

# The Covenant Welcomes NEW MEMBERS

**Twenty-two churches** joined the denomination at the 118th Annual Meeting.

## Canada Conference

### Lighthouse Covenant Church

*Sarnia, Ontario*

*membership 27, attendance 110*

Three men who had a vision for a church formed a core group and called Pastor Mark Crate to lead them. Crate had a relationship with Kensington Community Church, a large church in the Detroit area that has partnered with the Covenant Church to plant churches. While holding services on Saturday nights in a Christian Reformed Church building, the congregation is in the process of purchasing land. The church is reaching many young families, particularly those with no church background.

## Central Conference

### Agape Covenant Church

*Chicago, Illinois*

*membership 15, attendance 50*

In the late seventies, while a college student, Steven Stultz began working with youth in the east Garfield Park community on Chicago's west side. The work developed into a youth-oriented, community-based church. Today, Agape provides programs for approximately 800 teens and children through leadership initiatives, after-school programs, and intervention and

support services for at-risk youth. The church also leads community campaigns to address violence prevention and neighborhood development without displacement.

### Iglesia del Pacto Peniel

*Chicago, Illinois*

*membership 54, attendance 50*

Iglesia del Pacto Peniel's focus is to give strong spiritual leadership in its Mexican-American community, and reaching out to youth who are involved in gangs. Under the leadership of Pastor Javier Cardenas, the church provides Bible classes and English classes to the community. The church's home is the building that once housed the South Chicago Evangelical Covenant Church, which disbanded in 1998.

### Friends 4 Life Covenant Church

*Flossmoor, Illinois*

*membership 109, attendance 100*

Begun as a small group meeting in a Chicago area hotel in late 2001 under the leadership of Pastor George Wilson, Friends 4 Life now numbers 100 people and meets in the church previously owned by Bethel Covenant Church of Flossmoor, which disbanded last year. The church's mission ministry has focused on the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa, and its youth outreach includes a martial arts ministry.

### Millard Community Church

*Elkhorn, Wisconsin*

*membership 150, attendance 115*

Millard Community Church is a growing congregation in southern Wisconsin that dates back over 160 years. When the church decided to affiliate with a parent organization, the leaders researched several denominations. They decided to approach the Covenant because of the denomination's strong evangelical beliefs. David Hanan is pastor of the congregation.

## East Coast Conference

### Cambridge Community Fellowship Covenant Church

*Cambridge, Massachusetts*

*membership 125, attendance 300*

In the spring of 1996, an ethnically diverse group of young people began to dream about a church in the Central Square neighborhood of Cambridge. Soong-Chan Rah, formerly a campus staff worker with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at MIT, was called as pastor. The congregation has been involved in serving senior citizens, children, high-school students, and at-risk youth. In addition, they have sent out numerous summer, short-term, and long-term missionaries.



Surrounded by delegates from the new churches, Pastor Henry Greenidge (at piano) leads the assembly in a song of praise.

## Great Lakes Conference

### Christ Covenant Church

*Wixom, Michigan*  
membership 30, attendance 120

In 1994, a group of people from Faith Covenant Church of Farmington Hills, Michigan, began praying about a new church plant. Seven years later Faith Covenant sent a core group to start Christ Covenant Church in Wixom, a community in the metropolitan Detroit area. They soon drew the attention of Kensington Community Church, which added its support. In 2001 Nathan Pawl began as pastor of the developing congregation.

## Midwest Conference

### Relevant Word Ministries

*Colorado Springs, Colorado*  
membership 200, attendance 150

Relevant Word Ministries started in

1998 as an outgrowth of the work of Hillside Neighborhood Association, which was begun by its pastor, Promise Lee, a year earlier. The church serves a multi-cultural community. Though separate entities, Relevant Word and Hillside work together. Hillside is addressing crime issues, affordable housing through Habitat for Humanity, and loan networking. Relevant Word ministers through a drop-in center that provides programs for youth and families, a partnership with Young Life, and community service and Goodwill Workfare projects.

## North Pacific Conference

### Tapestry Covenant Church

*Tacoma, Washington*  
membership 50, attendance 120

In 2001 Tapestry Covenant Church set out to become a body that is culturally, ethnically, economically, and educationally diverse. Likewise, the assis-

tance given to help this church plant grow has come from diverse sources: Harbor Covenant of Gig Harbor, Washington; Oakdale Covenant of Chicago; and Irvington Covenant of Portland, Oregon. With Darryl Hutcherson as pastor, Tapestry is developing a positive presence in the community.

## Pacific Southwest Conference

### River's Edge Covenant Church

*Brentwood, California*  
membership 40, attendance 150

River's Edge is located in a Bay Area town that has grown by 700 percent in a decade, and where 90 percent of that population does not attend church. With the support of the conference and area Covenant churches, church planter Peter Foster began the work in Brentwood by developing relationships in the community. Eighteen people gathered for the first meeting in his home;

150 now attend services, which are held in a community center.

### **El Encino Covenant Church**

*Downey, California*  
membership 45, attendance 65

A group of people from the Covenant Hispanic Center for Theological Education (CHET) had a dream to plant a church. With the encouragement of Redeemer Covenant Church of Downey, El Encino Covenant was born. The congregation meets in the Redeemer church and ministers to the surrounding community of first- and second-generation Hispanic immigrants. The church has started a community center that provides a soccer program for children, parenting programs, and a counseling service. The pastor is Daniel Anabalon.

### **Southeast Asian Covenant Church**

*Fresno, California*  
membership 59, attendance 50

First Mission Covenant Church of Fresno began reaching out to southeast Asian immigrants in 1983 by helping them adapt to a new country and community. As trust deepened, the opportunity to share the gospel developed. One by one, families from the southeast Asian community started coming to the church. In 2001 Pastor Kong Sitthi became a Covenant church planter, allowing the Laotian-speaking people to form their own congregation.

### **Fuente de Esperanza Covenant Church**

*Isla Vista, California*  
membership 35, attendance 115

Begun with assistance from Covenant churches in the area, Fuente de Esperanza (Fountain of Hope) is ministering to the large Hispanic community in and around Santa Barbara, California. There are many low-income fam-



**New delegates celebrate as their churches are voted into the denomination.**

ilies in the area, and the church serves them through a food pantry, tutoring services, clothing distribution, health ministry, and classes in English as a second language. Hugo Otaola is pastor.

### **Nuevas de Gozo Covenant Church**

*Lennox, California*  
membership 185, attendance 300

After more than twenty-five years as an independent church, Nuevas de Gozo (Glad Tidings), wanted to become part of a larger church fellowship. Begun in 1975 by holding services held in homes, visiting people in the community, and providing food and help to the needy, this thriving congregation now holds three services each Sunday in a community that is 80 percent Hispanic. Under the leadership of Pastor Teodoro Carreras, the church has strong evangelistic programs as well as a focus on community relationships.

### **Iglesia Misionera Hispanoamericana**

*Pasadena, California*  
membership 250, attendance 200

Soon after this church began in 1994, the pastor, Marcelo Alvarado, met leaders from the Covenant Hispanic Center for Theological Education (CHET), and from Pasadena Covenant Church. Through these relationships, the young congregation began holding services in the Pasadena church, where they continue to meet. The church is reaching out to its community by ministering to gang members, people struggling with alcohol addiction, and others in need, and it has a vision to plant

churches in communities where there are none.

### **Vida Abundante Covenant Church**

*Roseville, California*  
membership 85, attendance 110

Vida Abundante (Abundant Life) started when Pastor Arnoldo Pinto and his family invited other families to meet together. The church ministers to the needs of the people in their community, many of whom do not speak English. They provide translation, accompany them to court or to doctors' offices, assist in finding jobs, help with police problems, and sometimes find people a place to sleep.

### **Iglesia del Pacto Evangélico Esperanza**

*Sacramento, California*  
membership 50, attendance 45

Esperanza Covenant Church was planted by Valley Hi Covenant Church in Sacramento with the support of many other area churches to reach the large Hispanic community. Under the leadership of Rolando Leiva, they meet at River Life Covenant Church. With an emphasis on discipleship and worship, the church provides mentors for new believers to help them grow in faith.

### **Sanctuary Covenant Church**

*Sacramento, California*  
membership 80, attendance 160

With the support of five area Covenant churches, Sanctuary Covenant was planted in the Natomas area of Sacramento. An economically and ethnically diverse community that is growing, Natomas has a need for churches and community development. With Sean Curtis as pastor, Sanctuary is focusing on house churches, Sunday morning ministries, children's ministries, Christian formation classes, and local and global missions.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30