13). We are grateful for your prayers and gifts on behalf of Christian Evangelistic Mission. Because of ongoing support, CEM is blessed to be starting our 67th year as a ministry nonprofit in 2024. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

