

Overview:

Church association of six Free Churches in Lithuania

Name: Free Christian Church

Purpose: Mutual strengthening and encouragement, establishment of new churches, collaboration with mission

Denominational background: Combination of Baptist, Mennonite and Free- Evangelical Church

Historical background: Registered as a church association since 2003. Began church planting around the Reunification (time of Independence from the Soviet Union) in 1991 with the aid of missionaries from North America and Germany.

Structure of the churches: Pastor with a council of elders.

Average Membership of the individual churches: 35

Missions organizations that the church is working alongside:

EMM (Eastern Mennonite Missions) www.emm.org

MBMSI (Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services International) www.mbmsi.org

Kontaktmission www.kontaktmission.de

DMG (Deutsche Missionsgemeinschaft) www.dmgint.de

Free Christian Church in Lithuania

Parašė Diana Goss

Penktadienis, 27 Birželis 2008 01:00 - Atnaujinta Penktadienis, 27 Birželis 2008 23:29



Details:

The Church association (denomination) "Free Christian Church" in Lithuania is an aggregation or rather a consortium of currently (2008) seven free churches in Alytus, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Panevezys, Šiauliai, Šilute and Vilnius.

Most members of our church are people who came from Catholic or unchurched backgrounds to faith in Jesus Christ.

Missionaries from North America helped to built up the church association.

Since 2003 our Church association has been officially registered as a denomination.

Usually the churches have an employed pastor who leads the church together with the elders. Four out of six churches have a pastor with theological training.

Church Collaboration & Events:

Free Christian Church in Lithuania

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1.) Twice a year we organize a weekend away for our pastors where they can have prayer, Bible study and be refreshed. This weekend is planned for the beginning of May and in the beginning of December. This weekend is used to share thoughts, experiences, testimonies, prayer and mutual encouragement.

2.) We rent an area of land that is surrounded by a lake in order to have camps for summer. Each summer we offer camps for children, teenagers, young adults, families and a father and son camp.

3.) Every year for one weekend in October we invite all the women from the churches for a women's conference.



4.) Once a year all the churches come together for an annual conference, where we listen to the Word of God, sing together and have several seminars.

Also there are – often visually illustrated – updates about the current church-events.

5.) Since 2007 leaders of the association also facilitate the publishing of Christian books and writings:

The spark of flyer: "Faith and live" (11 themes)
"Celebrate discipleship" from Richard Foster

forthcoming:

"Contemporary Christian" from John Stott

"Knowing God" from James I. Packer

Structure and assembling of the churches:

The individual churches are autonomous. The association is guided by the leadership of pastors as well as other leading members of the churches. These leaders meet about six times a year. The administration committee consists of the leader of the over all leadership group and two other people.

Each individual church has representatives which are called delegates. There is one delegate for 20 members with in a church.

At least once a year the delegates meet together.

They elect the administration committee and a bishop, who holds a theologically advisory function for the pastors and churches, but no representative or hierarchical one. Also they decide the leadership circle in the delegate assembly about the admittance or exit of an individual church in or out of the association.

The delegate assembly listens to the annual report of the leader, the report of the bishop as well as the statement of the treasurer, and these respective persons are affirmed or released from their duties. The delegate assembly is responsible to recruit new leadership and to determine when a change of leadership is necessary.