



# Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

MAY 2019



## "What is NICE's Goal?"

At a recent Missionary Conference the question was asked, "So, what is NICE's goal? What is it you'd like to see accomplished when a Church is planted or helped?" I started to say, "Well, we'd like to see every church become an indigenous church." And then I thought, that word indigenous may not be fully understood; so I answered, "NICE would like to see every church become self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating."

When this is realized in a church there are adequate finances to meet the needs, there are godly men who provide servant leadership, and there is a committed body of believers who are being disciplined and are reaching out to their community and the world with the Gospel.



Coal Creek Church

A wonderful example of this is seen in the Coal Creek Church near Longview, WA. The church began in 1912 in the old schoolhouse. After years of decline, the keys to the church were given to a faithful, local farmer, Floyd Shulke, who ministered the Word to the few who gathered together. In 1968, Floyd Shulke contacted NICE asking for ministry help, and God led Jerry and Becky Coon to serve the church for 4 years. Then in 1972, Evert and Gloria Atkinson responded to God's call to pastor the church, little knowing they'd still be serving there 47 years later! As Church missionaries with NICE, the Atkinsons accepted the challenge of this country church. Evert recalled, "The church was unorganized, there were no members and



Jerry & Becky Coon

no Constitution, but as God brought people to Christ and they began to grow, we began to see God prosper Coal Creek Church." Gloria added, "We were so grateful when a parsonage was built next to the church, but even more grateful as the people began working together in



Evert & Gloria Atkinson, 1972 and Present

serving one another and reaching out with the Gospel of Christ."

God opened the door to Pastor Atkinson for a fruitful radio ministry, "Time In The Word" on KBAM Radio 1270 which continued for 30 years. "The church has become known throughout the Longview area as one which carefully teaches the Scriptures with a family-like atmosphere," stated one of the young men recently. There are godly, dedicated men who provide leadership to the Church, and several young people and families have been sent by the church to fields of Christian service around the world. This includes individuals who became NICE missionary church planters as well! "We've been so blessed through the Atkinson's ministry," exclaimed one of the Sunday school teachers, "we now have over 75 members!"

Yes, Coal Creek Church is an example of the goal of NICE being realized: adequate finances, servant leadership; and a committed body of believers!

There are, of course, challenges as any church continues to grow. Certainly your prayers and support of the Mission are a vital part of the on-going work of planting and establishing churches in the Northwest. What a thrill it is when the goal of becoming an indigenous ministry is realized ... with your partnership!

**So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.** I Corinthians 3:7