



2023 Annual Meeting Ballot

The following names have been nominated by the Board of Nominations and the Covenant Executive Board and are now on the official ballot for the 137th Covenant Annual Meeting. Biographical sketches of these candidates are included.

The listing of nominees may be altered on the official ballot if any candidate declines before the time of election.

2023 BALLOT FROM THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS:

EXECUTIVE BOARD

(six-year terms)

William Davidson

Hillside Covenant Church, Walnut Creek, CA

David Im

Highrock Covenant Church, Arlington, MA

Troy Nichols

Common Ground Covenant Church,
Sacramento, CA

(four-year term)

Dean Erickson

Salem Covenant Church, New Brighton, MN

(two-year term)

Kanyere Eaton

Fellowship Covenant Church, Bronx, NY

BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

(five-year terms)

Pamela Pangborn

Hope Community Church, Detroit, MI

Pia Peña Restrepo

Edgebrook Covenant Church, Chicago, IL

T J Smith

Covenant Youth of Alaska, Anchorage, AK

BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

(five-year terms)

Virgil Biggs

Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI

Heather Perkins

The Journey Church, Wichita, KS

BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

(five-year terms) - continued

Michael Rice

Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI

David Tien

Access Evangelical Covenant Church, Houston, TX

(four-year term)

Sean Hoffbeck

Alaska Christian College, Soldotna, AK

COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE

(five-year terms)

Curt Anderson

Northwest Covenant Church, Mount Prospect, IL

Mary Palmer

Hillside Covenant Church, Walnut Creek, CA

Kecia Stroot

Roseau Evangelical Covenant Church, Roseau, MN

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

(three-year terms)

Jay Carstenbrock

Glen Ellyn Evangelical Covenant Church, Glen Ellyn, IL

Gregory Crawford

Naperville Covenant Church, Naperville, IL

Mary Miller

Bethany Covenant Church, Berlin, CT

Peter Nelson

Winnetka Covenant Church, Wilmette, IL

David Otfinoski

Haddam Neck Covenant Church, East Hampton, CT

ANNUAL MEETING OFFICERS FOR 2024 & 2025

(two-year terms)

Moderator

Julia Sandstrom

Thornapple Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI

Vice-Moderator

Carolyn Poterek

Libertyville Covenant Church, Libertyville, IL

2023 BALLOT FROM THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR BOARD OF NOMINATIONS:

(five-year terms)

Eric Hedberg, Canada Conference

Emmanuel Covenant Church, South Surrey, BC

Eric Johnson, Alaska Conference

Alaska Christian College, Soldotna, AK

Mark Mohrweis, Midsouth Conference

Redeemer Covenant Church, Carrollton, TX

Donecia Norwood-Smith, Pacific Northwest Conference

Midtown Church, Sacramento, CA

(two-year term)

Anthony Clerkin, Midwest Conference

Hope Covenant Church, El Dorado, KS



2023 Board of Nominations Candidates

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

Will Davidson

Pacific Southwest Conference Representative

Independent Engineering Consultant

San Ramon, California



Throughout his career as an engineer, Will primarily worked in the planning and design of rapid transit systems across North America, Jerusalem, and Sydney. He has worked with LA Metro since 1972 and been involved in every rail line built in Los Angeles since that time. In 2016, Will retired as senior vice president of Parsons Brinckerhoff, Inc., a civil engineering transportation consulting firm. Since then, he has worked as an independent consultant and part-time for the San Francisco Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Will has had the honor of serving the Covenant on local, conference, and denominational levels. He has been a member of the PSWC conference for four terms and chair of the PSWC board for eight years. He served on the Covenant Executive board from 2011 to 2017, as chair from 2014 to 2016. He has served as the chair of three PSWC superintendent search committees and on three Covenant presidential nominating committees. Will has also led the creation of a one-day training course for local church chairs and vice-chairs. Will and his wife, Gloria, have been members of Hillside Covenant Church for 37 years. They have three children and six grandchildren.

Personal Statement of Faith: I made my personal commitment to Christ in high school. I once considered whether God was calling me into ministry but realized that engineering was the direction for my life. Over the years, I have come to rely on the power of prayer and to lean on Christ who always goes before me. It has been exciting to watch God's hand in everyday life, in our local church, and in the PSWC. There are miracles all around us, and I try and stop and give him the glory each day. I have learned to trust in Christ and let go of my life, so I that I can experience life.

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

David Im

East Coast Conference Representative

Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

Burlington, Massachusetts



David and his family have been blessed to be part of the Highrock community in Arlington, Massachusetts, for the past 12 years. David, the son of a pastor, was born in Korea and raised in Brazil. His family settled into the American immigrant life in Los Angeles, California, eventually moving to Arizona where he met his wife in middle school. His family of origin and immigration journey deeply informs his outlook as a missional and purpose-driven leader. Professionally, David loves making an impact in the lives of his clients as a financial advisor and strategic corporate leader in his organization.

Personal Statement of Faith: I am a born again Christian. I believe in the divinity, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I accept him as my Lord and Savior.

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

Troy Nichols

Pacific Southwest Conference Representative

Pastor, Common Ground Covenant Church

Sacramento, California



Troy Nichols is an ordained pastor, entrepreneur, and educator with an MBA in entrepreneurship and a master's of Christian ministry. He serves as the senior pastor of Common Ground Church, an adjunct professor at California State University Sacramento, and a qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory. He is excited to bring his passion and experience in intercultural communities and innovative spirit to the executive board.

Personal Statement of Faith: I am a third generation “PK” (pastor’s kid) and have grown up in the ministry. However, my parents allowed for me to explore a personal relationship with Jesus on my own. I gave my life to Christ when I was seven years old. I will always remember the moment—I was driving to school with my mother when a worship song was playing. I asked my mother who Jesus was, and how he was God? After some conversation, my mother led me to accept Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dean Erickson

Northwest Conference Representative

Retired School Administrator, School/Educational Consultant
Minneapolis, Minnesota



Dean Erickson is a lifelong member of Salem Covenant Church in New Brighton, Minnesota, where he taught confirmation, adult Sunday School, and served on church boards. He has a BA from North Park University, an MA degree from the University of Minnesota, and a doctorate of education from Bethel University.

Dean and his wife, Donna, taught at the International School of Lusaka in Zambia and were instructors for two years in the college line for North Park University’s international exchange program at Södra Vätterbygdens Folkhogskola in Jönköping, Sweden.

Dean was president of Legacy Christian Academy for three years in Andover, Minnesota, and served for 25 years as principal of Minnehaha Academy, a ministry of the Northwest Conference. He is currently on the Board of Directors of Minnesota Renewal, a nonprofit counseling organization that serves faith community leaders, and is the former chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis. He currently does consulting work on board governance issues. Dean and Donna live in Minneapolis and have three adult children.

Personal Statement of Faith: I was born and raised in a Christian home. My parents loved the Covenant Church and both served in a variety of capacities. I attended Covenant Pines Bible Camp where I made a commitment to follow Jesus as a companion and guide for my life. I attended North

Park University where my faith matured and deepened and service to others became an important component in my career planning. Being an administrator both in public and Christian schools has given me incredible opportunities to “walk my talk” as a Jesus follower. Jesus gives me hope for today and tomorrow, gratitude for all that God has provided, and a passion to serve others.

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

Kanyere Eaton

East Coast Conference Representative

Pastor, Fellowship Covenant Church

Bronx, New York



Kanyere Eaton is the senior pastor of Fellowship Covenant Church in the Bronx, New York, where she has served for 13 years. She is the first woman to lead this urban congregation in its 123-year history. Kanyere has backgrounds in social work, substance abuse prevention, and philanthropy. She completed a bachelor of science degree at Cornell University, a master of science degree in social work at Columbia University, a master of divinity degree at Union Theological Seminary, and a doctorate of ministry at San Francisco Theological Seminary. She is married to James Dennis with whom she shares a passion for ministry.

Personal Statement of Faith: I am a joyful follower of Christ Jesus. I came to faith in the Lord in elementary school, following the powerful example of my mother, a Holy Spirit-led believer. In undergraduate school, I sensed a call to ministry, which I acknowledged in my mid-twenties. I have sought to follow, and serve, and please the Lord throughout my life. I am instructed by God’s Word, and I seek to be led by God’s Spirit every day. I have received great mercy and grace along this imperfect journey.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

Pamela Pangborn

Great Lakes Conference Representative

Director of Pastoral Care, Rooted Ministries

Gross Pointe Park, Michigan



Pam Pangborn serves as the director of pastoral care at Rooted Ministries, a ministry that equips pastors to thrive in ministry and life as they become grounded in the love of God. She just concluded a 16-year tenure as pastor at Hope Community Church in Detroit, an urban faith community deeply committed to racial righteousness. She is passionate about helping pastors and leaders experience the transforming love of God through intimate relationship with Jesus and helping people embrace their identity in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus within the world. Pam is committed to building authentic, life-changing communities with other followers of Jesus that become a pathway for healing and wholeness within the church. She also serves as a spiritual director within the Evangelical Covenant Church and as a senior caregiver with Healing Care Ministries, a ministry dedicated to empowering God's people for the Christian journey through pastoral care, spiritual formation, and training and equipping leaders to minister healing within the church. She is a graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio and holds a master of divinity/master of counseling degree and a doctor of ministry degree in formational counseling.

Personal Statement of Faith: My conversion to Christ began at age ten when holding a palm in my hand on Palm Sunday, and I first realized what Jesus had done for me by choosing to die upon the cross. Since that time, I have had many conversions of the heart as I have surrendered more of my life to Christ. Although I have believed in Jesus for many years, I did not receive the nurture of Christian community throughout my early life. At age 39, my sister became very ill, and the journey of walking along her side caused me to surrender my will and life to Christ and to enter fully into Christian community. That season was also the beginning of my call to full-time ministry. I continue to hunger and thirst after God and seek to follow Jesus in all things related to my life and ministry. Through the practice of the spiritual disciplines, both individually and corporately, I seek to position myself to be transformed, through the power of the Holy Spirit, more deeply into Christ's image and likeness.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

Pia Peña Restrepo

Central Conference Representative

Regional Coordinator, Latin America and the Caribbean
Serve Globally | Evangelical Covenant Church, Chicago, Illinois



Pia is an ordained Covenant pastor and global personnel serving with her husband Eugenio as regional coordinators to Latin America and the Caribbean. She studied linguistics and Christian education and is a spiritual director and a teacher. One of her greatest joys is to learn and teach God's Word.

Pia enjoys reading, painting, translating, writing, swimming, and biking. She likes coffee, raspberries, vegetable gardens, white elephants, art galleries, lentil soup, fresh cilantro and spending time with family and friends.

Pia is thankful for God's presence in her life, for opportunities to serve and learn, and for the joy and hope she finds in God's Word. She is thankful for her daughter, Paulina, and son-in-law, Ross, for her son, Effy, and for Alithea and Elise, her twin granddaughters.

Personal Statement of Faith: I believe in God, I believe in Jesus the Son of God, I believe in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. I believe in Christ and the forgiveness of sin through his death on the cross. I believe that I am redeemed by his love; therefore, nothing can separate me from the love of Christ. I believe in the power of prayer and the power of true community. As a Covenanter, I believe the Word of God is the "only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct."

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

TJ Smith

Alaska Conference Representative

Spiritual Director, Covenant Youth of Alaska

Anchorage, Alaska



TJ Smith is a Lakota, Ho Chunk, Cherokee man who lives in Anchorage, Alaska, on the lands of the Dena'ina Nation. He feels honored to have served the Creator in many ways, in rural Washington, in the inner city of Anchorage, with the homeless in Anchorage, and as pastor of New Song Covenant Church for 18 years. When his service as pastor ended last May, TJ took on a new role and is now working with First Nation students in Alaska as pastor of spiritual formation for Covenant Youth of Alaska. He also humbly serves the greater Covenant body in many ways. He shares Indigenous perspectives in Covenant Orientation and Crux, North Park University's one-year program designed for first-year students who want to grow in intercultural Christian discipleship. TJ also serves as a member of the Mosaic Commission, the Board of Ordered Ministry, and is currently the interim president of the Covenant Ministerium. He is married to Polly, who is an elementary PE teacher. They love to be in the Creator's creation through fishing, walking their dogs, and hiking. They have three children.

Personal Statement of Faith: Growing up in the church, I heard the message of God my whole life. At the age of seven, I believed in who God was. I was baptized at 12 or 13. At 17, I committed my life to God at camp. It has been a continuing and deepening my relationship with God. I have always felt God calling me to serve people. I assumed that would be through teaching high school history, but God had other plans. I volunteered as a youth leader and over time opportunities to do vocational ministry opened, first with Young Life, and then in the church. The Church the last place I thought I would be serving, but God has changed my heart, and the passion I had for teens, I now have for families and adults.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Virgil Biggs

Great Lakes Conference Representative

Financial Advisor

Biggs, Dickerson, and Roberts Wealth Management Services

Saranac, Michigan



Virgil became a licensed CPA in 1971 and over time realized his clients could benefit from investment services. Therefore in 1987, he became an Investment Adviser Representative. He takes pride in blending his knowledge of investments and tax to assist clients with investments that do not produce unexpected tax consequences. He feels fortunate to now focus on investments and still provide tax preparation and planning services to investment clients. He obtained his Michigan insurance license in 1999, and added insurance and annuity services to the options he provides clients. Insurance options include not only fixed and variable annuities, but term and whole life insurance and long-term care insurance where appropriate. He feels fortunate to add these options to the ability to offer stock, bond, and mutual fund investments as wealth management solutions.

Virgil has been married to his wife, Connie, since 1968. They have three grown daughters and six grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is active in his local church where he serves on various boards. He also serves on the Board of Sparrow Ionia Hospital and previously chaired the building campaign. He is an avid athlete and since 2019, he has participated in the Michigan Senior Olympics and qualified to attend the National Senior Olympics throughout the country. He will also participate in the upcoming 2023 games in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has been successful in the javelin, shotput, hammer throw and discus competitions, and previously completed numerous marathons and half-marathons to raise almost \$50,000 for charity.

Personal Statement of Faith: I had a born again experience at age and for more than 50 years have been on an exciting journey to learn more and share more about Jesus. I love how he challenges me to allow God to “open my eyes to the things unseen” and to “break my heart for the things that break his.” I strive to make that a part of my daily life.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Heather Perkins

Midwest Conference Representative

Director, Center Operations and Finance

Wichita State University

Wichita, Kansas



In her role at Wichita State University, Heather provides leadership for administrative operations. She creates and maintains the financial and operational infrastructure of an institute that supports individual centers, the university, and community partners. She provides financial analysis and reporting for research organizations and individual business units. In addition, she serves The Journey Church in Wichita, Kansas, bivocationally as associate pastor. Heather graduated from North Park Seminary and was ordained in 2018. Outside of these roles, she enjoys reading mysteries, gardening, music, and relaxing in her hammock.

Personal Statement of Faith: While still very much in process, I am fully committed to living a life committed to Christ. I desire to be conformed into his image, serve his church and be a witness of his love to the broader community.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Mike Rice

Great Lakes Conference Representative

Lead Pastor, Faith Covenant Church

Westland, Michigan



Born and raised in metro Detroit, Mike has been involved in vocational ministry since 2005 and has served at Faith Covenant Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan, since 2018. He received his undergraduate degree in psychology from William Tyndale College and a master's in theology from Michigan Theological Seminary. Mike has a discerning and organized mind and has served in a range of different church settings. He has been married to his

wife, Laura, since 1992, and they have one son and one daughter. Outside of church, he loves backpacking, bodyboarding, and a good triathlon!

Personal Statement of Faith: In February of 1990, I put my faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and found the forgiveness of sins. Since that time, I've been working to follow Jesus as well as I can wherever he sends me.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

David Tien

Midsouth Conference Representative

Consultant, bswift

Houston, Texas



David Tien has spent the last 25 years of his professional career in benefits administration and is currently a senior leader at bswift. He attends and is a trustee at Access Evangelical Covenant Church in Houston, Texas, and was a member of the planting leadership team when the church was formed over 15 years ago.

David is married to his wife, Julie, and they became empty nesters when their younger of two sons went to college last fall. One of his quests in life is to see baseball games in every MLB stadium; he has seven left to visit.

Personal Statement of Faith: I've been a follower of Christ since high school and discovered that God gave me gifts of leadership and experience that I've been able to use in a multitude of ways to serve his church. I believe I must reflect his love for people by caring for and serving others in the way Jesus served those he led. I've been humbled that God has always invited an imperfect person such as myself to serve in ways that were seemingly above my "maturity level"—from my young adult days of teaching children's choir to helping plant a church in my late 30s, none of which I could have imagined. I'm also challenged to lead like Christ in my professional life. Making disciples isn't exclusively done in the church or overseas, but also our interactions with people daily may be the only chance for God's love to shine on them.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

Sean Hoffback

Alaska Conference Representative

Vice President of Operations

Alaska Christian College

Kenai, Alaska



Born and raised in Alaska, Sean grew up in a Christian home where faith and family were always a top priority. After completing high school, he attended college in Chicago, where he met and married his wife, Shannon. Following graduation, they felt called to return to Alaska to work at Alaska Christian College. Sean currently serves as the vice president of operations and has held various other positions during his 16 years with the college.

Since his return to Alaska, Sean has furthered his education and ministry training. He earned an MDiv and was ordained to Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Covenant Church. He currently serves as the vice chair for the Alaska Conference Ministerium and assists with teaching in the Covenant's Financial Jump Start Program. In his free time, Sean loves to fish, snowboard, and travel to places that are not as cold as Alaska. He also enjoys playing hockey (his lifelong passion) and coaching his kids' three hockey teams.

Personal statement of faith: From as early as I can remember I have gone to church and believed in God. The first time Christ became especially real in my life was when I attended a camp called Youth Empowerment before my freshman year of high school. After I tasted what it meant to have a personal relationship with God, my faith began to become my own. I began to take leadership positions within my youth group and was the president of the Christian club at my public high school. I felt God calling me to full-time ministry, so after high school I pursued a degree in pastoral ministry at Moody Bible Institute. After college graduation, my wife and I moved up to Alaska to work at Alaska Christian College serving Alaska Natives. I have found myself humbled again and again that God would use me to serve his people, not only to come to know Christ, but to encourage them to walk and grow in their faith.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

Jay Carstenbrock

Central Conference Representative

Retired

VP of Operations Support

Wheaton, Illinois



Jay is currently a member of the North Park University Board of Trustees. He serves as vice chair of the Board and has chaired various committees as a member of the Board.

Jay earned his BS and MBA from the University of Minnesota. He is a retired vice president of operations support for BP; in a more than 26-year career with BP, Jay held numerous senior level finance and operations positions and was often called upon to lead through change. His roles have included CFO, transformation program director, strategy and performance director, and senior business advisor. After retirement, Jay returned to work for BP as a contractor for three years to assist BP with the Gulf of Mexico crisis response.

Jay has engaged in numerous other charitable, civic and religious involvements, formerly serving on the Board for the Repeat Boutique in Wheaton, Illinois; and the Board of Metro Chicago Youth for Christ. Jay currently serves on the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry Board and is church chair and a member of Glen Ellyn Evangelical Covenant Church. He and his wife, Barbara, have three daughters.

Personal Statement of Faith: Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. It has been my joy to walk with him or a lifetime. I owe him everything, and my deep desire is to be light and salt wherever or in whatever circumstance he places me. To God be the glory.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

Gregory Crawford

Central Conference Representative

SVP, Human Capital Management

Assured Partners Illinois

Lisle, Illinois



Greg Crawford brings more than 30 years of human resources management experience to his current position as senior vice president, Human Capital Management with Assured Partners Illinois. He is a certified professional in human resources and has held leadership positions that include director of employment, Empire BlueCross BlueShield of New York; director of compensation and benefits, BlueCross BlueShield Associations; director of human resources for the startup operations of National Futures Association, and manager of human resources for the Chicago Board of Trade. In addition to Greg's human resources background, he has held sales and marketing positions with the Signature Group as vice president, employer marketing; Adecco as area vice president; and TJ Adams Group as vice president, human capital management. Greg is an adjunct professor at the Graduate School of Business and Nonprofit Management, North Park University. His courses and lecture activities include Strategic Human Resources Planning and Staffing, Strategy and Metrics in Human Resources and Talent Development and Retention. He has also been a guest lecturer at the Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management's "Boot Camp" for new nonprofit CEOs.

Greg currently serves as a member of North Park University's Board of Trustees and is a member of the board's executive committee. He is also on the Board of Directors and has served as a mentor in the Transitional Housing Program for Bridge Communities, an organization that provides programs and services for homeless families. Greg holds a bachelor of arts in communication from North Park College and a master of arts in communication from Governors State University.

Personal Statement of Faith: I firmly believe that the Bible is the Word of God and Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. I promise to follow him as a faithful follower and member of the church.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

Mary Miller

East Coast Conference Representative

Chaplain

Covenant Village of Cromwell

Middleton, Connecticut



Mary is a current member of the North Park University Board of Trustees, serving in her role since 2017 and during that time as board secretary. Mary is a chaplain at Covenant Living of Cromwell, Connecticut. Previously, she was a pastor in the Midwest, a vice president (and first woman officer) of the Evangelical Covenant Church, and the director of a Lilly Endowment grant. Mary has served on many national boards in the Covenant, including the North Park University Board of Trustees for five years during the 1990s. She has been a columnist for *The Covenant Companion* and authored articles printed in *Leadership Journal*, *The Christian Century*, and *The Covenant Quarterly*, among others.

Mary has also authored a book, *Living with Loss*. During the 2017 Midwinter Conference, she received the North Park Theological Seminary's Alumni Award for Distinguished Service. Mary is a member of Bethany Covenant Church in Berlin, Connecticut.

Personal Statement of Faith: My faith has deepened over the years, knowing that God created me from his love, saved me through Christ's salvation, and nurtured me in the Holy Spirit. As an ordained minister, I have had the privilege of daily enhancing my own spiritual growth by participating in the body of Christ, studying his Word, and serving others inside and outside the church. Teaching confirmation, preparing texts for sermons, and Christian spiritual direction training were treasured activities that kept me on my knees and challenged!

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

Peter Nelson

Central Conference Representative

Dean of Engineering

University of Illinois Chicago

Wilmette, Illinois



Peter was appointed dean of the University of Illinois Chicago's (UIC) College of Engineering in 2008. Prior to assuming his deanship, he was head of the UIC Department of Computer Science. In 1991, he founded UIC's Artificial Intelligence Laboratory, which specializes in applied intelligence systems projects in fields such as transportation, manufacturing, bioinformatics, and e-mail spam countermeasures.

Peter has published more than 80 scientific peer-reviewed papers and has been the principal investigator on over \$40 million in research grants and contracts on issues of importance such as computer-enhanced transportation systems, manufacturing, design optimization, and bioinformatics. These projects have been funded by organizations such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the National Academy of Sciences, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Motorola. In 1994-1995, Peter's laboratory, sponsored by the Illinois Department of Transportation, developed the first real-time traffic congestion map on the world wide web, which now receives more than 100 million hits per year.

Peter received his undergraduate degree in mathematics and computer science from North Park University and his MS and PhD degrees in computer science from Northwestern University.

Personal Statement of Faith: I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

David Otfinoski

East Coast Conference Representative

President

Catamount Medical Education

Chester, Connecticut



David is the current chair of the North Park University Board of Trustees. He has served as a member of the board since 2016, and also was a board member from 2009 to 2014. David is currently president and CEO of Catamount Medical Education and former CEO of MedKnowledge, LLC. Previously he has served as CEO of MyBusinessAssistant and account director at R.R. Donnelly and Sons Corporate Giving Program.

David graduated from North Park in 1984 with a BA in history and earned an MBA from Sacred Heart University. He is married to Maria (Varalli) Otfinoski C'84, and they have two children, Annie and Benjamin C'14, as well as a daughter-in-law, Sommar (Johnson) C'14 G'21. David is a member of Haddam Neck Covenant Church in East Hampton, Connecticut.

Personal Statement of Faith: I came to faith in Christ as a young teenager at the Covenant camp in New Hampshire. Since that time, my faith has served as the motivating factor shaping how I behave toward others, exist within my work environment, and consider where to focus my time, talents, and resources. I know I am an imperfect vessel for the Christian message, yet each day I pray I can bring the presence of the living God to the world around me.

NOMINEE AS ANNUAL MEETING MODERATOR

Julia Sandstrom

Great Lakes Conference Representative

Teaching Pastor

Thornapple Covenant Church

Grand Rapids, Michigan



Julia serves as the teaching pastor at Thornapple Covenant Church and has served as the chair of the Board of Nominations for the Covenant for the past three years. She believes good governance assists in creating successful meetings and ministries. The Covenant Church is her denominational home, and she looks forward to serving in this way.

Prior to joining the Thornapple Covenant staff, Julia served as associate pastor at Holy Community Covenant Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is ordained to Word and Service in the Evangelical Covenant Church and holds a master's of theology from Regent College in Vancouver. Julia double majored in biblical studies and philosophy at North Park University. Prior to her time there, she attended Covenant Bible College. Born and raised in California, Julia grew up in a Covenant church and went to camp every summer at the Covenant's Mission Springs Camp. It was at camp where she first felt a call to ministry. Preaching and discipleship are a passion for Julia. She loves studying the Word, writing sermons, and witnessing the Holy Spirit work through preaching. One of Julia's greatest joys is helping people not only learn more about God, but also experience his love for them. She is currently learning more about how to do this well through her training to become a spiritual director.

Julia met her husband, Bryan, when she moved to Canada to work in the Covenant's Canadian conference office as the director of ministry support. They have two children, Hudson and Hava. Their dog, Ollie, was a rescue pup and resembles a small polar bear. Gardening and crossword puzzles are two of Julia's favorite hobbies. She also enjoys cheering for Ferrari during every Formula One Grand Prix.

Personal Statement of Faith: I believe in Jesus Christ. He's my king.

NOMINEE AS ANNUAL MEETING VICE-MODERATOR

Carolyn Poterek

Central Conference Representative

Assistant Professor, School of Education

North Park University

Libertyville, Illinois



Carolyn teaches at North Park University as an assistant professor in the School of Education and as a visiting professor at North Park Theological Seminary. She previously held positions as a full-time as Covenant pastor and a K-12 history and Spanish teacher; she still operates in these roles (in a smaller capacity) when time allows. She loves teaching and pastoring and feels blessed to have found her calling in these areas at an early age.

Carolyn and her husband, Chris, have five children and reside in the Chicagoland area. Carolyn truly enjoys learning new things with (and from) her children and students, traveling, and spending time catching up with close friends near and far.

Personal Statement of Faith: I grew up in a Christian home and had wonderful support from many throughout my upbringing. I made a personal commitment to follow Christ at Covenant Point Bible Camp when I was in middle school. Over the years, in different stages of my life (and in different countries) I have recommitted my life to serving the Lord in ways that seek to be faithful, just, loving, joyful, and peaceful.

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

Curt Anderson

Central Conference Representative

Retired Finance Manager

Beckman Coulter Inc.

Mount Prospect, Illinois



Curt has more than 40 years of experience in corporate finance. He has held various positions with Motorola, Washington Mutual, and Beckman Coulter where he provided finance support and advice to major business units, managed large finance teams, and was responsible for financial planning and forecasting.

Curt previously served on the Covenant Ministries of Benevolence and Covenant Retirement Communities boards and found his experience from corporate finance and church finance work to be valuable in board discussions and decisions. He has been retired for two years. He and his wife, Jan, have two adult children. They attend Northwest Covenant Church where Curt serves as secretary on the leadership team.

Personal Statement of Faith: I know that Jesus Christ is my Savior. He takes away my sins and gives me the example to love others and do service.

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

Mary Palmer

Pacific Southwest Conference Representative

Director of Finance

Hillside Covenant Church

Walnut Creek, California



Mary's career included teaching and accounting. She worked in the private sector as well as multi-national real estate, often using her teaching background to develop and implement training courses across the portfolio. Retirement offered opportunities for volunteer work in health care and not-for-profit organizations in the Chicago area. Five years ago, Mary moved to California to be close to family. She joined Hillside Covenant Church in Walnut Creek and when a staff position opened, she welcomed the opportunity to serve as director of finance.

Mary has served on various Covenant boards since 1991, including Covenant Trust, CRC Services, and Covenant Living. She completed a term on the Board of Benevolence in 2021.

Personal Statement of Faith: I was born into a Covenant family and was baptized at the Elim Mission Covenant Church in Cokato, Minnesota. My family moved during my childhood, and we did not always attend a Covenant church locally. However, the decision to attend North Park College (University) was never in doubt. I found at North Park my Christian home and grew in my faith as I studied the Bible with Christian friends who have continued to be my support. My life today is Christ-centered and I rejoice in his saving grace for me. I am happy that I can continue to serve Christ and the Covenant Church with my tenure on the Board of Benevolence.

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

Kecia Stroot

Northwest Conference Representative

Hospice Chaplain

LifeCare Medical Center

Roseau, Minnesota



Kecia Stroot is an ordained Covenant pastor serving as hospice chaplain in Roseau County. She is wife to Rob, mom to 11, mother-in-law to two, and grandma to one. Kecia's heart to follow God wherever God leads, has led her on many amazing adventures including having more than the two kids she originally planned, seminary, starting a charity in Haiti, and providing foster care. God continues to teach Kecia what it means to love sacrificially and to hold all things with an open hand.

Personal Statement of Faith: Jesus is my Lord and Savior. I am a sinner and cannot save myself.

Jesus's death on the cross has paid the penalty for my sins, and through this atonement, we are restored to Covenant relationship with God. He has redeemed me and saved me. I rely and trust in God as I follow Jesus. My response to God's amazing love for me is to follow Jesus as Lord of my life.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

Eric Hedberg

Canada Conference Representative

Lead Pastor

Emmanuel Covenant Church

South Surrey, British Columbia



Eric is the lead pastor at Emmanuel Covenant Church in South Surrey, British Columbia, just outside Vancouver. He has been there since 2013 and has served in multiple capacities—eighteen months as pastor of community life, one year as interim lead pastor, and almost eight years as lead pastor. After graduating from North Park University and North Park Seminary, Eric felt called out of his role in camping ministry to congregational ministry and has found incredible joy in the opportunity to lead Emmanuel Covenant’s wonderful congregation. Eric recently served as the treasurer for the Covenant Ministerium and chair of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada (ECCC) Ministerial Association. Eric and his wife, Erikka, love living outside Vancouver. Eric also coaches Ultimate frisbee at a local school and looks forward to leading a trip to Israel and Palestine this Spring through the ECCC.

Personal statement of faith: As long as I can remember, I have had a relationship with Jesus Christ. Along with my mom and dad, I was fortunate to have a number of great lay leaders speak into my life in both churches my dad pastored in Minnesota and Illinois. Like many children and youth, I was formed dramatically at camp where I encountered counselors who were fun and lived out their faith, heard music that was exciting and allowed me to connect to God in new ways, and heard preachers who opened up the Bible as a living Word. Throughout my life, my relationship with Christ has been constantly developing. I have found that my relationships with my wife, friends, mentors, colleagues, and congregants often draw me into deeper relationship with Christ. That has been in the form of encouraging or convicting words, through stories of God at work, or simply witnessing the ways my brothers and sisters in Christ find life in him. It is because of the power and beauty of seeing Jesus in relationships with others that I continue to find the role of the local church so vital.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

Eric Johnson

Alaska Conference Representative

VP of Advancement

Alaska Christian College

Soldotna, AK



Eric has served as a youth pastor and associate pastor in Covenant churches since college. He is currently the vice president of advancement at Alaska Christian College and has served in the role for seven years. During this time, he has been fortunate to grow connections with Covenant churches, ministry leaders, and individuals throughout the country, especially in Alaska. Eric and his wife, Meghan, have been married for 21 years and are blessed to be the parents of four children.

Personal Statement of Faith: I accepted Jesus into my heart as a five-year-old child. I was also five when my father unexpectedly died. My mother, a Christian, remarried when I was nine into a rough marriage and divorced when I was fifteen. During these difficult formative years, I knew the powerful and healing love of Christ through the church, specifically through some godly men who pointed me toward a heavenly Father who loves me. I look back with gratitude on the Christian influence of my extended family, including my grandfather and uncle, who served as pastors. As a high schooler at CHIC '88, I rededicated my life to Jesus to serve him throughout my life. Following high school, I went to North Park, where my mind was challenged to understand more fully the truth claims of Jesus and God's Word. As I have grown older, been married for 21 years, am a father of four teenagers (one in college), as an employee and as a friend, I continue to recognize my need for Jesus.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

Mark Mohrweis

Midsouth Conference Representative

Senior Pastor

Redeemer Covenant Church

Carrollton, Texas



For the past 15 years, Mark has served as the senior pastor of Redeemer Covenant Church, a multiethnic, multi-generational congregation in Carrollton, Texas. Prior to this call, he served in ministry in Oak Lawn, Illinois, and Seattle, Washington. He graduated from the University of Washington and North Park Theological Seminary, and he has had the opportunity to serve on the Board of Benevolence as well as on the Midsouth Conference Commission on Ministerial Standing (COMS). He and his wife, Jessica, have three children.

Personal Statement of Faith: I gave my life to Christ at age four and have followed him faithfully since. At age 18, I sensed the call to vocational ministry. Since 2007, I have been serving Christ as pastor of Redeemer Covenant Church.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

Donecia Norwood-Smith

Pacific Southwest Conference Representative

Co-Owner, Consultant, Coach

Influential LLC

Sacramento, California



Donecia has more than 20 years of experience working in both secondary and higher education as an advisor and college and career coordinator, helping young adults determine their career next steps. She has also worked as a fitness and nutrition coach and Zumba instructor. Her desire is to see individuals live purposefully, and to thrive in mind, body, and spirit. Donecia and her husband, Efrem, founded and planted Sanctuary

Covenant Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she helped to equip church leaders and served as women's ministry coordinator. Donecia holds a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota, a master of arts degree in human services with an emphasis in family life education from Concordia University, and is an associate certified coach.

Personal Statement of Faith: I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

Anthony Clerkin

Midwest Conference Representative

Lead Pastor

Hope Covenant Church

El Dorado, Kansas



Anthony Clerkin is the lead pastor of Hope Covenant Church.

He has previously served as children's pastor, youth pastor, and associate pastor at churches in the Central and Midwest conferences over the past 20 years. He just published his first children's book, and Anthony is excited to present gospel themes to the next generation in an approachable and entertaining way. He has served on many youth ministry boards and youth event committees and has been a presenter at Covenant Youth Workers Connection. One of his passions is walking with pastors as they discern God's call in times of transition. Anthony and his wife, Heather, have been married for 21 years, and they have four daughters and a son. Their oldest daughter is now leading youth ministries at their church.

Personal Statement of Faith: As a follower of Christ, I hold my faith as the cornerstone of my life. Through my faith, I have come to know and love God, and I strive to live out his will in everything I do. I believe that God created us in his image and that we are called to love and serve him by loving and serving others. I find great joy and peace in reading and studying the Bible, and I believe that, powered by the Holy Spirit, it is the ultimate source of truth and guidance for our lives. My faith has sustained me through years of testing and trials, and it continues to inspire and motivate me to seek out the imago Dei in those God puts on my path.