

## Finding a Flexible, Cloud Accounting System

Grace Fellowship Church

### Challenges

## Finding a Flexible, Cloud Accounting System

Grace Fellowship Church is a 1600-member multi-campus church in Maryland with \$3.6 million in annual contributions. Its administrative office handles accounting for the organization's individual campuses, as well as early stage nonprofit startups such as mission ministries and other faith-based groups. The church's finance team provides financial fiduciary support as these new organizations get off the ground – managing their fund accounting, contributions, and payroll until they obtain 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

Previously, Grace Fellowship used ACS Financial Suite, an on-premises church financial management solution, to support these processes. However, the rigid system made it difficult for the organization to produce the reports it needed, or to provide on-demand visibility to key stakeholders. In addition, ACS necessitated time-consuming manual data entry because it didn't allow finance users to copy journal entries, set up recurring entries, or import data from other systems. As the church expanded, it looked for a new financial system that would streamline fund accounting and activity-based budgeting, as well as offer real-time financial performance insight.

"As a nonprofit, we don't have the luxury of a large staff or IT budget, and we needed a financial system that would be less cumbersome to use and maintain," said Stacie Porter, director of finance, Grace Fellowship Church. "We knew cloud computing could lower our IT costs, and we evaluated both NetSuite and Intacct as possible replacements for ACS. We found Intacct to be superior for its depth of functionality, support for fund accounting, and overall flexibility, and automation capabilities."

### Solutions

## Streamlined Financial Processes Save Both Time and Money

With Intacct, Grace Fellowship Church increased operational efficiencies by replacing several manual financial processes with automated workflows. Intacct helps the church better manage its own fund accounting, payroll, accounts payables, contributions, and activity-based budgeting, as well as all accounting processes for the smaller organizations it sponsors.



### Company Overview

Grace Fellowship Church was founded 30 years ago by four couples dreaming of a new kind of church. Over the years, Grace Fellowship has grown significantly into a multi-campus church serving thousands of members in Maryland.

### Executive Summary

#### Previous Software:

- ACS Financial Suite

#### Results with Sage Intacct:

- Eliminated over 1,000 hours of administrative work every year
- Minimized finance staffing to save over \$22,000 annually
- Easily track, manage and report on multiple funds, projects and statistical indicators

## FINDING A FLEXIBLE, CLOUD ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

The church has dramatically streamlined its accounts payables (A/P) process through seamless integration between Intacct and Bill.com's paperless payment system. Department administrators now scan invoices directly into Bill.com. The central finance team reviews and approves payments in Intacct, and everyone has real-time visibility into which bills have been paid and which are outstanding. Grace Fellowship also connected Intacct with Tallie to help process credit card expense reports – aiding the church in its goal to go paperless.

Intacct's Project Accounting software brings all of the church's project data into one place so it can better manage financials and resources across programs. By allowing Grace Fellowship Church to tag every expense, Intacct has greatly advanced the organization's budgeting and reporting capabilities. The team quickly creates individual income statements and balance sheets for every campus in Intacct, and rolls this up into overall

### Results

## Real-time Dashboards Deliver Insight for Strategic Decision-Making

By leveraging the multi-dimensional data available in Intacct, Grace Fellowship has improved its stewardship of church funding. "With our previous system, our church directors would receive a financial update each month, but not for two weeks after each close cycle," commented Porter. "By comparison, Intacct gives us a modern system with all the financial information we need immediately at our fingertips."

Grace Fellowship is also utilizing Intacct's rolebased, customizable dashboards to gain realtime financial and operational insights. Church directors can get a complete view of their key metrics without waiting for someone in finance to print a report or track down information. Intacct's dashboards allow them to drill-down into the underlying data and gain deeper insight into the charges that impact their actuals-to-budget contributions, year-to-date spending, and year-over-year variance for individual projects or programs. In addition, by tracking statistical figures like attendance in Intacct, the finance team can monitor calculations such as average giving per person.

"With granular data on the costs of each program, our administrators can create and manage their budgets down to the project or event level," shared Porter. "This helps us make better informed spending decisions in every way."

*“With Sage Intacct’s modern financial management solution, we’ve left the dark ages of software behind and have become a more productive organization. By improving our accounts payables process and combining best-in-class software from Sage Intacct, Bill.com and Tallie, we are saving two weeks each month that we previously spent just entering invoices and expenses. This avoids around \$22,000 every year in additional staffing costs.”*



Stacie Porter,  
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