



Voluntary Removal of Churches from the Roster of the Evangelical Covenant Church

REGIONAL CONFERENCE	CHURCH NAME	REASON FOR REMOVAL
Alaska	New Song Covenant Church	Closed
Central	Atonement Covenant Church	Closed
Central	Grace Evangelical Covenant Church	Closed
East Coast	Covenant Congregational Church	Closed
East Coast	Community Covenant Church	Closed
Great Lakes	Love of Christ Christian Center	Closed
Midwest	The Evangelical Covenant Church of Pender	Withdrawn
Northwest	Community Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Northwest	The Gallery Covenant Church (DBA Last City Covenant Church)	Closed
Northwest	Highland Community Church (formerly Elim Mission Church)	Withdrawn
Northwest	Evangelical Covenant Church of Rush City	Withdrawn
Northwest	Nueva Vida Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Northwest	Cloverland Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Pacific Northwest	Hope Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Pacific Northwest	Bridge Covenant Church	Closed
Pacific Northwest	Disciple Community Covenant Church	Closed
Pacific Northwest	Evergreen Covenant Church	Merger
Southeast	Greater Faith Covenant Church	Closed
Southeast	Faith Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Pacific Southwest	Sanctuary Covenant Church	Closed
Pacific Southwest	Porterville Iglesia del Pacto	Withdrawn

ALASKA CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: CURTIS IVANOFF

New Song Covenant Church

Location: Anchorage, AK

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 25

Year joined the Covenant: 2001

Peak membership (approximately): 125

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

New Song has had a very dedicated core group of members who did significant and meaningful ministry in Anchorage over the course of its life. The leadership made the difficult decision that New Song Covenant had lived out its purpose as it was in a season where it simply no longer had the financial resources to continue. We give God praise and thanks for this community who so faithfully gave witness to the good news of Jesus since New Song was planted in 1996.

CENTRAL CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: DANNY MARTINEZ

Atonement Covenant Church

Location: Chicago, IL

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 24

Year joined the Covenant: 1998

Peak membership (approximately): 65

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Toll of the Covid-19 pandemic. It put stress on people's lives, and the church lost too many members. As a result, tithes and offerings decreased. Too much building upkeep was needed.

Grace Evangelical Covenant Church

Location: Chicago, IL

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 81

Year joined the Covenant: 1961

Peak membership (approximately): 175

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

With the changing religious landscape, Grace Covenant felt an urgency to reinvent itself. The church could have fought to survive, but it struggled to find a way forward together. The congregation was tired and weary and wanted more than survival. Eventually, the church voted to close proactively. It gave its resources to other local ministries and ultimately to the conference and denomination to be used to start new churches. In doing so, the talents of the congregation were unleashed into other area ministries. The decision was painful, but it was an act of faith. Resurrection comes only after death.

EAST COAST CONFERENCE**SUPERINTENDENT: HOWARD K. BURGOYNE****Covenant Congregational Church**

Location: Pawtucket, RI

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 15

Year joined the Covenant: 1942

Peak membership (approximately): 125

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

CCC was planted in 1892 to serve the Swedish immigrants who came to Rhode Island to work and live in the greater Providence area. The church began meeting in homes, with 12-15 persons determined to cultivate their faith in Christ and reach out to their neighbors with the hope of the gospel. Many people were led to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. The congregation persevered through many challenges, and while they waned in the 1970s, they experienced a season of renewal in the 1980s.

The church struggled again in the 2000s. In 2004, they explored but declined a potential merger with Calvary Covenant Church in Cranston, Rhode Island (which later closed in 2010) and resolved to continue until they came to their own discernment that the time to transition had come. In 2022, with membership and attendance down to 12-15 persons, and the impact of predictable aging, retirements, and the pressures of the pandemic, the congregation discerned it was time to conclude their ministry. After a unanimous vote in August, the congregation prepared to wind down their ministry at Christmas. These friends continue to meet weekly on Sundays for worship in their former pastor's home, back to the mode of gathering that launched their ministry in 1892. Rev. Cliff Tidd, raised up out of the congregation and ordained several years ago, has been their faithful pastor for many years. The faith and financial legacy of the church will be invested in church planting.

Community Covenant Church

Location: Hopkinton, MA

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 20

Year joined the Covenant: 1907

Peak membership (approximately): 130

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The church was planted in Milford, Massachusetts, in 1907, and enjoyed a dynamic ministry among Swedish immigrants and neighbors through the 1960s. Seeking to expand land in nearby Hopkinton, Massachusetts, right off of a cloverleaf exchange being installed at a new outer arterial highway (495) southwest of Boston. The church did not flourish as hoped for in this new community, as the nature of church life in culture changed, and the church struggled to navigate those transitions effectively. Still, much good ministry and loving fellowship was enjoyed by the congregation over these decades.

Several years ago, a discernment committee was formed and proposed the church seek to join in partnership, and potential merger, with Highrock Covenant Church. It was hoped that families and a new pastor from their Needham congregation (Metrowest) might come and spark a restart. A year of earnest effort together did not lead to joint resolve that this was feasible, particularly during the pandemic year of 2021. Having retired their long serving pastor in 2021, the church received interim pastoral care in 2022, during which time the congregation discerned it was necessary to close. The congregation concluded their active ministry in Advent, and a closing worship service was held on December 17. The faith and financial legacy of the church will be invested in church planting.

GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: GARTH MCGRATH

Love of Christ Christian Center

Location: Detroit, MI

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed):

Year joined the Covenant: 2010

Peak membership (approximately): 65

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Love of Christ Christian Center was a bivocational church plant of the Great Lakes Conference in Detroit in 2010. The church had several years of helpful, hopeful, life-changing engagement in the community with a high worship attendance of 126. Ministry among gang members in the neighborhood of 8 Mile and Wyoming on the north side of Detroit was priority. But it was always a struggle to sustain the ministry. The onset of Covid took a toll on the bonds of the church. They had to move out of their rented space in August 2020, adding to the burden. With hopes for rekindling the ministry extinguished by early 2023, the church decided to close.

MIDWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: BRIAN JOHNSON

The Evangelical Covenant Church of Pender

Location: Pender, NE

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church withdrew): 23

Year joined the Covenant: 1896

Peak membership (approximately): 70

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Pastor Dan Springer was serving as pastor of the Pender Covenant Church when he was asked to also serve a United church in Pender which was a dual affiliation church from a previous merger of UMC and Presbyterian. He pastored both churches for several years. During the Covid pandemic, the United church and Covenant church began meeting together for

worship since they were both small and sharing a pastor. Pastor Dan and the combined leadership of both churches—a great group of healthy leaders—met with acting superintendent Brian Johnson to determine a pathway forward as trying to fulfill the responsibilities of three denominational affiliations would be challenging. Leadership discerned that it would be best to disaffiliate from all three denominations, discover their new identity as a congregation, then consider potential re-affiliation with the body that seems the best fit. This decision was made with the blessing of all three regional adjudicators (Covenant, Presbyterian, UMC) who saw the missional value in letting go so the church could become something new.

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: KARA STROMBERG

Community Covenant Church

Location: Lake Bronson, MN

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church withdrew): 9

Year joined the Covenant: 1953

Peak membership (approximately): N/A

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Community Covenant has had a long history of ministry but remained distant from the Northwest Conference and the Covenant in recent years. The conference received a letter in October 2022 from church leadership, informing us that they would like to withdraw from the Northwest Conference and the Covenant. No rationale was given.

The Gallery Covenant Church (DBA Last City Covenant Church)

Location: St. Paul, MN

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 29

Year joined the Covenant: 2011

Peak membership (approximately): 45

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Gallery Covenant was a church plant that saw a pastoral change within the first few years of its ministry. When the planting pastor left, a bivocational pastor was hired, and the church struggled with securing a location to meet. The church saw a decline in attendance and missional momentum. The Covid-19 pandemic was especially difficult for this young church who struggled to maintain a critical mass, and within that time, the church changed its name to Last City Covenant. The few remaining members voted to close in 2022. The final worship service was June 5, 2022.

Highland Community Church (formerly Elim Mission Church)

Location: Cokato, MN

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church withdrew): 162

Year joined the Covenant: 1909

Peak membership (approximately): N/A

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The church has had dual affiliation with the Evangelical Free Church and the Covenant. They recently adopted new bylaws and determined through that process to no longer be affiliated with the Covenant. Their statement of faith is more aligned with the EFCA.

Evangelical Covenant Church of Rush City

Location: Rush City, MN

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church withdrew): 30

Year joined the Covenant: 1915

Peak membership (approximately): N/A

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The Evangelical Covenant Church of Rush became Rush City Bible Church in 2005.

Nueva Vida Covenant Church

Location: Monticello, MN

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church closed): 9

Year joined the Covenant: 2010

Peak membership (approximately): N/A

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Nueva Vida is no longer operating as a church/nonprofit organization.

Cloverland Covenant Church

Location: Maple, WI

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church closed): 27

Year joined the Covenant: 2002

Peak membership (approximately): 130

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Cloverland Covenant Church withdrew from the Covenant in April 2014. Official action was taken at the Northwest Conference Annual Meeting in 2015.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: GREG YEE

Hope Covenant Church

Location: Everett, WA

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church closed): 76

Year joined the Covenant: 2014

Peak membership (approximately): 150

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Hope Church originally was a Covenant church plant in Lake Stevens. It merged with Sanctuary Covenant Church (First Covenant Everett) in 2019. The church decided to transfer their affiliation to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America as they merge with an ELCA congregation back in Lake Stevens. In this departure, we celebrate the long legacy of ministry represented in Sanctuary Covenant Church, one of the earliest Pacific Northwest Conference churches (1903).

Bridge Covenant Church

Location: Salem, OR

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 45

Year joined the Covenant: 2015

Peak membership (approximately): 60

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

As churches were gathering again in-person and indoors after the pandemic, the challenge in regards to people and financial resources became clear. After a thorough discernment process, including the use of the Covenant's transition resource "At the Crossroads," the congregation and leadership decided that it was time to conclude the ministry. An "ending well" team was formed and Bridge thoughtfully spent five weeks in 2022 walking through a lament and closure process with the congregation.

Disciple Community Covenant Church

Location: Bellevue, WA

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 35

Year joined the Covenant: 2018

Peak membership (approximately): 100

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

After twelve fruitful and faithful years DCCC concluded ministry. They effectively reached

young adults and young families in the greater Seattle area and generously supported ministries in Cambodia. After the founding pastor's decision to transition out of the church, the members voted to close.

Evergreen Covenant Church

Location: Mercer Island, WA

Reason for removal: Merger

Number of members (when church closed): 150

Year joined the Covenant: 1951

Peak membership (approximately): 550

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The church went through a series of difficult challenges marked by steep decline. After a thorough process of praying through next steps, a bold decision was made to approach a nearby sister church that had just been adopted into the Covenant and consider merging. Conversations warmed up, and a decision was made for Encounter to be the lead church and new entity in the Evergreen building. The two churches have merged beautifully. They have become even more multi-generational and multiethnic and are positioned well to reach a diverse population on the east side of Seattle. They have grown since the merger to about 400. Over 600 Easter attendees celebrated five baptisms marking the merger's official grand opening.

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: DR. CATHERINE GILLIARD

Greater Faith Covenant Church

Location: Riverdale, GA

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 1

Year joined the Covenant: 2015

Peak membership (approximately): 90

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The church voted to close because of declining attendance due to Covid.

Faith Covenant Church

Location: St. Petersburg, FL

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church closed): 250

Year joined the Covenant: 1979

Peak membership (approximately): N/A

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

The church voted to withdraw their membership because they did not agree with the Covenant's position on women in ministry or the Covenant's teachings on racial justice, and they did not support the slow response in taking action on Covenant churches and clergy who are not in alignment with the Covenant's positions on same-sex marriage.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: BRIAN MURPHY

Sanctuary Covenant Church

Location: Sacramento, CA

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 19

Year joined the Covenant: 2003

Peak membership (approximately): 75

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Sanctuary Covenant Church was launched as a church plant by the Pacific Southwest and the Covenant (Church Growth and Evangelism) in 2001. Planting this church was made possible with financial support from Bayside, First Covenant, River Life, Valley Hi Covenant, and Lake Hills Covenant. Sanctuary was focused on community work from the early days; the Green House, a community development 501(c)3 focused on school age children, was started by members of Sanctuary Covenant.

The Greenhouse (info@thegreenhousecenter.org) continues to serve the Natomas region of Sacramento. In late summer 2022, after experiencing a sustained season of reduced missional energy, the members of Sanctuary Covenant voted to close the church and held a final service.

Porterville Iglesia del Pacto

Location: Porterville, CA

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church closed): 12

Year joined the Covenant: 1979

Peak membership (approximately): 80

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments:

Porterville Iglesia del Pacto was relaunched in 2019 as Camino de Jesus (DBA). While some momentum was gained, this was not found to be sustainable. Through the years, the conference has provided considerable financial support on multiple occasions. In the fall of 2022, church leadership formally requested withdrawal from the Covenant and the Pacific Southwest.