

October 13, 2021

To the Covenant Executive Board, John Wenrich, Rebecca Gonzalez, the Board of the Ordered Ministry and Covenant Colleagues,

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Apostle Paul spoke these words in his first letter to his fellow brothers and sisters in the faith at Corinth. He pronounced and declared godly favor, inner calm and spiritual well-being on the lives of the Believers dwelling in this Greek metropolis before delivering a direct and difficult message.

I too, proclaim grace and peace upon you, my fellow Covenanters, from God our Father and Christ our Savior as I submit this letter.

While my memory of my interview for the role of Executive Minister of Develop Leaders and Ordered Ministry in 2018 is somewhat blurry, what I do remember is that I was emphatic about the need for our pastors and chaplains to be loved, cared for and held accountable. Since my election at Gather 2018, this is exactly what I have endeavored to do.

I am so very thankful for the opportunity to have served the Covenant Church as the Executive Minister of Develop Leaders and the Ordered Ministry.

While serving as executive minister, I have intentionally set out to *see* and *value* the people who do the actual work of Denominational Offices. As a *shepherd leader*, I have valued not only the work that our colleagues put out or produce, but moreover, the people themselves.

As a DL team we’ve forged ahead through difficulties and challenges making advancements administratively, organizationally and relationally. We excelled in and through adversity.

Nevertheless, through much discernment and prayer I have decided not to pursue re-nomination as the Executive Minister of Develop Leaders and the Ordered Ministry. I believe that I was called to serve the denomination “for such a time as this” and that God uniquely prepared me to provide resilient and steadfast leadership for this season in the Covenant Church. I also believe that what I was called to do, I’ve done. The Lord did not call me to be perfect in this role, only to be faithful. I have faithfully carried out my duties as the EM of DL/OM and I pray that the Lord replaces me with a dutiful leader who will also remain faithful to this **holy work**.

While the events leading up to, during and after Gather 2019 may have somewhat tarnished the image of the office of the executive minister and to some extent, Ordered Ministry, nothing can overshadow or undervalue the work of our Covenant DL team. This competent, committed and creative team of leaders have walked alongside me as we’ve envisioned the ideal support and resourcing for the good of our Covenant Ministerium.

Although many pitfalls and challenges lie ahead, my prayer is that the Evangelical Covenant Church once again becomes one large conventical of committed and caring *Mission Friends* who are truly friends to ALL who fear God and follow Christ.

I will sorely miss my DL team members and my COLT colleagues. Working alongside these incredible men and women has been a gift to me; one that I'll never forget. Serving pastors in this role has afforded me the opportunity to see their spirits lifted in crisis and their lives changed through intervention.

Our goal over the past three years has been to support the women and men of the Cloth of the Covenant as they become, *ready* and *resilient*. We've work hard as a team to ensure that subsequent generations of Covenant clergy will be as committed to solid theological orthodoxy and orthopraxy, as were their Covenant predecessors. Hence, providing for our Covenant Churches and institutions ministers who are *ready* for Covenant ministry. Through missional innovations such as the Fitness For Ministry assessment, self-care and respite opportunities, and access to assistance in a time of personal crisis, our ministers and their families know that they are important to us and that we want to care for them. These have become the building blocks of making our Covenant pastors, *resilient*.

Gary Walter, former president of the Covenant, once opined that we (the Covenant) are like the Little Engine that said, "I think I can, I think I can." Our work in Develop Leaders, while still a work in progress, has strengthened our movement so that the echoes of "I think I can" still reverberate throughout our eleven conferences and five global regions.

I would like to thank my colleagues and friends for your prayers, support and presence during these last few years. My desire is that we all continue to lift the Evangelical Covenant Church and its Denominational Team in our fervent prayers as we seek to "... join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world."

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:3)

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lance Davis".

Rev. Lance Davis