



# Covenant Organizational Design

## Proposed Covenant Bylaw Amendments | Executive Summary

At Gather 2023, during the 137th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church, delegates will vote on the proposed Covenant Bylaw Amendments that support Phase I of the recommended Covenant Organizational Design. This design seeks to align the mission God has given us with the resources God has provided to us in this season, to set us up for a fruitful and thriving future in the years to come. And, we have proceeded through this process by:

1. Having our mission and mission priorities remain our central focus.
  - a. Mission: ***to join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world.***
  - b. Mission Priorities: ***make and deepen disciples; love mercy and do justice; serve globally; develop leaders; and start and strengthen churches***
2. Being together, not divided.
3. Working within what God has provided us financially in this season.
4. Communicating in timely, relevant, and clear ways.
5. Pursuing the good of the whole church over individual stakeholders and groups.
6. Serving with integrity.

In the proposed structure, the mission and the mission priorities remain our central focus and will drive everything we do. The proposed structure will allow us to better serve churches and conferences with focused resources that meet the needs of our denomination's mission.

To support this proposed structure, recommended Bylaw amendments are needed. The following describes the rationale for the recommended amendments:

- To align the Bylaws with the proposed structure.
- To remove specificity of role titles to allow for greater flexibility for the denominational future.

- To align our Bylaws for a more collaborative approach to our mission and our mission priorities.
- To create a structure that enhances faithful stewardship.

In the coming pages, you will find information and context to better understand the proposed bylaw amendments that are coming to you for approval. This section includes:

- Proposed Bylaw Amendments that allow the denominational team to be more responsive to the needs of the Evangelical Covenant Church.
- Phase I of the Covenant Denomination Organizational Structure.
- Supplemental Information to provide additional context.

We look forward to continuing to live out the Covenant mission through our five mission priorities through this new structure.



## Covenant Organizational Design:

### 2023 PROPOSED COVENANT BYLAW AMENDMENTS

*These items will be voted on during the 137<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Covenant.*

#### Article VII. The Annual Meeting.

#### Section 7.9. Elections and Calls.

#### b. Elected Executive Ministers Current Text

- i. The executive minister of love mercy and do justice, the executive minister of make and deepen disciples, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, the executive minister of serve globally, the executive minister of start and strengthen churches shall be elected by the Annual Meeting. Each election shall be by ballot.
- ii. One candidate each for the positions of executive minister of love mercy and do justice, the executive minister of make and deepen disciples, the executive minister of serve globally, and the executive minister of start and strengthen churches shall be nominated by the Executive Board.
- iii. One candidate for the position of executive minister of the ordered ministry shall be nominated by the Board of the Ordered Ministry, with the concurrence of the Executive Board and the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium.

#### Section 7.9. Elections and Calls.

#### b. Executive Ministers Proposed Text

- i. Executive ministers shall be elected by the Annual Meeting. Each election shall be by ballot.**
- ii. One candidate for the position of executive minister of the ordered ministry shall be nominated by the Board of the Ordered Ministry, with the concurrence of the Executive Board and the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium.**
- iii. All other executive minister positions shall have one candidate per position nominated by the Executive Board.**

*Move to remove the exact titles of each executive minister to provide more flexibility in how the organization can hire and create roles, and to adjust the order of the additional bullet points to create more clarity.*

## Article VIII. Executive Board.

### Section 8.1. Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Board. Current Text

The Executive Board shall coordinate and implement the common mission of the Covenant as developed and articulated by the Annual Meeting, this Constitution and Bylaws, and the strategic planning processes of the Covenant. The Executive Board shall carry out its work with an integrity and character consistent with Christian principles. Within this authority and in the course of its duties, the Executive Board shall

- i. approve the salaries of the officers of the Covenant, executive ministers, and executive directors;

### **Section 8.1. Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Board. Proposed Text**

**The Executive Board shall coordinate and implement the common mission of the Covenant as developed and articulated by the Annual Meeting, this Constitution and Bylaws, and the strategic planning processes of the Covenant. The Executive Board shall carry out its work with an integrity and character consistent with Christian principles. Within this authority and in the course of its duties, the Executive Board shall**

- i. approve the salaries of the officers of the Covenant, vice presidents, executive ministers, and executive directors;**

*Move to add "vice presidents" to allow for consistency of salary approvals for leadership and to have consistency in duties of the Executive Board.*

### Section 8.3. Committees. Current Text

- a. The Executive Board shall organize itself into committees for purpose of receiving reports, developing policies, and making recommendations to the Executive Board for a committee's specific area of focus.
- b. The standing committees shall be: develop leaders, love mercy and do justice, make and deepen disciples, serve globally, start and strengthen churches, communications, finance, and personnel.
- c. Each elected member of the Executive Board shall serve on at least one standing committee at any given time.
- d. Each standing committee shall have five to seven members who are elected members of the Executive Board. The executive minister of the mission priority of the committee or executive director of the support service shall be an advisor to the committee with the related focus of the executive minister or executive director. The committee may have members who are ex-officio members of the Executive Board. The Executive Board may appoint additional advisors, including appropriate members of the faculty of North Park Theological Seminary.
- e. Each standing committee shall develop procedural rules to be approved by the Executive Board.
- f. The Executive Board may establish additional standing committees or ad hoc committees as appropriate to advance the Covenant mission.

### Section 8.3. Committees. Proposed Text

- a. The Executive Board shall organize itself into committees for the purpose of receiving reports, developing policies, and making recommendations to the Executive Board for a committee's specific area of focus.
- b. The standing committees shall be **finance, personnel, and any other standing committee designated by the Executive Board policies creating the committee.**
- c. Each elected member of the Executive Board shall serve on at least one standing committee at any given time.
- d. Each standing committee shall have five to seven members who are elected members of the Executive Board. The committee may have members who are ex-officio members of the Executive Board. **The committee may request the presence of advisors to participate in their meetings.**
- e. Each standing committee shall develop procedural rules to be approved by the Executive Board.
- f. **The Executive Board may establish additional standing committees or ad hoc committees as appropriate to advance the Covenant mission.**

*Move to remove the exact titles of each standing committee of the Covenant Executive Board to provide more flexibility in how the board can organize itself so that it can be most effective in its work. Move to remove the exact titles of positions to allow for committees to have the flexibility to invite who is most necessary as advisors and ex-officio members.*

## Article X. Denominational Ministries.

### Section 10.1. Mission Priorities. Current Text

- a. In order to carry out its mission, the Covenant organizes its ministries around mission priorities. The mission priorities are:
  - i. start and strengthen churches—starting and strengthening healthy, missional churches in the United States and Canada;
  - ii. make and deepen disciples—helping people experience new life in Christ and grow deeper in Christ in a lifelong journey of faith;
  - iii. love mercy and do justice—walking humbly with God to address hurts and the cause of those hurts;
  - iv. develop leaders—developing and strengthening leaders, both lay and clergy; and
  - v. serve globally—pursuing the mission priorities internationally.
- b. Each mission priority shall be led by an executive minister.

**Section 10.1. Mission Priorities. Proposed Text**

**a. In order to carry out its mission, the Covenant ~~organizes~~ focuses on five mission priorities that guide the work that we do. The mission priorities are:**

- i. start and strengthen churches—starting and strengthening healthy, missional churches in the United States and Canada;**
- ii. make and deepen disciples—helping people experience new life in Christ and grow deeper in Christ in a lifelong journey of faith;**
- iii. love mercy and do justice—walking humbly with God to address hurts and the cause of those hurts;**
- iv. develop leaders—developing and strengthening leaders, both lay and clergy; and**
- v. serve globally—pursuing the mission priorities internationally.**

**b. Executive minister(s) shall oversee mission priorities.**

*Move to align our language in our bylaws to state that these five mission priorities are strategic priorities that all teams focus on. Move to remove the link from one mission priority to one executive minister with the goal of having our entire organization focus on these five mission priorities as the foundation for the ministry work we do.*

**Section 10.2. Vice Presidents. Proposed Text (NEW)**

**a. Vice presidents shall be appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board to give leadership to the organization. Each vice president is accountable for outcomes related to the mission of the Covenant, including the implementation of decisions and policies of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board of the Covenant.**

**b. A vice president shall lead an area by proposing and implementing strategies, proposing and managing income and expense, and working in collaboration with the president to propose and hire team members.**

**c. A vice president shall report to and be accountable to the president.**

**d. A vice president shall contribute to the overall mission of the Covenant by serving as an advisor to the Executive Board.**

**e. The corporate treasurer shall also hold the office of vice president of finance and shall be the chief financial officer of the Covenant.**

**f. By mutual agreement with the president, any board, council, commission, committee, or association of the Covenant or any board or committee of a corporation established by the Covenant may invite a vice president as a representative of the president of the Covenant, with the status of an advisor to a meeting of the group.**

**g. Temporary Absence or Disability.** In the temporary absence or temporary disability of a vice president, the president may appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the duties of that position on an interim basis for the duration of the temporary absence or temporary disability.

**h. Vacancies.** The Executive Board shall declare the position of any vice president vacant upon the removal, resignation, permanent incapacity, or death of the person holding that position.

**i. Removal.** By vote of two-thirds of its elected members, the Executive Board may remove a vice president.

**ii. Resignation.** A vice president may resign upon written notice to the Executive Board.

**iii. Permanent Incapacity.** The Executive Board shall develop a policy for determining permanent incapacity.

**iv. Filling Vacancy.** When a vacancy occurs in the position of a vice president, the president shall appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the duties of the vacated position on an interim basis, until such time as a permanent replacement is appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board.

*Move to add this section on vice presidents to align the bylaws with the proposed organizational structure and to provide vice presidents the same level of accountability as outlined for executive directors.*

#### Section 10.2. Executive Ministers. Current Text

a. An executive minister shall be elected by the Annual Meeting to give leadership to a mission priority. An executive minister is accountable for outcomes related to that mission priority, including the implementation of decisions and policies of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board of the Covenant.

b. An executive minister shall lead the mission priority by proposing and implementing strategies, proposing and managing income and expense, and proposing and managing team members.

c. An executive minister shall pursue coordination and collaboration across the mission priorities, ensuring a comprehensive, integrated mission strategy.

d. An executive minister shall be accountable to the president by reporting through the executive director of ministry development.

e. An executive minister shall contribute to the overall mission of the Covenant by serving on the Council of Administrators and as an advisor to the Executive Board.

f. By mutual agreement with the president, any board, council, commission, committee, or association of the Covenant or any board or committee of a corporation established by the Covenant may invite an executive minister as a representative of the president of the Covenant, with the status of an advisor to a meeting of the group.

g. Each executive minister shall be elected or re-elected by the Annual Meeting for a term of four years. Each term shall begin on September 1 following the Annual Meeting at which the executive minister was elected.

### **Section 10.3. Executive Ministers. Proposed Text**

a. Executive ministers shall be elected by the Annual Meeting to **oversee mission priorities**. An executive minister is accountable for outcomes related to **mission priorities**, including the implementation of decisions and policies of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board of the Covenant.

b. An executive minister shall **oversee mission priorities** by proposing and implementing strategies, proposing and managing income and expense, and proposing and managing team members.

c. An executive minister shall pursue coordination and collaboration across the mission priorities, ensuring a comprehensive, integrated mission strategy.

d. An executive minister shall be accountable to the president **and shall report to either the president or a vice president**.

e. An executive minister shall contribute to the overall mission of the Covenant by serving ~~on the Council of Administrators and~~ as an advisor to the Executive Board.

f. By mutual agreement with the president, any board, council, commission, committee, or association of the Covenant or any board or committee of a corporation established by the Covenant may invite an executive minister as a representative of the president of the Covenant, with the status of an advisor to a meeting of the group.

g. Each executive minister shall be elected or re-elected by the Annual Meeting for a term of four years. Each term shall begin on September 1 following the Annual Meeting at which the executive minister was elected.

*Move to adjust the numbering of this section due to the proposed addition of the section on vice presidents as Section 10.2. Move to remove the link from one mission priority to one executive minister with the goal of having our entire organization focus on these five mission priorities as the foundation for the ministry work we do. Move to remove the title of executive director of ministry development to allow for more organizational flexibility and to align with phase I of the organizational design proposal presented at Gather 2023. Move to remove the bylaw requirement to have executive ministers serving on Council of Administrators to align with the proposed change to Section 11.1.*



### Section 10.3. Executive Directors. Current Text

- a. Executive directors shall be appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board to give leadership to areas in support of the implementation of mission priorities. Each executive director is accountable for outcomes related to that mission support service, including the implementation of decisions and policies of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board of the Covenant.
- b. The executive director of ministry development shall represent the president to coordinate and bring collaboration across the mission priorities, ensuring a comprehensive, integrated mission strategy and maximized use of human and financial resources. The executive director of ministry development works with executive ministers in finalizing decisions related to strategy, finances, and staffing. The executive director of ministry development ensures coordinated and collaborative efforts with mission support services and regional conferences.
- c. The executive directors of mission support services shall be: the executive director of advancement; the executive director of communications, who shall serve as editor of the denominational magazine; the executive director of finance, who shall also hold the office of corporate treasurer and be the chief financial officer of the Covenant; and the executive director of operations.
- d. An executive director shall lead an area by proposing and implementing strategies, proposing and managing income and expense, and proposing and managing team members.
- e. An executive director shall report to and be accountable to the president.
- f. An executive director shall contribute to the overall mission of the Covenant by serving on the Council of Administrators and as an advisor to the Executive Board.
- g. By mutual agreement with the president, any board, council, commission, committee, or association of the Covenant or any board or committee of a corporation established by the Covenant may invite an executive director as a representative of the president of the Covenant, with the status of an advisor to a meeting of the group.
- h. Temporary Absence or Disability. In the temporary absence or temporary disability of an executive director, the president may appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the duties of that position on an interim basis for the duration of the temporary absence or temporary disability.
- i. Vacancies. The Executive Board shall declare the position of any executive director vacant upon the removal, resignation, permanent incapacity, or death of the person holding that position.
- i. Removal. By vote of two-thirds of its elected members, the Executive Board may remove an executive director.
  - ii. Resignation. An executive director may resign upon written notice to the Executive Board.
  - iii. Permanent Incapacity. The Executive Board shall develop a policy for determining permanent incapacity.
  - iv. Filling Vacancy. When a vacancy occurs in the position of an executive director, the president shall appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the

duties of the vacated position on an interim basis, until such time as a permanent replacement is appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board.

#### **Section 10.4. Executive Directors. Proposed Text**

**a.** Executive directors shall be appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board to give leadership to areas in support of the implementation of mission priorities. Each executive director is accountable for outcomes related to **their area**, including the implementation of decisions and policies of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board of the Covenant.

~~**b.** The executive director of ministry development shall represent the president to coordinate and bring collaboration across the mission priorities, ensuring a comprehensive, integrated mission strategy and maximized use of human and financial resources. The executive director of ministry development works with executive ministers in finalizing decisions related to strategy, finances, and staffing. The executive director of ministry development ensures coordinated and collaborative efforts with mission support services and regional conferences.~~

~~**c.** The executive directors of mission support services shall be: the executive director of advancement; the executive director of communications, who shall serve as editor of the denominational magazine; the executive director of finance, who shall also hold the office of corporate treasurer and be the chief financial officer of the Covenant; and the executive director of operations.~~

**b.** An executive director shall lead an area by proposing and implementing strategies, proposing and managing income and expense, and proposing and managing team members.

**c.** An executive director shall be accountable to the president **and shall report to either the president or a vice president.**

**d.** An executive director shall contribute to the overall mission of the Covenant by serving ~~on the Council of Administrators and~~ as an advisor to the Executive Board.

**e.** By mutual agreement with the president, any board, council, commission, committee, or association of the Covenant or any board or committee of a corporation established by the Covenant may invite an executive director as a representative of the president of the Covenant, with the status of an advisor to a meeting of the group.

**f.** Temporary Absence or Disability. In the temporary absence or temporary disability of an executive director, the president may appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the duties of that position on an interim basis for the duration of the temporary absence or temporary disability.

**g.** Vacancies. The Executive Board shall declare the position of any executive director vacant upon the removal, resignation, permanent incapacity, or death of the person holding that position.

- i. Removal. By vote of two-thirds of its elected members, the Executive Board may remove an executive director.**
- ii. Resignation. An executive director may resign upon written notice to the Executive Board.**
- iii. Permanent Incapacity. The Executive Board shall develop a policy for determining permanent incapacity.**
- iv. Filling Vacancy. When a vacancy occurs in the position of an executive director, the president shall appoint with the concurrence of the Executive Board a person to perform the duties of the vacated position on an interim basis, until such time as a permanent replacement is appointed by the president with concurrence of the Executive Board.**

*Move to adjust the numbering of this section due to the proposed addition of the section on vice presidents as Section 10.2., and to adjust the numbering within the section due to the proposed amendments. Move to remove the sections that specifically identify titles and role responsibilities to allow for more organizational flexibility and to align with phase I of the organizational design proposal presented at Gather 2023.*

#### Section 10.4. The Ordered Ministry. Current Text

- c. Executive Minister of the Ordered Ministry. The executive minister of the ordered ministry shall
  - i. act as an agent and representative of the Board of the Ordered Ministry between meetings of the board and report to the Board of the Ordered Ministry actions taken and representations made on behalf of the board;
  - ii. be an ex-officio member of the executive committee of the Covenant Ministerium;
  - iii. together with the Board of the Ordered Ministry and the Covenant Ministerium, develop and administer policies and programs to encourage, support, and care for ministers and missionaries; and
  - iv. serve as the leader for the mission priority of develop leaders and as an advisor to the Executive Board standing committee on develop leaders.

#### Section 10.5. The Ordered Ministry. Proposed Text

- c. **Executive Minister of the Ordered Ministry. The executive minister of the ordered ministry shall**
  - i. act as an agent and representative of the Board of the Ordered Ministry between meetings of the board and report to the Board of the Ordered Ministry actions taken and representations made on behalf of the board;**
  - ii. be an ex-officio member of the executive committee of the Covenant Ministerium;**

- iii. **together with the Board of the Ordered Ministry and the Covenant Ministerium, develop and administer policies and programs to encourage, support, and care for ministers and missionaries; and**
- iv. ~~serve as the leader for the mission priority of develop leaders and as an advisor to the Executive Board standing committee on develop leaders.~~

*Move to adjust the numbering of this section due to the proposed addition of the section on vice presidents as Section 10.2. Move to align language with the proposed change from 10.1. which updates the mission priorities from corresponding to specific teams to now having mission priorities as strategic priorities of our organization.*

Section 10.5. Board of Nominations. Current Text

**Section 10.6. Board of Nominations. Proposed Text**

*Move to adjust the numbering of this section due to the proposed addition of the section on vice presidents as Section 10.2.*

Section 10.6. Board of Pensions and Benefits. Current Text

d. The president of the Covenant, the treasurer/executive director of finance of the Covenant, and the chair of the Board of Pensions and Benefits shall be the trustees of the Covenant Pension Plan, as amended. Amendments to the Covenant Pension Plan shall be adopted as set forth in the plan.

**Section 10.7. Board of Pensions and Benefits. Proposed Text**

**d. The president of the Covenant, the corporate treasurer/~~executive director of finance of the Covenant~~, and the chair of the Board of Pensions and Benefits shall be the trustees of the Covenant Pension Plan, as amended. Amendments to the Covenant Pension Plan shall be adopted as set forth in the plan.**

*Move to adjust the numbering of this section due to the proposed addition of the section on vice presidents as Section 10.2. Move to remove the title of executive director of finance to align with the proposed organizational structure.*

Article XI. Council of Administrators and Council of Superintendents

Section 11.1. Council of Administrators. Current Text

- a. The Council of Administrators, in conjunction with the executive director of finance of the Covenant, shall recommend an annual Covenant coordinated budget to the Executive Board of the Covenant.
- b. The Council of Administrators shall have the following members: the president of the Covenant; the executive minister of love mercy and do justice, the executive minister of make and deepen disciples,

the executive minister of the ordered ministry, the executive minister of serve globally, the executive minister of start and strengthen churches, the executive director of ministry development, the executive director of advancement, the executive director of communications, the executive director of finance, the executive director of operations, the president of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, the president of North Park University, the dean of North Park Theological Seminary, the president of National Covenant Properties, and the president of Covenant Trust Company.

c. The Council of Administrators may have advisors approved by the Executive Board of the Covenant.

**Section 11.1. Council of Administrators. Proposed Text**

~~**a. The Council of Administrators, in conjunction with the executive director of finance of the Covenant, shall recommend an annual Covenant coordinated budget to the Executive Board of the Covenant.**~~

**a. The Council of Administrators shall serve as a presidential roundtable to connect the various Covenant corporations.**

**b. The Council of Administrators shall have the following members: the president of the Covenant; the president of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, the president of North Park University, the dean of North Park Theological Seminary, the president of National Covenant Properties, and the president of Covenant Trust Company.**

**c. The Council of Administrators may invite additional advisors to participate in their meetings.**

*Move to remove executive directors and executive ministers from the membership to allow this group to live into the new focused purpose – a presidential roundtable. Move to align our bylaws with the current function of the Council of Administrators, a presidential roundtable that seeks to keep a healthy Covenant connection and throughline. Move to remove the language that has the Council of Administrators recommending a budget to the Executive Board, as this is not how the entity has operated in quite some time. Move to allow the Council of Administrators to have the ability to invite advisors without the approval of the Covenant Executive Board to allow for greater nimbleness.*

**Section 11.2. Council of Superintendents. Current Text**

b. The superintendents of the regional conferences of the Covenant are members of the Council of Superintendents. The Council of Superintendents shall have the following ex-officio members: the president of the Covenant, the executive minister of start and strengthen churches, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, and the executive director of ministry development.

**Section 11.2. Council of Superintendents. Proposed Text**

**b. The superintendents of the regional conferences of the Covenant are members of the Council of Superintendents. The Council of Superintendents shall have the following ex-**

**officio members: the president of the Covenant. The Council of Superintendents may invite additional advisors to participate in their meetings.**

*Move to remove the titles from the membership of the Council of Superintendents to allow for organizational flexibility.*

## Article XII. Corporations.

### Section 12.3. North Park University. Current Text.

g. The Board of Trustees may submit requests for appropriations to be included in the annual Covenant coordinated budget. These requests for appropriations shall be submitted to the executive director of finance of the Covenant and the Council of Administrators for consideration in the preparation of the annual Covenant coordinated budget. Each request for appropriations shall include a copy of the budget of North Park University.

### Section 12.3. North Park University. Proposed Text.

**g. The Board of Trustees may submit requests for appropriations to be included in the annual Covenant coordinated budget. These requests for appropriations shall be submitted to the corporate treasurer of the Covenant and the Council of Administrators for consideration in the preparation of the annual Covenant coordinated budget. Each request for appropriations shall include a copy of the budget of North Park University.**

*Move to replace the title of executive director of finance with corporate treasurer to align with the organizational design proposal that was presented at Gather 2023 and the Covenant's Constitution and Bylaws. Move to remove the language that has the Council of Administrators considering requests for the annual Covenant coordinated budget, as this is not how the entity has operated in quite some time.*

## Article XIV. Commissions.

### Section 14.3. Commission on Pastoral Relations. Current Text.

- a. The Commission on Pastoral Relations shall have no appointed members but shall consist of the following ex-officio members only: the president of the Covenant, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, the executive director of ministry development, the dean of North Park Theological Seminary, and all regional conference superintendents.

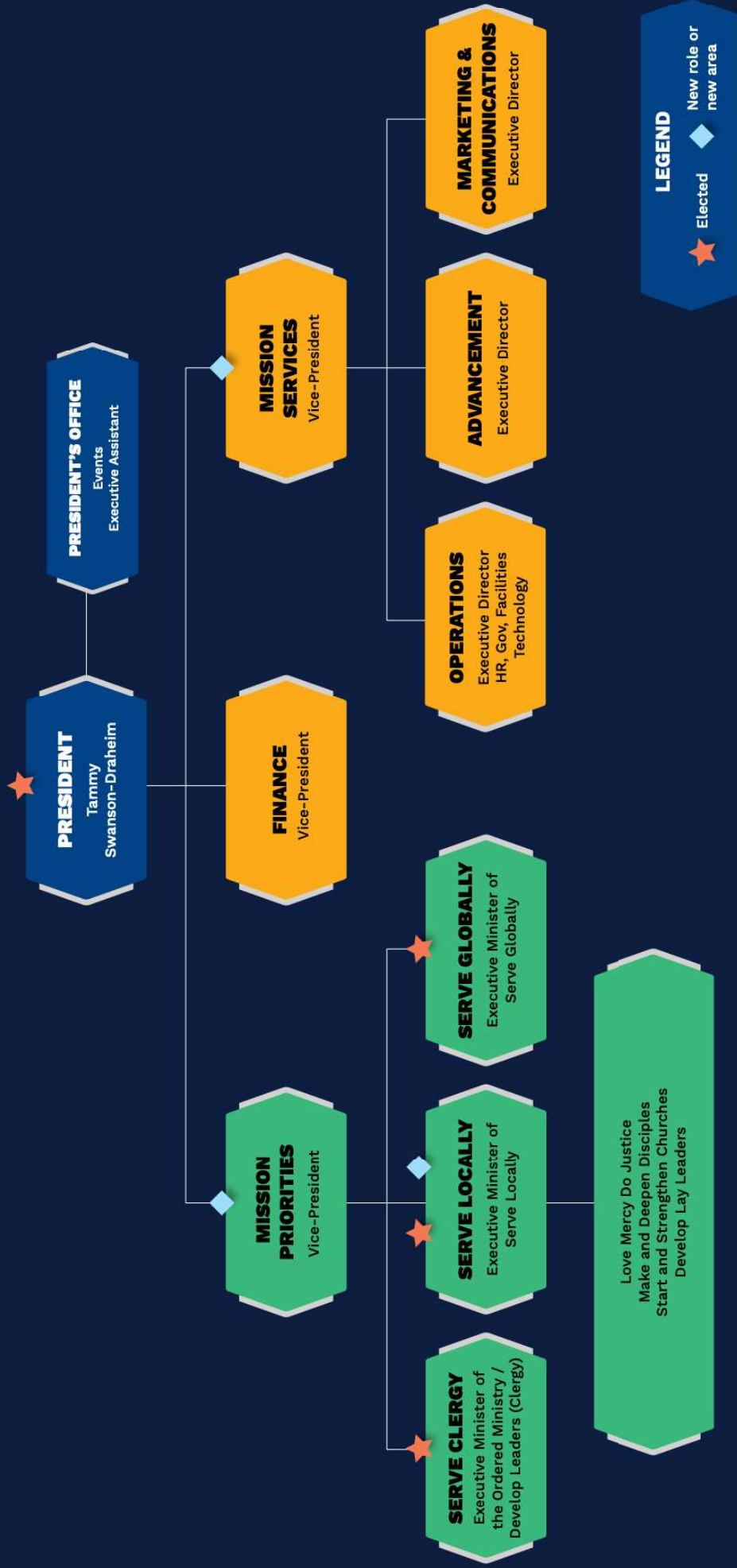
### Section 14.3. Commission on Pastoral Relations. Proposed Text

- a. **The Commission on Pastoral Relations shall have no appointed members but shall consist of the following ex-officio members only: the president of the Covenant, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, the vice president of Mission Priorities, the dean of North Park Theological Seminary, and all regional conference superintendents.**

*Move to update the title to reflect and align with the new proposed structure.*

# Covenant Denominational Team Organizational Design

## PHASE 1





# Covenant Organizational Design:

## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS

### Process and Timelines

#### 1. Why are we going through an organizational structure change?

- The purpose is to align the mission God has given us with the resources God has provided to us for this season, to set us up for a fruitful and thriving future in the years to come.
- Our current context calls for our organization to be structured in a way that allows us to adapt more responsively and quickly to better serve the needs of our local and global churches, communities, and conferences – 3StrandStrong.
- Our mission and mission priorities are central to who we are, so it is prudent to make adjustments to our structure when we have a change in leadership, such as a new president. This is an opportunity to optimize and reflect the gifts of our president and leaders who provide guidance and direction to our denomination.

#### 2. What guiding principles are used in the change process?

- Mission and mission priorities remain our central focus.
- We work together, not divided.
- We work within what God has provided financially.
- Communication is timely, relevant, and clear.
- We pursue the good of the whole church rather than individual stakeholders and groups.
- We serve with integrity.

#### 3. What does Phase 1 of the change process include?

- The first phase includes a framework for organizational structure change that focuses on leadership role alignment, clarity of reporting relationships, and necessary bylaw modifications.



- This phase introduces the process of navigating change and begins to look at structure, systems, processes, and strategies in the perspective of “whole” denominational organization to determine areas of redundancy, needed efficiency, and alignment.
- A needs survey was conducted as part of Phase 1 to assess the needs of churches. These results inform the efforts to align the work of the denominational team as we focus on the five mission priorities and serving the church locally and globally.

#### **4. Why are changes to the bylaws being suggested?**

- Our constitution and bylaws govern and provide prescriptive guidance to aspects of how we operate as a denomination. Periodically, we adjust bylaws to adapt to current times. Modifying elements such as details about names and job descriptions allows the denomination to meet the needs of churches and conferences in a more flexible, collaborative, and timely manner.
- Any proposed changes to the bylaws must go to the Annual Meeting for a vote. The proposed organizational structure provides context for the bylaw changes.

#### **5. Assuming the bylaw changes are approved at the Annual Meeting in June 2023, when would Phase 1 of the organizational design go into effect?**

- If the bylaws are approved, the Phase 1 portion of the structure is currently anticipated to go into effect October 1, 2023.

#### **6. What happens in the next phase?**

- Phases are a way to thoughtfully build out and make modifications to the rest of the organization. This means the leaders identified in Phase 1 will assist in recommending adjustments to subsequent phases of structure to better align us for our work. Utilizing the input and gifts of leadership from missional areas and services will make space for those closest to the work to inform the work/structure needed to serve the mission of the church.
- The next phase also includes beginning to look at how areas work together and how we more intentionally think about process/systems/planning together with input from those involved in the work.

### **Structure**

#### **7. What is the difference between appointed roles and elected roles? Which roles are elected, and which are appointed?**

- The president and all executive ministers are elected roles. The Annual Meeting elects these leaders to ensure the advancement of the mission of the Covenant.

- The proposed structure has four elected positions: president of the Evangelical Covenant Church, executive minister of the Ordered Ministry, executive minister of Serve Locally, and executive minister of Serve Globally. Elections for each position are held by the Annual Meeting every four years.
- The elected leader positions are proposed to guide areas of ministry (Serve Clergy, Serve Locally, Serve Globally) instead of specific titles and mission priorities. This arrangement is conducive to better alignment, collaboration, and leadership across the mission priorities. It also allows for better stewardship of our resources.
- The three vice-presidents (Mission Priorities, Mission Services, and Finance) are appointed by the president and ratified by the Executive Board. The executive directors of Operations, Advancement, and Marketing and Communications are also appointed.
- Appointed roles are appointed by the president and ratified by the Covenant Executive Board. The continuity that an appointed role provides is not limited by terms, which reduces disruptions from transition and allows an organization to be maintained continuously.

#### **8. What are the term lengths for the vice-presidents and executive ministers?**

- All elected roles (the president and all executive ministers) serve for four-year terms.
- Appointed roles (vice-presidents and executive directors) do not have term limits and are managed as employees of the organization against their responsibilities.
- All roles are subject to annual reviews.

#### **9. Which roles are ordained or credentialed?**

- The president and the executive minister of the Ordered Ministry are the only roles that require ordination.
- The vice-president of Mission Priorities, executive minister of Serve Locally, and executive minister of Serve Globally are recommended to be credentialed roles but do not require ordination.

#### **10. How will this new structure work in the beginning?**

- The executive minister of Love Mercy Do Justice, Paul Robinson, and the executive minister of Start and Strengthen Churches, Paul Lessard, have terms that are set to renew at this Annual Meeting. If the proposed bylaws are approved, these two roles and the executive minister of Make and Deepen Disciples would not need to be renewed.
- If the proposed bylaw amendments are approved at this Annual Meeting, the appointment for one year of interim leadership with Paul Robinson serving as the interim

executive minister of Serve Locally would go before the Covenant Executive Board for approval. Election for this new role would be slated for 2024.

- If the proposed bylaw amendments are approved at this Annual Meeting, the appointment of Paul Lessard to the role of vice president of Mission Priorities would go before the Covenant Executive Board for approval.
- The following leaders would continue in service according to the terms they were elected to or the roles they were appointed to:
  - Executive minister of the Ordered Ministry – Herb Frost (term ends 2026)
  - Executive minister of Serve Globally – Grace Shim (term ends 2026)
  - Executive director of Advancement – Gayle Gilreath (appointed)
  - Interim executive director of Operations – Deb Mitchell (currently appointed through June 30, 2023, with proposal to extend appointment)
  - Executive director of Marketing and Communications – Jennifer McIntyre (appointed)

#### **11. What is the reasoning for combining mission priorities under Serve Locally, and how will it work?**

- According to our current bylaws, one executive minister oversees each mission priority. The revised structure proposes that the executive minister of Serve Locally leads the mission priorities of Make and Deepen Disciples, Start and Strengthen Churches, and Love Mercy Do Justice.
- The Covenant will continue to focus on every mission priority, but a one-to-one correspondence between a single leader and a single mission priority will no longer exist. One leader who oversees multiple areas will increase collaborative goal setting, prioritization, and better management of financial and personnel resources. The specific details of that setup will be addressed in subsequent phases.
- Phase 1 addresses executive leadership roles but not individual staff or team member roles or how they will work together and collaborate. The subsequent phases will build out this detail if the Annual Meeting approves the proposed bylaw amendments.
- The Covenant's commitment to evangelism and discipleship, biblical justice and racial righteousness, church planting, and church vitality remains strong and core to our identity. Reconfiguring those teams does not convey a diminishment of the priority of this work but rather seeks to align the work more closely and reduce redundancies.

#### **12. Is the Serve Locally area a reasonable scope for one executive minister?**

- The Serve Locally area is about how the work is led, supported, and staffed rather than describing the scope. Many strong, capable leaders are already guiding much of the work

included in this area, and the proposed arrangement will foster closer collaboration and aligning of goals.

- Serve Globally functions as one team focused on our mission priorities across the world. We envision the Serve Locally area functioning in a similar manner in the domestic sphere.

### **13. Is the development of lay leaders a new mission priority?**

- The development of lay leaders has always been a priority to the Church. We foresee close collaboration between Serve Clergy, Serve Locally, and Serve Globally in developing lay leaders. As more and more churches turn to bivocational and alternate forms of church leadership, the lines between clergy and lay leaders become more fluid and require a more expansive, collaborative, and innovative approach.

### **14. Are there any concerns about an appointed person reporting to an elected person or an elected person reporting to an appointed person?**

- The bylaws allow for varied reporting relationships. The president is the highest level of leadership in our denomination and is an elected role. Vice-presidents are appointed but are an extension of the president. One of the responsibilities of the president is to set appropriate authority and communication channels, and the vice-presidents follow the lead of the president. In our current structure, elected executive ministers report to an appointed person. There are no plans to change this in the proposed structure.

### **15. What happens to Covenant Offices Leadership Team (COLT) in the proposed structure?**

- COLT is not an entity in our bylaws, but it has been helpful to have a regular meeting cadence between the president and executive leadership. The meeting cadence for the proposed leadership structure is to be determined, but President Tammy Swanson-Draheim highly values time with leaders and staff throughout the organization. New nomenclature will be determined to define the executive leadership teams to avoid confusion.

### **16. Will moving into this structure with the existing and proposed leaders reduce the ethnic diversity of our leadership?**

- Filling the proposed vice-president of Mission Services and other open roles as part of the organizational build-out will include a continued priority of ethnic diversity as a guideline during the hiring process.
- Other than leaders who are transitioning out, the remaining leadership, which includes leaders of color, will continue in their roles. In addition, we intentionally seek to maintain and increase our diverse staff at Covenant Offices.

**17. How does this structure demonstrate 3StrandStrong? What does this reorganization mean for how conferences will work with the denomination going forward?**

- 3StrandStrong references the collaborative and essential partnership between the local church, regional conferences, and the denominational team.
- It is a high priority for the denominational team to align with our conferences and support the work that they are doing. There is greater opportunity for more collaboration, and this will be engaged in future phases.

**Impact**

**18. In addition to facilitating the alignment of the mission with the resources, what other benefits will the structural changes offer?**

- This structure brings greater focus to the work of the denominational team. The three executive ministers will work closely and collaborate on the mission priorities.
- Under the leadership of the president and vice-presidents, the teams will operate with overarching goals that will help to align their work to better focus on the needs of our churches and conferences.
- The structure is one part of the overall change management process, which will also include financial stewardship, reducing redundancy, and closing gaps or inefficiencies.
- The need for the development of lay leaders in our churches is a consistent theme. This structure creates an intentional pathway for current and future needs to be addressed through a structure that is more flexible and focused. The increase of lay leadership development under Serve Locally is one example of the denominational team responding to needs shared by both churches and conferences.
- With mutual goal setting, we envision the teams collaborating together in order to meet the identified needs of churches, along with partnering with conferences.

**19. What is the financial sustainability of this model? What are the cost savings?**

- Finance is producing a financial model to create a more sustainable future. Cost savings have already been identified and will be intentionally addressed in future phases.
- This proposed phase has a reduction of two executive ministers and a reduction of the executive director of Ministry Development. The vice-president of Mission Services and VP of Mission Priorities are new roles. The net executive reduction in this phase is one full-time equivalent.
- Structure is just one piece of the financial puzzle. The denominational team has been working hard to reduce expenses. The proposed structure supports combining some mission priorities, which intends to eliminate unnecessary redundancies and supports a more targeted focus on shared initiatives.

## 20. When will we find out about the status of remote work?

- We do not yet have a timeframe for the remote decision.
- Completing all phases of the reorganization process is essential to understand the work that needs to be done through each employee's role. Once the new structure has been fully fleshed out, that will be the logical time to determine how best to align work and location requirements. We will provide ongoing updates if the bylaws are approved.

## 21. How can I learn more?

Join any of the virtual **Covenant Organizational Design** delegate briefing sessions:

1. Monday, May 8 | 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Central
2. Tuesday, May 30 | 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Central
3. Tuesday, May 30 | 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Central

Visit <https://covchurch.org/gather/> for more information and to locate the zoom links.

Disclaimer:

*This document represents some of the questions that we are frequently asked. The questions and answers are not intended to be exhaustive, but to be helpful as you review the proposed bylaw changes and the structure presented to you. Information may be subject to change. Materials are provided as a point of reference for what is current at the time of printing.*



## Covenant Organizational Design:

### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION | INTERIM LEADERSHIP BIOGRAPHIES



#### **PAUL LESSARD, PROPOSED TO BE VICE-PRESIDENT OF MISSION PRIORITIES**

Paul Lessard serves as executive minister of Start and Strengthen Churches. Throughout his years of ministry, he has served as a worship pastor, senior pastor, and nonprofit consultant serving churches and organizations in the U.S. and Canada as well as internationally. Paul also has 17 years in Christian higher education serving in teaching, administrative, and executive roles for Covenant Bible College and Colorado Christian University. Paul has been a part of six church plants, as well as serving on the Front Range Church Planting group for the Midwest conference of the ECC. As a consultant, he has worked with individuals, teams, and organizations finding themselves at some kind of a crossroads.

Paul was one of the creators of the award-winning puppetry series Quigley's Village seen on TBN, as well as being a published songwriter and author.

Paul has a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and a master's in executive leadership. He and his wife, Rebecca currently live in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and have two adult children, a daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren.



**PAUL ROBINSON, PROPOSED TO BE EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE LOCALLY**

Paul Robinson is the executive minister of Love Mercy Do Justice for the Evangelical Covenant Church. Robinson’s combined experience in ministry, business, nonprofit management, and leadership development spans 30 years. Prior to this role, Paul planted Grace Outreach Covenant Church, was Senior Community Leadership Manager with the Wilder Center for Communities, and former Director of the organization’s James P. Shannon Leadership Institute.

Paul is skilled in helping leaders discover their core motivations and helping them develop a plan to do their best work and live their best life. He has partnered with nonprofit, for-profit, education, government and community individuals and organizations in core value clarification, intercultural agility, anti-racism, and capacity strengthening to help them better lead themselves and others. Paul is most comfortable at the intersection of ideas, differences, passion, and effective action. He enjoys using his skills in meeting design, facilitation, and convening to catalyze meaningful connections to stimulate individual and community transformation.

Robinson holds a B.S. degree in Finance from Eastern Illinois University and a Master of Divinity degree from McCormick Theological Seminary. Paul is married to Kim, and together they have seven adult children.