

ANNUAL REPORT

2011

Blending Progress with Tradition



INDIANAPOLIS CENTER FOR CONGREGATIONS

More than 15 years ago, the Indianapolis Center for Congregations began its work with the assumption that congregations can learn to address challenges and opportunities with just the right amount of help. The Center assists congregations in finding that help by connecting pastors, leaders, staff and laity to resources that advance their knowledge and skills. We facilitate this connection through grants, education events and resource conversations. The Center helps with almost every imaginable issue identified by congregations – youth ministry, community outreach, strategic planning, spirituality, leadership development and more.



Technology is always a prevalent issue for Indiana congregations, as their leaders strive to expand the ways these tools can serve their missions – blending progress with tradition. It is important that mission drives the use of technology, not the other way around. The Center looks for the best resources to facilitate this balance, whether it involves scripture software, social media tools, an overall technology plan, congregation management software, computer networking or any of the varied facets of this growing field for congregations.



To address this important topic, the Center for Congregations worked with central Indiana congregations through the Technology and Ministry Grants Initiative (TMGI) and began planning for a statewide TMGI. This initiative includes an educational component, coaching and financial support in the form of matching grants. TMGI helps participants learn more about technology and ministry, develop plans to address technology needs unique to their congregations, and receive assistance and financial support toward implementing their own technology plans.



Our work with congregations and technology was one of many advancements in 2011. The Center now has five offices throughout Indiana. The satellite office in Crown Point is the newest member of the Center team. The year 2011 saw a record number of education events and meetings hosted by the Center – 148 events, drawing a record 2,294 participants. Center staff had more than 7,500 conversations with Indiana congregations in 2011. We continue to work with our national affiliate, the Alban Institute, to share with others what we are learning from congregations statewide.

We are happy to be part of the lives of Indiana congregations. Strengthening these faith communities continues to be our mission, our passion and our work. We look back on 2011 with a sense of accomplishment, and we look forward to 2012 with a sense of anticipation of the good things that are to come.

Tim Shapiro

Tim Shapiro
Center President

Front cover photo is from Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis. The above photos are (from top) Progressive Baptist Church in Indianapolis, Covenant United Methodist Church in Fort Wayne and Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis



ENHANCING MINISTRY IMPACT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Teenage members of Progressive Baptist Church have the routine down to a science. Give them a few minutes, and they can clear the sanctuary of its 500-plus chairs, musical instruments and potted plants, and turn it into an expansive basketball court, complete with a backstop at either end. The flexibility of the space has served the Indianapolis congregation well since members erected the family life center a dozen years ago. A dedicated sanctuary was slated as the next major construction project, but the recession got in the way. "So we changed our thought process from 'Let's raise money to build something new' to 'let's improve what we already have,'" explains Marti Prather, the church business manager.



Progressive Baptist Church in Indianapolis

Topping the list of much-needed upgrades was an efficient sound system. "Depending on where you were seated, you might not hear the worship service," says Associate Pastor Benny Polin. "The ceiling speakers were in a cluster, and the sound was muffled." Members were so familiar with the acoustics problem that they knew which chairs to occupy and which to avoid on Sunday mornings. But what about visitors?

"One of my greatest fears was that someone might come for the first time and sit in the wrong spot," says Prather. "Why would they ever come back?" The pastoral staff shared her concerns and agreed enthusiastically when she recommended they pursue the opportunity to participate in the Center for Congregations' Technology and Ministry Grants Initiative (TMGI), announced last year. "I remember reading about the initiative in a newsletter and saying to Pastor [Michael] Jones, 'We have to do this!' It quickly became a priority for our church."

In creating TMGI, the Center revised and updated another successful initiative. Its first major grants initiative, offered in 2000, was called Computers and Ministry. "The name gives a hint at the difference between the two initiatives," explains Aaron Spiegel, the Center's information technology director. "We wanted to broaden the scope beyond computers because technology now affects everything from theatrical lighting to musical instruments to smart phones to heating and cooling systems. Congregations have embraced the reality that technology isn't a choice or a luxury anymore. It's a necessary tool of ministry."

Application for TMGI was open to congregations in eight Central Indiana counties. The Center's intent was to select 30 participants, but that number swelled to 33 because the field was so competitive and "the grant proposals were so good," according to Spiegel. Participants varied in size, faith tradition and geographic location, but one characteristic remained constant. "Every congregation came into the initiative saying, 'we want to do X-Y-Z,'" says Spiegel, "and they ended up doing X-Y-Z plus A-B-C." The three all-day educational sessions increased their knowledge of available technology and expanded their vision of how tech tools could support and streamline their ministries.

With guidance from a Center consultant, each congregational team prepared and fine-tuned its proposal and applied for a grant of up to \$30,000, which the congregation agreed to match. The Center's eventual payout was \$892,175, says Spiegel, but because several congregations more than matched the grant amounts, "the total investment in technology exceeded \$2 million."



Raising the matching funds was a challenge for some congregations and put their creativity to the test. As an example, Progressive Baptist Church decided to complete its sound-system upgrade in two phases to ease the financial burden on likely donors. A campaign called “Set Aside a Sacrifice” encouraged members to break a habit, forfeit a treat—a fast-food lunch, a midday latte, a weekend movie—and make a contribution instead. A poster, tacked to a wall in the worship area, depicted a thermometer inching upward toward the \$30,000 goal. The campaign’s tagline asked: “Progressive, Can You Hear Me Now?” Early feedback indicated the answer to the question was an enthusiastic “yes.”

“Even though we don’t have all the new speakers installed yet, people are saying, ‘Wow! We can hear you now, and we’re only halfway done!’” reports Prather. “They’re excited about the positive changes and look forward to seeing—and hearing—what’s next.”

BLENDING PROGRESS WITH TRADITION

Sound quality of a different type was the dilemma that prompted Congregation Beth-El Zedeck to apply for inclusion in TMGI. “We had a phone system that was so old that the receivers were no longer being produced,” explains Bonnie Craig, human resources and foundation coordinator at the Indianapolis synagogue. “If a handset went down, we had to try and find one that was refurbished. Replacing the entire system was such a significant expense that we didn’t feel we could do it without help from the Center.”

Participation in the Center’s educational sessions benefited Beth-El Zedeck’s tech team in two ways. First, “it was a wonderful networking opportunity,” says Craig. “I was able to talk with other congregations that had recently gone through a phone system change. They recommended vendors we should consider and told us about the problems they encountered along the way. It saved an enormous amount of time.”

colleagues that new phones were a good starting place... but much more was possible. Their sprawling facility, built in 1958, is home to a large and diverse congregation of 800 families. Some 200 youth attend the synagogue’s religious school, and 220 preschoolers—only half of them Jewish—are enrolled in its early childhood program. Fifty employees are spread throughout the building, adding to the internal and external communication challenge. Keeping in touch was no easy task.

“Our young members had been pushing us to take advantage of innovative technology,” says Rabbi Dennis Sasso. “They convinced us that people don’t send flyers and invitation by mail anymore; they send ‘e-vites.’ We learned that more members read our news on the Web than in the printed bulletin. With the help of the Center and some savvy people on our staff, we’ve significantly transformed the way we communicate our programs and activities and the way the synagogue does its business.”

In addition to a new phone system, the building now has wireless Internet access in areas where parents congregate

as they wait for their children to complete religious classes. A new security camera enables teachers in the education wing to remain in their classrooms and see who is at the outside door requesting admission. Sasso has use of a state-of-the-art projector when he leads adult education classes or makes presentations at board meetings, and staff members can access information about various employee benefits by simply logging onto an intranet site. To



Congregation Beth-El Zedeck in Indianapolis

no one’s surprise, the feedback on the new equipment and its capabilities has been overwhelmingly positive, a response that is in keeping with the synagogue’s long-held point of view.

“We like to describe ourselves as a congregation rooted in tradition but engaged in modernity,” says Sasso. “Our catchphrase is ‘tradition has a vote but not a veto.’ We don’t wait for the future to happen.”



Second, the interaction convinced Craig and her

As an interesting postscript to Beth-El Zedeck's foray into technology, the antiquated telephone system that set the project in motion is still in use, but not at the synagogue. Members of the tech team contacted Nancy Armstrong, their consultant at the Center, and asked for suggestions about donating the equipment. Armstrong put them in touch with a newsletter aimed at nonprofit agencies, and "we found an organization that was terribly excited to take our phone system," says Bonnie Craig.

COUNTDOWN TO WORSHIP

Covenant United Methodist Church in Fort Wayne sought help from the Center's northeast Indiana regional office when it embarked on an effort that Pastor Jack Scott describes as "bringing the church into the 21st century." Upgrading the sanctuary's technology was at the heart of the \$170,000 project, which also included carpeting and a fresh coat of paint. Motivation for the new lighting, sound system, projection equipment and multiple screens was a desire to expand church membership.

"We've been holding our own for a couple of years," explains John Kratzat, music director. "We wanted to approach a younger demographic with the kinds of things they expect in worship, especially if in the past they've attended a big nondenominational church that used a lot of technology. We certainly don't want to 'steal' members from other congregations, but we do want to appeal to the unchurched. When people move into the area and visit us, we want them to stay."

To accomplish that goal without alienating older members, the church conducts two traditional worship services on Sunday mornings, with a contemporary service wedged in between. The sermon remains the same, but everything else varies. "We're trying to put on two very different kinds of services," says Greg Krempel, hired this year to oversee the contemporary worship experience. "We need to cater to people who prefer a traditional style and those who want a more contemporary approach. We have to get across the same idea and accomplish it in a service that is only an hour long."

Kratzat agrees with his colleague's assessment and admits that a traditional worship service can become stagnant without the occasional addition of a new element. While technology may play a more obvious role in a contemporary setting, it also can enhance the familiar. "We try to stretch folks," he

says. "But we have to do it delicately...whether it's with a piece of music, the pastor's message or a video clip."

A resource grant from the Center gave a boost to the church's fundraising campaign that has benefited both worship experiences. For six weeks the congregation gathered in fellowship hall on Sunday mornings while the sanctuary underwent extensive renovation.

The 20-year-old speakers were replaced; bars of lights and new projectors were positioned on the ceiling; screens were placed at strategic points; and a control booth was equipped with a digital board that could be set one way for the traditional service and flipped another way for the contemporary version. Monitors outside the sanctuary now show a timer that gives a countdown to the start of the contemporary service: Five minutes until worship; four minutes...three minutes...

"To use the countdown timer before the traditional service would be like committing suicide," jokes Pastor Scott. "You learn what you can and can't do. I can't make traditionalists into contemporary folks; and I wouldn't want to. As a preacher, I always have to think of my audience." He says both Covenant audiences have given the recent improvements two thumbs up, and he agrees with them. "I've been pastoring for 28 years, and I think it's exciting suddenly to have all these tools available. Sometimes I wonder how we did ministry without them."



Covenant United Methodist Church in Fort Wayne



CENTER FOCUS 2011 ANNUAL REPORT STATISTICS

RESOURCE CONSULTING

CENTRAL

- 4437 Conversations in
- 603 Cases of which
- 306 are New Cases with
- 495 People representing
- 304 Congregations
- 41% were clergy
- 59% were laity

THE TOP ISSUES

Technology
Building
Leadership
Congregational Vitality
Youth Ministry

NORTHEAST

- 978 Conversations in
- 161 Cases of which
- 102 are New Cases with
- 147 People representing
- 97 Congregations
- 54% were clergy
- 46% were laity

THE TOP ISSUES

Technology
Building
Finance
Leadership
Youth Ministry

SOUTHWEST

- 998 Conversations in
- 125 Cases of which
- 94 are New Cases with
- 124 People representing
- 75 Congregations
- 48% were clergy
- 52% were laity

THE TOP ISSUES

Technology
Leadership
Finance
Outreach
Care Ministry

SOUTHEAST

- 1004 Conversations in
- 120 Cases of which
- 98 are New Cases with
- 111 People representing
- 66 Congregations
- 61% were clergy
- 39% were laity

THE TOP ISSUES

Congregational Vitality
Worship
Building
Leadership
Technology

NORTHWEST

- 287 Conversations in
- 43 Cases of which
- 23 are New Cases with
- 44 People representing
- 31 Congregations
- 68% were clergy
- 32% were laity

THE TOP ISSUES

Congregational Vitality
Technology
Finance
Building
Public Ministry

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

- 148 Educational Events and Meetings
- Including 46 held in Central Indiana
- 35 in the Northeast area
- 24 in the Southwest
- 22 in the Southeast
- and 21 in the Northwest
- 2294 People representing
- 1008 Congregations from
- 105 Faith Groups or Denominations

A Celebration of Giving
A Place of Welcome
A Practical Guide to Congregational Planning
Alban Institute Board of Directors
Archdiocese of Indianapolis meeting
Assessing Our Situation Luncheon Series
Auburn Ministerial Association
Brownstown Christian Church meetings
Brownstown Area Ministerial Association
Brownstown Nazarene leadership meeting
Calvary Lutheran Church, Indianapolis
Charting Our Direction Luncheon Series
Christ Apostolic Church meeting
Circle of Care
Columbus First Baptist planning meeting

Congregation Management Software Basics
Congregational Management
Congregations and Community
Congregations On-line
Developing Cultures of Generosity
Economic Challenges Facing Indiana Pastors
Effective Meetings in Your Congregation
Engaging in Faithful Ministry
Envisioning & Designing Faith Formation
Essentials of Church Finance
First Free Methodist Church
Flourishing Grants Follow-up Luncheon
Fort Wayne Rescue Mission board retreat
Fundraising Strategies in a Changing World
Hammond Clergy Call Out
How to Build The Band
ICC Board of Directors
Keys to Successful Fundraising
Leading Effective Meetings
Leading in Conflict
Lilly Endowment Evaluation Meeting
Marketing 101
Metro Ministries
Miami County Center Info Luncheon
North United Methodist Church staff meeting

NYI Council Planning Meetings
Olive Branch/Centenary Christian Church
Plymouth Congregation Staff Retreat
Quaker Life Advisory Committee
Resource Grant Information Sessions
Resourcing Congregations
Roanoke Seminary Retreat
Shaping a Theology of Giving
Social Media for Congregational Leaders
St. Joseph United Methodist staff meeting
St. Paul Lutheran council meeting
Staying on Track Luncheon Series
Sustainable Youth Ministry
SW Book Giveaway Open House
Technology and Ministry Grant Initiative
The Art of Being a Healing Presence
The River Christian Church
Transformative Philanthropy
Trends in Religious Giving
Understanding Generational Differences
Understanding Religious Giving
Unitarian Universalist Committee Meeting
United Churches of Christ Clergy Group
Vibrant Music and Worship
Youth Activities that Reach and Teach

GRANTS

- \$1,542,440 for
- 115 Grants of which
- 6 were Flourishing Congregations Grants totaling \$24,699
- 34 were Technology and Ministry Grants totaling \$892,175
- 75 were Resource Grants totaling \$625,566

GRANT RECIPIENTS

Abundant Harvest United Methodist Church, Avon Christian Church, Batesville Christian Church, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Bible Church of Indianapolis, Bloomington First Christian, Boggstown Presbyterian Church, Branchville United Methodist, Bremen United Methodist, Bridgeway Community Church, Calvary Christian Church, Calvary United Methodist Church, Carmel Lutheran Church, Carmel Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Central Presbyterian Church, Christ Community Church, Christian Park Reformed Church, Church at Mt. Gilead, College Park Church, Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, Covenant United Methodist Fort Wayne, Cross Lane Community Church, Crossroads Community Church, Cumberland First Baptist Church, Dale Presbyterian Church, Eagle Church, Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Epworth United Methodist Church, Evangelical United Church

of Christ, Fairlawn Presbyterian Church, Faith Church, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fall Creek Community Church, First Baptist Church of Columbus, First Presbyterian Church of Jasper, First Presbyterian Church of Jeffersonville, First Presbyterian Church of Scottsburg, First Unitarian Church of Hobart, First Wayne St. United Methodist Church, Fort Wayne Baptist Church, Fortville Christian Church, Freedom Church, Genesis Church, Griffith Lutheran Church, Harvest Bible Chapel Indy West, Hazel Dell Christian Church, Heartland Church, Heartland Church of the Nazarene, Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Iglesia Metodista Vida Nueva, Indiana Chin Baptist Church, Indianapolis Christian Fellowship, Indianapolis Grace Ethiopian Church, Indy Metro Church, Jamestown Christian Church, Life Journey Church, John Knox Presbyterian Church, King of Glory Lutheran Church, Korean Presbyterian Church, Messiah Lutheran Church, Mooresville Friends Meeting, Mt. Auburn United Methodist Church, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Nativity Catholic Church, New Hope Christian Church, New Hope Presbyterian Church, New Covenant Christian Center, New Direction Worship Center, New Life Church,

North Salem United Methodist Church, North United Methodist Church, Northside New Era Missionary Church, Old Bethel United Methodist Church, Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Progressive Missionary Baptist Church, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, Roberts Park United Methodist Church, Seerley Creek Christian Church, Sheridan United Methodist Church, Sherwood Oaks Christian Church, Sinai Synagogue South Bend, Southland Community Church, St. Anthony Catholic Church, St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, St. Francis-in-the-Field Episcopal Church, St. James Lutheran Church, St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church, St. John Lutheran Church of Kendallville, St. John Lutheran Church, St. Jude Catholic Church, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, St. Peter's United Church of Christ of Carmel, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, Traders Point Christian Church, Trinity Episcopal Church, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Unitarian Universalist Church, Unitarian Universalist Church of Evansville, Wilkinson Church of Christ, Woodburn Missionary Church, Zion United Church of Christ, Zionsville Presbyterian Church

Financial Report

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND ACTIVITIES

The following is a summary of the statement of financial position and the statement of activities of the Center as of December 31, 2011 and for the year then ended. This financial information was extracted from the audited financial statements of the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, Inc. It does not, however, include all disclosures normally associated with financial statements prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. The complete financial statements, including footnotes and the report of our auditors, BKD, LLP, are available for review upon request.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	ASSETS		2011	2010
	Cash and cash equivalents		\$ 1,078,797	\$ 5,399,869
	Prepaid expenses and other assets		21,380	34,469
	Investments		24,490,401	24,761,422
	Property and equipment		284,313	210,618
	Total assets		25,874,891	30,406,378
	LIABILITIES			
	Accounts payable		\$ 64,757	\$ 43,456
	Accrued expenses		88,111	74,360
	Total liabilities		152,868	117,816
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted		\$ 2,487,162	\$ 2,302,417	
Temporarily restricted		23,234,861	27,986,145	
Total net assets		25,722,023	30,288,562	
Total liabilities and net assets		\$ 25,874,891	\$ 30,406,378	

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	2011			2010			
		Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
	Revenues and other support						
	Contributions	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 8,747,612	\$ 8,747,612
	Return of grant funds	—	84,467	84,467	—	34,722	34,722
	Educational Events	58,071	—	58,071	35,498	—	35,498
	Investment income	184,745	—	184,745	279,394	—	279,394
		242,816	84,467	327,283	314,892	8,782,334	9,097,226
	Net assets released from restrictions	4,835,751	(4,835,751)	—	3,730,280	(3,730,280)	—
	Total revenues and other support	5,078,567	(4,751,284)	327,283	4,045,172	5,052,054	9,097,226
Expenses and losses							
Resource Consulting	517,283	—	517,283	500,224	—	500,224	
Resource Discovery and Dissemination	251,234	—	251,234	258,905	—	258,905	
Education	729,410	—	729,410	615,561	—	615,561	
Resource Grants	861,022	—	861,022	802,929	—	802,929	
Major Grant Initiative	1,007,909	—	1,007,909	126,394	—	126,394	
Congregational Learning and Evaluation	739,576	—	739,576	788,658	—	788,658	
Total program services	4,106,434	—	4,106,434	3,092,671	—	3,092,671	
Management and general	787,388	—	787,388	673,107	—	673,107	
Total expenses	4,893,822	—	4,893,822	3,765,778	—	3,765,778	
Change in net assets	184,745	(4,751,284)	(4,566,539)	279,394	5,052,054	5,331,448	
Net assets, beginning of year	2,302,417	27,986,145	30,288,562	2,023,023	22,934,091	24,957,114	
Net assets, end of year	\$2,487,162	\$ 23,234,861	\$ 25,722,023	\$2,302,417	\$ 27,986,145	\$ 30,288,562	





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MISSION

The mission of the Indianapolis Center for Congregations is to strengthen Indiana congregations by helping them find and use the best resources available to address the challenges and opportunities they identify – and then to share what we learn nationwide.

The Indianapolis Center for Congregations is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and is a supporting organization of the Alban Institute. Alban is a research, publishing, education and consulting organization based in Herndon, Virginia. Founded in 1974, Alban is an independent center of learning and leadership development with a focus on congregations.

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