Building Community
As a cell-based church, Xenos focuses first and foremost on our home groups. The year 2000 at Xenos continued and expanded on the recent growth trend, with home groups leading the way. Fellowshipwide, home group attendance went up by 18 percent. This is a substantial improvement over last year’s 12 percent growth. At 18 percent growth, the home groups will double in size in about four years. This is the highest rate of growth for home groups in Xenos since 1987.

At the same time, adult and student central teachings grew at a lower rate of about 8 percent. This means a higher than ever percentage of our people are now in home groups. This year, Xenos attained an overall incorporation rate in adult Central Teachings of 87 percent of those attending a Central Teaching who also belong to a home group. Clearly, our earlier worries when moving into the building—that more people would come to Central Teachings, but fail to see the value of close, engaged fellowship, leading to a superficial, “Sunday only” church—are not materializing.

To accomplish this growth, we planted 12 new home groups, and recognized 63 new home group leaders. We also lost two home groups and six leaders. As a result, we now have 90 adult home groups and 357 home group leaders (college and up). Viewed differently, we now have around 300 cell groups from junior high through adult.

On the negative side, our high school and junior high ministries have run into serious trouble. The number of adult volunteers in these ministries declined at the same time the groups grew in number the last two years. As a result of lost leaders, the junior high ministry had to decline by three cell groups, even though their attendance in cell group rose by 30 students. High school also reduced by two cells and added one home church, but their attendance at home groups rose by 40 students!

The net result of these facts is that high school and junior high home groups are mushrooming in size, thus further stressing the leaders who remain and leading to ineffective ministry. These trends loom as a crisis, which the elders believe must be addressed this year. That is our top priority for 2001.

Already, our leadership has been busy working on this youth worker crisis. The “Adopt-a-Cell” program was rolled out to the college home churches and at the Open Servant Team Meeting in October. At time of writing, the college groups have adopted more than eight new cell groups in the high school ministry. Other groups are negotiating for adopting junior high cells. In addition, we are proposing three additional paid high school teams be funded by the Fiscal Support Team this year. Pray that God will help us come to the rescue of these fruitful ministries. If the church gets behind these programs, we may well see this serious crisis resolved early in the year!

In missions, our aggressive sending program continues. We anticipate that 16 adults will be raising funds during 2001. When they succeed, we will have 44 full-time missionaries on the field. To hasten this process, the elders are increasing the percent of missionary support raised within Xenos beginning in 2001 from 60 percent to 70 percent maximum.

The Elders would like to thank God for sending his blessing on our church by bringing a continual flow of non-Christians who are meeting Christ and being meaningfully discipled in home groups and rapidly expanding classes. We would like to thank the hundreds of committed Christian workers who have felt led to devote themselves to serving God alongside us, suffering privation, depression, and spiritual battering at times for the cause of Christ. We would like to thank our administrative staff for their leadership and self-effacing professionalism in the often-unpredictable push and pull of a growing, changing ministry. We would like to thank the Fiscal Support Team for your sacrificial giving, which accounts for 85 percent of our urgently needed funding, and which increased by an unprecedented 20 percent in 2000.

As all the members continue making their contribution, Christ’s body is truly being built up to “attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13) How exciting to imagine where God might take our vigorous ministry in the future!
The Administration and Operations Division provides administrative support, tools and facilities, helping focus the ministries conducted by our church staff and members.

Summary of 2000

Administration and Operations underpins all the great ministry done in this church—God has blessed us with fantastic resources to accomplish our support work. We’re learning that flexibility under changing conditions and responsiveness to opportunities are the norms for our support activities in this dynamic church.

Administration activities helped to focus our church resources. This key function strives to support the work of the elders and alleviate the burden of clerical work and mundane management functions in their daily activities. We have improved our recurring support of the elders as they strive to lead the church on God’s path. They were able to travel in the spring to look at the best practices in other churches, and delivered findings to the Servant Team at the spring retreat. Throughout the year, administration supported the lead pastors with sabbatical support and study materials.

What a great year of godly service we were able to be involved in as part of the work of Operations:

- Our on-going development of our Xenos database remained a major focus for Andy Ault. Andy has become a real expert in our “business,” helped by his own experiences as a home group leader and as a staff member for over six years. We freed more of Andy’s time by leveraging Andy Leedy’s technical and network expertise, and through the work of Judy Davis as our user support specialist. We oversaw development of a donor system for Urban Concern. The church, Urban Concern and Xenos Schools continued to reap the benefits of donated T-1 access to the Internet from UUNET, which really enhances our productivity.

- The unsung heroes of our financial stewardship and accounting programs—Alan Burkholder, Cate Gilbert and Scot Northrup—continued their service to our growing and increasingly complex church with great, albeit truly behind-the-scenes, effect.

- Our Technical Services staff, headed by Mark Grover, supported an ever-increasing list of events and users requiring sound and video systems. Jeremy Myers was a welcome addition to our support staff in this area. We also developed more volunteer and paid-per-event resources to provide support services for weddings and other events.

- Cathy Kaiser is the foundation of the service to staff, church members and visitors provided through our offices. Her work, along with the daily support of our reception staff anchored by Suzanne Fox, has created an environment reflecting the ethos we want to have.

- Dave Bucklew, our Facilities Plant Superintendent, oversaw a full year of facility-related projects. Dave and his crew provided weekly support for multiple uses of adult education, Xenos Schools, Sunday Oasis programs and many other events. We now have over 62 acres under management and about 73,800 square feet of facilities to oversee at our main site. We also oversee facility work at the Calumet facility in Clintonville.

- We assisted Urban Concern in completing a major addition to the house next to the playground on 13th Avenue in South Linden.

The Fiscal Support Team Retreat is always a big highlight of the year. This year the team approved a 2001 target budget of $4.88 million, pending the outcome of the pledge program.
Thanks to Derf Braun’s expert oversight and hard work, we facilitated the move of the Study Center to a more suitable long-term location in the Office and Study Center building. As part of this project, we added a wonderful (and highly functional) patio.

Building X opened for our first student meetings on January 2. You can read more about the effect of this new facility on our youth programs under the Student Ministry division.

The addition of Dan Pettit as Facility Manager at Calumet starting this school year improved our ability to provide daily service to the school.

We opened the Missions “Hudson House” for use by visitors and our own missionary teams. Dustin White led the charge in getting that house ready to occupy, and is working as the year ends on our next missions support house (located east of our main drive).

If you noticed the increased beauty of our property’s grounds and the consistency and quality of landscaping, you should thank our Grounds Manager, Dan Mayner.

Of course, there are many miscellaneous efforts we spear-headed, like locating a new site for the Fellowshipwide retreat, human resource support and follow-up, investigating many legal situations, initiating policies to safeguard our assets and legal status, acquiring furnishings for various uses and involvement in getting ready for the school year start. Operations is the division that other ministries look to for support in daily concerns.

Primary Goals for 2001

We are a “learning organization.” There are very few places we can look to as a model for how to support our work. Not many churches try to tackle what we do with the resources available to us. Our multiple uses of our facilities and the time frames of use are unique. We are incredibly technology-rich, constantly pressing the-envelope on what we do with systems.

The single largest potential consumption of resources for Operations in 2001 will be the planned addition to the lobby space at our Main Campus facility. As we leave 2000, we are receiving bids for contracts to start this project in March. Targeted completion is in the early fall, in time to support anticipated growth in Central Teachings. If we can achieve our projected budget, this project will consume Derf Braun full-time, and require high levels of support from several other division personnel.

We will still provide excellence in our support of other facility needs. We will complete another missions house and adjunct office space, along with additional enhancements to Building X and new office space for staff growth.

Technical Services staff will continue to enhance our systems at Building X, the office and auditorium and at Main Campus. We are initiating work with our bands to improve service and capabilities in our music ministry.

Our Information Systems staff will be challenged to support more growth in our church staff. A key on-going project is the support of exploding use of video as a communication media at meetings and on the Web. Our systems are constantly strained to meet the demands of this resource-intensive technology.

Consistent and timely service are the hallmarks of our Finance and Accounting department—they will provide excellent services and reporting to our leadership, staff and members. The efforts of the GIFT ministry team, headed by Tim McDaniel, will grow to keep pace with the needs of our growing and changing church population.

Because of all these challenges, we need lots of prayer for the work of our division. Our core services typically are only noticed when we come up short of expectations. We want to not only avoid this, but also make sure that our behind-the-scenes ministry proactively enhances the other ministries of our church.
Summary of 2000

Last year, post-college home groups saw a decline in first-time guests, so that concern became central to our 2000 goals. God demonstrated his power and grace as he used our church to introduce many new people—a substantial increase over last year—to his message of truth and love. For instance, our division’s home groups grew by almost 30 percent and adult central teachings grew by almost eight percent. We pray ardently that we never become inward-focused, remaining committed to God’s commission to share his free gift of salvation to all who ask for it.

The Community Festival (5,000 attending, and headed up by Christine Walker), and the Soccer Clinic (115 attending, and hosted by the three Columbus Crew players in our church), were examples of events we administrate in hopes that the Columbus community experiences some aspect of the love of God through us.

The Xenos Summer Institute is our annual conference committed to sharing our copious resources with Christians around the country and around the world. Jay Reilly’s External Relations’ department worked hard in promoting this conference, and we saw a 36 percent increase in attendance. Sadly, our non-Xenos attendees only increased by 8 percent, but we have plans to help change that.

The Communications department advanced substantially in their multi-pronged mission. Video productions delivered many excellent testimonies for our central teachings, demonstrating how the power of God transforms people’s lives. Our Web site (www.xenos.org) drew an amazing 105 percent increased attention this year, successfully continuing its intent of sharing our resources with other churches. We also began publication of the monthly Xenos News, which provides more centralized information of God’s work in our church.

The year gave us much to be grateful for—praise God!

Primary Goals for 2001

This year the elders have commissioned our division to:

- Develop a class devoted to answering questions of those investigating Christianity. This is a cooperative ministry with the Equipping Division.
- Pull out all the stops in promoting the Summer Institute to Christians who are not involved in Xenos.
- Hone our Web “gardening” process. Timely updates of out-of-date materials and improved graphics are a couple of key needs. Let us know if you see errors!
- Maintain home group efforts in sharing Christ and guide them in leadership development.

Kids heard how God impacted the lives of professional soccer players Rob Smith (left) and Mike Clark, as well as learned practical soccer skills at the Third Annual Xenos Soccer Clinic.
Summary of 2000

By any measure, 2000 has been an outstanding year for the Equipping Division. Enrollment in adult education classes continued to break records. 1,490 individuals took one or more classes during the 1999-2000 academic year, making Xenos the largest theological training center in Central Ohio!

To keep pace with growing enrollment, four new teachers were hired. Todd Fox and Lee Campbell joined the Christian Principles staff, and Cathy Faehnle and Mary Barnum began teaching Basic Christianity. They’ve all done a great job.

Last summer we introduced our new course catalog. This 22-page booklet provides a bird’s-eye view of our adult education program. Currently, Xenos offers 56 different courses on a regular basis taught by 44 instructors.

With the help of the Operations Division, we successfully moved the Study Center into the lower level of the Xenos office. The increased space gives us needed room to expand our collection. We also have conference rooms available for individual and group Bible study.

Traffic on the Crossroads Project Web site, our online apologetics ministry, rose 80 percent over the prior year. Visitors from around the world wrote to us expressing their interest in the dynamic content featured on our site.

Last July, world-renown scholar D.A. Carson and Erwin McManus, pastor of a multi-ethnic church in Los Angeles, joined us for the 2000 Xenos Summer Institute. Attendance was higher than ever and some guests were returning for the second or third time.

We also introduced students in Hermeneutics and Christian Principles Unit 3 to Jim Leffel’s new inductive study method. This fresh approach has generated renewed interest in inductive Bible study. In the long term, we believe that this new tool will improve the quality of home group teachings across the fellowship.

**Adult education continues to be a strong point of Xenos’ equipping ministry; class enrollment grew nine percent over 1999.**

**Primary Goals for 2001**

Our first priority in 2001 will be to prepare two candidates to teach Christian Servanthood and two more to teach Christian Principles. All fours hould be in the classroom by winter of 2002. Adequately staffing these important courses is a must if we want to maintain reasonable class sizes and quality instruction.

In 2001, we will also form a partnership with an accredited seminary, making it possible for people to earn a masters degree while studying at Xenos. This is an exciting new step for us! It will enhance our ability to train missionaries, equip future class teachers and prepare people to fill leadership roles in Xenos. To support study at the masters level, we will also beef up our collection of materials in the Study Center.

The theme of the 2001 Xenos Summer Institute will be “Christian Community in a Fragmented Culture.” We’ll focus on fostering vital Christian community through a growing network of home groups. Dale Galloway and Leith Anderson will be featured speakers. Galloway has years of experience in cell-based ministries like ours. While he was pastor, New Hope Community Church in Portland, Oregon, grew to a weekly attendance of 6,000 people, with 5,000 in home groups led by 500 volunteers. Leith Anderson is the senior pastor of Wooddale Church, a large congregation in the Minneapolis area. Anderson is known nationally as an expert in leadership development. In addition to the main speakers, we have invited pastors from cell-based churches in the Midwest to lead workshops on home group ministry strategies. Participants can look forward to a great exchange of ideas.
Summary of 2000

We are very thankful that God gave Xenos another fruitful year of ministry. Our church grew in nearly every area. We not only grew quantitatively, but there are clear indications we also grew qualitatively. Numerical growth is good, but growing without sacrificing quality is even better. Xenos Missions likewise grew quantitatively and qualitatively in 2000. Here is how:

- We now have over 1,800 prayer and financial supporters for our missionaries, up 20 percent.
- We sent the Taiwan Team; we now have 30 accredited missionaries serving in seven fields.
- 10 accredited missionaries are actively raising support so they can get to the field.
- Two families are being considered for ministry in Cambodia.
- We gave over $646,000 in 2000 to support our missionaries, up 77 percent.
- We gave over $452,000 in 2000 to support Urban Concern, up 18 percent.
- We added a second grade at Harambee Christian School.
- “Word in the Hood” (the adult home group in South Linden) and Urban Concern’s high school Bible studies increased in attendance by 49 percent (combined).
- Urban Concern’s junior and senior high cell groups increased in attendance by 8 percent.
- 65 people took missions classes this year, up eight percent.
- We now have 85 home group Missions Representatives (up 13 percent), 190 Missions Mobilizers, and 190 people interested in becoming missionaries (up 280 percent).
- We gave over $43,000 to foreign relief and development projects, up 5 percent.

Primary Goals for 2001

One of our primary objectives for 2001 is to get 10 missionaries (four for Northern Russia, six for Southeast Asia) ready to go to the field. These five couples are accredited and actively raising support. Our part in the preparation process is to round out their training; your part is to join us in supporting them financially and prayerfully. Take the initiative today to contact one of these couples and offer your support. For more information, call Mark Avers at 823-6510, x 150. Other Missions goals for 2001 include:

- Accredit and prepare four missionaries for service in Cambodia.
- Visit our missionaries in Southeast Asia and Brazil.
- Continue to support and promote the Youth for Christ and International Student ministries.
- Administer two short-term missions trips (Cambodia and Southeast Asia).
- Further enhance the development of future missionaries.
- Research and implement an integrated missions approach in Xenos classes, other teaching venues, and home groups.
- Provide financial support to a variety of relief and development projects around the world.
- Expand Harambee Christian School by adding a third-grade class.
- Facilitate quantitative and qualitative growth in the South Linden Bible studies.

It is great to see the way God uses our church so powerfully to help fulfill his great commission. Thank you for supporting missions so generously. We hope you are as excited about next year’s Missions Division goals as we are. We are confident God will continue to build upon the foundation he has laid, as we press ahead.

The Missions Division

exists to glorify God by mobilizing the resources entrusted to Xenos for the fulfillment of Christ’s commission to make disciples in all nations.

The Taiwan Team–Amy and Seann Gibson, Robb and Holly Branch, and Jennifer and Tim McCracken–began their lives as missionaries in the summer of 2000.

“There is no lack of heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.” (Galatians 6: 9,10)

Dave Merker,
Division Coordinator

There’s an amazing openness to hearing about God’s love and forgiveness in Cambodia. Xenos hopes to get a team there in 2001.
Summary of 2000

This has been the best year of home group growth that we’ve seen in a long time. Last year, we hoped to see a 10 percent increase in Pastoral home group attendance, but the Lord enabled us to exceed that—we grew by 18 percent.

More home groups have been planting and aspiring to plant than have in the last decade. Pastoral Division now oversees 72 home groups, and we saw nine new home groups birthed in 2000. One of these was an “inorganic plant”—meaning that it began with people who were not previously in the same home group. The vast majority of planting home groups have not been hurt by planting, but rather have grown since doing it.

Having a number of groups multiplying each year is a strong indicator that we’re accomplishing the commission we were given; namely, to reconcile people to Christ (2 Corinthians 5: 18-20), and make disciples (Matthew 28: 18-20). In order to plant a healthy home group, you must have these components occurring. We are sincerely grateful to the Lord for this growth, and to the many Christian men and women who are willing to do the hard work, character development and patiently trust God in order to help their groups plant.

Here are some other exciting developments in 2000:

- Home Group Connection received 555 inquiries for home group involvement from Central Teachings, and made 385 referrals of people to home groups.
- This year we welcomed Kevin Furno to our counseling staff, so we now have two full-time counselors to serve the needs of individuals and couples in Xenos.
- “Sexual Integrity” is the name of the newly accredited ministry team designed to help men overcome the habit of pornography.
- Support for spouses of substance abusers is now more concrete through class and discussion groups.
- The Servant Team grew by 54 new members, for a total of 654 deacons. This means effective discipleship and leadership training is happening on the home group level.
- Jeff Gordon and Danny Walker launched men’s challenge groups, which supportively address the spiritual and practical issues men leaders face.

Primary Goals for 2001

We hope to have nine new groups in 2001. The challenge to reach that number will be greater, since this year we are insisting on plurality of leadership for every home group with 15 or more people. In 2001, we hope to grow in home group attendance by 10 percent. In order to attain this goal, we will need increased home group oversight. This need is even greater, because we will bid adieu to Jeff Gordon as one of our overseers. Jeff will be pursuing more of a teaching role in the fellowship. Jeff has brought a wealth of insight, efficiency and spiritual verve to the department. Our new part-time home group consultants in 2001 are John McKewen (elder), Laura Gordon, and Kendall Triplett—all of whom bring very fine credentials as church planters and respected, seasoned Christian leaders. We have every confidence that they’ll do an excellent job overseeing and helping home groups. Elder Jody Kear will be starting a new oversight augmentation pilot program, similar to the old “sphere” meetings with a limited number of home groups.

We expect to see more people helped by the counseling department this year. There are also ideas afoot of starting up a ministry to those who struggle with homosexuality.

We expect approximately 40-50 more people to qualify for the Servant Team this coming year. The Servant Team will now meet only twice a year for regular meetings. The Fellowshipwide retreat will be gearing up this coming year at a new place—Hoover Y-Camp. It should be better than ever.
“So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty.” —James 2:12

Summary of 2000

Thanks to last year’s Fiscal Support Team vote and Jay Reilly, I was able to allocate more time to Quality Initiatives and new Communications department work by going to an every-other weekend schedule at Central Teachings.

In 2000, we made great strides in developing a common reporting structure of key results across the church. This improved the quality of information available at our planning retreat and made for better use of time by the Management Team and elders.

We created a common template for home group consultants and home group leaders to use in their oversight of home groups. This template also helps us evaluate home groups on an aggregate basis. In addition, it identifies the number of people in a given home group who are at various stages of spiritual development. This helps leaders to get a feel for the overall health and needs of the group. The stages include:

- Attending home group only
- Involved in additional cell group discipleship study
- Graduated from our Christian Principles course
- Membership on the Servant Team
- In home group leadership

For Xenos overall, this chart shows us that for continued growth it will be especially key to develop new leaders through discipleship work to prepare them for home group leadership and/or to join the Servant Team.

We also made strides in formulating survey instruments that can help assess the quality of our church. We completed a specialized survey for our college ministry to help us discern and address growth barriers to our campus Central Teaching.

Primary Goals for 2001

In 2001, most of my efforts will be focused on improving the quality of our Web site and overall communications within our church, including the development of our new monthly newspaper, the Xenos News.

We also hope to bring back a highly regarded church consultant, Carolyn Weese, to visit with the Elders and Management Team. Carolyn has been instrumental in helping us make strategic decisions in the past, and could help us talk through issues that will affect our direction for the next three to five years.

We plan to complete a leadership assessment survey which is being tested with a few pilot groups at this time. We will also work on streamlining reporting for the elders.

The Xenas News improves communication within the church and eliminates a surplus of mail.
Summary of 2000

From September 1999 to September 2000, our student ministries grew from 1,275 to 1,504 in weekly attendance. That means Oasis, junior high, high school and college ministries, in total, grew by 229 students or 18 percent. We thank God for this kind of growth. We also thank him for the dozens of salvations and the growing cell-based attendance. However, two issues have developed which could threaten this fruit: a shortage of adult workers in the junior high and high school groups, and inadequate leadership training. Take a look at the graph below depicting high school cell attendance verses the number of adult workers.

As you can see, our high school cell group attendance has increased by 45 percent over the last two years while our adult work force has dropped 20 percent! This can't continue. That's why the "Adopt-A-Cell" plan is so exciting. This plan allows adult cell groups to adopt specific student cell groups by sending some of their workers to student cell groups. “Adopt-A-Cell” will go a long way toward helping solve our worker shortages—we're already seeing the benefit in many student cell groups.

With leadership training, we want to give our college students more opportunities to teach and lead their own groups. So, this past year the elders endorsed a pilot plan that addresses this issue, while simultaneously providing more workers for the high school ministry. Here, we pay a team of college students to lead a high school home church. The college students teach, mentor, administrate, and help with outreach and follow up. All of this is done without any older adults doing the work! The high school home churches obtain the leaders they need while each team of college students gets on-the-job teaching and leadership experience. Thus far, we've mobilized one team, and they are experiencing a large measure of success. Each team costs money, but thankfully, the Fiscal Support Team voted in three more such teams. We hope this plan, along with the “Adopt-A-Cell” plan, will enable us to experience both quantitative and qualitative growth.

Other highlights from 2000

- “Melee” and “Explosion” (monthly outreach to fourth and fifth graders) attendance remained strong.
- Oasis added a Saturday night program to support the new adult Central Teaching.
- Xenos Schools posted high performance in SAT scores, and Harambee School showed great improvement.
- Junior High large meeting (Blow Out/JAM) attendance grew by 15 percent, while cell group attendance grew by 22 percent.
- Building X gave the high school group room to grow! Large meeting attendance grew by 25 percent, while cell group and home church attendance grew by 26 percent.
- College home churches grew by 60 students (27 percent), while planting two churches!

Primary Goals for 2001

- Develop a report that looks five-10 years ahead and estimates upcoming numbers of Xenos students, the friends they bring, and needed worker and space resources.
- Provide adequate training and support for the new “Adopt-A-Cell” workers.
- Adjust the volunteer worker time requirements for our children’s program (Oasis) in order to provide enough workers for the growing attendance.
- Assist our growing inner-city school (Harambee Christian School) by providing facility requirements and expansion options.
- Plant over 10 additional cell groups and home churches in the junior high and high school ministries. Mobilize over 100 high school students on five regional trips and two overseas trips (Indonesia and Ireland). Parents please note: only one trip per student!
- Increase college home church participation in its Central Teaching (participation from home church members has been too low). Also, plant two more home churches, thus bringing the total number of college home churches up to 11.

We ask for your prayers. Student ministry is like mission work, and it seems the field gets tougher each year. However, with your prayers and God’s grace, we can continue reaching non-Christian students for Christ while developing workers and leaders for his church.
In 2000, Xenos was blessed with another year of growth in the financial resources God has entrusted to us. However, we also experienced our first year of a deficit in contributions. An aggressive 20 percent plus budget increase vote by the Fiscal Support Team for 2000 proved unattainable. We fell short in collections by $170,000, or 4 percent of our total budget. At the same time, division coordinators met their goals in 2000 while spending under their budgets by over $140,000. So, the church remains financially blessed and stable, as cash reserves are adequate to cover requirements.

The December Fiscal Support Team retreat targeted an overall 2001 budget of just under $4.9 million. The following is a high-level summary of financial information for 2000 and 2001.

### 2000 and 2001 FST Approved Budget

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Our Vision:
Xenos has set out to build a highly-trained, sophisticated, caring, leadable, cohesive, committed and flexible work force of Christian servants who continually strive to serve the Lord and do his will.

We are committed to fostering spiritual growth by encouraging people to respond to God’s love through loving service toward God and all people. Specifically, we direct our resources to serving the family, the non-Christian community locally and internationally, and the broader Christian community.

Our Mission:
God has called on the church to cooperate with him as he reconciles the world to himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). Therefore, Xenos Christian Fellowship exists to help people learn how to draw close to God. This work begins by inviting people to receive the gift of forgiveness offered through Christ.
Xenos Christian Fellowship began in 1970 as a newspaper The Fish, printed in a boarding house by some Ohio State University students. It derived its name from the Greek word Icthus (fish), which was an acronym used by early Christians meaning “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, the Savior.” The Fish was dedicated to helping other students discover that Jesus Christ holds the key to humanity’s problems.

The boarding house, known as the Fish House because of its association with the paper, became a center for regular Bible studies. These meetings—referred to as the Fish House Fellowship—attracted students searching for answers during turbulent times. Gary DeLashmutt and Dennis McCallum, lead pastors at Xenos, were among those students.

The Fish House Fellowship became Xenos Christian Fellowship in 1982, and grew into a nondenominational, evangelical church that includes thousands of people from all walks of life. The small Bible studies are now a network of home-based Bible study groups and ministries in Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Dayton. Xenos currently supports several missionary teams around the world, operates three private schools in Columbus for students from preschool to eighth grade, offers adult education courses on biblical knowledge and faith, and provides a variety of community and social services that minister to the poor, prison inmates and youth.

Xenos is a Greek word which refers primarily to one who is a sojourner in a foreign land, a biblical description of Christians whose ultimate home is in heaven.