



Gather 2024

THE 138TH COVENANT ANNUAL MEETING

CINCINNATI | JUNE 26-29

DELEGATE NOTEBOOK

[COVCHURCH.ORG/GATHER](https://covchurch.org/gather)



138th Annual Meeting

OF THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

JUNE 27–29, 2024

HYBRID

DELEGATE RESOURCES *pages 2-21*

*Understanding Roles of Delegates, Executive Board
and Ministries, and the Moderator*

Electronic Voting

Glossary of Common Parliamentary Terms

AGENDA *pages 22-26*

See Agenda for contents included in this Delegate Notebook



Delegate Resources

Welcome to the Covenant Annual Meeting! The purpose of the Covenant Annual Meeting is the same as the purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ—at all times and in all situations—to discern and do the will of God. A lot must happen at an Annual Meeting and a lot of people participate.

At the Annual Meeting, we:

- Celebrate what God is doing in and through us
- Connect with those committed to our common mission
- Pray for the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church
- Worship together
- Ordain, license, and commission pastors and global personnel
- Elect persons into leadership positions (administrators and board members)
- Receive new churches into our fellowship (and say farewell to some)
- Review the stewardship of the resources God has blessed us with and approve projected investment of resources
- Review our efforts in accomplishing God's mission in the previous year
- Chart a course for the future, trusting God for the outcomes
- Approve amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws
- Make decisions necessary to the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church, regional conferences, and affiliates

To make sure that everyone is clear about what is happening when and how, several documents are used to govern the Annual Meeting:

- The Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church
- *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (most recent edition)
- Standing Rules of Order (approved at a meeting to guide that specific meeting)

These governing documents help us:

- Protect the right of the majority to decide
- Protect the right of the minority to be heard
- Protect the rights of the individual members, both those present and those absent
- Prevent a “railroad” of the meeting by manipulation
- Prevent an emotional “stampede” of the meeting

At first some of the language and protocols used during the meeting may seem strange to you, but we have provided resources in this section to help your engagement.

THERE ARE THREE KEY PARTICIPANTS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING:

I. THE DELEGATES

Delegates represent churches, Covenant administration, and related affiliates, boards, and other key leaders. Everything that happens at the Annual Meeting requires the delegates’ participation. Delegates receive the reports, approve recommendations, deliberate on the issues, and vote on motions. Our delegates, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of Jesus Christ, ultimately determine the course for the Covenant Church’s future.

Delegates need to do the following:

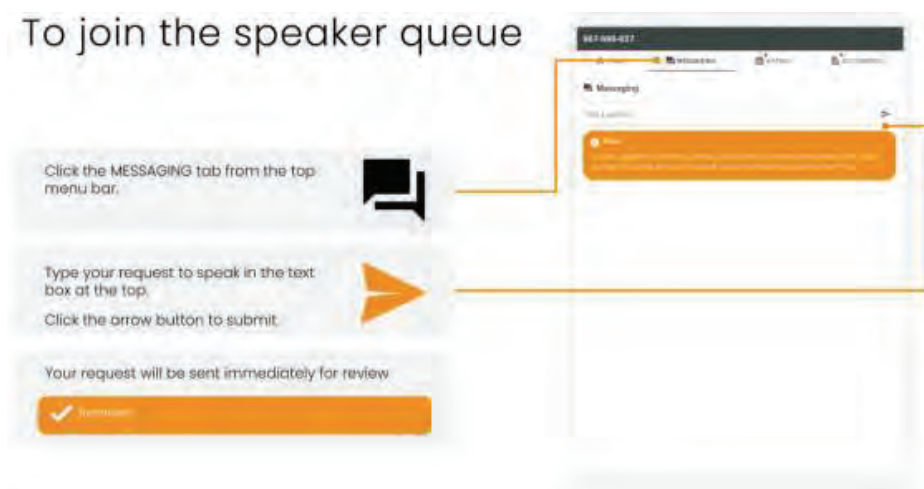
1. **Keep alert.** The leaders of the Annual Meeting work very hard to make sure that everyone is “on the same page,” but they can’t do it alone. Please be aware of what is happening, and if you are unsure, please ask! The order of the printed agenda is not the order in which items are addressed. Due to the length of time required for various agenda items and given the schedule to allow for regular breaks, the Moderator has the right to adjust the order in which items are addressed. This will require delegates to remain engaged.
2. **Listen carefully and think about the motion before the group.** Read up on the agenda items prior to the start of the meeting so that you are able to engage with the motions thoughtfully and with proper context of what exactly is being voted on.
3. **Engage!** There are many ways to participate: ask questions, make comments, actively listen, and vote. Remember that silence generally means agreement when we are a part of a large deliberative body.

SPEAKING

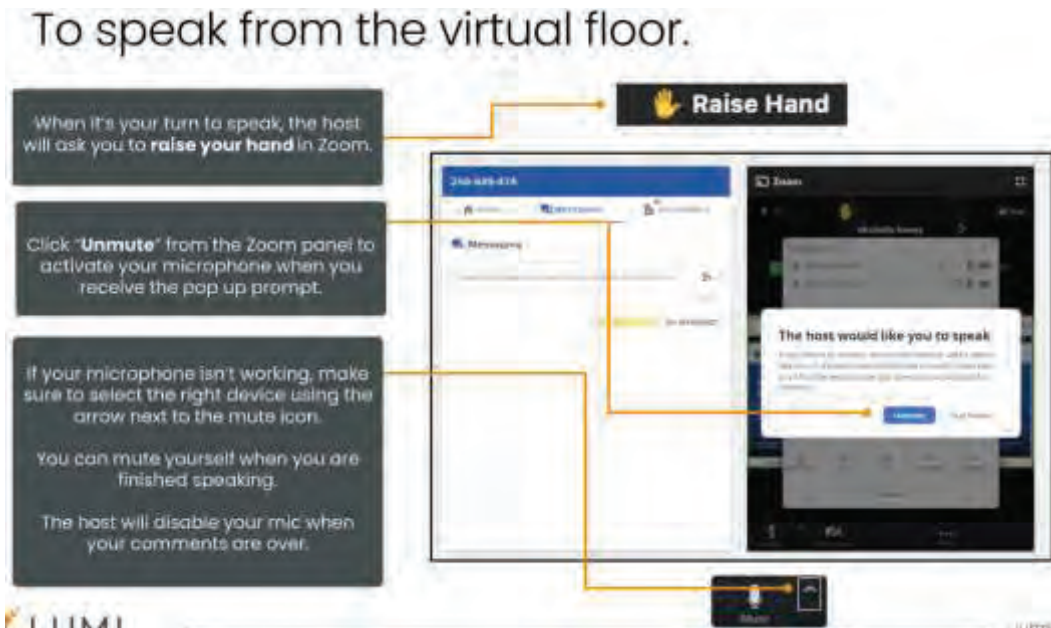
Every delegate has the right to speak in the meeting regardless of how you are participating—whether online or onsite.

Here are some guidelines for speaking:

1. Make sure the subject you want to talk about is under discussion.
2. If you are a virtual attendee, utilize the Messaging feature on LUMI to share your intent to speak for any reason.
 - a. When you select Messaging, you will be provided a text box to type your request to speak to the Moderator.
 - b. Once you are finished typing your request to speak, click the arrow button to submit.
 - c. Your request will be sent immediately for review.



- d. If there is still time in the discussion available for comments or questions, the Moderator will address you and invite you to speak.
- e. Before the Moderator addresses you and invites you to speak, a virtual delegate host will assist you in “coming to the mic.” The host will prompt you to “raise your hand” in Zoom by pressing the button to “raise your hand.” A pop-up dialogue box will appear on the video section (on the right side of your screen) asking you to unmute and speak. Follow the instructions on the screen to unmute and speak.



3. If you are onsite, you will approach the appropriate microphone in the room and await your turn to be recognized by the Moderator.
4. For both onsite and virtual delegates, when you have been recognized, speak to the Moderator and state your name and the church or entity you represent, and the city and state. Say what is on your mind. **Remember, you do not make a speech to the Assembly; you are speaking to just one person, the Moderator, and the others are listening in.**
5. If you have a question, the Moderator may know the answer, or the Moderator may ask someone else to provide the answer.
6. If you have a point to make, you may speak once to an issue. You may not speak again on the same issue as long as someone else who has not yet had a turn is seeking the floor or is waiting to speak.
7. If you desire to speak a second time on the same issue and there is an opportunity to do so because no one else is waiting to speak, you may approach the microphone a second time.
8. Once you have spoken a second time, you have used up your rights to debate on that issue.

If you have a matter for discussion that is not on the Agenda, please write a description of it and submit to the Moderator using the “Messaging” button or email to governance@covchurch.org. Please keep in mind that the “Messaging” feature is only to be used for official meeting business and Robert’s Rules of Order applies equally there as it does elsewhere—please don’t use the button as a “chat” to say hi to other delegates, to make comments on the proceedings, or anything else that would be considered out of order in a meeting.

Due to the nature of our hybrid meeting, it is strongly requested that agenda item requests be submitted electronically by delegates to the Moderator at governance@covchurch.org prior to the start of the 138th Covenant Annual Meeting. The Moderator will decide whether to present your request to the Annual Meeting; if the response is “yes,” it will come to the assembly for vote to place on the Agenda. If you submit it before we adopt the Agenda, it requires a majority vote to add it to the Agenda. If you submit it after we adopt the Agenda, it requires a 2/3 majority vote of all registered delegates. At the appropriate time, the Moderator will invite you to present your matter to the Annual Meeting.

Remember that you represent yourself, your church, or entity you represent, and Jesus Christ. Motives should not be called into question during a debate, and the merits of the motion are the issue to be considered. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we recognize that while brothers and sisters may argue, we are in relationship in Christ together.

II. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND MINISTRIES

1. The Executive Board is the mover of almost all the recommendations that arise from the Agenda, which it approves before it comes to the Annual Meeting. This process, established by the Covenant Bylaws, ensures a coordinated mission and avoids possible contradictory recommendations from various official sources. All recommendations are subject to the amendment, referral, or rejection of the meeting. As the mover of most of the recommendations on the Agenda, a spokesperson for the Board is usually granted what Robert’s Rules call “preference in recognition.” This is the privilege of a mover to speak first to a motion. (Please note that motions arising from a board, commission, or committee do not require a second as they already have more than one supporter.)
2. The Board of the Ordered Ministry reports directly to the Annual Meeting after obtaining the approval of the Covenant Ministerium to its recommendations.
3. Commissions and committees are basically study groups who formulate statements which may become the official statements of an Annual Meeting. All of these are reported through the Executive Board.

III. THE MODERATOR

The Moderator of the Annual Meeting is the presiding officer of the meeting. This important role as Moderator is this person's only function.

The Moderator:

- interprets and applies the rules of the meeting
- expedites the business of the meeting
- ensures that everyone involved in the meeting is treated fairly
- clarifies what is happening
- advises delegates in the procedures of the meeting
- maintains the discipline and joy of Christian fellowship

ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR THIS ANNUAL MEETING

We have partnered with LUMI to assist us during this year's hybrid Annual Meeting. Some learning may be required to get the hang of the system before you use it to cast your vote and participate in the meeting.

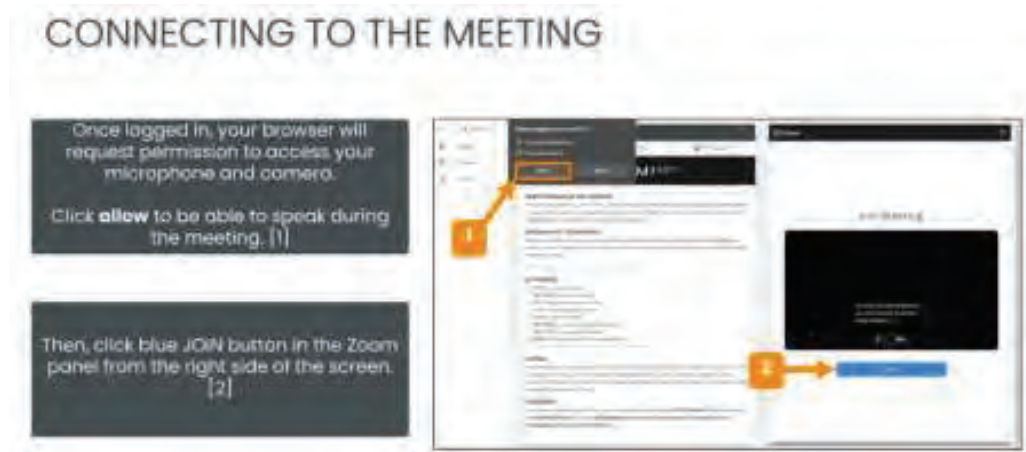
This system is designed for virtual and hybrid meetings like ours, and **every delegate will be using the LUMI system, whether online or onsite. Onsite and online attendees will interact with LUMI in slightly different ways (more on this below).**



If you are joining the meeting virtually: You **must use a laptop or desktop computer** to participate. In previous years, delegates were able to use phones and tablets to participate in the meeting. LUMI, however, only works on computers with specific web browsers—**mobile devices and web browsers outside of Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, and Mozilla Firefox are not supported.** It is important to avoid trying to use Safari (the default web browser on Mac) and instead use one of the three previously mentioned browsers to access the LUMI website. Online delegates are expected to have a reliable means for participation, including a strong internet connection to support their engagement in the meeting. Delegates will be credentialed according to the principle of “one delegate, one device” (**one delegate may not use more than one device at a time, and multiple delegates may not share the same device**). This is a security feature that is tied to LUMI to help ensure the voting process is safe and accurate. If you need to switch devices for any reason during the meeting, you will need to log out of LUMI on your original device before you attempt to log in to LUMI on a second device.

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES: REQUIREMENTS TO ACCESS THE MEETING





Along with a reliable internet connection, **it is suggested that online delegates use a microphone-equipped headset or earphones (Bluetooth or wired)** to reduce audio feedback, allow you to better hear the audio of the Annual Meeting, and to block background noises when speaking to the Moderator. When you plug in your headset or turn on your earphones, you will need to ensure that your computer’s settings have been set so that the “speaker” is your headset, and the “microphone” is also your headset. This is a critical part of your set up so that when you queue to speak through the LUMI platform, Zoom is set up with the correct speaker and microphone. This will minimize any technical difficulties.

Below is a sample screenshot of some of the main features online delegates will use on the LUMI website during the meeting. Please familiarize yourself with these details as you will use this screen for most of the meeting. (Onsite attendees will not engage with the meeting through a laptop or desktop, so this screenshot does not apply to your experience.) Online delegates will need to enable the video screen for the webcast so they can see what is happening live.



As the technology will be different for onsite and virtual delegates, the training is offered as separate videos for you to watch at your leisure. Recorded sessions can be found on the Gather website (covchurch.org/gather). Onsite delegate orientation will take place on Thursday, June 27, at 10:00 a.m. Eastern.

If you are joining the meeting onsite: Onsite attendees will be using LUMI’s physical voting devices to cast votes. This will consist of both a voting card and a voting keypad. You will receive a voting card during registration, which will authenticate your identity as someone who is able to vote in the LUMI system. **It is important that you keep track of your voting card throughout Gather.** Voting keypads, on the other hand, will be provided when you enter the meeting space and will be collected on your way out at the end of each business session. This will allow for the devices to be charged for the next session.

To vote, you need to physically insert your voting card into the voting keypad (making sure the arrows and the chip at the bottom of the voting card are facing you), and the card must remain in the keypad the whole time in order to cast your vote. When the vote is opened, the voting options will appear on the device screen. Simply press the physical numerical button on the keypad that corresponds with your choice for voting. For the majority of the motions we will vote on (but not all), 1 will correspond with “For,” 2 will correspond with “Against,” and 3 will correspond with “Abstain.” After you have voted, a confirmation will appear on the screen. In order to change your vote, simply enter your new choice (usually 1, 2, or 3). Once you have confirmed your choice, your vote will be submitted.

Onsite and online delegates are responsible for making sure their devices are fully charged. All delegates are responsible for ensuring that their technology is working as intended—as long as there is quorum, voting will not be delayed due to any delegate’s individual technical needs. As for online delegates, onsite delegates will be credentialed according to the principle of “one delegate, one device” (one delegate may not use more than one device at a time, and multiple delegates may not share the same device). If you are onsite, your voting card authenticates you as a voter and can only work in combination with the voting keypad. This is a security feature that is tied to LUMI to help ensure the voting process stays safe and accurate. If you are onsite and your voting card or voting keypad is not functioning properly, raise your hand and a member of our onsite helpdesk offer assistance.

A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF COMMON PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

AMEND, MOVE TO. Most motions may be amended on the floor of the meeting, particularly when they deal with the business rather than the procedures of the meeting. All amendments must be

germane to the original motion. Amendments can be made in three (3) ways: addition, deletion, or substitution. When an amendment has been seconded, it must be debated and decided, or otherwise dealt with, before the motion it seeks to amend may be further considered.

APPEAL FROM THE RULING OF THE MODERATOR. A delegate is testing the Moderator’s ruling against the opinion of the meeting. The motion to appeal requires a second. An affirmative vote by the meeting sustains the Moderator’s ruling.

BALLOT, TO ORDER THE VOTE ON A PENDING QUESTION TO BE TAKEN BY. The Bylaws and Rules specify that certain questions be decided by ballot. Questions other than these may also be decided by ballot if a majority of the meeting concurs with a request from a delegate for it.

CONSENT AGENDA. Items on the Consent Agenda are routine, procedural, informational, self-explanatory non-controversial items that require action but generally don’t require discussion or debate. Acting on these items moves the meeting along, allowing for more time for substantive issues. Items on the Consent Agenda may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any two delegates. Items removed from the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly at a place in the Agenda determined by the Moderator.

DIVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY. This is a vote by rising. It may be demanded by any delegate to verify a vote taken by voice or by a show of hands or may be ordered by the Moderator when a vote by show of hands or by voice has been “too close to call.” If it is still not possible to discern the outcome visually, the Moderator may order a count by the Sergeants-at-Arms. Most of the meeting may also order a count.

EXECUTIVE SESSION. According to Robert’s Rules of Order, certain items require confidentiality. One of those items relates to how a society disciplines a member. When the body determines that a matter must be debated and decided in secret, a motion for Executive Session is proper. After a majority vote on the motion for Executive Session, everyone, except delegates and resource personnel, is excused from the meeting. In addition, the live stream will cease until the Executive Session is concluded.

INFORMATION, POINT OF. Asking a question about the business at hand.

MADAME MODERATOR. The traditional form for addressing the Moderator from the floor of this meeting.

ORDER, POINT OF. A delegate calls the Moderator’s attention to a possible breach of the Rules. If the delegate is not satisfied with the Moderator’s subsequent explanation, he or she may appeal if the point has been raised concerning an actual ruling of the Moderator.

PARLIAMENTARIAN. An advisor to the Moderator on parliamentary law.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY, POINT OF. Asking a question about the application of the Rules in the business at hand.

PERSONAL PRIVILEGE, POINT OF. A delegate believes that his or her rights or the rights of another are being infringed upon.

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME. A delegate may move to postpone the item under discussion until a

later point in the meeting. The motion requires a second and is debatable.

PREVIOUS QUESTION, MOVE THE. A motion to cut off debate on an issue which requires a second, and a two-thirds majority. An affirmative vote merely cuts off debate and is not a vote on the motion under debate.

PRIVILEGED MOTION. A motion that does not relate to the pending question at hand but does have to do with matters of such urgency or importance that, without debate, they are allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.

PUTTING or CALLING THE QUESTION. Taking a vote.

RECONSIDER, MOVE TO. A motion to reconsider an item previously voted upon may be made at any time, though it may have to wait until other business has been dealt with before it can be taken up. If a majority decides that the item previously voted upon will be reconsidered, debate on it re-opens, and another vote is taken (or it is otherwise disposed of, by referral, etc.) The motion to reconsider has unique characteristics: It may be made only by a delegate who originally voted with the prevailing side on the item; it may be made no later than the day following the original vote; it cannot apply to an item when provisions of it have already begun to be carried out (such as the signing of a contract); and it cannot be itself reconsidered.

REFER, MOVE TO. (Not to be confused with a motion to table.) A referred motion goes to a board or committee as designated by the Motion to Refer. It requires a second and is debatable.

SECOND. A seconder need not agree with the motion or vote for it. The seconder need only agree that the motion deserves the attention of the meeting.

SERIATIM. In a series (i.e., a long motion consisting of a series of resolutions, paragraphs, articles, or sections that are not totally separate questions can be considered by opening the different parts to debate and amendment separately, without a division of the question).

STANDING RULES. These rules are prepared by the Agenda Committee to provide guidance for this particular Annual Meeting setting for how items are dealt with generally. The Standing Rules require a two-thirds majority for approval and a two-thirds majority for suspension of any part of such.

SUSPEND THE RULES. It is possible to suspend a rule that is standing in the way of accomplishing what the meeting clearly wants to do either by motion or by unanimous consent. Bylaws may not be suspended unless they are in the nature of “rules of order.” This is a complex issue, with each instance subject to the interpretation and ruling of the Moderator.

TABLE, MOVE TO. (Or “LAY ON THE TABLE”). Unlike a referred motion, a tabled motion goes nowhere. No one considers it, studies it, or does anything with it until a motion passes to “take it from the table.” If this does not happen at this Annual Meeting, the motion is dead, i.e., we could not move to “take something from the table” that was put on the table at a previous Annual Meeting.



Report on Credentials for the 138th Annual Meeting

CREDENTIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS TO THE 138TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH*

**Unaudited statistics are provided at this time. A final audited report will be printed in the minutes.*

FIRST CREDENTIALING REPORT

	ONSITE	ONLINE	TOTAL
Total credentialed voting delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total additional registrants in non-voting categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

SECOND CREDENTIALING REPORT

	ONSITE	ONLINE	TOTAL
Total credentialed voting delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total additional registrants in non-voting categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

THIRD CREDENTIALING REPORT

	ONSITE	ONLINE	TOTAL
Total credentialed voting delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total additional registrants in non-voting categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

FOURTH CREDENTIALING REPORT

	ONSITE	ONLINE	TOTAL
Total credentialed voting delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total additional registrants in non-voting categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

FIFTH CREDENTIALING REPORT

	ONSITE	ONLINE	TOTAL
Total credentialed voting delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total additional registrants in non-voting categories	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDANCE	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

FINAL CREDENTIALING REPORT

REPRESENTING

DELEGATES

CHURCHES

CONFERENCE

Alaska

Canada

Central

East Coast

Great Lakes

Midsouth

Midwest

Northwest

Pacific Northwest

Pacific Southwest

Southeast

TOTAL OF DELEGATES BY CONFERENCE

Delegates in Addition to Those Represented in Conferences

GENERAL DELEGATES

	DELEGATES	CHURCHES
Officers of the Covenant	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Executive Board	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Council of Administrators	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Annual Meeting Officers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Board of Nominations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Covenant Ministerium	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Assoc. of Cov. Camps and Conf. Centers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Commission Delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Serve Globally Delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Regional Conference Offices	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL GENERAL DELEGATES	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
*TOTAL CREDENTIALLED DELEGATES	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**(sum of Delegates by Conference & General Delegates)*

ADDITIONAL REGISTRATIONS

Honorary Delegates	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Advisors from Covenant Institutions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Advisors from Nonmember Churches	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Resource People	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Registered General Conferees	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Exhibitors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
*Total Additional Attendees	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

TOTAL REGISTERED ATTENDEES (SUM OF TOTALS)

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Proposed Standing Rules of Order for the 138th Covenant Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting Agenda Committee recommends the adoption of the following proposed standing rules of order for the 138th Covenant Annual Meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The written documents that govern the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church are the Illinois Not For Profit Act, the Articles of Incorporation of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Evangelical Covenant Church Constitution and Bylaws, the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the Covenant Pension Plan, and the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* (henceforth will be called Robert's Rules for purposes of this document). Robert's Rules provides that a convention or assembly of delegates such as the Covenant Annual Meeting may adopt its own standing rules to supplement the provisions of Robert's Rules and of its own documents. The Standing Rules provide guidance for this 138th Annual Meeting, setting out how items are dealt with generally. The Standing Rules require a two-thirds majority for adoption or suspension.

That the business of deliberative assemblies may be conducted by electronic means is given sanction in *Robert's Rules* most recent edition (the 12th ed., published in 2020, see Section 9, paragraphs 30-36). Procedures for establishing delegate credentials, obtaining the floor, discussion, and voting, have been devised with due diligence to the spirit and letter of the Evangelical Covenant Church's governing documents, to Robert's Rules, and to the tradition of the Covenant Annual Meeting as a participatory and deliberative assembly.

STANDING RULES OF ORDER FOR THE 2024 COVENANT ANNUAL MEETING

1. The Business Meeting Shall Be Conducted in Hybrid Format — Both with Online and Onsite Capabilities.

- a. Delegates attending onsite are credentialed and authenticated with a personalized voting card, which will be provided at registration. The voting card must be kept secure and not shared. Voting cards will be used in conjunction with a voting device, which will be maintained by the vendor (LUMI) and provided daily to onsite delegates. For issues related to the voting card or voting device, delegates may seek assistance with the vendor's tech support team.
- b. Delegates attending online are expected to have reliable means for participation and are

credentialed according to the principle of “one delegate, one login IP address.” Delegates attending online are responsible for their own personal technological connectivity and devices; for elements related to engaging with the voting platform, delegates may pursue assistance with the vendor’s tech support team. A delegate’s personal technology failure does not constitute a point of order, of information, or of privilege to be addressed to the whole meeting.

- c. Quorum is determined by the ratio of the number of delegates attending online who are logged in plus the number of onsite delegates to the number of registered delegates.
- d. All individuals called upon to present to the delegates on an agenda item must appear in person or via a pre-recorded video.

2. Obtaining the Floor

Only those who have been credentialed as delegates, advisors, or resource persons can request the privilege to address the entire assembly, including on points of order, of information, and of personal privilege.

3. Voting

- a. All voting, whether delegates are attending online or onsite, is conducted electronically for this meeting, and meets the requirements stipulated in Robert’s Rules for a secret ballot.
- b. Online delegates will need a personal device (desktop, laptop, or mobile device) and an internet connection. Onsite delegates will be provided a personalized voting card and a voting device.
- c. Onsite or online delegates who are logged in but who do not vote on a question will be tallied as abstentions.

4. Debate

Recognizing that delegates will be engaging online and onsite, every effort will be made to ensure the experience is similar for a delegate regardless of the mode of participation. Within the limits of technology and/or delegates’ connectivity, our hope is that no preference or priority will be given to either category of delegate. Customarily, Annual Meetings have attempted to organize debate alternating between speeches in favor and against, following the mic sequence. Seeking to uphold that custom while recognizing the differences in delegate participation, we will strive to provide online delegates similar opportunities to engage as onsite participants.

5. Time Limits

- a. Reports that contain no proposal for action by the meeting shall be limited to ten (10) minutes, including the question period, with the exception of the president’s report, the treasurer’s report, and items specified in the agenda to extend beyond the 10-minute time limit.
- b. Debate on any main motion, including its subsidiary motions, shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes, except as otherwise specified in these standing rules and the agenda. No amendment or other subsidiary motion to a main motion shall be allowed until debate on the main motion has ceased or ten (10) minutes have passed.

- c. No speech in debate may exceed three (3) minutes unless this period is extended by a majority vote at the request of the speaker. The Moderator has discretion to enlarge the time for speech in debate due to interpretation of speeches not made in English.
- d. Time limits may be extended for a specific period by a two-thirds vote.
- e. Unless otherwise indicated on the schedule as a lunch or dinner break, any breaks called by the Moderator will be thirty (30) minutes long.

6. Submission of Motions in Writing

All main motions and subsidiary motions shall be submitted electronically via the voting platform using the “Type a Question” feature and addressing the Annual Meeting secretary or via email (governance@covchurch.org) and addressing the Annual Meeting secretary.

7. Items of Business Not on the Agenda

The Bylaws provide in Section 7.8.a.ii that “Items of business that are not on the agenda may be submitted in writing by a delegate to the Moderator. If the item submitted is in order, a majority vote of the delegates present and voting shall be required to place that item on the agenda.” It is further strongly requested that such items be submitted electronically by delegates to the Moderator at governance@covchurch.org prior to the start of the 138th Covenant Annual Meeting.

8. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are routine, procedural, informational, self-explanatory non-controversial items that require action but generally do not require discussion or debate. Acting on these items moves the meeting along, allowing for more time for substantive issues.

- a. Items on the Consent Agenda may be removed from the Consent Agenda at the request of any two delegates.
- b. Items removed from the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly at a place in the agenda determined by the Moderator.
- c. If the Consent Agenda is not adopted as a single motion, then each of the items on the Consent Agenda shall be acted upon by the assembly as a separate motion at a place in the agenda determined by the Moderator.

9. Elections: Procedure for Floor Nominations

- a. Immediately after presentation by the Board of Nominations, the Moderator will call for nominations from the floor.
- b. Nominations from the floor shall be accepted only if the person nominated has agreed to have his or her name placed in nomination.
- c. Delegates desiring to nominate a candidate shall rise to make the nomination and shall thereafter electronically submit to the Moderator via the voting platform using the “Type a Question” feature or via email (governance@covchurch.org), the nominator’s name, the church

or entity the nominator represents, the name of the potential candidate with an affirmation that the potential candidate satisfies the particular requirements of the office as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws. When making a nomination from the floor, the name of the nominee is the only information permitted; the nominator shall submit descriptive information regarding the potential candidate similar in scope and content to that provided to the Annual Meeting by a nominating board or committee. The Moderator will distribute the descriptive information by email to all delegates prior to the election.

10. Runo Elections

In the case of an election with three or more candidates, if no candidate receives a majority of votes after two rounds of voting, then beginning with the third round, the candidate with the lowest number of votes in that round will be eliminated. In the event of a tie among the lowest vote-getters, those tied will not be eliminated in that round. A candidate may withdraw at any point. Voting rounds will continue until one candidate receives a majority of votes.

11. Modification of Agenda Order

The Moderator shall have the discretion to revise the order of agenda items to accommodate scheduling needs.

ANNUAL MEETING OFFICERS

Moderator: Julia Sandstrom

Vice Moderator: Carolyn Poterek

Secretary: Norma Ramos

Parliamentarian: Clarence Chan

President: Tammy Swanson-Draheim

Corporate Secretary: Dierdra Clark

Assistant Corporate Secretary: Jordan Meyers



AGENDA

ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-EIGHTH COVENANT ANNUAL MEETING

June 27 – June 29, 2024

Each agenda item will be given the time necessary to ensure that it is fully addressed. Per Standing Rule 11, the moderator shall have discretion to revise the order of agenda items to accommodate scheduling needs.

Delegates who leave the meeting early or arrive late will not have voice or vote when they are not present. Please do all you can to be present in person or online throughout the scheduled meeting. Agenda items that are time certain are listed below.

TIME CERTAIN

Thursday, June 27

4:15 pm Irving C. Lambert Outstanding Urban Ministries Award

Friday, June 28

10:30 am Service Recognition for Global Personnel
11:00 am Actions to Be Taken from the Ordered Ministry
11:30 am Clergy Vocational Service Recognition
2:05 pm T.W. Anderson Outstanding Layperson Award

Saturday, June 29

10:15 am FY2022/23 Performance Report
10:45 am FY2024 Mission and Ministry Budget

**Reports exceeding the ten (10) minute limit per the Standing Rules are marked with an asterisk.*

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

- #1. Morning Worship
- #2. Opening Statement by the Moderator
- #3. Greeting from Garth McGrath, Great Lakes Conference Superintendent

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 - a. Honorary Delegates 28
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- #9. Church Planter Commissioning 35
- #10. Action on Removal of Churches from the Roster* 36
 - a. Voluntary Removal from Membership
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- #42. Adjournment
- #43. Benediction

Annual Meeting Officers

- Moderator: Julia Sandstrom
- Vice Moderator: Carolyn Poterek
- Secretary: Norma Ramos
- Parliamentarian: Clarence Chan
- President: Tammy Swanson-Draheim
- Corporate Secretary: Dierdra Clark
- Assistant Corporate Secretary: Jordan Meyers



Approval of Honorary Delegates and Resource Persons

RESOURCE PERSONNEL

Gayle Gilreath	Advancement
Prajakta David-Kelley	Advancement
Kreig Gammelgard	Advancement
Steve Dawson	Finance
Aaron Dean	Finance
Christina Kempe	Finance
Melissa Liew	Finance
Fredrik Wall	Finance
Paul Robinson	Serve Locally
Dominique Gilliard	Serve Locally
Ramelia Williams	Serve Locally
leisha Hawley	Serve Locally
Mary Hendrickson	Serve Locally
Alex Rahill	Serve Locally
Jennifer McIntyre	Marketing and Communications
Cathy Norman Peterson	Marketing and Communications
Paul Stewart	Marketing and Communications
Paul Lessard	Mission Priorities
Jill Hall	National Covenant Properties
Rob Hall	National Covenant Properties
Paul Kruit	National Covenant Properties
Rollin Persson	National Covenant Properties
Deb Mitchell	Operations
Jonathan Basa	Operations
Clarence Chan	Parliamentarian
Erik Anderson	President's Office
Betzy Cisneros	President's Office

Herb Frost	Serve Clergy
Marti Burger	Serve Clergy
Karen Ingebretson	Serve Clergy
Jin Lee	Serve Clergy
Danielle Ng	Serve Clergy
Grace Shim	Serve Globally
Nils Clauson	Serve Globally
Renée Hale	Serve Globally
Deborah Masten	Serve Globally
Chrissy Palmerlee	Serve Globally
Lyndsey Watson	Serve Globally
Dennis Carlson	Board of the Ordered Ministry
Stephen Kelly	Worship Leader
Dorcas Li	Worship Leader
Joshua Boyd	Band
Jonah Brooks	Band
Jonathan Gweshe	Band
Maggie Johnson	Band
Jennifer Rives	Vocalist
Kyle Fletcher	LUMI Technicians
Adam Zuber	LUMI Technicians
Travis Zuber	LUMI Technicians

HONORARY DELEGATES

Torben Joswig	International Guest
Deborah Blue	Emeriti
Evelyn Johnson	Emeriti
John Wenrich	Emeriti
Glenn Palmberg	Emeriti



Churches Applying for Membership

Based upon the recommendation of the respective conferences, the Executive Board recommends to the 138th Annual Meeting that the following churches be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Covenant Church.

CHURCH	APPROXIMATE MEMBERSHIP	APPROXIMATE ATTENDANCE
EAST COAST CONFERENCE		
Church of Hemlock Farms Lords Valley, PA	150	60
GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE		
Life Church Auburn Hills Auburn Hills, MI	43	68
Healing Covenant Church Paducah, KY	31	30
NORTHWEST CONFERENCE		
Epiphany Covenant Church Minneapolis, MN	36	120
PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE		
Whitewater Church DBA Garden City Covenant Church Tacoma, WA	40	320
PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE		
Freedom Point Covenant Church Loomis, CA	N/A	520
Ocean Rock Covenant Church Marina, CA	N/A	100
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE		
International Covenant Church Orlando, FL	50	85

SUMMARY

Number of new churches:	8
Cumulative approximate membership:	350
Cumulative approximate attendance:	1,303

REPORT ON CHURCHES JOINING THE COVENANT

The mission of the Covenant is stronger, richer, and more diverse because of the eight churches joining the denomination this year. Each one brings a ministry that will enrich our contribution to God’s kingdom, and we are confident each congregation will be enriched by its connection with the Covenant. Each story testifies to both the handiwork of God in raising up a ministry and the faithfulness of committed people in carrying out that ministry. What is less visible is the role every Covenanter plays in these stories. Through making possible the elements of a pastoral assessment process, financial support, training, and strategic services, every Covenanter has a place in these stories.

EAST COAST CONFERENCE

Church of Hemlock Farms
Lords Valley, PA
Pastor: Herbert Jacobson

Average Attendance: 60

The Church of Hemlock Farms is returning to the Covenant after voluntarily withdrawing several years ago as part of restructuring away from a federated church model (Covenant and Reformed Church in America) in order to be singularly affiliated with the Covenant. The congregation was founded in the late 1960s and adopted into the Covenant in 1971. They are the sole Protestant Christian church in a gated community of 3,100 homes of Hemlock Farms. The congregation was deeded land within the community, and the church was built in phases from 1980 to 2002. Originally sponsored by a consortium of mainline denominations, they formed a federation in 1992 to affiliate with the RCA and the Covenant, which continued until 2023. Rev. Dr. Herb Jacobson has been their pastor since 2004. The ministries of the church include children and youth, women’s ministries, prayer, Bible studies, community food pantry, and global personnel support (Joel and Kim Delp family in Ecuador).

GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

Life Church Auburn Hills
Auburn Hills, MI
Pastor: Donearl Johnson

Average Attendance: 68

Life Church Auburn Hills launched in 2019 in pursuit of becoming a multiethnic community empowered and transformed by God’s grace, truth, and love. We experienced an amazing start with

a solid launch team and strong response from a beautifully diverse community. We were intentional about cultivating space to tear down walls that separate us and build bridges as we endeavor to see individuals come to know Jesus as Lord, grow in their relationship with God and with one another, and become engaged and equipped to go and serve together. We have hosted Sunday gatherings, community groups, outreach events, and international potlucks; and we have witnessed individuals connect, eat, develop relationships, and grow spiritually. Although our physical gatherings were disrupted by the pandemic in 2020, by God's grace, we were able to create virtual spaces to continue the great work that God started. We hosted virtual gatherings, game nights, and other outreach events, discussion groups, and book studies dealing with justice and reconciliation. Despite the significant challenge, we were able to faithfully navigate the pandemic as well as social, racial, and political tension by addressing issues head-on while keeping God's kingdom at the forefront. We seek transformational encounter with God through relationships with God and one another through community groups, connecting and engaging young men, support to our school district, strengthening and empowering families through workshops, and gathering together on Sundays to worship and celebrate Jesus, our risen Savior!

Healing Covenant Church
Paducah, KY
Pastor: Dawn Choate

Average Attendance: 30

In the summer of 2022, a group of six families began meeting informally once a month along the beautiful lakes of western Kentucky for prayer, fellowship, and Bible study. The group's specific intent was to walk through a season of forgiveness as they had all previously served in a difficult church environment that eventually became untenable. In the fall when the lake was no longer a viable meeting place, we began to have more serious conversations about whether we were becoming a church family. In January 2023, we began meeting more regularly as a church family. The core group of six families grew, and by the end of the summer, we were meeting weekly on Sunday mornings. We spent the fall working through the book *A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture that Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing*, by Scot McKnight and Laura Barringer. Coming out of toxic church and leadership cultures, we wanted to be intentional about planting a church with a healthy view of leadership, the use (and abuse) of power, and service to others. By Christmas 2023, we opened our service to the public and have been meeting as a church family since that time.

We are passionate about missional and nonprofit service. Since opening our doors, we have served foster children, hungry and homeless people in our community, and tornado survivors, among other missional projects. We hosted a Merge ministry team and enjoyed a week of service together rebuilding homes from the tornado damage in Kentucky. Our church agrees wholeheartedly that the Covenant and the Great Lakes Conference are a body of Christ followers that is a beautiful complement to the work God wants to do in us.

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

Epiphany Covenant Church
Minneapolis, MN
Pastor: Kevin Farmer

Average Attendance: 120

Epiphany Covenant Church was launched as a church plant in the Northwest Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church in 2018. With Pastor Kevin Farmer serving as the planting and lead pastor, 40 family units serving as a launch team, and six Covenant and non-Covenant churches providing financial, capital, and personnel support, this multiethnic, Christ-centered movement was birthed. After signing the Church Planting Agreement in March 2018, Epiphany began hosting monthly preview services, and then began holding weekly worship services in August. Their public grand opening was on November 4, 2018. Since then, Epiphany continues to meet and engage in strategic ministry partnership with Hope Academy, a Christ-centered K-12 school located in South Minneapolis.

Since its inception, Epiphany has experienced God's faithfulness in its three missional priorities: make and deepen disciples, identify and develop servant leaders, and plant healthy, multiethnic, missional churches. Epiphany has been blessed to journey with individuals and families across the expanse of God's beautiful multiethnic mosaic and between all lines of socioeconomic status. This ministry movement has motivated people to be Holy Spirit-empowered kingdom citizens who are actively engaged in biblical efforts of compassion, mercy, and justice and who desire to see lost people found and hurting people helped.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

Whitewater Church
DBA Garden City Covenant Church
Tacoma, WA
Pastor: George Bedlion

Average Attendance: 320

We planted in 2016 out of the missional community and satellite campus work we had been doing with Bethany Church, a Converge church in Puyallup, Washington. We saw a high conversion rate of new Christians—people finding Christ from a diversity of backgrounds. We are grateful for all God did during that season of ministry. We began building a relationship with the Covenant before the pandemic. In 2022, we renamed and launched onto the pathway of being a Covenant church plant adoption with the help of Greg Yee, Peter Sung, and the Pacific Northwest Conference. This has been a great transition and fit for our church. The conference helped galvanize and resource our launch in Tacoma. The theological/cultural fit and leadership support with the Covenant has been amazing. We are seeing our ministries effectively reach skeptics, seekers, and deconstructors in the Pierce County area. Our discipleship/formation pathways have helped people center Jesus in their

lives and employ third way practices in their everyday life. Our investment in both digital and in-person resources has catalyzed our growth in both evangelism and discipleship. We are excited to see old and new local partnerships flourish with communities like Olive Crest foster care, Nourish, and the Chinese Reconciliation Park network.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

Freedom Point Covenant Church
Loomis, CA

Average Attendance: 520

Pastors: Heather and Justin Tomscak

Freedom Point Covenant Church was planted after Heather and Justin Tomscak received a prophetic word that they would be lead pastors together and would “help set captives free” (Isaiah 61:1-3). After years of praying, and seeking counsel from mentors, other pastors, and denominational leaders, Heather and Justin agreed to go through the church planting assessment process in 2020. While many churches were closing their doors and making alternative meeting plans, they discerned that the Lord would not relent on the planting plans. In September 2020, over Zoom, the Tomscaks received the “green light” to proceed with planting Freedom Point Covenant Church in partnership with the Pacific Southwest Conference, the Covenant, and their sending church, Rock Harbor Covenant Church. Freedom Point Covenant Church is grateful for those partnerships and the church planting processes, including cohorts and consistent coaching offering support, encouragement, ideas, and retreats to come alongside the church leadership.

Justin and Heather both have a strong youth ministry background, which led them to launch a youth group before they even launched regular Sunday morning worship services. That ministry continues to thrive with annual trips to Mexico to build houses with Baja Bound, youth camps, and retreats—but more important, the youth group has been a place for students to be seen and known while hearing the good news of Jesus Christ and being a safe place to land in the midst of several tragedies within the local community. The children’s ministry serves more than 120 young students (infants through fifth graders) every week.

Ocean Rock Covenant Church
Marina, CA

Average Attendance: 100

Pastor: Nehemiah Gallardo

Ocean Rock Church launched their first service in the small town of Marina, on the central coast of California in April 2019. Before they could celebrate their one-year anniversary, the pandemic forced them out of their rented school space, and they pivoted to online church. For the past three years they’ve been meeting in a leased storefront that has allowed the church to continue but limited growth due to space. Ocean Rock Church has discovered a fresh fire and renewed passion for the lost and recently relocated to a larger portable space for a church relaunch. The Covenant

has coached them through this three-month process and has been an source of guidance and strength during this time. Pat Stark, Anita Eyer, and Justin Noseworthy have all been true friends of Ocean Rock and kind examples from the Pacific Southwest Conference. Ocean Rock is currently impacting the region it serves by connecting people far from Christ to the knowledge of who he is. As a church in a city ranked one of the top ten most post-Christian cities in the US by the Barna research group, we are reaching those who are truly far from Christ and fulfilling our mission of “connecting people to Jesus.”

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

International Covenant Church

Average Attendance: 85

Orlando, FL

Pastora: Darlyn Viera Tortorella

Mi esposo Leonardo y yo vinimos de Caracas, Venezuela luego de trabajar como lideres por varios años en la iglesia, visitamos la ciudad de Orlando en florida, donde conocimos personas y familias de diferentes nacionalidades, les compartimos testimonios y experiencias y de esta forma los animábamos a Conectarse con Dios a través de la oración y el estudio de la biblia. A medida que se sumaron más personas comenzamos un proceso de discipulado y luego de un tiempo buscamos un salón y nos reunimos los domingos. En este proceso conocimos a la gran familia Iglesia Evangélica del Pacto (Covenant) donde uniendo esfuerzos y recibir su apoyo nos ha permitido ser una Iglesia y un refugio para todas las personas y familias que necesitan conocer a Jesús y se sienten sin familia aquí en Orlando.

My husband, Leonardo, and I came from Caracas, Venezuela. After working as leaders for several years in the church, we visited the city of Orlando in Florida, where we met people and families of different nationalities and shared testimonies and experiences with them. In this way we encouraged them and connect with God through prayer and Bible study. As more people joined, we began a discipleship process. After a while, we found a room where we could meet on Sundays. In this process we met the great Evangelical Covenant Church family, where joining efforts and receiving their support has allowed us to be a church and a refuge for all people and families who need to know Jesus and feel without family here in Orlando.



Church Planter Commissioning

GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

Phil Carr, New Evangelical Covenant Church (Detroit, MI)



Action on Removal of Churches from the Roster of the Evangelical Covenant Church

COVENANT REGIONAL CONFERENCE	CHURCH NAME	REASON FOR REMOVAL
Central	The City of Truth Covenant Church (formerly New Jerusalem Life Covenant Church)	Closed
Central	Arbor Covenant Church	Withdrawn
Central	Evangelical Covenant Church of Milwaukee	Closed
East Coast	New Vision Covenant Church	Withdrawn/Merger
East Coast	Table Covenant Church	Merger
Great Lakes	Bethany Covenant Church	Closed
Midwest	Crossroads Community Church	Withdrawn
Midwest	Faith Covenant Church	Closed
Northwest	Edina Covenant Church DBA Mercy Commons Covenant Church	Closed
Northwest	City of Lakes Covenant Church	Closed
Pacific Southwest	Ebenezer Iglesia del Pacto	Withdrawn
Pacific Southwest	The Bridge Community Church	Closed

CENTRAL CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: DANNY MARTINEZ

The City of Truth Covenant Church (formerly New Jerusalem Life Covenant Church)

Location: Chicago Heights, IL

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 15

Year joined the Covenant: 2006

Peak membership (approximately): 75

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Due to health difficulties, Pastor Lawrence Pointer is no longer able to pastor the church. So many seeds were planted by The City of Truth. God blessed the ministry, and we know God will continue to bless the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Arbor Covenant Church

Location: Madison, WI

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Year joined the Covenant: 1964

Peak membership (approximately): 126

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Arbor Covenant is in dissent from denominational policy on human sexuality.

Evangelical Covenant Church

Location: Milwaukee, WI

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 45 on the roster; 25 participating

Year joined the Covenant: 1945

Peak membership (approximately): 165

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Despite loving pastoral and committed lay leadership, adequate but diminishing financial resources, and a desire among core members to continue as a worshipping, fellowshiping, and serving body, the congregation painfully concluded it could not continue the functions of the church. With few people participating, an aging congregation, an aging building, dwindling resources, and little vision for the future, the congregation engaged in a year-long process for seeking a different pathway. That process sealed a growing awareness of the challenges facing the church that ultimately coincided with the pastor's decision to retire. The Lord made it clear that becoming a legacy church was the route that most honored him. The congregation held its last service on November 12, 2023, with Rev. Mike DeLong, pastor, and Rev. Danny Martinez, Central Conference superintendent, officiating. In God's mercy, the church's financial assets allowed for its two missionary families to receive support through 2025, the Covenant Kids Congo sponsored child to receive monthly support through her completion of the program in several years, and the Harbor Point Ministries, the Central Conference, the

denomination, and several local ministries to also receive financial gifts. Additionally, the church's community arts program for youth blessed Covenant Harbor and Covenant Point Bible camps with a wide variety of arts and crafts supplies. Milwaukee Evangelical Covenant Church witnessed to God's presence for 78 years, serving the people of the community and the Evangelical Covenant Church. Peace to her memory even as the seeds of her ministry continue in legacy.

EAST COAST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: HOWARD K. BURGOYNE

New Vision Covenant Church

Location: Bayside, NY

Reason for removal: Withdrawn/Merger

Number of members (when church closed): 25

Year joined the Covenant: 2012

Peak membership (approximately): 110

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: New Vision was adopted into the Covenant after withdrawing from the United Methodist Church. Following several years of declining attendance, especially accelerated during the years of the Covid pandemic, the congregation discerned in 2023 to seek the Lord about their future. This led them to explore, and ultimately to approve a plan to merge into Edge City Church in Mineola, New York, which is a church plant affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church. Edge City is a multi-site congregation, serves a multiethnic population, and is growing with ministry to many in their Long Island communities. Edge City is receiving the members and pastor of New Vision (Rev. Martin Chang) into their fellowship, and Pastor Chang will continue to serve as a campus pastor. We thank God for the life, mission, and witness of the people of New Vision and commend them to the Lord's care, and that of Edge City Church in this next season. Like the branch that sprang from the root of Jesse, we pray the Lord will give increased growth and renewed energy to the people of God joining Edge City from New Vision.

Table Covenant Church

Location: Fairfax, VA

Reason for removal: Merger

Number of members (when church closed): 45

Year joined the Covenant: 2015

Peak membership (approximately): 70

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: In 2014, Table Covenant Church was parented and sent out by Community Covenant Church, Springfield, Virginia. Pastor Michael Han served as the church planting pastor, gathering and launching a multiethnic congregation in suburban Washington, DC, in Fairfax, Virginia. The church grew in the first five years and adopted a house church model for meeting weekly, with all-church/large gatherings held monthly. During the pandemic years, the congregation began to decline in strength. At the same time, the sending

church, CCC in Springfield, Virginia, declined and endured a stressful pastoral transition. CCC and Table agreed to ask Pastor Han to serve both churches, which led to an experiment of combining ministries together. After a period of discernment, both churches agreed that it seemed good to merge Table Covenant and CCC. Now, one church gathers in Springfield, and a multiethnic, multigenerational congregation of about 90 people is renewed together in a unified mission. We pray this merger will be a catalyst for renewal and revitalization for Community Covenant Church, and for effective outreach and service to the Springfield community, where CCC has ministered for more than 50 years.

GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: GARTH MCGRATH

Bethany Covenant Church

Location: Lyndhurst, OH

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 35

Year joined the Covenant: 1953

Peak membership (approximately): 250

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Bethany's roots were in First Covenant Church of Cleveland, founded in 1889. Members of First Covenant Church planted Bethany Covenant Church in 1952 and formalized as a member of the Covenant in 1953. Throughout its ministry, the church was known for sacrificial service to the neighborhood, the city of Lyndhurst, and the larger Cleveland community; for faithful missionary support; and for generous support of both the Great Lakes Conference and the Evangelical Covenant Church. In recent years, despite significant efforts to deepen their engagement in the community, the church experienced decline. On November 12, the congregation voted to close the church and become a legacy church, with proceeds from the sale of their building to be invested in missional vitality and church planting ministry initiatives in the Great Lakes Conference.

MIDWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: BRIAN JOHNSON

Crossroads Community Church

Location: Halstead, KS

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Number of members (when church withdrew): 30

Year joined the Covenant: 2010

Peak membership (approximately): 140

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: When Crossroads Community Church of Halstead, Kansas, joined the Covenant in 2010, the connection to the denomination remained

tenuous, with the pastor serving as the primary connector to the Midwest Conference. Following the pastor's retirement, the church pursued connections with other networks and has recently chosen to disaffiliate from the Covenant as they embrace a new local church network.

Faith Covenant Church

Location: Essex, IA

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 11

Year joined the Covenant: 1904

Peak membership (approximately): 76

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: In 1991, the Covenant churches of Fremont, Iowa, and Essex, Iowa, merged to form Faith Covenant Church in Essex. Membership remained steady for many years following the merger; however, in recent years, as more and more people relocated away from the community, church membership dwindled to a small group of faithful individuals. After prayerful discernment, the church decided to close its doors in November 2023.

NORTHWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: KARA STROMBERG

Edina Covenant Church

DBA Mercy Commons Covenant Church

Location: Edina, MN

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 15

Year joined the Covenant: 1945 (organized in 1944)

Peak membership (approximately): 250

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Edina Covenant Church (DBA Mercy Commons) enjoyed 80 years of ministry in the heart of the vibrant community of Edina, Minnesota. The church struggled to redefine itself through the pandemic and leadership transitions, and attendance waned alongside financial challenges. In recent years, Mercy Commons was a quiet, liturgical, family-centered church community, deeply loved by those who attended. The loss of a beloved worship leader accelerated conversations around the sustainability of the church. The remaining members, under the leadership of Pastor Daniel Lukas, voted to become a legacy church in early 2024. In closing, Mercy Commons was able to bless Covenant Pines Bible Camp with furniture and additional resources for the camp's new worship center.

City of Lakes Covenant Church

Location: Minneapolis, MN

Reason for removal: Closed

Number of members (when church closed): 8

Year joined the Covenant: 2018

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: City of Lakes Covenant was planted in 2013 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The church began with momentum and energy. When they needed a place to meet, they formed a cooperative partnership in 2015 with Aldrich Presbyterian Church, an established church in Minneapolis under the umbrella Resurrection Minneapolis. The church(es) formed community partnerships and remodeled the facility for various outreach-based ministries. For a time, the planting pastor maintained dual licensure with the Covenant and PCUSA until 2019 when he dropped his Covenant credential. The church(es) continued to operate under this shared agreement, but when the pastor took a leave of absence to address a family matter in early 2022, the complexities surrounding the cooperative agreement, the pastor's extended leave of absence, and ongoing conflict around governance and polity with the PCUSA proved untenable. The church voted to close on October 29, 2023. Aldrich Presbyterian also voted to close around the same time, and the building was sold to the current renters who plan to continue to minister in the community.

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE

SUPERINTENDENT: BRYAN MURPHY

Ebenezer Iglesia del Pacto

Location: Southgate, CA

Reason for removal: Withdrawn

Year joined the Covenant: 2021

Peak membership (approximately): 50

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: Ebenezer del Pacto came into the Covenant membership in 2021. The church's pastor was very appreciative of the Covenant's ministry and direction. However, sometime after coming into membership, the church released the pastor and indicated desire to depart the Covenant.

The Bridge Community Church

Location: San Jose, CA

Reason for removal: Closed

Year joined the Covenant: 2008

Peak membership (approximately): 53

Reason leading to removal from the roster and comments: The Bridge Community Church was a church plant of the Pacific Southwest Conference and the denomination, formally launched in San Jose in 2008. The planting pastor, Andy Fitzgerald, faithfully served for many years until the close. The church weathered the transitions that came with not having a permanent home in a costly community, as well as Covid. In 2023, the Bridge closed its ministry doors.



Action to Designate Vice Presidents, Executive Ministers, and Executive Directors of Covenant Offices as Annual Meeting Delegates

The following bylaw amendment will be voted on during the 138th Annual Meeting of the Covenant.

*The text in **green** are the words to be added.*

SECTION 7.4. DELEGATES.

- e. The president, vice presidents, executive ministers, and executive directors of the Covenant, the members of the Executive Board, the members of the Council of Superintendents, and the members of the Council of Administrators shall be ex-officio delegates.

Rationale: This language allows executive leaders of the Covenant to have delegate status, regardless of the organizational structure.



Report of the President



It is truly a privilege to pursue God's mission with this beautiful faith family. The work of the Evangelical Covenant Church is rich and robust, reaching people for Christ worldwide. I celebrate the richness of our ministry and the many, many ways we have seen God at work this past year. The Covenant Offices denominational team has been living into the new organizational structure voted on during last year's gathering. It is our hope and prayer that this realignment of resources will posture us in a stronger way to serve the local church and regional conferences and better align God's mission with the resources churches have provided for us in this season. We want to ensure that we are set up for a thriving future. We truly are moving **faithfully forward**, which also happens to be our missional theme this year.

Acts 2:42-27 provides a glimpse of how the early church laid the foundation for missional work, together.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

As we continue to express our devotion through worship, teaching, fellowship, prayer, living generously, and radical hospitality, may we experience God working through us to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world.

I am grateful for this call on my life to serve the Covenant. I have loved being with you in your churches, some of your conference annual meetings, and special events around the Covenant and in our global church. Thank you for your questions, your notes and words of encouragement, and most especially, your prayers. It has been an honor to be with and among you, and I look forward to more engagements in the coming years. Since we were together in June 2023 I have been part of:

Engagements in 19 local churches in six of our regional conferences. These visits often include preaching, greeting, and connecting with the pastoral and other church leadership teams. With every visit I grow in appreciation of the beautiful diversity of the church and the ways in which

churches are bringing the good news to their neighbors in creative ways.

I have been part of **four in-person** milestone anniversary celebrations and provided a video greeting to 10 others. It was meaningful to celebrate the 150-year anniversary of First Covenant Church in Red Wing, Minnesota. This church was foundational to our Covenant beginnings, and I was blessed to remember these early pioneers who gathered for prayer and study of the Scriptures. Likewise, what a pleasure to celebrate a 10-year anniversary with a congregation made up of mostly Congolese immigrants in Iowa, Shalom Covenant Church. This congregation is doing such great ministry, including caring for Afghan refugees, that the governor of Iowa has recognized their work. This month I visited the church where I grew up, Peninsula Covenant Church of Redwood City, California. It was deeply meaningful to remember those who had invested in my life and to thank them for their ministry. Each church I visit has its own special story, and I love spending time among our people and experiencing the way God is working in such varied contexts.

I have engaged in some form in all **11 regional conferences** this year, speaking in eight. Visiting at the local level, hearing the joys and challenges, answering questions, and praying together is life-giving. It keeps me close to the heart of God's people. It was a pleasure to be able to participate and speak in three conference annual meetings again this year.

I have also been part of **two international visits**. My experience in the DR Congo was both eye-opening and life-giving. What a pleasure to work and worship with our brothers and sisters in a mutually encouraging partnership. I pray that more Covenanters will consider visiting the places where we are partnering and that some will consider exploring global service. The gospel is spreading rapidly in many places and among many people groups, and experiencing this gives me a glimpse of what I imagine heaven will look like.

I actively participated in **14 governing boards** across our denomination and have enjoyed the **Presidential Roundtable** that consists of our affiliate presidents from North Park University, North Park Theological Seminary, Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, National Covenant Properties, and Covenant Trust Company. What an encouraging group of gifted and faithful leaders.

I want to express deep gratitude to the **denominational team** who has demonstrated great commitment to the mission during difficult seasons. This past year they have flexed with the changes the reorganization has brought, even when challenging. We know that there will always be opportunities to change and shift to better meet the needs of our churches, but the re-organization is complete and we now have the opportunity to maximize what we have learned. I am thankful for the wonderful executive leaders who work alongside me, helping to discern God's leading and make wise decisions. I don't do this work alone, and I am deeply grateful for the teams I partner with. We have all greatly appreciated the support and prayers of those in our local churches.

As the church, we know it is important that **prayer** remains at the center of all we do. We cannot do the work God has called us to do if we are not spending time and energy in prayer, spending time in God's presence, listening for God's direction, and following his leading. I'm grateful for the response to the monthly prayer emails distributed through the CovChurch Now mailing list. They have included updates, prayer practices, and specific ways to pray for the Covenant Church. Thank you for engaging in the work of prayer together.

I praise God for each church plant supported in the Covenant and the many established churches who have engaged in vitality resources. I celebrate that we will be hosting thousands of students for the first full United national conference! I am excited that we have a new director of evangelism, Leisha Hawley, who can give focused attention to raising the temperature of evangelism. I am grateful for the ongoing work of Love Mercy Do Justice that helps us to make disciples in a more caring and just world. I am thankful for the Serve Clergy staff who have nurtured partnerships with the Lilly Foundation that provide financial support for Covenant clergy to receive renewal grants, crisis assistance, and financial leadership support. I am grateful for the generosity of this movement that we, together, can send millions of dollars to proclaim and demonstrate the love of Christ globally. Thank you for your generous gifts!

A few colleagues at Covenant Offices have moved into new ministry roles this year, and a few will be moving to other ministry settings this season. I want to close with a few words of welcome and gratitude for these team members.

I would like to welcome, **Dierdra Clark**, corporate secretary; **Paul Lessard**, vice president of mission priorities; and **Cyndi Hoffman**, our new vice president of finance. Pending a vote of the Annual Meeting, we hope to confirm **Paul Robinson** as the executive minister of Serve Locally, a position he has given interim leadership to in the transition. I thank each of these individuals for saying YES to God for this coming season of ministry life. They are all wonderfully suited for this kingdom work, and I look forward to our collaborative partnerships.

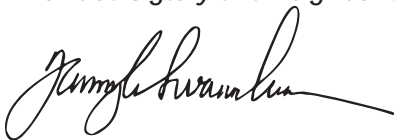
I want to give deep thanks to **Steve Dawson** for his service as the interim vice president of finance this past year. Steve has been a gift to the denomination in many ways over the last 30 years. I'm grateful for his support in clarifying our financial systems and reporting and laying a solid foundation to support our new full-time vice president of finance. We extend thanks to Steve and his wife, Mary-Jane Dawson. We pray that they will both be able to enjoy more of their retirement years, especially with visits to see their beautiful granddaughter.

I invite your continued prayers and suggestions for the next vice president of mission services. This is the final opening to fill to complete the senior team. This leader will provide important leadership and support for Operations, Human Resources, Advancement, Marketing and Communications, and more. Would you join me in diligently praying for this yet-to-be-identified leader?

In addition, I give great thanks for our eleven regional conference superintendents and their dedicated staff. It is refreshing to work together with my gifted sisters and brothers who care so deeply for our churches and leaders.

We are in this mission and ministry together, pursuing Jesus and the work he has invited us into. Let us continue to lean in and prayerfully pursue the leading of the Holy Spirit, moving **faithfully forward** together.

For God's glory and neighbor's good,



Tammy



Recommendation on Covenant Resource Paper: FREEDOM, UNITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY IN COVENANT LIFE AND MISSION

“How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!” (PSALM 133:1).¹

“I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts” (PSALM 119:63).

“Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others”

(PHILIPPIANS 2:4).

“For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love

become slaves to one another” (GALATIANS 5:13).

“May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (ROMANS 15:5–7).

THE CHALLENGE OF OUR PRESENT TIME

Across the history of the Evangelical Covenant Church, at moments when faith and fellowship were at stake, the commitment to freedom, within biblical authority and unity in Christ has kept our family of faith from fracturing unnecessarily while retaining the integrity of our fellowship in Jesus Christ. As our society becomes increasingly rife with division—from political polarization and economic inequalities to ruptures along lines of worldview, race, class, religion, and geography—the Covenant’s motto, “United in Christ” (Conjuncti in Christo), adopted at the formation of the church in 1885, our Covenant Affirmation regarding biblical authority, and the reality of freedom in Christ have been severely tested. We have aspired to pursue God’s mission together in the world while acknowledging that we hold diverse theological expressions within historic orthodoxy.

Disunity in the church undermines our witness to the power of the cross to reconcile people to one another, rebuilding the walls of division that Christ’s death broke down. The bitter fruits of negative partisanship challenge Covenanters, as brothers and sisters in Christ struggle to love, understand, and accept one another, within and between diverse congregations. In this context, even those foundational commitments—to the centrality of Christ, to Scripture’s authority, to unity for the

¹ All Scripture references are from the NRSV unless otherwise noted.

sake of mission, and to freedom in Christ—can be polarized and used against one another as false alternatives or feared rivals rather than being woven together in a creative and dynamic tension.

A pressing tension at the conception of this paper was the proliferation of conversations and controversies within the Covenant regarding biblical theology, polity, and ethics addressing same-sex unions and Christian marriage and the welcome and discipleship of LGBTQ+ persons in congregational life. To address these challenges, President Gary Walter proposed a Covenant Resource Paper that would reflect afresh, not on human sexuality² itself, but on the historical rationale for Covenant freedom and our responsibility to God's word in Scripture. This was advanced in 2018 through the Board of Ordered Ministry and commissioned by the Covenant Executive Board. Since that commissioning, many additional pressing concerns have further strained unity within and among our Covenant congregations, including heightened negative political partisanship, long-standing racial inequities, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, this resource paper has evolved to incorporate the themes of freedom, unity, and responsibility. What hangs in the balance is our capacity to remain united in faith, hope, and love in pursuit of God's mission. As Covenanters we seek first God's kingdom of reconciling justice and healing righteousness (MATTHEW 6:33). The whole mission of the whole Church for the whole world calls us to embrace a shared practice of discipleship with generous hospitality and radical holiness for all God's people.

As Christian denominations fracture over disputes regarding politics, polity, sexuality, race, and more, it is critical that we ask ourselves: How will we, as Covenant people and congregations united in mission, continue to live and serve together in the unity of the Spirit, bearing witness amid these particular challenges in congregational decision making? How will we obey Jesus's call to steward and maintain our unity in Christ within a divided church and world? Will we accept the church being divided according to social castes and political tribes, or will we proactively pursue peace and reconciliation in keeping with our founding ethos and vision (PSALM 119:63; CF. ROMANS 12:18; EPHESIANS 4:3)?

At various points in Covenant history, we have returned to reflect on our foundational values in light of new and repeated challenges. This resource paper continues in that tradition, reflecting again on Covenant freedom and our responsibility to God's word in Scripture and to one another in the church. In light of present political and social challenges that divide our nations and the churches within them, this paper addresses our diverse Covenant congregations and members. It seeks to offer resources for us to live and serve together as one body in faith and mission, extending freedom and acting responsibly toward one another. The commission and scope of this paper does not directly concern sexuality, which would require a distinct process of research and discernment.

² For a suite of Covenant resources on human sexuality, go to <https://covchurch.org/resource/embrace/>. For a copy of the 2007 Board of Ministry teaching paper on human sexuality and the marriage ethic, go to <https://covchurch.org/resource/human-sexuality-paper/>

This paper intends rather to resource the Covenant in how we can remain together while we deliberate and discern on matters that are primary and secondary to our unity in Christ.

Covenant Resource Papers, as described in the Covenant’s bylaws, are not binding authoritative statements but rather serve as formational teaching resources to generate and facilitate communal discernment. This paper was not commissioned to resolve every tension between people, positions, or perspectives. Rather, it suggests a path for how we as Covenant people and congregations might move forward together, bearing witness to the gospel of Christ and embodying the kingdom of God in our ever-more polarized context. This paper seeks to highlight a pathway for Covenanters to talk to one another, to listen charitably to the pains and fears our brothers and sisters carry—and so to bear one another’s burdens and serve one another in faith, hope, and love—so that together we can seek God’s glory and our neighbors’ good.

The authors pray that Covenant congregations and Covenant people reading this paper are inspired by a vision of the church that is not divided along predictable fault lines of theological or political worldviews, but is ever-more-fully a fellowship in which we are deeply committed to one another in a holy community that reflects the oneness of our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, working in unity and mission to heal and reconcile the whole world—including us to one another. The authors pray that each Covenant congregation and person would be committed to living in the creative tension between our deep commitment to God’s word and to being companions of all who fear God, including those who hold interpretations of biblical texts and ethics different from our own. The desire is to be a hospitable church where those who disagree with us charitably on points of interpretation and doctrine are not regarded as enemies but welcomed as fellow pilgrims journeying toward God’s countercultural kingdom. As Covenanters we confess that “in your light we see light” (PSALM 36:9B), and we also recognize that our knowledge is partial (1 CORINTHIANS 13:9-12), and our love is imperfect.

CONJUNCTI IN CHRISTO (UNITED IN CHRIST): THE CALL TO UNITY

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (PSALM 133:1, NIV).

The visible unity of the church, as Christ’s one body, stands as a public testimony to the Father and the Father’s love. Jesus prayed for the unity of the family of God, “that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me...that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (JOHN 17:21, 23).

Our unity in Christ is a priceless gift, a sacred trust we steward; it is not ours to create or to set aside. It is like an olive tree we must carefully cultivate if we are to harvest its healing fruit. In Ephesians 4, the Apostle Paul urges the church to make “every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one

hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (EPHESIANS 4:3–6). In becoming children of the one God, we join one family with many diverse siblings. As Psalm 133:1 expresses so beautifully, “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” Christian unity is centered in Christ, the living Word. While we do not seek unity at all costs, we “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit” (Romans 12:18) for the sake of Christ.

While the Covenant both emerges from and adheres to historic Christianity, we have given extra emphasis in our movement to the unity of the redeemed in Christ in the community of faith. Our name “Covenant” references the commitment we make to one another and to cooperate in the work of the gospel as mission friends. This commitment to freedom in Christ ensures that Christian unity is neither the suppression of diversity nor its denial; it is neither legislated uniformity nor tepid compromise to a lowest common denominator. Rather, Christian unity preserves distinction, drawing diverse expressions into an overarching relationship of love and mutual participation. This is one way we may reflect the unity in diversity of the Triune God. Both diversity and unity are preserved by faithful love.

Our unity is like that of an orchestra with its varied musicians. Christ, our conductor, unites us in himself and directs our performance through the Holy Spirit as we share the Father’s love. In orchestrating such a great unity of the Spirit, Christ labors with each of us to center our participation in the body and the mission by keeping us in tune and tempo with the Spirit. Just as an orchestra plays in unity by keeping eyes on the conductor, so we can only maintain unity in the church if our eyes are both opened by Christ and remain fixed on him at all times. There is no unity in Christ apart from abiding in Christ. Abiding is not passive; abiding is our active occupation as disciples, letting the word dwell in us richly and work through us faithfully.

And yet the church too often fails to be an exception to the broader polarization and division of our time, leading to sad and bitter divisions not only as hardened denominational distinctions but also, and often more painfully, within denominations and within and between local churches. Instead of bearing witness to “one body and one Spirit...one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all” (Ephesians 4:4), the church may differ little from the world in this respect. We confess that in the Covenant we have not been immune to these broader divisive forces, and lament that deep pain has resulted, leading to lingering wounds, loss of trust, and strained credibility.

One aim and hope of this paper is to confess this divisiveness as sin and to encourage repentance, charting an amended path forward in a renewed commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ, to love one another, and to renew our common mission. In light of the reality of these divisions and the deep wounds that exist—not simply “out there” but within and among us—it is also timely to reexamine the resources of our history that might equip us in our time—and to renew these

foundational commitments amid the pressing challenges of our day. For it was in just such a time of deep division that the Pietist movement emerged, out of which our Covenant was birthed.

HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS: FOUNDING COMMITMENTS TO SCRIPTURE, FREEDOM, AND UNITY

“I am a companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts” (PSALM 119:63).

Formal confessional statements, like the Lutheran Augsburg Confession or Reformed Westminster Confession, defined the boundaries of each tradition in the period following the death of the original Protestant reformers in the sixteenth century. Hope for the reunification of the western church was abandoned, and the theological divisions between Protestant traditions were solidified and deepened. These confessions focused on narrowing doctrinal distinctions. Consequently, the doctrines that distinguished traditions gained heightened importance and rigidity. What were once observed as distinct and complementary panes in a stained-glass window became dividing walls. As the theological divisions of the Protestant Reformation merged with political divisions among emerging European nation states, vicious wars took millions of lives.

In the wake of this destruction, the German and Swedish Pietists (among others) called for a return to the core reformations sought by Martin Luther: the priesthood of all believers, the individual’s personal appropriation of transformative faith, and the dynamism of the living word of God in Scripture. They sought to focus on the new life in Christ that united believers rather than the doctrinal debates that divided them. They did not deny the importance of what Christians believe but rather insisted that knowledge cannot stand alone without transformation; the objective truths of the gospel must be subjectively experienced. They believed that true Christian life was not a result of one’s head knowledge alone or one’s citizenship (the state church model), but rather of new life in Christ. They believed that true Christian unity emerged not from legislated doctrinal uniformity but rather from a shared experience of regeneration—a new birth in a living hope through faith in Jesus Christ.

While these emphases of the broader Pietist movement served to relativize the role of confessional statements, the atonement controversy provoked by Swedish Lutheran pastor P.P. Waldenström in 1872 called into question the value of confessional statements as such. After an extensive study of Scripture’s teaching on the atonement—having posed the question often repeated in the Covenant, “Where is it written?”—Waldenström concluded that the atonement in Christ reconciled a sinful humanity to God rather than reconciling God to humanity.³ This conclusion conflicted with the Augsburg Confession, the standard of orthodoxy for the Church of Sweden. Consequently, many who sympathized with Waldenström’s conclusions were barred from Lutheran pulpits and communion tables, in both Sweden and Swedish America. Thus, many who formed the Covenant

³ For Waldenström’s “Sermon for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity,” see *Covenant Roots: Sources and Affirmations* (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1999), 97–110.

had experienced firsthand the painful consequences of exclusion when confessional statements functioned as a boundary for church membership and participation. They lamented the narrowing of church and shared mission by required doctrinal uniformity, resulting in genuine Christians remaining outside. Moreover, they were concerned that strict adherence to confessional statements might limit rather than ensure faithful interpretation of Scripture—and even replace Scripture’s authority with an authoritative human interpretation.

In February 1885, delegates gathered in Chicago representing congregations from two Lutheran synods, the Mission Synod and the Ansgar Synod. Both synods were breakaways from the older and larger Augustana Synod, and all three synods held the Augsburg Confession as their standard of orthodoxy. In deciding collectively to form something new, a Covenant, the delegates adopted as their sole confession, “the Holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.”⁴ This decision was very intentional; in adopting Scripture alone as the confession, they were leaving behind the Augsburg Confession as the boundary of their theology and fellowship. “The Covenant Church has understood that God’s word is sovereign over every human interpretation of it—including its own.”⁵ This sole confession was not a freedom from Scripture but rather a means of focusing on Scripture itself, read in context, rather than any human interpretation of Scripture expressed in confessional form.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST: LOVINGLY EXTENDED, RESPONSIBLY EXERCISED

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love” (GALATIANS 5:13).

“Freedom” can mean many things, from political freedom to freedom from sin or oppression. The freedom described in Covenant Affirmations (“the reality of freedom in Christ”) refers to something very particular: the freedom we extend to one another in the places we differ in our understanding of God’s word. This freedom enables the true freedom that is found in submission to God’s will and preserves the unity of Christ’s body. The Covenant’s historical commitment to freedom in Christ is not limitless nor an end in itself but rather exists to preserve the unity, clarify the orthodoxy, and extend the faithfulness of the church. It exists to enable the church’s hearing and obeying of God’s will in Scripture, and to guard our responsibility to cling to Christ and to one another in community. The Preamble to the Covenant Constitution describes this freedom “as a gift that preserves personal conviction yet guards against an individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.”⁶

The hope of Covenant freedom is that we might offer “to one another theological and personal freedom where the biblical and historical record seems to allow for a variety of interpretations of

4 *Covenant Roots: Sources and Affirmations* (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 1999), 15.

5 *Covenant Affirmations* (Chicago: Covenant Publications, 2005), 19.

6 The Evangelical Covenant Church, Constitution and Bylaws, “Preamble.”

the will and purposes of God.⁷ The intent is that such freedom might allow continued fellowship and ministry together across differences that have historically or might presently divide Christians from one another. Biblical expressions of freedom in regard to matters that should not divide Christians are found most clearly in Romans 14:1ff. and 15:1-3 and 1 Corinthians 7-10. In those passages Paul discusses a Christian's freedom in regard to marriage and singleness, what one may eat or drink and, more briefly, the observance of holy days. We are not to misconstrue freedom as license to commit immorality or to participate in idolatry (1 CORINTHIANS 10:23-24 AND ACTS 15). Mature freedom serves the weak and the vulnerable as Christ and his apostles have done for us (1 CORINTHIANS 11:1).

There are secondary areas in which, after careful study, earnest Christians do come to different conclusions on Scripture's teaching. It is in precisely these areas that extending freedom to one another enables us to remain united—and, as we remain united amid our diversity and the tensions of disagreement, preserve the possibility of growing in faithful obedience to God's word. In Christ, unity does not imply or require uniformity but allows for rich diversity. We value dialogue with one another to help us hear the full counsel of Scripture, praying for the illumination of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, Covenant "freedom in Christ" has especially focused on making adequate space for conscience and conviction to mature together in community. The Covenant has recognized that "Christian vitality has not always been maintained by the majority" and so has sought to respectfully consider dissenting voices.⁸

Respect for dissenting voices exists in dynamic tension with the responsibility of the Christian body to discern the Spirit of truth. Working together we are called to distill truth from error, to practice restorative discipline, and to train ourselves in godliness. As the Covenant understood in 1963, "Therefore, whether the body be one of our local congregations or the denomination itself or any other organization within the denomination, it must have some way of determining that its freedom remains within the bounds of biblical authority."⁹ In the polity of the Covenant this communal discernment rests in the authority of the Annual Meeting (congregational, conference, and denominational) and the elected bodies and leaders called and accountable to shepherd the church and to direct ministry and mission.

Such freedom and responsibility enable a living orthodoxy and application of faith and learning (HEBREWS 4:12). We do not attempt to fill in all the spaces in our Christian understanding with neat and simple answers. The same Spirit who inspired the authors of Scripture to write is present to illuminate its faithful application to our contemporary situation. Extending this freedom to one another protects and honors dissenting voices and enables godly diversity to flourish within the unity of the Spirit. Covenant freedom seeks to realize Christ's prayer for our unity (JOHN 17) and

7 *Covenant Affirmations*, 19.

8 *Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom* (Chicago: Covenant Committee on Freedom and Theology, 1963), 13.

9 *Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom*, 14.

the Apostle Paul's counsel that we do everything to maintain this gift of unity in the bond of peace (EPHESIANS 4:3). Such extension of freedom to others also requires a faithful and reflective reading of Scripture that holds individual passages within the whole of Scripture.¹⁰ This is a profound call to respect truth and extend grace to those with whom we disagree in the name of a shared life in Christ and the creation of a gracious, loving community that reflects the profound unity of the Triune God.

Covenant freedom is exercised within the church as a fellowship of believers for the sake of improving our faithful reading of Scripture. But the flower of godly dissent bears the fruit of the Spirit. The personal exercise of dissent does not exist in isolation from the unity and discipline of the church. The stewardship of dissent requires wisdom and discernment. In the Covenant, dissent exists within and is accountable for what it proposes under the polity adopted by the Covenant. The people of God share the responsibility of exercising godly discernment and self-discipline. This is especially necessary when errors in teaching or practice threaten our witness, worship, and unified mission. Local congregations, regional conferences, denominational boards, and ultimately the Covenant Annual Meeting help us discern and determine that the exercise of freedom remains faithful and fruitful.

To be free then is not to be independent but to be devoted to one another in the bond of love, sharing in a common grace extended by the faith of Jesus Christ. That same responsible concern for unity may require restraints on the personal or local exercise of freedom. Since a principle of Christian freedom has as a primary aim the unity of Christian fellowship, there needs to be great care not to exercise such freedom in ways that damage or break fellowship (1 CORINTHIANS 8:7-13; ROMANS 14:13-23). "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another" (GALATIANS 5:13). Freedom in Christ is not selfishly demanded; it is selflessly given, stewarded for the building up of the body of Christ.

This is now and has always been a difficult and challenging freedom. Our stewardship of this freedom for more than 130 years has profoundly shaped the identity of our denomination. It has enabled sacramental unity between those who affirm the validity of infant baptism and those who hold to baptism only for believers. It has upheld theological unity among Christians holding diverse interpretations of the end times. It has upheld ethical unity among Christians holding diverse interpretations of justice and just war versus non-retaliation. It enabled the Covenant to weather controversies of the 1920s and 1950s over dogmas of biblical inspiration and interpretation that divided many other Protestant denominations. It has facilitated the Covenant's shift from a predominantly Swedish American denomination to a body increasingly reflecting the multiethnic mosaic of people that is the Covenant Church today.

Historically, we have understood primary doctrines of orthodoxy that shape our understanding of

¹⁰ See the first Covenant Resource Paper, *The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Bible* (2008).

salvation to follow the framework of the confession of the historic Church in the Apostles' Creed. "On the central issues of our faith, doctrine, and conduct, the biblical message is sufficiently clear: the creation of all things by God, humanity made in the divine image but fallen in sin, their consequent moral inability to achieve redemption, the incarnate and sinless life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, his atoning death and resurrection, redemption through faith in him, the regenerative and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of Christ's coming again to consummate his kingdom and judge the world. These affirmations constitute the essential core of the biblical message and are sufficiently clear for our salvation."¹¹

As stated earlier, the presenting tensions that occasioned this paper's commissioning surround the ongoing pastoral questions and ethical guidelines that arise from the biblical meaning of marriage and how best to welcome and disciple LGBTQ+ persons in our communities. How do the central issues of our faith, doctrine, and conduct bear on our understandings of sexual orientation, gender identity, marriage and parenting? Which of these qualify as primary or secondary matters in the Christian faith? In what ways are the ordering of our sexual relations connected to "the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit"? How should biblical perspectives about our bodies and marriage lead us in these questions? A review of existing Covenant resources can provide a helpful starting point.¹²

Our ongoing discernment involves the integration of beliefs and values all Covenanters hold dear: the commitment to biblical authority, the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves, the avoidance of sexual immorality, the honoring of chaste vocations in singleness and marriage, and the commitment to human dignity and rights. Some Covenanters fear that these may be discounted or compromised. These debates highlight both our values and our fears. Let us acknowledge them, recognizing the hopes and hurts behind them, naming them honestly in the church. Neither preemptive condemnation nor presumptive affirmation reflects the grace and liberation of Jesus Christ. Let us enter into genuine dialogue with one another, truly listening to both values and fears.

WEAVING FREEDOM, UNITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY TOGETHER

"Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." (PHILIPPIANS 2:4)

In exercising freedom and responsibility, we are accountable to God as we form disciples prospering in the work of the Lord. Both freedom and responsibility derive their necessity and purpose from the unity of the word of God and the royal law of love (James 2:8). Endowed with these gifts, we are responsible to build up the unity of the Church in the knowledge and love of God. To claim one is to claim the other also. There is no freedom in Christ without responsibility to Christ. The reverse is equally true. As beloved children of God we are both free and responsible. As siblings one to another in the body of Christ, all Covenanters are called to exercise these gifts in unity and in love.

¹¹ *Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom*, 10.

¹² See note 2.

In Christ, freedom, unity, and responsibility form a cord of essential strands that weave the strong bond of peace between us. Taken in isolation, any of the three (freedom, unity, or responsibility) can break down into distorted absolutist claims. Joined together they make possible the giving and receiving needed to live as one body in Christ.

In granting one another freedom in interpretation, we also hold one another accountable in application to the way of Jesus being practiced in our congregations. Covenanters find Scripture to be the only perfect rule for conduct, as well as faith and doctrine. In affirming the vows of baptism¹³ and vows of congregational membership, we promise to follow Christ as Lord by how we live among God's faithful people, hear God's word and share in the Lord's Supper, proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, and strive for justice and peace in all the earth. We promise to support the ministries of our church, including the conference and denomination to which we belong.¹⁴

Covenant congregations commit to work with each other in regional conferences and faithfully support the mission and ministries of each. Likewise Covenant ministers, in assuming the common vows of ordered ministry, pledge to live in conformity to Christ and his teachings, to be a faithful witness and wholesome example for God's people, to submit to the church's discipline, to pledge loyalty to and support for the Covenant and its mission, and to follow the ethical guidelines for Covenant ministers.¹⁵ These are all sacred vows voiced in the presence of God and one another. They qualify positively how freedom, unity, and responsibility work together in harmony in the Covenant Church. The burden and blessing of local church leadership, of all conference and Covenant boards, and of the Covenant Annual Meeting is to steward these commitments.

Freedom in interpretation does not exempt any individual or congregation from the fundamental koinonia of the church: our devotion to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, to prayer, to generosity, to acts of mercy, to doing justice, to mutual submission, and especially to the transcending law of love, which is the stem on which grow all the fruit of the Spirit. For both laity and clergy, the yoke of Jesus tethers disciples together in communal participation in the way of Christ because we form the body of Christ.

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE...TOGETHER?

“May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” (ROMANS 15:5-7).

¹³ *The Covenant Book of Worship* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 2003), 131.

¹⁴ *The Covenant Book of Worship*, 361.

¹⁵ *The Covenant Book of Worship*, 402.

At the denomination’s centennial anniversary in 1985, Covenant president Milton B. Engebretson could report that “the challenge to abandon [the Covenant’s] insistence on maintaining a mystique of freedom within the bounds of biblical Christianity and exchange it for a doctrinal system has ever been present. The fact that it has not been abandoned—even though it has been tested and altered by such challenges—puts it, I believe, in a unique position to influence the whole evangelical world on its path to unity and strength.”¹⁶ The need for unity and strength within the church is no less pressing today, and the Covenant remains in a unique position to contribute to the strengthening of Christ’s church amid the heightened polarizations of our time.

As previously stated, Covenant Resource Papers are not binding statements but rather serve as formational teaching resources to generate and facilitate communal discernment. This paper is an invitation to commit anew to our founding values described above, for the sake of our present and future unity, identity, obedience, and witness. At this juncture in our history, it is essential that we establish a listening posture from which we can invite the Holy Spirit to do God’s work in and through us as we cry out, “Lord, have mercy!” In the ways described in this section, every Covenanter and Covenant congregation is invited to remain in community, in conversation, and in mission with one another. If we are to live and serve together, to maintain the bond of unity as brothers and sisters within congregations, this is a solid starting posture. Certainly, it requires more than this, but it does not allow for less.

Every Covenanter is invited to begin with humble self-reflection. To those “who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else,” Jesus offered this parable (LUKE 18:9-14):

Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: “God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.” But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Even as we lament divisions broadly, our goal should not first be to point out the sins or failures of others but first to recognize and repent of our own. Let us implore God’s mercy so that the Holy Spirit might work in us toward our transformation and through us toward a transformed church and world.

“God, have mercy on me, a sinner!” (Luke 18:13). Humbly acknowledge and repent of thoughts, speech, and actions that have diminished Christian unity, denied freedom to

¹⁶ Milton Engebretson, “Foreword” to Karl A. Olsson, *Into One Body*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1986), vii.

others, or asserted personal freedom without due regard for the larger community. Ask for God’s Spirit to transform your thinking, speaking, and acting in the areas you have confessed. Where possible, seek reconciliation and repair of relationships with those you have injured.

Every Covenanter is invited to seek truth and transformation. The call to Christian unity—and to extend freedom for its sake—does not foreclose the reality of truth. It is not concession to the lowest common denominator for the sake of conflict avoidance. Nor does the simple fact of personal disagreement about any matter of theology or practice automatically entail that it is open for church-wide debate or disagreement. Racism and slavery once had their theological and biblical defenders, but faithful Christians of all denominations have recognized that one cannot simply “agree to disagree” about racism or slavery. There are issues of clear conviction where we must not give moral equivalence to all sides.

In the Covenant Church, “Where is it written?” remains our primary question as we seek to hear and obey God’s will. “We believe that the Bible is the place where God is to be met, where his forgiveness is proclaimed, and where his will is made known”¹⁷ and that “to read it properly, therefore, is to find it an altar where one meets the living God.”¹⁸ Christ is our living Bread (JOHN 6), Truth itself (JOHN 14:6), and we are called to come to him continually, to trust in him, to listen to him, and to follow his full teaching in a life of disciplined obedience. This is the way of freedom.

As we pursue the living Truth, it is imperative that we read Scripture within community since each of us sees in part (1 CORINTHIANS 13:9) and none of us alone has the final word on all matters of faith, doctrine, or conduct. Moreover, our Pietist roots remind us that it is insufficient merely to know or speak the truth; we must also do the truth. We must be transformed, moving beyond isolated statements or legislated changes to lived, communal transformation through the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the call to be doers of the word and not merely hearers (JAMES 1:22-25). This is a living faith in the risen Lord.

Reflect anew on the first Covenant Resource Paper, “The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Bible.”¹⁹ We encourage frequent encounter with God at the altar of Scripture, seeking to read “faithfully, communally, rigorously, charitably, and holistically, with commitments to grace, transformation, and mission.”²⁰

(See fuller descriptions within that paper.)

Every Covenanter is invited to honor every person as God’s image-bearer. One clear message of

¹⁷ *Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom*, 6.

¹⁸ *Biblical Authority and Christian Freedom*, 5.

¹⁹ Available at <https://covchurch.org/resource/covenant-resource-papers/>

²⁰ *The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Bible*, 2.

God's word is that all people are equal in creation, equal in human dignity, equally addressed by the gospel, and equal in welcome before the cross and throne of the Lamb. This truth compels us to honor every person as created in God's image, and to extend to every person the life-giving gospel and ministries of the church. Christ's life and death is for all people, tearing down the dividing walls of hostility between diverse peoples and opening the ministry of reconciliation. The church must not rebuild the walls Christ himself tore down or reject someone whom Christ himself has welcomed. We are called to embody the radical hospitality of the kingdom of God in which the first are last and the last are first (MATTHEW 20:16).

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves” (Philippians 2:3). Regard every person as God's child, honoring God's image in them by treating them with the utmost respect and value. Assess how your congregation can more fully reflect gospel hospitality in its worship and ministries.

Every Covenanter is invited to hold fast to diversity in community. True unity preserves faithful diversity. As our society becomes increasingly polarized, we must be especially attentive to Christ's call to unity within the single family of God, in witness to the one gospel. We must actively resist the pull to reduce the one church of Christ, in which dividing walls are torn down, into affinity groups of shared thought, functionally disenfranchising those who disagree with the prevailing view. Our congregations should reflect the fullness of our local communities in ethnicity and socioeconomic standing. We cannot claim for ourselves the privilege of comfortable fellowship among those with whom we have only minor disagreements while failing to work for and offer to everyone the gift of freedom and responsibility to love one another in Christ. We cannot grasp what it means to love those with whom we disagree while failing to desire and strive for the liberation of those who are most different from us.

True community amid difference is not simply coexisting—sharing space in a pew or on a membership roster. True community requires that we listen to one another, that we know and actively bear one another's burdens—that our brother's or sister's burdens become our own. We are forced to break down stereotypes, surrender privileges, and see life from other points of view. This is a task of tearing down and of building up, a task that is messy...and beautiful! But it is a precondition for fulfilling the whole mission of the church. Our unity in Christ for the sake of witness and mission must be greater and more important to us than our differences, disagreements, or debates over secondary matters of interpretation.

Evaluate to what extent your congregation reflects the full diversity of your wider community ethnically, socioeconomically, politically, etc. Seek opportunities for shared mission and respectful conversation with people with whom you disagree. What can you learn from that person? How can you together pursue Christ's mission?

Every Covenanter is invited to maintain the practice of love in all things. The pursuit of unity does not circumvent disagreement or conflict. Yet it is imperative that if we disagree, we do so in love. No degree of conviction or perceived rightness excuses us from the command to love, not only our neighbor but also those whom we perceive as enemies. “If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing” (1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3).

It is crucial that we learn and practice respectful forms of conversation with each other around disputed matters, and that we speak respectfully both to and about one another in person, in absentia, and in social media. “Christians cannot discern soundly or witness winsomely while on the rhetorical attack against one another. Whatever convictions we hold or passions we feel, we must remember that at the other end of our words stand sisters and brothers—and that our words are overheard by a listening world.”²¹

If we find ourselves differing to a significant degree in how we read and understand Scripture’s meaning and application, we remain responsible for stewarding our disagreements in ways that avoid provoking division or expressing disrespect toward one another. We must resist making enemies out of our brothers and sisters in Christ, instead asking God to grow our love for each other. We must resist toxic polarities that caricature those who disagree with us, instead allowing Christ to develop mutual respect and affection among us. If the Covenant is to be an agent of God’s kingdom in the twenty-first century, we must learn anew to see one another as Christ sees us and to treat one another as Christ treats us: with mercy, grace, and love.

Commit to renewed obedience to Christ’s command that we love one another in imitation of and participation in his own limitless, sacrificial love (John 13:34; Ephesians 3:16-19) and to active cultivation of the Christlike love described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: curbing envy, boasting, arrogance, rudeness, irritability, and resentment in order to practice patience and kindness, to rejoice in the truth, and to bear, believe, hope, and endure all things. We encourage within Covenant communities the formal adoption of practices that embody charity in conversation and action.

Every Covenanter is invited to seek God’s grace for our common life, mission, and witness. Above all we must act and interact in conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit. This is not work we can accomplish with human effort. We need one another and together we need the Spirit of our Lord to help us keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We must make space for the Holy

²¹ Darrin W. Snyder Belousek, *Marriage, Scripture, and the Church: Theological Discernment on the Question of Same-Sex Union* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021), xiii.

Spirit to act and to transform. Apart from God we can do nothing. For this reason, this paper does not offer solutions to particular debates. Rather, it offers a starting point to prepare the way for God to act, forming and transforming us, as individuals and congregations bearing witness in local communities.

Commit to frequent prayer for the unity, fidelity, and witness of our denomination and every regional conference, congregation, and individual within it. Pray that the world would know we are Christ's disciples by our love for one another (John 13:35) and that God would be glorified in all we do and say.

Holy Father, whose incarnate Son prayed for his disciples that they would truly be one, as you and he are one, gather and uphold us in holy covenant, united in Christ, empowered by one Spirit, as true companions and friends, to obey the great commandment and the great commission, for the sake of God's glory and the pursuit of neighbor's good. Amen.

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2024 Proposed Covenant Bylaw Amendments

The following items will be voted on during the 138th Annual Meeting of the Covenant. The text in green are the words to be added.

14.a.1. Section 6.3. The President.

a. Duties and Responsibilities. The president shall provide pastoral leadership to the Covenant. The president shall also be the chief executive officer of the Covenant and, subject to the authority of the Annual Meeting and the Executive Board, shall have general direction of the ministry and business matters of the Covenant, general direction of the officers of the Covenant and members of the Council of Administrators, the general powers and duties of management usually vested in the office of president of an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, and all other powers and duties as may be prescribed by the Annual Meeting, the Executive Board, or these Bylaws. Within this authority and in the course of the duties of president, the president shall

- ii. be an ex-officio member of all boards, councils, commissions, committees, and associations of the Covenant, except the Presidential Nominating Committee and any **meeting of a** committee of the Executive Board that **when it** is reviewing the performance or compensation of the president of the Covenant;
- iii. be **or designate a vice president to serve as** an ex-officio member of the boards and committees of all corporations established by the Covenant and their affiliates.

Rationale: *As the denomination has grown in its complexity, the number of boards and committees that the president is a member of has increased immensely. This modification would allow for the president of the Covenant to continue to have voice and vote at the boards and committees of affiliates through a proxy when the president is unable to be present.*

14.a.2. Section 10.5. The Ordered Ministry.

b. The Board of the Ordered Ministry.

- i. The Board of the Ordered Ministry shall have fourteen elected members and the ex-officio members identified in these Bylaws. Twelve elected members of the board shall be ordained or commissioned Covenant ministers and two elected members of the board shall be lay persons. A majority of the elected clergy members of the board shall be ordained to word and sacrament. At least two elected clergy members of the board shall be staff persons. At least one elected clergy member of the board shall be a consecrated missionary **global personnel**.

Rationale: *Move to replace “missionary” with “global personnel” to bring language into alignment with mission priority language.*

14.a.3. The Ordered Ministry. Contested Credential.

- iv. The Board of the Ordered Ministry shall report directly to the Annual Meeting, except that the recommendations of the Board of the Ordered Ministry concerning the ordination, licensure, commissioning, consecration, and discipline of ministers and missionaries, and major policies relating to the work of the Board of the Ordered Ministry shall be submitted to the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium. Recommendations approved by the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium may be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant. Recommendations not approved by the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium shall be referred back to the Board of the Ordered Ministry. **In the case of a contested credential, the Board of the Ordered Ministry shall notify the executive committee of the Covenant Ministerium that a minister desires to contest the removal of their credentials. If, after a contested credential hearing, the executive committee of the Covenant Ministerium reaches a two-thirds vote on the recommendation for the removal of credentials, the Board of the Ordered Ministry will then submit recommendation to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant. If a two-thirds vote is not reached, then the pastor remains suspended and the matter returns to the Board of the Ordered Ministry.**

***Rationale:** This change is contingent upon the Ministerium vote to amend the process for contested credentials. If the Ministerium votes to make that change, this language will align with the amended contested credential process.*

14.a.4. Section 11.2. Council of Superintendents.

- 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 vice president of mission priorities, the executive minister of serve clergy, and the executive minister of serve locally.** The Council of Superintendents may invite additional advisors to participate in their meetings.

***Rationale:** This change allows the Covenant executive officers to have full voting status.*



2024 Proposed Changes to the Rules for the Ordered Ministry

*The following items will be voted on during the 138th Annual Meeting of the Covenant.
The text in **green** are the words to be added.*

ARTICLE I. The Board of the Ordered Ministry.

Section 1.1. Composition.

- c. The executive committee shall consist of the chair, the secretary, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, **the president of the Covenant**, the president of the Covenant Ministerium, and the dean of North Park Theological Seminary. Other staff may be appointed as advisers to the executive committee.

Rationale: *Adding the president of the Covenant to the named executive committee members.*

Section 1.2. Function.

- a. As provided in the Bylaws of the Covenant, the Board has general supervision over all ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, licensed ministers, and consecrated missionaries **global personnel** of the Covenant, including their ordination, commissioning, license, consecration, standing, discipline, and the maintenance of high standards in their ministry.

ARTICLE VII. Consecrated Missionary **Global Personnel**.

Section 7.1. Description. Consecration for missionary **global personnel** service in the Covenant is an act of the church by which a person called by God is recognized and set apart for missionary **global personnel** service. The Covenant consecrates only after determining through careful examination that the candidate has been called of God, is genuinely committed to the apostolic message, lives in conformity to it, and is gifted for the specific service to which they are called. In consecration the church gratefully accepts the person as one called by God and given to the church to minister in the spirit of Christ. The Covenant consecrates the missionary **global personnel** to be the servant of the gospel by word and deed through the missionary **global personnel** work of the Covenant.

Section 7.2. Preparation.

- a. Candidates shall have been approved for missionary **global personnel** service by the Serve Globally Committee of the Executive Board of the Covenant.
- b. Candidates who are not graduates of NPTS or CHET shall have completed the required orientation

program for missionary **global personnel** of the Covenant. The orientation requirements shall be determined by the Serve Globally Committee of the Executive Board of the Covenant, together with the Board, and approved by the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium and the Annual Meeting of the Covenant.

- c. Candidates shall have completed the educational requirements for consecrated missionary **global personnel**. These educational requirements shall be determined by the Serve Globally Committee of the Executive Board of the Covenant, together with the Board, with the approval of the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium and the Annual Meeting of the Covenant.

Section 9.3. Global Service License.

a. **Description.** The global service license is for persons who are called to be missionaries **global personnel** by the Covenant. It is intended to provide credentials for those who do not qualify for ordination to word and sacrament, ordination to word and service, or commissioning but are serving as Covenant missionaries **global personnel**. This license is valid for the duration of the missionary's **global personnel's** call and authorizes the holder to perform appropriate functions, subject to government regulations.

b. **Qualifications.**

- iii. The candidate shall be called and consecrated as a missionary **global personnel**.

c. **Procedure.**

- iii. The candidate shall complete a licensing paper and be interviewed by a committee on ministerial standing appointed by Serve Globally. The Board may also request an interview before beginning missionary **global personnel** service.

ARTICLE X: Discipline and Care.

Section 10.2. Definition

- a. A minister or consecrated missionary **global personnel** may be charged with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Covenant. A minister or consecrated missionary **global personnel** may be disciplined by the Board in one of three ways:
 - ii. Temporary suspension of ministerial or missionary **global personnel** credentials and removal from ministerial functions, while charges are being investigated and while appropriate care is provided.
- b. A minister or consecrated missionary **global personnel** may be brought under the care of the Board in one of two ways:
 - ii. Temporary suspension of ministerial or missionary **global personnel** credentials and removal from ministerial functions, while the vocation of healing and restoration is being pursued.

Section 10.3. Procedure.

- b. In the case of serious offense, a minister or missionary's **global personnel** credentials may be temporarily suspended by the executive minister of the ordered ministry and the president of the Covenant, in consultation with the regional conference superintendent, the regional director, or the executive minister of serve globally. After investigation, the Board shall determine the kind of discipline required.
- c. In all matters involving disciplinary action, care shall be exercised to keep information confidential. Further, the accused minister or missionary **global personnel**, with a ministerial colleague as **advocate support person** when desired, shall be given opportunity to meet with the Board to present the matter or to appeal the case.
- d. When a minister or missionary **global personnel** is placed under discipline as described in Section 10.2.a.i. and 10.2.a.ii., it is not necessary that such action be reported to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant.
- e. If, after investigation, it is warranted by the gravity of the offense, the Board shall with the approval of the Covenant Ministerium recommend to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant that a minister or consecrated missionary **global personnel** be dismissed from the ministry of the Covenant. An ordained minister, commissioned minister, licensed minister, or a consecrated missionary **global personnel** who has been so dismissed shall surrender the certificate of ordination or license, and be removed from the roster of Covenant ministers. The Annual Meeting action to dismiss invalidates any continuing standing as Covenant clergy.
- f. The Board will seek appropriate ways to care for a minister or missionary **global personnel** who has been dismissed. The possibility of restoration and the reinstatement of credentials may be considered by the Board at any time.

ARTICLE XI: Standing.

Section 11.1. Description. Standing in the Ministerium is the Covenant's recognition of persons who have been granted credentials as an ordained minister, commissioned minister, licensed minister, or as a consecrated missionary **global personnel**. In order to maintain standing, a minister or missionary **global personnel** must be a member of a Covenant congregation and a full member of the Covenant Ministerium. Appropriate continuing education is required for all credentialed ministers and missionaries **global personnel** to maintain standing. Requirements shall be determined by the Covenant Ministerium in consultation with the Board, and monitored by the Ordered Ministry for report to the Board.

Section 11.2. Categories of Membership.

- a. Membership in the regional conference ministerial association and the Covenant Ministerium shall be of two kinds:
 - i. Full membership, in which all privileges shall be accorded:
 - (2) consecrated missionaries **global personnel**;

ii. Associate membership, in which neither voting privileges nor the holding of office shall be accorded:

(2) consecrated missionaries **global personnel** in the inactive category;

c. Military chaplains and consecrated missionaries **global personnel** shall maintain their standing through the office of the executive minister of the ordered ministry, although they are encouraged to maintain connection to a regional ministerial association whenever possible.

Section 11.3. Rosters. A complete roster of ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, licensed ministers, and consecrated missionaries **global personnel** shall be maintained and made available to the members of the Covenant Ministerium.

Rationale: Replace “missionary” with “global personnel” to bring language into alignment with mission priority language. Replace “advocate” with “support person” for clarity.

14.b.2. ARTICLE X. Discipline and Care.

e. If, after investigation, it is warranted by the gravity of the offense, **and the minister or global personnel chooses to contest their dismissal**, the Board shall with the approval of the **executive committee of the** Covenant Ministerium recommend to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant that a minister or consecrated **global personnel be dismissed from the ministry of the Covenant. If a minister does not contest the dismissal of their credential, the Board shall, with the approval of the Covenant Ministerium, recommend to the Covenant Annual Meeting that a minister or consecrated global personnel** be dismissed from the ministry of the Covenant. An ordained minister, commissioned minister, licensed minister, or a consecrated **global personnel** who has been so dismissed shall surrender the certificate of ordination or license, and be removed from the roster of Covenant ministers. The Annual Meeting action to dismiss invalidates any continuing standing as Covenant clergy.

Rationale: Additional change noted in e. is contingent upon the Ministerium vote to amend the process for contested credentials. If the Ministerium votes to make that change, this language will align with the amended contested credential process.



Election of Executive Minister of Serve Locally: Paul Robinson



Rev. Paul Robinson is currently serving as the interim executive minister of Serve Locally. Previously he was executive minister of Love Mercy Do Justice for the Evangelical Covenant Church. Paul's combined experience in ministry, business, nonprofit management, and leadership development spans 30 years. Prior to coming to Covenant Offices, he planted Grace Outreach Covenant Church, served as senior community leadership manager with the Wilder Center for Communities, and was director of the organization's James P. Shannon Leadership Institute.

Paul is skilled in helping leaders discover their core motivations and 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, antiracism, and capacity strengthening to help them better lead themselves and others. He is most comfortable at the intersection of ideas, differences, passion, and effective action. Paul enjoys using his skills in meeting design, facilitation, and convening to catalyze meaningful connections and stimulate individual and community transformation.

He holds a BS degree in finance from Eastern Illinois University and a master of divinity degree from McCormick Theological Seminary. Paul is married to Kim, and they have seven adult children.



Call of North Park Theological Seminary Faculty Members



REV. DR. DAVID BJORLIN

Assistant Professor of Worship

**Pastor of Worship and Creative Arts at Resurrection
Covenant Church**

David Bjorlin was born in Duluth, Minnesota, and grew up in neighboring Hermantown until graduating from high school. After completing a one-year discipleship certificate at Covenant Bible College in La Merced, Ecuador, he attended North Park University in Chicago where he graduated with a BA in history and secondary education. He went on to earn a master of divinity at North Park Theological Seminary in 2011 and a PhD in history and hermeneutics with a concentration in liturgical studies from Boston University School of Theology in 2018.

David currently is the assistant professor of worship at North Park Theological Seminary and the pastor of worship and creative arts at Resurrection Covenant Church in Chicago. He published a book of hymns, *Protest of Praise*, in 2020 with GIA. Several of his hymns have also appeared in various denominational publications. He also co-authored *Incorporating Children in Worship: Mark of the Kingdom* and has written journal articles on the history and practice of congregational song. He has served on the board of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada and is currently secretary of the Liturgical Conference executive board. His next book of hymns, *Hope Will Not Fail*, will be published later this year.

When not writing or teaching, David enjoys attending concerts, perusing the Art Institute of Chicago, and reading fiction and poetry. He lives in Chicago's North Center neighborhood surrounded by a close community of friends.

When not writing or teaching, David enjoys attending concerts, perusing the Art Institute of Chicago, and reading fiction and poetry. He lives in Chicago's North Center neighborhood surrounded by a close community of friends.



DR. SOPHIA MAGALLANES-TSANG
Assistant Professor of Old Testament

Dr. Sophia Magallanes-Tsang is a Latina Pentecostal Bible scholar who specializes in Hebrew wisdom literature and Old Testament studies. She graduated in 2011 from New College School of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh.

She has taught college and seminary courses in both Old and New Testaments since 2007. She has held two full-time teaching positions at Life Pacific University (2014-2020) and Fresno Pacific University (2022-2024). She also has taught for Fuller Theological Seminary in both English and Spanish.

Though she is a teacher first, she has presented and contributed several papers and chapters in books over the past decade. Current book projects include a commentary on the Book of Job through Wipf and Stock as well as a co-authored book called *Reading the Word Interculturally* and a textbook titled *Biblical Interpretation as Scriptural Accompaniment*, both through Baker Academic.

Sophia has a passion for reading the Bible together in our diverse communities and making biblical studies an accessible skill to everyone in the pew. She is married to Sam Tsang, her loving husband of four years. Both native Californians, Sam and Sophia have answered the call serve the North Park Theological Seminary community in Chicago.



2024 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 138th 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.

2024 BALLOT FROM THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS:

EXECUTIVE BOARD

(six-year terms)

Baionne Coleman

Radiant Covenant Church,
Renton, Washington

Mark Eastburg

Thornapple Covenant Church,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Debra Hamilton

Chugach Covenant Church,
Anchorage, Alaska

Trinity Opp

Alexandria Covenant Church,
Alexandria, Minnesota

David Sim

Renew Covenant Church,
Lynnwood, Washington

BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

(five-year terms)

Brenda Giordano

Newport Covenant Church,
Bellevue, Washington

Ray Wall

Rosebud Covenant Church,
Rosebud, Alberta

COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

(five-year terms)

Art DeRooy

Hilmar Covenant Church,
Hilmar, California

Benjamin Moore

Arvada Covenant Church,
Arvada, Colorado

Travis Nordstrom

First Covenant Church of
Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska

Susan Poston

Salem Covenant Church, New
Brighton, Minnesota

Tiffine Watts

Hope Covenant Church,
Detroit, Michigan

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

(three-year terms)

Arriel Gray

Metropolitan Community
Church, Chicago, Illinois

Dawn Helwig

North Park Covenant Church,
Chicago, Illinois

N. Marcia Jimenez

Winnetka Covenant Church,
Wilmette, Illinois

Kristian Werling

Winnetka Covenant Church,
Wilmette, Illinois

Ann Wiesbrock

Hinsdale Covenant Church,
Hinsdale, Illinois

Dennis Wolff

Faith Lutheran Church,
Redman, Washington

**2024 BALLOT FROM THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD
FOR BOARD OF NOMINATIONS**

Adam Gilliard

Stone Mountain, Georgia
New Life Covenant Church

Joe Muzzi

South Lyon, Michigan
Crossroads Community Church



2024 Board of Nominations Candidates



NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

BAIONNE COLEMAN

**Pacific Northwest Conference Representative
Radiant Covenant Church
Seattle, Washington**

Baionne Coleman is a seasoned leader in the education sector. She has a deep understanding of the challenges faced by marginalized communities, particularly those related to financial stability and generational wealth. She has a background in financial coaching and mentorship, and she is committed to equity and inclusion. She can bridge gaps, build coalitions, and drive positive change that aligns with the goals and mission

of the Evangelical Covenant Church. In addition, as the CEO of a nonprofit and co-chair for the Governance and Nominating Committee, she offers a wealth of knowledge, training, and support.

Statement of Faith: “My faith in Jesus Christ is foundational to who I am and how I approach life and work. I should never need to open my mouth to profess I’m a Christian because people should note there is something profoundly different based on my actions and how I move in spaces.”

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD

MARK EASTBURG

**Great Lakes Conference Representative
CEO, Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services
Thornapple Covenant Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan**

Mark Eastburg is a dedicated member of the Evangelical Covenant Church and has been nurtured in its values and principles from birth. He is a fourth-generation Covenanter currently serving as the CEO of Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services, where he



collaborates with a board of directors to guide a 114-year-old organization in finding innovative ways to live out its mission to “express the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.” Mark also maintains a small psychotherapy practice. He has served as the chair of the Covenant Living Board and the Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp Board.

Statement of Faith: “Through spending time in the Gospel of Luke, I have begun to see that at the core of Jesus’s message is his care of those who are outsiders and downtrodden, which has caused me to have a different idea of what it means to follow Jesus. I see this next chapter of my life as a working out of what this means.”

NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD



DEBRA HAMILTON

**Alaska Conference Representative
Licensed Professional Counselor
Chugach Covenant Church
Soldotna, Alaska**

Debbie Hamilton is a licensed professional counselor with the State of Alaska. She was a social worker in a foster family agency for seven years in California and has worked as a counselor in Alaska since 2001. Debbie serves as the executive director of New Hope Counseling Center, where she and her team seek to provide opportunities for students at Alaska Christian College as well as individuals, couples, and families of the Kenai

Peninsula to be healed, restored, and equipped through faith-based counseling to pursue a life of wholeness and hope.

Statement of Faith: “I believe in a Triune God; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are in need of a Savior. I believe that our loving God graciously sent his one and only son, Jesus, to redeem us by dying on the cross for our sin, offering us forgiveness of sin and a restored relationship with God and that we are to accept this gracious gift. I believe that Jesus left the Holy Spirit to guide, counsel, testify, and remind us of things we have been taught and to lead us into truth. I believe as followers of Christ we are to continue to work out our salvation as we grow more and more into the likeness of Christ through the study and application of the Word and that we are to proclaim his truth and hope to others. ”

**NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD
TRINITY OPP**

**Northwest Conference Representative
Pastor
Alexandria Covenant Church
Alexandria, Minnesota**



Trinity Opp is the senior pastor of Alexandria Covenant Church in Alexandria, Minnesota. Prior to serving in this role, he was the executive pastor, and before that he served for nine years as a youth pastor and associate pastor in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Trinity attended Mankato State University for his undergraduate studies and completed his seminary education at Bethel

Seminary. His primary spiritual gifts are leadership, administration, and teaching. Trinity is married to Gwen, and they have five children between the ages of six and 18. He enjoys the outdoors, reading, and hanging out with his family.

Statement of Faith: “By God’s grace and through faith, I believe Jesus Christ to be Savior and Lord of my life. I believe there is one God who has three persons. I am chosen by God the Father for salvation, redeemed by God the Son (Jesus Christ) through his work accomplished on the cross and by the resurrection, and I am born again by God the Holy Spirit.”



**NOMINEE TO THE COVENANT EXECUTIVE BOARD
DAVID J. SIM**

**Pacific Northwest Conference Representative
Pastor / Church Planter
Renew Covenant Church
Seattle, Washington**

Rev. Dave Sim has lived in the Seattle area since 1989. He completed his undergraduate studies at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, with an English degree, then served as InterVarsity staff for nine years, where he helped to build up the multiethnic fellowship and led the staff team at the University of Washington. Dave enrolled at the newly launched Seattle Pacific

Seminary and graduated with his MDiv in 2012. While in seminary, he and his wife, Janice, launched a home group for young adults, which became a church plant, Renew Covenant Church.

Statement of Faith: “I believe in One God, the Creator of all things, who is infinitely perfect and

without bounds and exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe in the centrality of the Word of God, both Old and New Testaments. The Word of God, inseparably unified with the work of the Holy Spirit, is transformative and central in the discipleship of each Christian as well as the church's mission. As a minister of the gospel, I am called to teach, preach, and guide others in God's salvation through Christ, with the Word being centered in this calling."

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

BRENDA GIORDANO

**Pacific Northwest Conference Representative
Newport Covenant Church
Bellevue, Washington**

Brenda Giordano is a trained spiritual director who is a strong communicator and unafraid to ask hard questions or have difficult conversations. She is a prayerful and sensitive listener to people and the Holy Spirit and is deeply committed to racial righteousness. She brings more than 30 years of broad healthcare experience, including 15 years in healthcare technology. Brenda is committed to the Evangelical Covenant Church, its affirmations, aims, and institutions.



Statement of Faith: "Born into a loving Christian family, I put my faith in Jesus Christ at the age of eight. By 17, I was comfortable speaking to others about putting their faith in Christ and sought and received gifts of the Holy Spirit. I continue to seek the will of God, follow the movements of the Spirit, and as opportunities present themselves, talk to others about Jesus. I love the Lord and spending daily time in Scripture and prayer, especially with solitude and silence, being agenda-less in God's presence."



NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF THE ORDERED MINISTRY

RAYMOND WALL

Canada Conference Representative

Pastor

Rosebud Covenant Church

Rosebud, Alberta

Rev. Raymond Wall has served in various ministry settings for nearly 50 years. He served on numerous boards, locally, regionally, and nationally. He has experience in church leadership, having served as pastor of three churches over 36 years and 11 years in denominational executive work. He is a #9 on the Enneagram—a good listener; a caring, nonanxious presence in meetings; and a trained spiritual director.

Statement of Faith: “I was born into a Christian family and raised in the church. The Christian faith became real and personal for me shortly after high school graduation when I surrendered to the Holy Spirit’s gentle tug in response to a Christian friend’s bold testimony. Within a few months of surrendering my life to Christ, I enrolled in Bible college where, through studies, prayer, and opportunities to serve, I sensed a call to Christian ministry.”

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES
OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

ART DEROOY

Pacific Southwest Conference Representative

Retired

Hilmar Covenant Church

Hilmar, California



Art DeRooy brings a deep love for the Evangelical Covenant Church’s historical outreach to care for the community through such ministries as Home of Mercy to urban hospitals to aiding the intellectually disabled with independent living options. His long history with the Board of Benevolence allows him to contribute institutional knowledge to the current environment of healthcare change. Now retired, he brings a wealth of accounting and financial analysis experience to the board.

Statement of Faith: “I’ve been a follower of Jesus Christ for most of my life. A walk away from faith in my young adult years did not kill my love for God and his church. Now I cannot see a life without Jesus in front of me every day.”



NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES
OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

BENJAMIN MOORE

**Midwest Conference Representative
Arvada Covenant Church
Golden, Colorado**

Ben Moore has been a member of Covenant churches for 15 years. His undergraduate degree is in business administration with dual majors in finance and accounting, and he has a JD from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law. Ben has 15 years of experience in private practice, focusing on business, taxation, and real estate. He has prior board experience serving as a member of the Executive Board of the Midwest Conference and on the board of Clinic with a Heart (nine years, including as president), a nonprofit that provides free healthcare and dental care to low-income families. His past board service and volunteer interests align with the CMB mission of offering support resources and comfort to those in need.

Statement of Faith: “I have believed in Jesus for as long as I can remember, but it was after my freshman year in college on a summer mission project when I made a conscious decision to become a disciple of Jesus. That decision led me to a Christian community where I first learned that discipleship is a lifelong process of learning from Jesus how to live in the kingdom of God. I have been trying to be a faithful student of Jesus ever since.”

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES
OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

TRAVIS NORDSTROM

**Midwest Conference Representative
First Covenant Church of Omaha
Gretna, Nebraska**

Travis Nordstrom is the lead portfolio manager for taxable and tax-exempt fixed-income investment strategies with First National Bank Omaha. His expertise includes pension plans, foundations and endowments, and insurance. He directs the research and portfolio construction effort and helps shape the team’s economic outlook. He has skills in analyzing financial/economic data and trends, professional communication, and working with and leading a team.



Travis served on the Midwest Conference Executive Board from 2016 to 2021 and was a member of the Presidential Nominating Committee in 2021.

Statement of Faith: “I can’t say precisely when I first put my faith and trust in Jesus as my Savior, but it was probably confirmation when this faith truly became ‘my own.’ I have been growing ever since. Certainly not in a straight line—there have been seasons of doubt and seasons of great trust and joy. Christ has been faithful through it all. I believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and seek to live a life worthy of his call on my life.”

**NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES
OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD**

SUE POSTON

Northwest Conference Representative

Salem Covenant Church
New Brighton, Minnesota



Susan Poston has vast experience on the Covenant Executive Board and the Board of Benevolence, which positions her to step into the ever-changing landscape of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence with a much shorter learning curve. As a past chair of the board, she can support a new board chair in coming years. She is both a big-picture thinker and good with details. Her administrative career helps her to understand the breadth of diverse ministries administered by this board.

Statement of Faith: “I am a sinner saved by grace. Created by God and redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, I strive to become more like Jesus, my Lord. I believe in lifelong learning and rest in the knowledge that through worship, prayer, and time spent in God’s Word, I am more like Jesus today than I was yesterday.”

NOMINEE TO COVENANT MINISTRIES
OF BENEVOLENCE BOARD

TIFFINE WATTS

Great Lakes Conference Representative
Hope Community Church
Detroit, Michigan

Tiffine Watts has a heart and passion for helping people meet their basic needs. She serves in various outreach ministries in the Detroit area, including Hope House Detroit. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix and is the bookkeeper at Tessica Bookkeeping.



Statement of Faith: "I believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I trust the Bible to guide and teach me to live and be more like him. Jesus died for my sins and rose on the third day, and I have the Holy Spirit for strength and reassurance."

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

ARRIEL GRAY, JR.

Central Conference Representative
Metropolitan Community Church
Chicago, Illinois

During his time at North Park University, Arriel Gray was a two-sport athlete in football and track and field. He played linebacker for the Vikings and earned all-CCIW, all-district, and all-American honors in 1980. Arriel also served as a resident director and member of the gospel choir while earning his degree. He was inducted into the Viking Hall of Fame as a part of the 2015 class. He briefly played cornerback for the Chicago Bears in 1983. He has served as a firefighter for the Chicago Fire Department since 1987, and in 2006 was promoted to the Deputy Fire Commissioner of the Fire Prevention Bureau for the City of Chicago. Arriel retired from the Chicago Fire Department after 35 years of service. Presently he is the life safety manager at McCormick Place / Wintrust Arena. Arriel enjoys playing piano and saxophone. He is married to Allena F. Gray, and together they have four children.



NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

DAWN HELWIG

Central Conference Representative

Retired

North Park Covenant Church

Chicago, Illinois



After working for 30 years as a consulting actuary and principal for Milliman, Inc., Dawn Helwig retired in 2016. Prior to Milliman, she worked for ten years for an insurance company, primarily in health product pricing and analysis. She is currently serving as a retiree on Milliman's Giving Fund, and she is on the board of American Friends of Journey House Actions Rwanda. She is the sister-in-law of David and Nancy Helwig, the lead donors for the Helwig Recreation Center. She has also made her own impact on North Park University, including serving on the Board of Trustees previously from 2012 to 2017 and currently since 2019. Dawn is serving on the Advancement Committee and is currently chair of the Finance Committee. She is married to Ted Helwig, and they have two daughters and one son.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

N. MARCIA JIMENEZ

Central Conference Representative

Winnetka Covenant Church

Chicago, Illinois



Marcia Jimenez earned a BA from Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana. She is currently serving as the director of intergovernmental affairs at Swedish Hospital in Chicago, where she has been working since 2011. Prior to that, she acquired more than 20 years of professional experience in the public sector, serving as liaison to many local, state, and national governmental, business, and community groups and institutions. She served the city of Chicago as commissioner of the Department of Environment, ensuring programs were in place to protect human health and the environment, and also as assistant to Mayor Daley, managing the city's interest in improving transportation on rails in Illinois and across the US. Marcia represented Chicago in Canada on Great Lakes issues, in Beijing, China, on urban environmental issues, and at the United Nations World Environmental Summit. She represented the city of Chicago on the National Association of

Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP) Board of Directors, the State of Illinois Policy Advisory Council, the Chicago Climate Exchange, and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, addressing global warming issues; Coastal Health Strategy Team Working Group protecting our water supply; and Neighbor Space for community land use planning.

**NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY**

KRISTIAN WERLING

**Central Conference Representative
Winnetka Covenant Church
Winnetka, Illinois**



After graduating from North Park University, Kristian “Krist” Werling earned a JD from the University of Illinois College of Law in 2002, graduating magna cum laude, and an MBA from Northwestern in 2010. Krist has been a partner at McDermott Will & Emery since 2012, focusing on representing medical technology, pharmaceutical companies, and private equity funds in transactions and commercial and regulatory issues. Prior to that, he was a partner at McGuireWoods LLP, counsel at Hospira Inc., and an associate at McGuireWoods. He has served in many capacities at North Park University including serving on the SBNM Advisory Board. He has also served on the board of the North Park Friendship Center. In addition to his work at McDermott Will & Emery, Krist is co-author of TheHealthcareInvestor.com, a blog covering business and legal issues that impact investments in healthcare and life sciences. He is a member of the Journal of Law and Technology Policy and has been published in such publications as *Healthcare Law Monthly*, *Tech Journal South*, and the *Corporate Law Journal*, among others. He is a sought after speaker, appearing at events such as the Medical Device Symposium and the Medical Device Law and Compliance Conference. He is married to Laura, and they have three sons.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

ANN WIESBROCK

Central Conference Representative
Retired President of Covenant Trust
Hinsdale Covenant Church
Hinsdale, Illinois



Ann Wiesbrock, CFP® served as the president of Covenant Trust for 13 years until her retirement in 2023. She is passionate about helping people align their finances with their values. She has spent her career working in trust and estate administration and investing. Prior to joining Covenant Trust, she worked at The Chicago Trust Company (formerly Wintrust Asset Management), United Counties Trust Company in Summit, New Jersey; and Northern Trust in Chicago. Ann is a Certified Financial Planner™ and a member of the Financial Planning Association. A magna cum laude graduate of North Park University, she also holds an MA in liberal studies from Rutgers University. She completed her coursework for the financial planning certification (CFP®) at Northwestern University. Ann served on the Covenant Retirement Communities Board of Directors for eight years, serving as board chair for four years. She also served on the Covenant Board of Benevolence and its Finance Committee. Ann resides in Hinsdale, Illinois, with her family and is a member of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Hinsdale, serving in various music and volunteer activities.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

DENNIS WOLFF

Pacific Northwest Conference Representative
Certified Public Accountant
Faith Lutheran Church
Redmond, Washington



After earning his degree at North Park University, Dennis Wolff attained his master's in accounting in 1992 from Northern Illinois University. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Illinois CPA Society. Dennis is currently a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, where he has worked since 1992. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Washington CPA Society, Illinois CPA Society, North Park University Board of Trustees, and a former member of the Chicago Council of United Way of Metropolitan Chicago and the Midwest Entrepreneurs' Forum. He is married to Paula, and they have three children.

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

ADAM GILLIARD

**Southeast Conference Representative
New Life Covenant Church
Stone Mountain, Georgia**

Adam has a wide range of life experiences both inside and outside the church, from leading the worship team to leading a Christian after-school program in the community. He has a long history of being involved with Christian Community Development Association (CCDA) and the SAY Yes Christian after-school program. Adam is deeply committed to the men's group in his church and to prayer. He is passionate about learning and seeking holistic health in life.



Statement of Faith: “My faith in my Redeemer is what humbly brings me joy. As for anything I face in this challenging life, he always fills my Spirit with the faithful vision of the life that never ends. Passionate faith in him brings progress!”

NOMINEE TO THE BOARD OF NOMINATIONS

JOE MUZZI

**Great Lakes Conference Representative
Pastor
Crossroads Community Church
South Lyon, Michigan**

Joe has been the lead pastor of Crossroads Community Church in South Lyon, Michigan, since 2006. He has a master of arts in practical theology, a certificate in spiritual direction, and an master's in the art of teaching. Joe was ordained by the Covenant in 2011. He has served as the chair of the Great Lakes Conference Ministerial Association, as well as on numerous external boards. Joe has been married to his wife, JoAnne, for over 40 years and they have one adult son.



Statement of Faith: “I was born and raised in a Catholic family, baptized as an infant and educated in Catholic schools. As they do for many people, the promises of my baptism began to crystallize in me as a teenager. My journey has led me to desire and seek a balanced expression of my Christian faith.”



Change in Standing of Ministerial Credentials

ACTIVE TO INACTIVE

Bum Yong Kim (OWSa)

Jeffrey Loewen (OWSa)

Tabatha Mason (CSM)

John Teter (OWSa)

Al Tizon (OWSe)

INACTIVE TO ACTIVE

Aune Carlson (OWSa)

Kyle Small (OWSa)

TRANSFERRED CREDENTIAL

Douglas Bixby (OWSa) to the United Church of Christ

Eva Cudmore (OWSa) to the United Church of Christ

Andrea Marie Johnson (OWSa) to the United Methodist Church

Stephen Wiens (OWSa) to the United Church of Christ

RESIGNATION OF CREDENTIAL

Nathan Albert (OWSa)

Rebecca Barnett (OWSa)

William Barnett (OWSa)

T. Paul Burdick (OWSa-retired)

Brian Estrella (OWSa)

Ralph Moller (OWSa)

Troy Parson (OWSa)

Bob Shim (CM)

Mary Putera (OWSa)

Julio Sical (OWSa)

Jonathan Woolner (OWSa)

REINSTATEMENT OF CREDENTIAL

Robin Swieringa (OWSa)

2024-2025 Licenses

Agenda Item 18.b.

Licenses valid July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Conference License Name

Ministry Setting

Alaska

BVL

LaBore	Bonnie	Bethel Evangelical Covenant Church	Bethel	AK
Razzo	Abel	Unalakleet Evangelical Covenant Church	Unalakleet	AK
VanAmburg	Stan O.	Community Covenant Church Fairbanks	Fairbanks	AK

ML

Alverts	Michael G.	Community Covenant Church Eagle River	Eagle River	AK
Barefoot	James W.	Mat-Su Covenant Church	Wasilla	AK
Keyser	Jeffrey R.	Covenant Youth of Alaska (CYAK)	Eagle River	AK
Shaw	Tyler D.	Community Covenant Church Eagle River	Eagle River	AK
Ventress	James C.	Nome Evangelical Covenant Church	Nome	AK
Williams	Andrew D.	Scammon Bay Covenant Church	Scammon Bay	AK

Total in conference: 9

Canada

BVL

Bayley	Karen R.	Hope Community Covenant Church	Strathmore	AB
Johnson	Kenneth T.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Fort Frances	ON
Mast	Mark D.	One Hope Canada	Rainy River	ON
Ndiom	Michel	Green Timbers Covenant Church	Surrey	BC

ML

Anderson	Erik V.	Faith Covenant Church	Winnipeg	MB
Charles	Jason S.	City Collective, an Evangelical Covenant Church	Surrey	BC
Dyck	D. Sean	Evangelical Covenant Church	Minnedosa	MB

Filicicchia	Michael D. A.	Evangelical Covenant Church Of Canada	Strathmore	AB
Fowler	Meghan	Faith Covenant Church	Winnipeg	MB
Friesen	Shannon M.	Stonehouse, An Evangelical Covenant Church	Steinbach	MB
Goertz	Robert I.	The Rosebud Church	Rosebud	AB
Jensen	Gavin W.	Holy Community Covenant Church	Winnipeg	MB
Kane	Jesse J.	Evangelical Fellowship Church	Edmonton	AB
Penner	Richard F.	Lighthouse Covenant Church	Sarnia	ON
Strong	Jeffrey W.G.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Nelson	BC
Tam	Darrick	The Worship Project	Maple	ON
Westerhoud	Natasha B.M.	The Bethany Group	Camrose	AB

Total in Conference: 17

Central

BVL

Chang	Samuel Y.	Christ Covenant Church of Villa Park	Villa Park	IL
Coleman	Tiana E.	Missio Dei Uptown	Chicago	IL
Cornelius	Cheryl D.	Church Of Gary Covenant Church	Gary	IN
Crozier	Thomas M.	Jesus People USA Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
Davis	Phyllis E.	Fellowship Christian Church	Oak Park	IL
Duncan	Melissa B.	Bethany Covenant Church	St. Charles	IL
Fisk	Rick K.	DeerGrove Covenant Church	Palatine	IL
Fredrickson	Beth L.	Harbor Point Ministries	Lake Geneva	WI
Jones	Michael D.	Community Covenant Church	Calumet Park	IL
Kholodenko	Max	Core Christian Community Church	Chicago	IL
Kholodenko	Trishia O.	Core Christian Community Church	Chicago	IL
Lizama	Drina B.	Luz de Esperanza	Campton Hills	IL
Lizama	Rafael A.	Luz de Esperanza	Campton Hills	IL
Nowlin	Nilwona E.	Kingdom Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
Strahan	Debra L.	Jesus People USA Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
Thomas-Flagg	LaNiece M.	Mission Covenant Church	Blue Island	IL
Torres	Edgar I.	Central Conference	Chicago	IL
Washington	Verneé L.	Kingdom Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
White	Tamela	Calvary Covenant Church	Chicago	IL

White	Timothy L.	New Community Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
Winter	Andrew Gregory	Jesus People USA Covenant Church	Chicago	IL

ML

An	Taehwan	Peacemakers Korean Covenant Church	Schaumburg	IL
Anderson	Eric P.	Covenant Harbor	Lake Geneva	WI
Barron	F. Javier	Iglesia del Pacto Evangelico Renacer	Algonquin	IL
Catanus	Gabriel Jay	Garden City Covenant Church	Chicago	IL
Cha	Karis	New Vision Covenant Church	Wilmette	IL
Choi	Min Ho	Peacemakers Korean Covenant Church	Schaumburg	IL
Edstrom	Andrew N.	Northwest Covenant Church	Mt. Prospect	IL
Fogel	Jonathan	Hope Covenant Church	Orland Park	IL
Gaiya	Zachs T.	Faith Evangelical Covenant Church	Wheaton	IL
Hinz	Daniel R.	Bethesda Evangelical Covenant Church	Rockford	IL
Johnson	Rachel M.	Northbrook Evangelical Covenant Church	Northbrook	IL
Kang	Joshua	Minsoo Lakeview Covenant Church	Northbrook	IL
Kim	Won J.	Christ Covenant Church of Villa Park	Villa Park	IL
Mercado	Osvaldo	Iglesia Del Pacto Evangelico Belen	Chicago	IL
Miller	Lynnea Kay	Winnetka Evangelical Covenant Church	Wilmette	IL
Morrell	Andrew H.	REAL Community Covenant Church	Marion	IN
Norris	Barry	Valley Evangelical Covenant Church	Stillman Valley	IL
Pak	William M.	Lakeview Covenant Church	Northbrook	IL
Ramos	Norma	Iglesia Del Pacto Evangelico Peniel	Chicago	IL
Randolph	Travis C.	Beacon of Hope Hospice	Galesburg	IL
Robinson	Darnell Dion	Harvest Covenant Church	Milwaukee	WI
Shakya	Amos	Transformation Christiya Nepali Church	Batavia	IL
Taylor	Cody P.	First Evangelical Covenant Church	Rockford	IL
Tetrault	Michael R.	Riverside Covenant Church	West Lafayette	IN
Torres	Mario R.	Iglesia Del Pacto Vida Eterna	Rockford	IL
Townsend	Charles W.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Belvidere	IL
Werling	Nathan	Northwest Covenant Church	Mt. Prospect	IL

Total in Conference: 48

East Coast

BVL

Adams	Daniel	Newton Covenant Church	Newton	MA
Barrett	Alison R.	Central Square Church	Cambridge	MA
Epps	Aundrea	Redeemed Church	Yorktown	VA
Mitchell	Laura R.	Central Square Church	Cambridge	MA
Privitt	Marcus S.	Haverhill Commons Covenant Church	Arlington	MA
Roth	Leah A.	The Commons Evangelical Covenant Church	Rochester	NH
Sadlier	Daniel J.	Mosaic Covenant Church	New York	NY

ML

Bang	Steve	Metro Community Church	Englewood	NJ
Bruce	Catherine	Reformed Church of Shawagunk	Wallkill	NY
Carrion	Sixto	Michael Redeemer City to City	New York	NY
Dennis	James R.	Fellowship Covenant Church	Bronx	NY
Fore-Ravelo	Tamara Y.	Inner Visions	Silver Spring	MD
Graham	Ian M.	Ecclesia Princeton	Pennington	NJ
Jakubowski	Richard T.	Mestizo Community Covenant Church	Providence	RI
Jarrett	Travis L.	Great Road Covenant Church	Acton	MA
Marcucci	Joseph P.	Highrock Church, Inc.	Arlington	MA
May	Ethan C.	Anchor Bay Covenant Church	Arlington	MA
McEvoy	Christine	InterVarsity Christian Fellowship USA	Madison WI	
Mook	Andrew L.	Sanctuary Church	Providence	RI
Mury	John L.	Highrock Church, Inc.	Arlington	MA
Okpala	Craig O.	Hope Church Jersey City	Jersey City	NJ
Ostos Cruz	Rut Esther	Expansion Covenant Church	Corona	NY
Padilla Castro	Simon A.	Expansion Covenant Church	Corona	NY
Park	Gene J.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Tomahawk	WI
Proulx	Dale A.	Pilgrim Covenant Church	Lunenburg	MA
Roberts	Kimberly Jo	Highrock Church, Inc.	Arlington	MA
Sadlier	Amanda J.	Mosaic Covenant Church	New York	NY
Simpkins	Marlon C.	Regional Hospice And Palliative Care	Danbury	CT
Taber	Michael John	Highrock Church, Inc.	Arlington	MA
Venturini	Elisabeth	Bethany Covenant Church	Bedford	NH

Wall	David D.	Bethany Covenant Church	Bedford	NH
Webel	Matthew R.	Haverhill Commons Covenant Church	Arlington	MA
Wright	Kimberly	Church of the Resurrection	New York	NY
Yung	Jason Mui	Central Square Church	Cambridge	MA

Total in Conference: 34

Great Lakes

BVL

Arakelian	Phillip G.	Crossroads Community Church	South Lyon	MI
Beale	Rita R.	Hope Community Church	Detroit	MI
Dry	Brendan D.	LifeChurch Auburn Hills	Auburn Hills	MI
Ehrich	Karen Sue	Christ Community Church	Allegan	MI
Ginger	Dawn	Life Covenant Church	Canton	MI
Henderson	Harlan A	Faith Covenant Church	Westerville	OH
Hill	N. David	First Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	MI
Kareithi	John M.	Revival Covenant Church	Columbus	OH
Mayer	Katherine	One Church	Louisville	KY
McClain	Benjamin	Crossroads Community Church	South Lyon	MI
McGarry	Rick	New Wine Covenant Church	Mason	MI
McGarry	Terri	New Wine Covenant Church	Mason	MI
Morgan	Micah J.M.	Sanctuary Columbus	Columbus	OH
Niemi	Jennifer L.	Crossroads Community Church	South Lyon	MI
Nunham	Jeff M.	Bretton Woods Covenant Church	Lansing	MI
Raju	Azia N.	Citadel of Faith Covenant Church	Detroit	MI
Russ	Brian D.	Christ Covenant Church	Livonia	MI
Stone	Linda Ann	First Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	MI

ML

Barger	Scott R.	Cran-Hill Ranch	Rodney	MI
Bradford	Paul L.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Cheboygan	MI
Bryde	James Alan	Faith Covenant Church	Farmington Hills	MI
Buckner	Katelyn R.	LifeChurch Livonia	Livonia	MI

Carey	Harvey F.	Citadel of Faith Covenant Church	Detroit	MI
Carr	Phillip C.	New Evangel Covenant Church	Southfield	MI
Connell	Charles A.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Whitehall	MI
Cozart	Harvey	Lighthouse Church	Richmond	KY
Dalman	Dale A.	Grand Rapids Police Department	Grand Rapids	MI
Duren	Arthur L.	Kindgom Embassy Covenant Church	Muskegon	MI
Ek	Peter William	Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	MI
Filipiak	Noah	Mosaic Covenant Church of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids	MI
Grandy	John E.	Life Covenant Church	Canton	MI
Holmgren	Kaitlyn	Zion Covenant Church	Jamestown	NY
Jackson	Laura S.	Faith Covenant Church	Farmington Hills	MI
Johnson	Donearl L.	LifeChurch Auburn Hills	Auburn Hills	MI
Ludge	Michelle L.	First Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	MI
Miyamoto	Shunichi	Faith Covenant Church	Farmington Hills	MI
Nesburg	David K.	Grand Valley State University Campus Ministry	Allendale Charter Twnshp	MI
Perry	Devon Lamar	Faith Covenant Church	Farmington Hills	MI
Rahill	Alexander W.	LifeChurch Livonia	Livonia	MI
Ratcliff	Christopher	Hope Community Church	Detroit	MI
Reinard	Aaron D.	Scandia Evangelical Covenant Church	Russell	PA
Smith	Craig R.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Whitehall	MI
Stillin	Trevor M.	Absolute Home Health and Hospice	Grand Blanc Township	MI
Strabbing	Timothy R.	Ascension St. John Hospital	Grosse Pointe Woods	MI
Valentine	Jeanette D.	Journey Covenant Church	Cuyahoga Falls	OH
Van Voorst	Jared R.	Life Covenant Church	Canton	MI
Williams	David Anthony	Life Transformation Church	Columbus	OH
Younger	Leeann R.	Cityview Covenant Church	Pittsburgh	PA

Total in Conference: 48

Midsouth

BVL

Brieger	Nancy E.	Restoration Covenant Church	Round Rock	TX
Lee	Matthew	Mosaic Community Covenant	Missouri City	TX
Taylor	Christy-Lee Rauch	Sonoma Springs Church	Las Cruces	NM

ML

Crume	Tre Edward	Redeemer Evangelical Covenant Church	Carrollton	TX
Partain	Stephen T.	Grace Community Church	New Orleans	LA
Wu	David Y.	Mosaic Formation	Houston	TX

Total in Conference: 6

Midwest**BVL**

Answer	Darryl A.	New Community ECC	Kansas	MO
Burdick	Nathaniel	Grace Covenant Church	Lakewood	CO
Ferris	Joshua R.	Primal Church	Johnstown	CO
Giles	Kimberly	Trailhead Covenant Church	Longmont	CO
Houwen	Stephen A.	Life House Covenant Church	Longmont	CO
Kiruhura	Eugene	Shalom Covenant Church	Urbandale	IA
Larson	Kevin J.	Sedalia Community Church	Manhattan	KS
Lundy	Eileen F.	Community Covenant Church	Omaha	NE
Mach	Isaac Duop	The Well Covenant	Des Moines	IA
Portillo	Vilma	Alfa y Omega Covenant Church	Carthage	MO
Sandberg	John	Community Covenant Church	Kearney	MO
Sivewright	Jason P.	Engage South KC	Kansas City	MO
Vega	Jose Ruben	Iglesia Evangelica Casa de Oracion	Wayne	NE
Vogel	John V.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Moran	KS

ML

Anderson	Matthew R.	Arvada Covenant Church	Arvada	CO
Bacani	Rosanno J.	Covenant Cedars Bible Camp	Hordville	NE
Barton	David M.	Trailhead Covenant Church	Longmont	CO
Boeschling	Jael B.	Community Covenant Church	Omaha	NE
Bruggeman	Meghan R.	Renew Covenant Church	Carroll	IA
Clerkin	Anthony J.	Hope Covenant Church	El Dorado	KS
Cole	Melvin B.	Freedom Covenant Church	Kansas City	MO
Diller	Dwight A.	Alert Covenant Church	Leonardville	KS
Eaton	Amber Lynne	The Well	Colorado Springs	CO
Eden	Jessica Nicole	Bethlehem Covenant Church	Waverly	NE

Farmer	Maryruth	Evangelical Covenant Church	Ceresco	NE
Fick	Jessica	Hillcrest Covenant Church	Prairie Village	KS
Fisher	Jacob C.	First Covenant Church	Omaha	NE
Flanagan	Jeffrey Lee	Harvest Ridge Covenant Church	Shawnee	KS
Gingrich	Kimberly	Hillcrest Covenant Church	Prairie Village	KS
Henoch	Tyler	First Covenant Church	Salina	KS
Heppner	Robert Jason	Hillcrest Covenant Church	Prairie Village	KS
Hilts	Tracy C.	Living Hope Covenant Church	Colorado Springs	CO
Hinman	Philip M.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Lindsborg	KS
Hutsell	Tamara L.	Swedeburg Covenant Church	Wahoo	NE
Joos	Charlotte M.	Community Covenant Church	Lenexa	KS
LaFollette	Preston C.	Deerbrook Covenant Church	Lees Summit	MO
Lang	Alexia B.	Engage South KC	Kansas City	MO
Leonard	Kayleigh	Arvada Covenant Church	Arvada	CO
Meakins	Cheryl Rae	Arvada Covenant Church	Arvada	CO
Ndegwa	Samuel M.	Imani Restoration Center Church	Aurora	CO
Nickerson	Nicki Renee	Centennial Covenant Church	Littleton	CO
Penn	Austin Daniel	Community Covenant Church	Osage City	KS
Pickering	Chad M.	New Life Wichita Covenant Church	Andover	KS
Raymond	Daniel J.	Council Tree Covenant Church	Fort Collins	CO
Redenius	Allan M.	First Covenant Church	Fort Dodge	IA
Reiner	Stefanie	First Covenant Church	Mason City	IA
Rojas	Amadeo Roberto	Renuevo Covenant Church	Arvada	CO
Russell	Gregory A.	Renovate Church	Parker	CO
Russell	Susan R.	Renovate Church	Parker	CO
Rodriguez	Jose	Kansas City Covenant Church	Kansas City	KS
Severson	Nathan P.	Hillcrest Covenant Church	Prairie Village	KS
Stephens	William E.	Ascent Community Church	Louisville	CO
Truax	Adam	Community Covenant Church	Kearney	MO
Vair	L. Scott	World Orphans	Castle Rock	CO
Vair	Deborah	Castle Oaks Evangelical Covenant Church	Castle Rock	CO
Vaughan	Philip A.	Castle Oaks Evangelical Covenant Church	Castle Rock	CO

Total in Conference: 56

Northwest

BVL

Cassell	James R.	New City Covenant Church	Edina	MN
Coronna	Mark S.	Calvary Covenant Church	Stockholm	WI
Damberger	Erin Marie	Lakeside Covenant Church	Victoria	MN
Freeman	Linda M.	Essentia Health	Virginia	MN
Jacobson	Kristine L.	Crossroads Evangelical Covenant Church	Forest Lake	MN
Lopez Perez	Juan H.	La Bendicion Covenant Church	Brooklyn Park	MN
Ross	Roger A.	Turtle Mountain Epiphany Covenant Church	Belcourt	ND
Todhunter	Paulita Colleen	Epiphany Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Wagar-Gilreath	Gayle S.	Community Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Yuek	Elijah K.	South Sudan Evangelical Covenant Church	Sioux Falls	SD

ML

Arland	Sophie Marie	Crossroads Church	Woodbury	MN
Arndt	Michele A.	Roseville Covenant Church	Roseville	MN
Asker	Brian J.	Crossview Covenant Church	North Mankato	MN
Asker	Sandra L.	Crossview Covenant Church	North Mankato	MN
Auer	Christopher	Risen Life Covenant Church	Brooklyn Center	MN
Bjornrud	Seth	Evangelical Covenant Church	International Falls	MN
Botzet	Jennifer	Sanctuary Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Christiansen	Matthew Brent	Evangelical Covenant Church	New London	MN
Dell'Arciprete	Mauricio	Destino Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Felty	Aaron M.	Plymouth Evangelical Covenant Church	Plymouth	MN
Finsaas	David C.	Harvest Church	Crookston	MN
Gunderson	Kyle R.	Cedarbrook Church	Menomonie	WI
Halbersma	Brad	Fridley Covenant Church	Fridley	MN
Hanson	Kohl M.	Karmel Evangelical Covenant Church	Princeton	MN
Hoffner	David T.	Minnehaha Academy	Minneapolis	MN
Hovda	Roger Wayne	First Covenant Church	Willmar	MN
Hovis	Jason S.	Karmel Evangelical Covenant Church	Princeton	MN
Inestroza	Polly E.	Crosstown Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Jackson	Bradley W.	Crossview Covenant Church	North Mankato	MN
Jones	Cynthia Marie	Catalyst Covenant Church	White Bear Lake	MN

Keehr	Sullivan G.	Catalyst Covenant Church	Shoreview	MN
King	Jake C.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Braham	MN
Kozamchak	Laura A.	Presbyterian Homes and Services	Minneapolis	MN
Larson	Justin D.	North City Covenant Church	Minneapolis	MN
Linna	Georgiana	Riverwood Covenant Church	Rockford	MN
Maley	Jonathan	Midcurrent Covenant Church	Hudson	WI
Mason	Douglas M.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Baudette	MN
MergensDavid	R.	Alexandria Covenant Church	Alexandria	MN
Nelson	Nathan L.	Mission Covenant Church	Poplar	WI
Nelson	Jessie L.	Crossroads Church	Woodbury	MN
Nordin	Galen R.	Hope Church	Grand Forks	ND
Nygaard	Mark L.	Saint Therese of New Hope Senior Services	New Hope	MN
Pitts	Verna M.	Ecumen Hospice	North Branch	MN
Renlund	Lisa M.	Crossroads Church	Woodbury	MN
Risley	Sarah E.	Mission Covenant Church	Poplar	WI
Russell	Terri M.	Salem Covenant Church	New Brighton	MN
Schanil	Gregory B.	Bethlehem Covenant Church	Wheaton	MN
Staples	Jamison Robert	Renew Covenant Church	Eau Claire	WI
Starr	Ryan W.	Lakeview Covenant Church	Duluth	MN
Tobiason	Mia A.	Department of the Army		
Turrill	Joseph J.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Lake Norden	SD
Wiens	Kay B.	Maple Grove Covenant Church	Maple Grove	MN

Total in Conference: 52

Ordered Ministry

ML

Broeker	Robert W.	Department of the Army
Choi	Hyang Sook	Department of the Army
Hutchison	Ben M.	Department of the Air Force
Menne	Paul R.	Department of the Army
Willocks	Gregory O.	Department of the Navy

Total in Conference: 5

Pacific Northwest

BVL

Dewald-Grauer	Tyra	L.	The Well Covenant Church	Corvallis	OR
Do	Eunice		The Table Covenant Church	Mercer Island	WA
Figueroa	Magdiel	A.	Iglesia Esperanza Viva	Sumner	WA
Kolman	April		Resurrection Covenant Church	Boise	ID
Metzger	Paul	L.	Tigard Covenant Church	Tigard	OR
Randolph	Lynda	S.	Southeast Conference	Atlanta	GA
Robison	Alison	Lynn	Renew Covenant Church	Lynnwood	WA
Segura	Rosa	M.	Iglesia Latinoamericana a Covenant Church	Bellevue	WA
Tzec	Magdiel		Pacific Northwest Conference	Mercer Island	WA
VanHoy	Ronald	G.	St. Clare Hospital	Lakewood	WA

ML

Anderson	Brooke	E.	Salem Hospital	Salem	OR
Anderson	Timothy	J.	Creekside Covenant Church	Redmond	WA
Andlovec	Kathleen	M.	First Covenant Church	Portland	OR
Cheng	Ian		Seattle Chinese Covenant Church	Bellevue	WA
Collard	Paul	G.	Columbia Grove Covenant Church	East Wenatchee	WA
Cramer	Joshua	D.	Resurrection Covenant Boise	Boise	ID
Crumrine	Aaron	B.	Selah Covenant Church	Selah	WA
Do	Bob	Uc Thang	The Table Covenant Church	Mercer Island	WA
Emmons	Benjamin		Crossroads Community Covenant Church	Yelm	WA
Ernst	Asher	B.	City Covenant Church	Spokane	WA
Fairbanks	Robert	A.	Immanuel Church	Spokane	WA
Finney	Mark	D.	Emmaus Church	Spokane	WA
Gothold	Peter	A.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Kent	WA
Grosskopf	Jeff	A.	Bellingham Covenant Church	Bellingham	WA
Huskamp	Michelle	L. M.	Monroe Covenant Church	Monroe	WA
Khilchenko	Andrey	Y.	City of Rain Covenant Church	Kent	WA
Kidd	Jeremy		Harbor Covenant Church	Gig Harbor	WA
Knapp	Matthew	R.	Harbor Covenant Church	Gig Harbor	WA
Kwon	Sangkil		Tacoma Trinity Church	Tacoma	WA

Larsen	Aubrey	Praise Covenant Church	Tacoma	WA
McCann	Angela Mary	Cascade Covenant Church	North Bend	WA
McDaniel	Heather	Alive Covenant Church	Poulsbo	WA
Moore	A. Phil	The Garden Covenant Church	Spokane	WA
Muia	Amy J.	Bethany Covenant Church	Mount Vernon	WA
Salcedo	Torina M.	Evangelical Covenant Church	Kent	WA
Strunk	O. William	Multicare Deaconess Hospital	Spokane	WA
VanderLinda	Richard E.	Praise Covenant Church	Tacoma	WA
Wadsworth	Zahra J. A.	West Hills Covenant Church	Portland	OR
Watson	Lyndsey M.	Covenant Kids Congo		

Total in Conference: 39

Pacific Southwest

BVL

Bonilla	Rebekah A.	Cornerstone Covenant Church	Turlock	CA
Carlson	Lori E.	Come, Learn, Rest Ministries	Oakdale	CA
Collins	Anthony L.	The Leadership Connection	Walnut Creek	CA
Engle	Karyn L.	Edgewater Covenant	Pittsburg	CA
Fearnside	Janet	All Things New Covenant Church	Monterey	CA
Forrest	Bruce M.	Calveras Co Sherriff's Office	San Andreas	CA
Godshall	Natalie	Redeemer Covenant Church	Orangevale	CA
Gonzales	Jaime	Nueva Esperanza Church	Antioch	CA
Guzman	Edwin O.	Iglesia Cristiana Shalom - Elohim	Rohnert Park	CA
Hong	Albert O.	New Hope Covenant Church	Oakland	CA
Huerta	Rebecca	Iglesia Del Pacto Evangelico	Kingsburg	CA
Kim	Sharon	The Garden Church	Chatsworth	CA
Kreisher	Debbie A.	Freedom Point Covenant Church	Loomis	CA
LaVigne	Shane	River City Christian	Gold River	CA
Le	Alan	First Covenant Church	Oakland	CA
Lee	Robert I.	The Garden Church	Chatsworth	CA
Loring	Jimalene	Chapel In The Pines Community Covenant	Arnold	CA
Medina	Maritza	El Encino Covenant Church	Downey	CA
Nesta	Juana I.	Stockton Covenant Church	Stockton	CA

Peña	Hector Victor	Agape Iglesia Del Pacto	Phoenix	AZ
Ramos	Jorge A.	Hope Center Covenant Church	Pleasant Hill	CA
Robertson	Joseph M.	Hope Church of Turlock	Turlock	CA
Sorenson	Anita L.	Pasadena Covenant Church	Pasadena	CA
Stahl	Lesley Hollis	The River Church Community	San Jose	CA
Terashima	Norifumi	Pacific Southwest Conference	Walnut Creek	CA
Turner	Jasmin	Common Ground: A Covenant Church	Sacramento	CA
Villela	Sandra L.	Amistad Covenant Church	Las Vegas	NV
Wood	Sarah	Freedom Point Covenant Church	Loomis	CA

ML

Aanderud	Nathan E.	Rolling Hills Covenant Church	Rolling Hills Estates	CA
Alessio	Jennifer M.	Bayside Covenant Church of Citrus Heights	Citrus Heights	CA
Armstead	Christa M.	Midtown Covenant Church	Sacramento	CA
Barsotti	Catherine	CHET	Compton	CA
Bishop	Gregory J.	Grace Covenant Church	Spring Valley	CA
Blue	Jennifer C.	Servant Partners	Pomona	CA
Boies	Judson B.	Bayside Covenant Church - Granite Bay	Granite Bay	CA
Buitrago	César A.	Amigos de Jesus Covenant Church	Patterson	CA
Byron	Caleb M.	Modesto Covenant Church	Modesto	CA
Cane	Trudy J.	Community Covenant Church	West Point	CA
Carter	Fred L.	Eagle Rock Covenant Church	Los Angeles	CA
Coray	Joseph R.	Modesto Covenant Church	Modesto	CA
Del Carlo Jenks	Cosette P.	Ocean Hills Covenant Church	Santa Barbara	CA
Falgien	Kathryn L.	Hope Center Covenant Church	Pleasant Hill	CA
Frick	Robert W.	Puna Covenant Church	Keaau	HI
Glynn	Douglas	Hope Covenant Church	Chandler	AZ
Gundlach	Elizabeth H.	Modesto Covenant Church	Modesto	CA
Gutierrez	Michael A.	Redeemer Covenant Church	Downey	CA
Hawkins	Jack D.	Canyon Springs Covenant Church	San Diego	CA
Hernandez	Nichole Marie	Coastline Covenant Church	Redondo Beach	CA
Howell	David	Community Counseling Associates	Fair Oaks	CA
Huang	Daniel G.	Newsong Community Church	Irvine	CA
Johnson	Melody D.	Pacific Southwest Conference		

Johnston	Parker	University Covenant Church	Davis	CA
Kaiser	Cecile	Chapel In The Pines Community Covenant	Arnold	CA
Kim	Lois Eunji	The Garden Church	Chatsworth	CA
Kim	David	The Garden Church	Chatsworth	CA
Loux	Timothy	Hope Center Covenant Church	Pleasant Hill	CA
Luna	Rolando	Comunidad Familiar Cristiana of the ECC	Redwood City	CA
Lund	Joshua	University Covenant Church	Davis	CA
Manzano	Fernando David	La Vina Covenant Church	Kerman	CA
Mariano	Lemuel	On Ramps Covenant Church	Fresno	CA
Merida	Fredy Amilcar	Vida Abundante	Roseville	CA
Milbrath	Christopher J.	District Church	El Dorado Hills	CA
Miller	Angie	Generations United	Redwood City	CA
Pennell	Zachary	Good Samaritan Community Covenant Church	Valley Springs	CA
Reiher	Aaron F.	First Covenant Church	Eureka	CA
Ronan	Jacqueline Q.	Peninsula Covenant Church	Redwood City	CA
Scott	Joel D.	Bridge Covenant Church	Gilbert	AZ
Seitz	Daniel J.	Hillside Covenant Church	Walnut Creek	CA
Solomon	Israel B.	The Harbor Covenant Church	Los Angeles	CA
Speedie	Rachel Kimiko	Midtown Covenant Church	Sacramento	CA
Sweeney	Craig E.	Bayside Covenant Church of Citrus Heights	Citrus Heights	CA
Tomscak	Heather M.	Freedom Point	Roseville	CA
Tomscak	Justin G.	Freedom Point	Roseville	CA
Wesley	David M.	Serving USA		
Wysong	Stephen C.	Hillside Covenant Church	Walnut Creek	CA
Yamamoto	Michael	The Garden Church	Chatsworth	CA
Zuehlsdorff	Benjamin R.	Marin Evangelical Covenant Church	San Rafael	CA
Zuehlsdorff	Shelly	Marin Evangelical Covenant Church	San Rafael	CA

Total in Conference: 78

Serve Globally

GSL

Klein	Marta	Global Personnel
Muniz	Fabio	Global Personnel

Nahnychuk	Colleen		Global Personnel
Noren	Karl	E.	Global Personnel
Noren	Mary	L.	Global Personnel

Total in Conference: 5

Southeast

BVL

Grimes	Valarie		Radiant Church Savannah	Savannah	GA
Johnson	Darryl	R.	Walk Of Faith Church	Mound Bayou	MS
Owens	Mary Ann		Trinity World Christian Center	Douglasville	GA
Reed	Dorean		Trinity World Christian Center	Douglasville	GA
Wong-Turner	Sharon	A.	Kingdom Covenant Ministries	Miami	FL
Zentz	Jenny	Elaine	Rock Harbor Covenant Church	Melbourne Beach	FL

ML

Diamond	Angela	Renee	Rock Harbor Covenant Church	Melbourne Beach	FL
Larsen	Andrew	J.	Safety Harbor Covenant Church	Safety Harbor	FL
Miller	Timothy	A.	Lakeview Community Church	Tarpon Springs	FL
Strickland	Brian	D.	Gracespring Covenant Church	Vero Beach	FL

Total in Conference: 10

Grand Total: 407



Presentation of Candidates for Transfer of Ordination

Henry M. Burbano

Serving: Covenant Church, Houston, TX
Ordaining Body: The Covenant Church of Ecuador
Conference: Midsouth

Georgia A. Hill

Serving: Life Church Riverside, Detroit, MI
Ordaining Body: United Church of Christ
Conference: Great Lakes

Jonathon V. Kosec

Serving: Evangelical Covenant Church of Bay Indies, Venice, FL
Ordaining Body: Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
Conference: Southeast

Sung Ryong Kwak

Serving: Dodam Covenant Church, Mount Prospect, IL
Ordaining Body: Korean Evangelical Church of America
Conference: Central



Presentation of Candidates for Ordination to Word and Service

Rachel M. Hart

Serving: Linwood Covenant Church, Wyoming, MN
Specialization: Christian Formation (all ages)
Conference: Northwest

Amy E. Long

Serving: Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, MN
Specialization: Christian Formation (all ages)
Conference: Northwest

Phyllis K. Myung

Serving: Great Road Church, Acton, MA
Specialization: Christian Formation (all ages)
Conference: East Coast

Hannah F. Nielsen

Serving: The River Church Community, San Jose, CA
Specialization: Christian Formation (all ages)
Conference: Pacific Southwest

Deborah E. Packnick

Serving: Covenant Church of Easton, Easton, CT
Specialization: Christian Formation (all ages)
Conference: East Coast

Andrea J. Spicer

Serving: Jesus People USA, Chicago, IL
Specialization: Restorative Justice
Conference: Central



Presentation of Candidates for Ordination to Word and Sacrament

Benito Amaya

Serving: City Gateway Covenant Church, Compton, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

David M. Barboza

Serving: Grace Hills Covenant Church, Angels Camp, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

Leanne M. Benton

Serving: Redeemer Covenant Church, Tulsa, OK
Conference: Midsouth

Jessica C. Boggs

Serving: Evangelical Covenant Church, Princeton, IL
Conference: Central

Leonardo E. Carrillo

Serving: Comunidad Cristiana, I.P.E., Highland Park, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

D. Alejandro Carrizo

Serving: Las Buenas Nuevas Covenant Church, Houston, TX
Conference: Midsouth

Adam J. Christian

Serving: First Covenant Church, River Falls, WI
Conference: Northwest

Allison E. Corriveau

Serving: Newton Covenant Church, Newton, MA
Conference: East Coast

Prajakta S. David-Kelley

Serving: The Evangelical Covenant Church, Chicago, IL
Conference: Central

Joy A. Fishler

Serving: Life Community Church, Roseville, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

Rodney M. Gadsden

Serving: CrossRoads Covenant Church, DeSoto, TX
Conference: Midsouth

Kyle J. Harmon

Serving: Pine Lake Covenant Church, Sammamish, WA
Conference: Pacific Northwest

Megan R. Herrold Sinchi

Serving: Re-entering call process
Conference: Central

Randall J. Hoffbeck

Serving: Community Covenant Church, Eagle River, AK
Conference: Alaska

John S. Kim

Serving: New Life Covenant Church, Palatine, IL
Conference: Central

Rebekah J. Lindberg

Serving: Community Covenant Church, Peabody, MA
Conference: East Coast

Daniel E. Parry

Serving: New Gottland Evangelical Covenant Church, McPherson, KS
Conference: Midwest

Evens Paul

Serving: Serve Globally Personnel: serving Haiti
Conference: Serve Globally

Carmen R. Quinche

Serving: Comunidad Cristiana I.P.E., Highland Park, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

Lynette E. Sanchez

Serving: Countryside Community Church, Sherwood, OR
Conference: Pacific Northwest

Serena A. Sinclair

Serving: Covenant Grove Church, Modesto, CA
Conference: Pacific Southwest

Edith G. Soto López

Serving: Jesus Fiel Amigo Covenant Church, Brooklyn Park, MN
Conference: Northwest

Daniel P. Swartz

Serving: Emmanuel Covenant Church, Shoreview, MN
Conference: Northwest

Laura M. Tarro

Serving: Bethany Covenant Church, St. Charles, IL
Conference: Central

Alexander J. Taylor

Serving: Evangelical Covenant Church, Princeton, IL
Conference: Central

Anthony R. Thomas

Serving: Calvary Covenant Church, Chicago, IL
Conference: Central

Rebecca J. Worl

Serving: Pine Lake Covenant Church, Sammamish, WA
Conference: Pacific Northwest



Clergy Vocational Service Recognition

Our denomination calls, credentials, and sends individuals into ministry. We believe it is most appropriate that our community of pastors and congregations join together at each Covenant Annual Meeting to honor a group of clergy who have offered faithful service and godly obedience. Therefore, on behalf of the Evangelical Covenant Church and the Office of the Ordered Ministry the 138th Annual Meeting would like to honor the following individuals:

Thomas G. Beeghly, Whitehall, MI
Michael D. Brown, Brandon, SD
Scott A. Burnett, Newcastle, WA
Steven D. Carlson, Turlock, CA
Peter T. Cha, Lincolnshire, IL
Mark E. Chapman, Prior Lake, MN
Michael P. Coglean, Kearney, MO
Edward F. DeForest, Kingsport, TN
Gretchen M. DeNeui, Los Gatos, CA
Paul H. DeNeui, Los Gatos, CA
Paul R. Duppenenthaler, Sherwood, OR
Ruth M. Dutton, Sammamish, WA
Mark A. Ellingson, Brooklyn Park, MN
Ross B. Erickson, Mason City, IA
Herbert H. Frost, Lino Lakes, MN
Judith A. Hamrick, Uniontown, OH
Donna M. Harris, Minneapolis, MN
Scott D. Hartley, Maple Grove, MN
John D. Hege, Palmer, AK
Stephen A. Houwen, Longmont, CO
Jonathan D. Ireland, Santa Barbara, CA
Brian G. Johnson, Omaha, NE
Carolyn S. Johnson, McMinnville, OR
Darryl R. Johnson, Mound Bayou, MS
Heidi R. Johnston, El Cajon, CA
Sam S. Jung, Seattle, WA
Paul F. Knight, Grand Forks, ND
Brian L. Kyle, Grand Rapids, MI

Jerrold A. Lange, Northport, MI
Steven P. Larson, Hutchinson, MN
Deborah D. Masten, Redondo Beach, CA
Kevin S. Melin, Willmar, MN
Deborah C. M. Montzingo, Lyndhurst, OH
Joyce E. Norman, Blue Springs, MO
David P. Nystrom, Auburn, CA
Deb L. O'NeilLewis, Bethesda, MD
Michael J. Ostermann, Clyde, KS
Stephen F. Pace, Olympia, WA
Piedad Peña-Restrepo, Chicago, IL
Karl E. Peterson, Minneapolis, MN
Chamron Phal, Alameda, CA
Daniel R. Pietrzyk, Salem, WI
Eugenio Restrepo, Chicago, IL
Keith G. Robinson, Rockford, MN
Joel P. Rude, Burnsville, MN
Adrienne Low Satterberg, Middletown, CT
Eric P. Sparrman, Excelsior, MN
Julie A. Steel, Snoqualmie, WA
Daniel B. Thompson, Plymouth, MN
Johan J. Tredoux, Lenexa, KS
Gregory M. West, San Diego, CA
Heidi M. Wiebe, Strathmore, AB



IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR SERVICE
TO GOD’S KINGDOM AND THE GLOBAL CHURCH
THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH RECOGNIZES

Lillian and Don Dwight



FOR WILLINGLY ACCEPTING the call to serve in Taiwan from 1991 to 2024.

FOR HUMBLY RECEIVING as privilege the opportunity to learn from and embrace the Taiwanese and Filipino cultures while joining the missio Dei in an often complex yet sacred context.

FOR FAITHFULLY SERVING within your calling and gifting for global teaching and support service. For discipleship and pastoral leadership.

FOR GRACIOUSLY ENCOURAGING others, both missionary colleagues and national friends, through your gifts of education and church leadership.

FOR FAITHFULLY representing the kingdom, working in mutual partnerships, strengthening local churches, transforming individuals, families, and communities, and for affirming dignity.

FOR EFFECTIVELY LEADING by supporting the Kizimani project’s implementation of a healing arts program at New Dawn Secondary School in Nairobi; for creating and implementing a computer program at Eldo-Jamii Primary and the secondary school in Eldoret.

LILLIAN, FOR STEADFAST LEADERSHIP as school nurse, high school health class teacher, and worship leader at Morrison Academy; for your service creating and leading Bible studies at the Filipino Fellowship.

DON, FOR EFFECTIVELY LEADING at Morrison Academy as both teacher and administrator; for ministering to students through coaching; and for faithfully pastoring the Filipino Fellowship.

DON and LILLIAN, FOR COMPASSIONATELY AND GRACIOUSLY SHARING your home and lives with many friends and guests for the last 33 years.

FOR AUTHENTICALLY LOVING one another and others, and modeling what it looks like to live as citizens of the kingdom of God.

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU... “your faith has shown itself in action, your love in labor, and your hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Presented in the city of Covington, state of Kentucky, this twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT

Grace Shim, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE GLOBALLY



IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR SERVICE
TO GOD'S KINGDOM AND THE GLOBAL CHURCH
THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH RECOGNIZES

Erika and Nils Clauson



FOR WILLINGLY ACCEPTING the call to serve in Oaxaca, Mexicali, and Monterrey, Mexico. Beginning short-term missions in 1998 for Erika, followed by project and career missions in 2002 for both Erika and Nils.

FOR HUMBLY RECEIVING as privilege the opportunity to learn from and embrace the Mexican culture while joining the missio Dei in an often complex, yet sacred context.

FOR FAITHFULLY SERVING within your calling and gifting for discipleship, leadership development, community development, and healthy family ministries.

FOR GRACIOUSLY ENCOURAGING others, both global personnel colleagues and national friends, through your gifts of community care and global partner engagement.

FOR FAITHFULLY representing the kingdom, working in mutual partnership, empowering and transforming individuals, families, and communities, and affirming dignity.

NILS, FOR EFFECTIVELY LEADING while facilitating strategic planning for Covenant leaders; for serving on the leadership board of FUNDEFAM; for serving as treasurer and team coordinator for mission staff; for recently becoming the full-time manager of global partnerships for Covenant World Relief and Development.

ERIKA, FOR STEADFAST LEADERSHIP within MAEM (Ministering to the Abused and Exploited in Mexico), the women's discipleship group, FUNDEFAM's youth group and Fuentes Libres, serving economically poor women through micro-enterprise loans; for providing leadership development, Christian formation, and ministries of compassion and justice.

ERIKA AND NILS FOR COMPASSIONATELY AND GRACIOUSLY SHARING your home and lives with many friends and guests for the last 26 years.

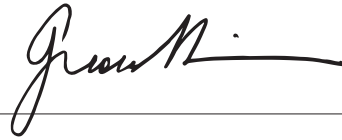
FOR AUTHENTICALLY LOVING one another and others, and modeling what it looks like to live as citizens of the kingdom of God.

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU...“your faith has shown itself in action, your love in labor, and your hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

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Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT



Grace Shim, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE GLOBALLY



IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR SERVICE
TO GOD’S KINGDOM AND THE GLOBAL CHURCH
THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH RECOGNIZES

Karen and Carl Groot



FOR WILLINGLY ACCEPTING the call to serve in Thailand from 1988 to 2024.

FOR HUMBLY RECEIVING as privilege the opportunity to learn from and embrace the Thai culture while joining the missio Dei in an often complex yet sacred context.

FOR FAITHFULLY SERVING within your calling at the Abundant Life Center (ALC) and the International Community School (ICS); for utilizing your gifts for evangelism and community development.

FOR GRACIOUSLY ENCOURAGING others, global personnel, colleagues, and national friends through your gifts of pastoral care and compassionate leadership.

FOR FAITHFULLY representing the kingdom, working in mutual partnerships, strengthening local communities, transforming individuals and families, and affirming dignity.

KAREN, FOR EFFECTIVELY LEADING within the ALC ministry; for providing small business opportunities, local outreach, and discipleship training; and for curating and participating in a vibrant worship community.

CARL, FOR STEADFAST LEADERSHIP within the ICS setting; for utilizing your cross-cultural and engineering skills for campus development and becoming a vital liaison between local contractors and school leadership.

CARL AND KAREN, FOR COMPASSIONATELY AND GRACIOUSLY SHARING your home and lives with many friends and guests for the last 36 years.

FOR AUTHENTICALLY LOVING one another and others, and for modeling what it looks like to live as citizens of the kingdom of God.

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU... “your faith has shown itself in action, your love in labor, and your hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude” (1Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Presented in the city of Covington, state of Kentucky, this twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT

Grace Shim, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE GLOBALLY



IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR SERVICE
TO GOD’S KINGDOM AND THE GLOBAL CHURCH
THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH RECOGNIZES

Janet and Ron Ziegelbaur



FOR WILLINGLY ACCEPTING the call to serve in Zaire (now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo) in 1986 to 1988 (short-term technical services in Karawa), then 1991 for Ron; 1988 to 1991 (short-term surgical technologist and accounting in Karawa), then 1993 for Janet; for both serving faithfully in the Central African Republic as well as Cameroon, their place of retirement.

FOR HUMBLY RECEIVING as privilege the opportunity to learn from and embrace the Congolese, Central African Republic, and Cameroonian cultures while joining the

missio Dei in an often complex yet sacred context.

FOR FAITHFULLY SERVING WITHIN YOUR CALLING at Rain Forest International School as educators, technical services director, guidance counselor, and mentors.

FOR GRACIOUSLY ENCOURAGING global personnel colleagues, students, and national friends through your gifts of pastoral care and hospitality.

JANET, FOR EFFECTIVELY providing Christian education and discipleship for your students; for serving as country coordinator and providing vital accounting and administrative support to your team members.

RON, FOR STEADFAST LEADERSHIP in technical support for RFIS as well as overseeing all necessary construction; for providing educational support and relaying your vision for improving the facility collaboratively with your Cameroonian team members.

RON AND JANET, FOR COMPASSIONATELY AND GRACIOUSLY SHARING your home and lives with many friends and guests for the last 33 years.

FOR AUTHENTICALLY LOVING one another and others, and modeling what it looks like to live as citizens of the kingdom of God.

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU... “your faith has shown itself in action, your love in labor, and your hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Presented in the city of Covington, state of Kentucky, this twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT

Grace Shim, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE GLOBALLY



IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION FOR SERVICE
TO GOD’S KINGDOM AND THE GLOBAL CHURCH
THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH RECOGNIZES

Becci Swearingen



FOR WILLINGLY ACCEPTING the call to serve in Kenya from 2018 to 2024.

FOR HUMBLY RECEIVING as privilege the opportunity to learn from and embrace the Kenyan culture while joining the missio Dei in an often complex yet sacred context.

FOR FAITHFULLY SERVING within your calling and gifting for education, creating curriculums, and mentoring.

FOR GRACIOUSLY ENCOURAGING teaching colleagues, ministry partners, and national friends through your gifts of compassion, justice, and mutual collaboration.

FOR FAITHFULLY representing the kingdom, working in honoring partnerships, strengthening local schools, transforming individuals, families, and communities, and affirming dignity.

FOR EFFECTIVELY LEADING by supporting the Kizimani project’s implementation of a healing arts program at New Dawn Secondary School in Nairobi; for creating and implementing a computer program at Eldo-Jamii Primary and the secondary school in Eldoret.

FOR STEADFAST LEADERSHIP serving the Evangelical Covenant Church Kenya (ECCCK) by creating and writing the curriculum for the 2024 inaugurated Ushauri youth mentorship program.

FOR COMPASSIONATELY AND GRACIOUSLY SHARING your life and home with many friends and guests for the last six years.

FOR AUTHENTICALLY LOVING others and modeling what it looks like to live as a citizen of the kingdom of God.

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD FOR YOU... “your faith has shown itself in action, your love in labor, and your hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude” (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Presented in the city of Covington, state of Kentucky, this twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-four.

Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT

Grace Shim, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE GLOBALLY



**The Evangelical Covenant Church presents the
2024 T.W. Anderson Outstanding Layperson Award to**

Scott Peterson



Scott Peterson has been a lifelong member of First Evangelical Covenant Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. His life is a testimony to his faith and his love of the mission of the gospel. For over 50 years, he has been a faithful servant of the Lord.

Scott has served not only at First Evangelical Covenant Church but has extended himself beyond the walls of the church to share the gospel. He has volunteered at several CHIC (now Unite) conferences and volunteered on high school ski trips, bike trips, and countless trips to Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp with groups for camp workdays.

Scott's work at Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp has shined a light on his love for the Lord. He loved camp as a kid, and he and his family saw camp life as a missional life. Scott met his wife, Terry, while serving on summer staff at Portage Lake. An electrician by trade, Scott has used his expertise as an infrastructure problem-solver. Among his many efforts included are:

- Leading the building of new lakeside cabins, renovations on every building on camp, the moving of the camp road, the building of the challenge course, and his endless work to keep all systems functioning.
- Filling in as cook—managing the kitchen and staff for numerous summers when needed.
- Representing camp at zoning and township meetings on a regular basis.
- Encouraging summer staff and training them in many areas around camp.
- Managing design and bidding for the camp dining hall project now underway.
- Simply supporting the work of camp.
- Organizing multiple golf fundraisers and other opportunities for people to financially support Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp.

Over the years and decades Scott has lived a life of service, commitment, and love for the mission of the gospel.

We celebrate Scott Peterson, recipient of the 2024 T.W. Anderson Award, and give God thanks for his faithful service.

Presented at the 138th Annual Meeting, on the twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-four.



Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT



Dierdra Clark, CORPORATE SECRETARY



**The Evangelical Covenant Church presents the
2024 Irving C. Lambert Award to
Evelyn M.R. Johnson**



In grateful recognition of faithful commitment and passionate dedication to the cause of Christ through wholistic urban and ethnic ministries;

For paving the way, especially for women in ministry, opening the door for diversity, and freely inviting others, not just to be at the table but to enhance the table through their contributions;

For your visionary approach to empowering leaders; for building multiethnic mosaic teams founded on relationships based on trust, and for mentoring your staffs with intention;

For braving the loneliness and challenges of being the “first” in so many spaces of the Covenant, including as first woman elected to lead a department at Covenant Offices within the budget and the first woman elected as superintendent;

For your tireless commitment to advance the multiethnic mosaic and to the power of participation as you created diverse teams, adapting each person’s roles according to their gifts;

For your strategic leadership and inexhaustible work ethic;

For investing in a mosaic team of leaders on Crescendo, facilitating their participation in the Antiracism Discipleship Pathways, and for championing Crescendo Justice Journey trips;

For listening first before giving advice, and loving people well;

For your role as “pastor-teacher,” equipping and empowering others for servant work for the kingdom, multiplying disciples as far back as your role as associate (and later interim) superintendent in the Midwest Conference;

For being a consummate collaborator, a zealous visionary, a powerful ally and advocate for people of color, an enthusiastic and courageous servant leader, and a lifelong learner forever seeking to advance the mosaic kingdom of God—all for God’s glory and neighbor’s good;

For your rich service to the Covenant Church throughout more than 42 years of ministry and beyond, creating resources, and leaving an indelible mark in such areas as Midwinter, Unite, Covenant Orientation, Journey to Mosaic, Crescendo ministries, and more;

For being a “Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwelling” (Isaiah 58:12);

For embodying the spirit and service of Irving C. Lambert, we celebrate Evelyn M.R. Johnson and give thanks to God for her faithful and compassionate service.

Presented at the 138th Annual Meeting, on the twenty-seventh day of June in the year of our Lord, two thousand twenty-four.



Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT



Paul Robinson, EXECUTIVE MINISTER OF SERVE LOCALLY



Fiscal Year 2023 Financial Report

When Gary Walter became head of Church Growth and Evangelism (now Start and Strengthen Churches) in the 1990s, he shared five rules of conduct for those of us on staff to live into. One of those rules was “Remember the widow in Iowa.” It was a simple way for us to remember that every dollar we spend on behalf of the Covenant was donated sacrificially by someone, and we should treat it accordingly. When I started in the interim role as vice president of finance a year ago, I laid out the same five rules for the Finance team, and they have made them their own. We consider the stewardship of Covenant resources to be a sacred trust.

Over the past year, the Covenant has started to live into the new organizational structure approved at Gather 2023. That work has included evaluation of current personnel, evaluating any new positions to be considered, now presenting a fully formed budget for the fiscal year starting October 1, 2024. We are excited in that we believe there will be better missional traction as the ministry anticipated by this budget begins to play out.

We continue to claw our way back from the impacts of Covid earlier this decade, and we sense a light at the end of the tunnel—not a train coming at us but rather the Covenant emerging into a bright new day. That’s not to say “we’re back” but that almost every day feels better than the last, and we can look to the future with optimism and prayer.

One evidence of that truth is that church giving is up approximately 7% from the year before, as well as 7% over budget through the first half of the fiscal year. Something to celebrate!

FY2023 OPERATING RESULTS

Covenant expense spending in FY2023 was 4.15% under budget. That represented significant effort on the part of leadership to keep a rein on expenses. That tight rein was necessary because revenues weren’t up to snuff. We were almost \$800,000 behind budget for Covenant Church Support. However, in July 2023, we received an Employee Retention Credit grant from the federal government for \$1,629,655 (when adding in the interest bonus). That allowed us to forgo some of the deployed reserves (accumulated surplus from prior years) that would have been needed to keep mission moving forward and balance the budget. It is not a great management process to eat into reserves over multiple years, and we are reasonably optimistic that we can get to a fully balanced budget again.

The final operating bottom line was that we ended FY2023 with an operating surplus of \$554,276. Like the uptick in Church Support reported this year in FY2024, it has been a long time since we have been able to report a surplus for the Covenant.

FISCAL YEAR 2023 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

	BUDGET FY 2023	ACTUAL FY 2023	% VS BUDGET
Mission Provision			
Covenant Church Support	\$7,848,188	\$7,074,230	-9.86%
Individual Donor Support	\$2,657,361	\$2,667,054	0.36%
Affiliate Fees	\$4,200,000	\$4,200,000	0.00%
Deployed Reserves	\$1,459,699	\$363,208	-75.12%
Annual Bequest Draws	\$1,874,000	\$1,874,233	0.01%
Other Income	\$250,000	\$275,242	10.10%
TOTAL MISSION PROVISION	\$18,289,248	\$16,453,967	-10.03%
Mission Investment			
Serve Clergy	\$1,167,637	\$1,043,511	10.63%
Serve Locally	\$4,148,111	\$4,204,665	-1.36%
Serve Globally	\$5,958,252	\$5,071,495	14.88%
President's Office	\$946,341	\$1,024,989	-8.31%
Finance	\$1,021,274	\$1,054,877	-3.29%
Advancement	\$908,278	\$1,001,322	-10.24%
Operations	\$1,575,495	\$1,844,443	-17.07%
Marketing & Communications	\$1,388,860	\$1,284,044	7.55%
North Park University	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	0.00%
Other	\$175,000	\$0	100.00%
TOTAL MISSION INVESTMENT	\$18,289,248	\$17,529,346	4.15%
Operating Loss	\$0	(\$1,075,379)	-5.88%
Employee Retention Credit	\$0	\$1,629,655	8.91%
NET INCOME (LOSS) FOR YEAR	\$0	\$554,276	3.03%

COVENANT BENEFITS

Of great interest to clergy, the Covenant Pension Plan experienced a strong 2023 (it reports results on a calendar year basis). Just as the disappointing results in 2022 were fueled by the general equity and other markets being solidly down, the Plan experienced good recovery in 2023. At the recent Board of Pensions and Benefits meeting, it was reported that the Plan was at 105.9% funding level as of January 1, 2024.

There are 2,161 pastors, chaplains, global personnel, and other ministry roles (and their spouses) who participate in the Plan. Of those, 1,042 are actively receiving pension benefit payments. Those payments total more than \$1,250,000 every month. We are now in a long season (next 60 years or so) of declining numbers in the Plan. With the closure of the Plan to new applicants a few years ago, we saw a drop of 16 participants in 2023. All told, the Plan has assets of \$283,453,382 as of January 1, 2024.

Covenant Benefits (an imbedded ministry of the Covenant) supplies financial security through health insurance and retirement benefits to pastors and ministry staff, which enables Covenant leaders and ministries to give of themselves and their abundance. Numerous access points to mental health services are included, which enable Covenant pastors and leaders to care for their own emotional and mental health while attending to the emotional, spiritual, and mental health of their congregants. Covenant Benefits acts as an advocate and liaison when insurance concerns arise, freeing up time and space for Covenant pastors and leaders to focus on their ministries.

The health insurance ecosystem is ever more complicated as new laws are enacted, and costs continue to skyrocket as lifesaving medical advances and specialty medications are released. Covenant Benefits prioritizes affordable access to healthcare. With guidance from the Board of Pension and Benefits and experts in the field, Covenant Benefits continues to manage our group health insurance plan with diligence and service to the Covenant.

The health insurance component of Covenant Benefits is struggling to adjust to the steadily rising costs of medical coverage. Year-over-year increases in actual medical costs for all medical plans nationwide have averaged 8%. Beginning in the year 2019, medical premiums paid by participants and their churches started to total less than the medical treatment costs incurred. The administrative costs of the plan added to that negative balance. Covenant Benefits has traditionally increased premiums very modestly while offsetting any shortfalls with reserve investment returns, while similar denominational and ministry group health plans like ours have passed on double-digit increases regularly to keep up with healthcare inflation. We are evaluating adjustments for 2025 to enable the Covenant to continue providing this important service of group employee health insurance coverage long into the future while keeping up with healthcare inflation trends, such as a higher premium increase, right-sized family tier rates, and/or increased copays and deductibles.

FINANCIAL AUDIT UPDATE

Included with this report is a copy of the most recent Covenant audited financial reports as of the end of our last fiscal year on September 30, 2023. The report includes both “base mission” activity as reported in the Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Results section above, as well as broader global “project ministries” and related Covenant financial obligations. This is the most comprehensive view of our mission financial activity.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET

It has been an interesting process to work out the FY2025 budget. The normal planning and meeting with ministry leaders was straightforward and took place on schedule. Then we needed to address a few issues that impact payroll (a major component of the budget every year), such as the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) as well as the reorganizational work, which included combining ministry areas, a process of leveling salary ranges, and consideration of filling positions that have intentionally been left unfilled during the process. With all of that behind us now, we are able to present the FY2025 budget.

There are several major changes to the budget presentation this year:

1. The income projections includes a new line item for Combined Investment Income. In order to simplify some accounting by combining investment accounts where possible, we have been able to identify restricted funds that don't have a requirement to direct investment income back into that restricted account. These are funds where the donors have said they want their gifts to benefit XYZ ministry in the Covenant. Those donors have every right to expect those gifts to benefit that XYZ ministry, but the gifts don't have ties to the earning. Rather than perpetuate the restricted nature of the earnings, this new methodology allows for a significant amount (\$1,100,000) to flow into the general fund budget for the year. Without this revenue, budget decisions would have been much more draconian.
2. The new missional structures have been put into place with Serve Locally (formerly Start and Strengthen Churches, Make and Deepen Disciples, and Love Mercy Do Justice), Serve Clergy (formerly Develop Leaders), and Serve Globally (formerly World Mission) all in place.
3. Overall, the budget is a 2.3% increase from the budget approved last year for FY2024.

We continue to give thanks to the many Covenant churches and individuals who support the mission and ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church. I am grateful for the dedicated staff who give time and focus to doing the books of the church well and on time. We endeavor to remember the “widow in Iowa” in all we do.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidated Financial Statements
With Independent Auditors' Report

September 30, 2023 and 2022

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Executive Board of
The Evangelical Covenant Church
Chicago, Illinois

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of The Evangelical Covenant Church, which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Evangelical Covenant Church as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of The Evangelical Covenant Church and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audits. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about The Evangelical Covenant Church's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the consolidated financial statements are available to be issued.

To the Executive Board of
The Evangelical Covenant Church
Chicago, Illinois

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the consolidated financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of The Evangelical Covenant Church's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about The Evangelical Covenant Church's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Supplementary Information

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits. We did not audit the financial statements of Covenant Trust Company, an investee of which The Evangelical Covenant Church has a significant influence. Those statements were audited by other auditors, whose report has been furnished to us, and our opinion, insofar as it relates to the investment in Covenant Trust Company, is based solely on the report of the other auditors. The investment in Covenant Trust Company made up 3.6% of The Evangelical Covenant Church's total assets and 17.5% of its change in net assets. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

Capin Crouse LLP

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

	September 30,	
	2023	2022
ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,406,359	\$ 1,369,643
Assets held for board designated purposes:		
Cash and cash equivalents	276,342	276,342
Investments	5,939,308	5,939,308
Prepaid expenses and other assets	130,917	109,812
Notes and accounts receivable:		
Churches and other affiliates (net of allowance of \$25,000 at September 30, 2023 and 2022)	1,353,048	1,411,363
Other Covenant entities	1,411,374	3,096,826
Other	356,958	446,226
Real estate held for sale (Note 15)	-	815,388
Investments (Note 2)	40,609,013	43,962,955
Investments whose use is limited (Note 2):		
Annuities	5,742,239	5,208,903
Investments pledged	1,328,514	1,295,471
Property and equipment, net (Note 4)	9,328,462	9,201,405
Interest in irrevocable trusts (Note 7)	629,386	583,733
	<u>\$ 69,511,920</u>	<u>\$ 73,717,375</u>
Total Assets		
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 2,175,584	\$ 2,205,401
Deferred income	735,142	1,375,576
Insurance payable	12,221,292	15,973,272
Lines of credit and notes payable (Note 5)	2,113,636	3,620,726
Supplemental retirement benefits payable (Note 12)	515,342	625,828
Annuities (Note 13):		
Annuities payable	715,603	699,286
Due to other Covenant entities	4,832,068	4,482,097
Total liabilities	<u>23,308,667</u>	<u>28,982,186</u>
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	23,586,717	22,477,319
With donor restrictions (Note 10)	22,616,536	22,257,870
Total net assets	<u>46,203,253</u>	<u>44,735,189</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 69,511,920</u>	<u>\$ 73,717,375</u>

See notes to consolidated financial statements

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidated Statements of Activities

	Year Ended September 30,				
	2023		2022		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	
	Total	Total	Total	Total	
SUPPORT AND REVENUE:					
Church giving	\$ 4,378,662	\$ 3,429,995	\$ 7,808,657	\$ 4,595,214	\$ 3,453,664
Fees	3,957,343	-	3,957,343	3,944,599	-
Contributions	1,511,868	5,381,982	6,893,850	1,757,391	6,189,620
Meetings and events	529,406	-	529,406	500,740	-
Communication sales	164,338	-	164,338	183,183	-
Bequests	1,473,874	-	1,473,874	1,572,214	-
Loss on sale of real estate held for sale	(790,296)	-	(790,296)	-	-
Grant revenue	1,629,655	-	1,629,655	-	-
Other	139,775	2,606,030	2,745,805	117,085	1,241,824
Investment income (loss) net of fees	1,837,476	1,047,324	2,884,800	(2,488,761)	(1,936,655)
Change in value of annuities and interest in irrevocable trusts	137,169	(57,131)	80,038	(76,426)	(248,953)
Total Support and Revenue	<u>14,969,270</u>	<u>12,408,200</u>	<u>27,377,470</u>	<u>10,105,239</u>	<u>8,699,500</u>
Net Assets Released From Restrictions:	12,049,534	(12,049,534)	-	12,612,539	(12,612,539)
	<u>27,018,804</u>	<u>358,666</u>	<u>27,377,470</u>	<u>22,717,778</u>	<u>(3,913,039)</u>
EXPENSES:					
Start & Strengthen Churches	4,163,532	-	4,163,532	3,838,117	-
Make & Deepen Disciples	733,303	-	733,303	702,910	-
Develop Leaders	3,229,328	-	3,229,328	3,283,705	-
Love Mercy, Do Justice	891,556	-	891,556	795,360	-
Serve Globally	9,981,823	-	9,981,823	10,034,430	-
General Mission	87,800	-	87,800	114,401	-
Communication	1,309,245	-	1,309,245	1,454,684	-
General administration	4,515,551	-	4,515,551	5,081,659	-
Fundraising	997,268	-	997,268	971,269	-
Total Expenses	<u>25,909,406</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,909,406</u>	<u>26,276,535</u>	<u>-</u>
Changes in Net Assets	1,109,398	358,666	1,468,064	(3,558,757)	(3,913,039)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>22,477,319</u>	<u>22,257,870</u>	<u>44,735,189</u>	<u>26,036,076</u>	<u>26,170,909</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 23,586,717</u>	<u>\$ 22,616,536</u>	<u>\$ 46,203,253</u>	<u>\$ 22,477,319</u>	<u>\$ 22,257,870</u>
				<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>

See notes to consolidated financial statements

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows

	Year Ended September 30,	
	2023	'2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	\$ 1,468,064	\$ (7,471,796)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided (used) by operating activities:		
Depreciation expense	161,238	166,704
Unrealized (gain) loss on investments	(2,783,220)	8,690,238
Unrealized (appreciation) depreciation on annuity investments	(24,104)	18,259
Loss (gain) on sale of investments	209,718	(800,667)
Gain on sale of annuity investments	(9,360)	(3,465)
Loss on sale of real estate held for sale	790,296	-
Annuity payments	75,363	215,861
Actuarial change in annuities	(63,619)	(45,020)
Change in interest in irrevocable trusts	(45,653)	142,873
Increase (decrease) in reserve for accounts receivable	46,075	-
Bad debt loss	125,000	-
Contributions restricted for investment in endowment	(1,570,446)	(1,009,740)
Changes in:		
Accounts receivable	1,657,270	(572,058)
Prepaid expenses and other assets	(21,105)	(1,606)
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	(29,817)	(327,196)
Insurance payable	(3,751,980)	(3,707,428)
Supplemental retirement benefits payable	(110,486)	84,181
Deferred income	(640,434)	(190,899)
Net Cash Used by Operating Activities	(4,517,200)	(4,811,759)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of property and equipment	(288,295)	-
Purchases of investments	(5,394,377)	(9,346,665)
Proceeds from sale and maturity of investments	11,288,778	13,595,238
Purchase of investments restricted for annuities	(207,492)	-
Proceeds from sale and maturity of investments restricted for annuities	57,591	211,344
Proceeds from sale of property held for sale	25,092	-
Disbursements under notes receivable	(1,399,430)	(1,758,386)
Collections on notes receivable	1,404,120	1,869,695
Net Cash Provided by Investing Activities	5,485,987	4,571,226
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Contributions restricted for investment in endowment	1,570,446	1,009,740
Borrowings from lines of credit and notes payable	71,911	312,017
Repayments from lines of credit and notes payable	(1,579,001)	(943,739)
Annuity payments	(75,363)	(215,861)
New annuity agreements	212,599	1,389
Gift portion of new annuity agreements	(132,663)	(470)
Net Cash Provided by Financing Activities	67,929	163,076
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,036,716	(77,457)
Cash and Cash Equivalents, Beginning of Year	1,645,985	1,723,442
Cash and Cash Equivalents, End of Year	\$ 2,682,701	\$ 1,645,985

(continued)

See notes to consolidated financial statements

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows (continued)

	Year Ended September 30,	
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Cash and cash equivalents consist of the following:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,406,359	\$ 1,369,643
Cash and cash equivalents held for board designated purposes	<u>276,342</u>	<u>276,342</u>
	<u>\$ 2,682,701</u>	<u>\$ 1,645,985</u>
 SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:		
Cash paid for interest	<u>\$ 147,813</u>	<u>\$ 135,436</u>

See notes to consolidated financial statements

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The Evangelical Covenant Church (the “Church”) and other Covenant institutions are accountable to the Executive Board of the Covenant and the Covenant Annual Meeting. Only those funds under the Executive Board's control that are associated with the Church activities are included in these consolidated financial statements. The consolidated financial statements exclude the accounts of member churches and regional conferences. They also exclude other Covenant institutions administered by separate Boards. These Covenant institutions are related parties of the Church as the Executive Board is a member of their institutional boards. Related parties include Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, North Park University, National Covenant Properties, Covenant Trust Company, Paul Carlson Partnership, and Centro Hispano de Estudios Teologicos del Pacto Evangelico. The Church is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(a) as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). In addition, the Church has been classified as an organization that is not a private foundation under IRC Section 509(a)(1). Accordingly, no provision for federal or state income taxes is required.

BASIS OF CONSOLIDATION

Bezalel, Inc. and CovScholars LLC are nonprofit organizations whose sole member is the Church. They have been incorporated in the State of Illinois within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the IRC. Bezalel, Inc. was formed in 2016 to assist the Church in acquiring and developing real property for families in low-income communities. CovScholars was formed in 2017 to provide a loan program for scholars at North Park Theological Seminary. Intercompany transactions and balances have been eliminated for consolidated financial statement purposes.

BASIS OF ACCOUNTING

The preparation of consolidated financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAP) requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the consolidated financial statements, and the reported amounts of income and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents include checking, savings, and money market accounts. At times these balances may exceed federally insured limits. As of September 30, 2023 and 2022, the Church had cash on deposit that exceeded federally insured limits by \$2,270,736 and \$924,751, respectively.

INVESTMENTS

Investments, including investments whose use is limited, with readily determinable fair values are reported at fair value based on quoted market prices. Investments, including investments whose use is limited, in National Covenant Property (NCP) Certificates and NCP Demand Accounts are reported at cost plus accrued interest. Investment in Covenant Trust Company (CTC) is reported under the equity method. Investment income and realized and unrealized appreciation and depreciation are included in investment income in the consolidated statements of activities. Assets funding endowment net assets are included in investments on the consolidated statements of financial position.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued:

CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS

Contributions and bequests are recorded at the time of notification of an unconditional promise from the donor and are classified as net assets without donor restrictions or net assets with donor restrictions (see Note 10). Net assets without donor restrictions are primarily derived from member churches, individual donors, and fees (see Note 8). Restricted contributions are received from member churches and individual donors in support of various ministries of the Church. Funds are raised by member churches, direct mailings to individuals, and promotion of ministry opportunities through the Church's website. Contributions receivable represent amounts expected to be collected within less than one year.

NOTES AND ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Notes and accounts receivable consist of discretionary loans made to Covenant entities for building projects with related accrued interest and various receivables from other Covenant entities. All notes and accounts receivable are due on demand. The allowance for notes and accounts receivable is maintained at a level that, in management's judgment, is adequate to absorb probable losses.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment in excess of \$5,000 are capitalized at cost, or if donated, at the fair market value on the date of the gift. Property and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, ranging from 5 to 50 years. Property donated with restrictions regarding its use and contributions of cash to acquire property are reported as restricted support. Absent any donor stipulations, these restrictions expire when the asset is acquired or placed in service, and a reclassification is made from net assets with donor restrictions to net assets without donor restrictions at that time.

INSURANCE PAYABLE

Covenant Benefits Service (CBS), formerly named Bethany Benefit Service, an activity of the Church, administers the voluntary health (including medical, dental, prescription drug and vision), life, and long-term disability insurance plan for the denomination's ministers, missionaries, and staff. CBS collects and remits the benefit premiums on behalf of the participants. Amounts payable represent benefit premiums collected from participants not yet remitted to the insurance carrier at year-end as well as reserves allocated to CBS to cover future liabilities including claims incurred but not received.

ANNUITY AGREEMENTS

The Church has an obligation to make payments under charitable gift annuity agreements. In accordance with various state regulations, the Church maintains separate trust funds as a reserve fund to meet the future payments under these agreements (see Note 13). Annuities payable are determined based upon the annuitants' ages and life expectancies using rates which comply with various state requirements. A discount rate of 7% and the Annuity 2015 Mortality Table were used in the valuation of the annuity agreements. Payouts are made for the life of the annuitants at rates ranging from 4.2% to 21.6% based on existing annuity agreements. The excess of amounts available to fund the annuities over the calculated amount of annuities payable is recorded as net assets with or without donor restrictions if the residual is available to the Church or as a liability if the residual is payable to others or other Covenant entities.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, continued:

DEFERRED INCOME

Deferred income includes monies received in advance for meetings and events, and payments received for subscriptions not yet mailed. In addition, deferred income includes grant funds received that have not yet been expended and are subject to certain conditions.

CLASSES OF NET ASSETS

The consolidated financial statements report amounts separately by classes of net assets as follows:

Net assets without donor restrictions are those currently available at the discretion of the Executive Board for use in the Church's operations, those designated by the Board for specific purposes, and those resources invested in property and equipment.

Net assets with donor restrictions are those contributed with donors' restrictions for specific operating purposes or programs, or those with timing restrictions. They are not currently available for use in the Church's ministries until commitments regarding their use have been fulfilled. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or the purpose restriction is accomplished, net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the consolidated statements of activities as net assets released from restrictions. Net assets with donor restrictions also include those restricted by donors in perpetuity. These assets are included with investments.

EXPENSES

Expenses are recorded as incurred in accordance with the accrual basis of accounting. The costs of providing the various program services and supporting activities have been summarized on a functional basis in Note 14. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the program services and supporting activities benefited. Advertising costs, if any, are expensed as incurred.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Meetings and events income and expenses include the activities of the Church's annual meeting and an annual conference held for Church pastors. Additionally, a women's conference is held every three years. Payments for these events are due prior to the events taking place, and revenue is recognized ratably over the event period, which typically range from 3-5 days. Sales revenue is recognized at the point of sale.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

2. INVESTMENTS AND INVESTMENTS WHOSE USE IS LIMITED:

Investments as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, consist of the following:

	2023	2022
Money Market Funds	\$ 1,174,971	\$ 1,734,138
NCP Demand Accounts	8,740,774	8,640,108
Equity:		
Mutual Funds	15,074,753	15,432,115
Other Assets Illiquid	2,632,491	2,676,739
Total Equity	17,707,244	18,108,854
Fixed Income:		
Mutual Funds	12,875,161	15,208,279
NCP Certificates	3,549,379	4,000,690
Total Fixed Income	16,424,540	19,208,969
Investment in CTC	2,500,792	2,210,194
 Total Investments	 \$ 46,548,321	 \$ 49,902,263

Investments as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, are reported on the consolidated statements of financial position as follows:

	2023	2022
Investments held for board designated purposes	\$ 5,939,308	\$ 5,939,308
Investments	40,609,013	43,962,955
 Total Investments	 \$ 46,548,321	 \$ 49,902,263

Investments, whose use is limited as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, consist of the following:

	2023	2022
Annuities:		
Money Market Funds	\$ 228,725	\$ 213,340
Equity Mutual Funds	2,277,476	2,049,359
Fixed Income:		
Bonds - US Government	2,696,862	2,626,760
Mutual Funds	539,176	319,444
Total Fixed Income	3,236,038	2,946,204
 Total Annuity Investments	 5,742,239	 5,208,903
 Investments Pledged - National Covenant Properties Certificates (see Note 6)	 1,328,514	 1,295,471
	\$ 7,070,753	\$ 6,504,374

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

2. INVESTMENTS AND INVESTMENTS WHOSE USE IS LIMITED, continued:

Investments in NCP Certificates bear interest at rates ranging from 1.75% to 4.5% and mature through 2026. Investments in NCP Demand Accounts bear interest at 1.75% and are redeemable on demand.

Investment in CTC represents the Church's ownership interest in CTC, which is equally owned with related parties North Park University and Covenant Ministries of Benevolence.

Fees paid for investments held and managed by CTC were \$175,556 and \$176,153 for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. Included in investment income is \$242,212 and \$166,356 of interest income earned from sources held at other than fair value for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

At September 30, 2023, approximately \$40 million of the Church's investment portfolio was held and managed by CTC and approximately \$13.6 million was held at NCP. While these assets are subject to investment risk, the Church has not incurred and does not expect to incur any losses related to the solvency of the entities themselves. The Church does not believe it is exposed to any significant risk of loss related to these entities.

3. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AND DISCLOSURES:

The Church uses appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value based on inputs available using the hierarchical disclosure framework which prioritizes and ranks the level of market price observability used in measuring the investments at fair value. Market price observability is impacted by a number of factors, including the type of investment and the characteristics specific to the investment. Investments with readily available active quoted prices or for which fair value can be measured from actively quoted prices generally will have a higher degree of market price observability and a lesser degree of judgment used in measuring fair value.

Investments measured and reported at fair value are classified and disclosed in one of the following

Level I — Quoted prices are available in active markets for identical assets or liabilities as of the reporting date. The type of investments included in Level I are publicly traded securities.

Level II — Pricing inputs are other than quoted prices in active markets, which are either directly or indirectly observable as of the reporting date, and fair value is determined through the use of models or other valuation methodologies.

Level III — Pricing inputs are unobservable and include situations where there is little, if any, market activity for the investment. The inputs into the determination of fair value require significant management judgment. Due to the inherent uncertainty of these estimates, these values may differ materially from the values that would have been used had a ready market for these investments existed.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

3. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AND DISCLOSURES, continued:

In certain cases, the inputs used to measure fair value may fall into different levels of the fair value hierarchy. In such cases, an asset or liability's level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Management's assessment of the significance of a particular input to the fair value measurement in its entirety requires judgement and considers factors specific to the investment.

The following table summarizes the valuation of the Church's financial assets by the above fair value hierarchy levels as of September 30, 2023:

	Total	Level I	Level II	Level III
Investments at fair value:				
Money Market Funds	\$ 1,174,971	\$ 1,174,971	\$ -	\$ -
Equity:				
Mutual Funds	15,074,753	15,074,753	-	-
Other Assets Illiquid	2,632,491	-	-	2,632,491
Fixed Income Mutual Funds	12,875,161	12,875,161	-	-
Total investments at fair value	31,757,376	29,124,885	-	2,632,491
Investments carried at cost:				
NCP Demand Accounts	8,740,774			
NCP Certificates	3,549,379			
	12,290,153			
Investment in CTC	2,500,792			
 Total Investments	 \$ 46,548,321	 \$ 29,124,885	 \$ -	 \$ 2,632,491
 Investments whose use is limited at fair value:				
Money Market Funds	\$ 228,725	\$ 228,725	\$ -	\$ -
Equity Mutual Funds	2,277,476	2,277,476	-	-
Fixed Income:				
Bonds - US Government	2,696,862	-	2,696,862	-
Mutual Funds	539,176	539,176	-	-
Total investments whose use is limited at fair value	5,742,239	3,045,377	2,696,862	-
Investments whose use is limited at cost:				
NCP Certificates	1,328,514			
 Total investments whose use is limited	 \$ 7,070,753	 \$ 3,045,377	 \$ 2,696,862	 \$ -

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

3. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AND DISCLOSURES, continued:

The following table summarizes the valuation of the Church's financial assets by the above fair value hierarchy levels as of September 30, 2022:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level I</u>	<u>Level II</u>	<u>Level III</u>
Investments at fair value:				
Money Market Funds	\$ 1,734,138	\$ 1,734,138	\$ -	\$ -
Equity:				
Mutual Funds	15,432,115	15,432,115	-	-
Other Assets Illiquid	2,676,739	-	-	2,676,739
Fixed Income Mutual Funds	15,208,279	15,208,279	-	-
Total investments at fair value	<u>35,051,271</u>	<u>32,374,532</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,676,739</u>
Investments carried at cost:				
NCP Demand Accounts	8,640,108			
NCP Certificates	4,000,690			
	<u>12,640,798</u>			
Investment in CTC	<u>2,210,194</u>			
 Total Investments	 <u>\$ 49,902,263</u>	 <u>\$ 32,374,532</u>	 <u>\$ -</u>	 <u>\$ 2,676,739</u>
 Investments whose use is limited at fair value:				
Money Market Funds	\$ 213,340	\$ 213,340	\$ -	\$ -
Equity Mutual Funds	2,049,359	2,049,359	-	-
Fixed Income:				
Bonds - US Government	2,626,760	-	2,626,760	-
Mutual Funds	319,444	319,444	-	-
Total investments whose use is limited at fair value	<u>5,208,903</u>	<u>2,582,143</u>	<u>2,626,760</u>	<u>-</u>
Investments whose use is limited at cost:				
NCP Certificates	<u>1,295,471</u>			
 Total investments whose use is limited	 <u>\$ 6,504,374</u>	 <u>\$ 2,582,143</u>	 <u>\$ 2,626,760</u>	 <u>\$ -</u>

Investments in NCP Demand Accounts, NCP Certificates, and the investment in the CTC have been excluded from the fair value hierarchy as they are carried at cost, which approximates fair value.

Other assets illiquid consist of limited liability partnerships and are carried at fair value, as determined by the funds' general partners based on information provided by the funds' underlying professional managers. The funds do not allow for withdrawals of investments but will make distributions of its distributable cash flows to its limited partners over the estimated ten year life of the fund. The Church has an outstanding capital commitment of \$87,500 as of both September 30, 2023 and 2022. The Church made no additional purchases of its limited partnership investments during either of the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

4. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT:

Property and equipment at September 30, 2023 and 2022, consist of the following:

	September 30,	
	2023	2022
Administrative office:		
Land	\$ 3,098,419	\$ 3,098,419
Building and improvements	8,061,588	8,013,581
Furniture, fixtures, equipment and vehicles	874,403	968,443
IT software and development	228,643	-
	12,263,053	12,080,443
Less accumulated depreciation	(2,934,591)	(2,879,038)
	\$ 9,328,462	\$ 9,201,405

5. LINES OF CREDIT AND NOTES PAYABLE:

The Church has a line of credit with NCP. As of September 30, 2023 and 2022, the available line of credit was \$2,500,000. At September 30, 2023 and 2022, the outstanding balance was \$0 and \$0, respectively. The interest rate is set at the prime rate, but in no event less than 6.25% per annum. At September 30, 2023 and 2022, the interest rate was 8.5% and 6.25%, respectively. This line of credit is payable on demand with sixty days written notice.

The Church also has a mortgage note payable with NCP on the building it now owns and occupies. This loan was refinanced in May 2019 at a total loan amount of \$2,680,000. As of September 30, 2023 and 2022, the outstanding balance on the mortgage note payable was \$2,113,636 and \$2,254,263, respectively. The initial interest rate was 4.75%. The interest rate was adjusted on May 1, 2020 and will be adjusted every twelve months thereafter. At both September 30, 2023 and 2022, the interest rate was 3.875%. Under the refinanced loan terms, principal and interest is paid monthly in arrears in installments of \$18,792, based on the most recent interest rate adjustment. All unpaid principal and interest is due and payable on May 1, 2032. The note is secured with real estate.

During the year ended September 30, 2021, the Church acquired real estate located in Dolton, Illinois by assuming two related mortgage notes payable with NCP totaling \$1,298,049. One mortgage note payable in the amount of \$551,735 was subsequently paid off during the year ended September 30, 2021. The second mortgage note payable in the amount of \$744,990 was paid off during the year ended September 30, 2023.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

5. LINES OF CREDIT AND NOTES PAYABLE, continued:

During the year ended January 31, 2018, the Church started a program called CovScholars. The Church obtained a loan with NCP to be able to offer eligible Covenant Scholars interest free loans. The original principal amount for the ECC is not to exceed \$1,000,000. Interest, charged at prime rate, but no less than 6.25%, is added to the principal of the loan. This loan was paid off in full during the year ended September 30, 2023.

During the year ended January 31, 2019, the Church established a \$1,000,000 line of credit with NCP in support of pastoral grantmaking. The interest rate was set at the prime rate, but in no event less than 6.25% per annum. At September 30, 2023 and 2022, the interest rate was 8.5% and 6.25%, respectively. This line of credit is payable on demand with sixty days written notice. The outstanding balance on the line of credit is \$0 and \$420,873, as of September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively, and is secured by invested funds from proceeds of a grant from the Lilly Foundation.

Principal payments on lines of credit and notes payable are due as follows for the year ending September 30:

2024	\$	146,179
2025		151,945
2026		157,938
2027		164,168
2028		170,644
Thereafter		<u>1,322,762</u>
		<u>\$ 2,113,636</u>

Interest expense for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, was \$147,813 and \$135,436, respectively.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

6. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES:

GUARANTOR OF DEBT

The Church is liable as joint guarantor, with the regional conferences, of various mortgage loans of local Covenant churches. As of September 30, 2023, the outstanding principal balance on these loans totaled \$61,175,356. These loans are secured by the related properties. The Church has pledged investments totaling \$1,328,514 as security for these loans. The mortgage loans have maturity dates ranging from on demand through the year 2050.

COVENANT AGREEMENTS

The Church participates in sponsoring various "Covenant Agreements" with regional church conferences. These intentions to give are not recorded in the consolidated financial statements because they only constitute expressions of intent to give where all discretion to transfer the resources rests with the Church. The Covenant Agreements provide support for pastor salaries and benefits at various member churches. While there are intentions through fiscal year 2029, there are no commitments beyond fiscal year 2027. The Church's planned expenditures under existing Covenant Agreements are as follows for the year ending September 30:

2024	\$	205,537
2025		142,235
2026		126,975
2027		125,225
2028		125,000
2029		<u>125,000</u>
	\$	<u><u>849,972</u></u>

7. BENEFICIAL INTEREST OF GIFT INSTRUMENTS:

A source of funds to the Church is in the form of bequests from deceased church members and other parties. The Covenant Estate Planning Services, an affiliate of the Church, maintains information as to the estimated values of the Church's share of trusts and other estate planning mechanisms used by donors. Estimates of value as to the underlying assets of the trusts or other arrangements rely on quoted market prices in the case of stocks and other equity and traded debt securities, appraisal value (where available) for real property, and other reasonable estimates made by the trustees for specific assets.

Amounts related to irrevocable trusts for which the Church is named as beneficiary are reflected in the consolidated statements of financial position as Interest in Irrevocable Trusts. Trusts which name the Church as beneficiary, but which allow the beneficiary to be changed to a different Church-related entity at the discretion of the grantor, are not considered irrevocable for accounting purposes and, accordingly, have not been recorded in the consolidated financial statements. The Interest in Irrevocable Trusts becomes available to the Church upon death of the grantor. During the year ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, the Church was not the beneficiary of any new irrevocable trusts.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

8. FEES AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS:

The Church charges fees for administrative and management services provided to other Covenant institutions and funds of the Church. Fees are assessed monthly, and the Church recognizes revenue as the services are performed. Fees charged to related Covenant institutions and funds were \$3,957,343 and \$3,944,599 for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. In addition, the Church recorded \$212,812 and \$359,994 for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively, as reimbursement of expenses incurred by the Church, which are reflected as a reduction of general administration expenditures in the consolidated statements of activities.

9. PENSION TRUST FUND:

The Church participates in one multiemployer plan. The risks of participating in a multiemployer plan differs from single-employer plans in the following aspects:

- a) Assets contributed to the multiemployer plan by one employer may be used to provide benefits to employees of other participating employers.
- b) If a participating employer stops contributing to the plan, the unfunded obligations of the plan may be borne by the remaining participating employer.
- c) If the organization chooses to stop participating in the multiemployer plan, it may be required to pay to the plan an amount based on the underfunded status of the plan, referred to as a withdrawal liability.

All full-time ministers participate in the Covenant Pension Plan. This multiemployer plan, administered by the Board of Pensions and Benefits of the Evangelical Covenant Church, is noncontributory and provides defined benefits based on years of service and remuneration. Covenant ordained or licensed ministers serving full time in the denomination, in one of its conferences or in Covenant churches are required to participate in the Covenant Pension Plan. Full-time missionaries of the Covenant are also required to participate. The contribution rate is 12.5% of the annual compensation, including housing allowances, of participating personnel. Participants with five years of service are entitled to pension benefits upon retirement. Pension benefits are paid monthly and are based on length of service and compensation. Pension expense, representing the Church's required contribution to the Covenant Pension Plan, was \$398,666 and \$452,480 for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. The contributions made by the Church represented approximately 7% of the total contributions made to the Covenant Pension Plan in both 2023 and 2022. To the extent the Covenant Pension Plan is underfunded, future contributions to the Plan may increase.

The Covenant Pension Plan is not an Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) Plan and is not required to file Form 5500. The Covenant Pension Plan's fiscal year is January 1 to December 31.

Total contributions from all employers to the Plan for the year ended December 31, 2022, are as follows:

<u>Pension Fund</u>	<u>FEIN</u>	<u>2022</u>
Covenant Pension Plan	36-3065447	\$ 5,886,924

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

9. PENSION TRUST FUND, continued:

As of December 31, 2022, the Covenant Pension Plan's total net assets available for benefits were \$263,303,089 and the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was \$261,858,092. As of December 31, 2022, the Plan was 100% funded, based on the Church Plan assumptions utilized by management. The December 31, 2022, actuarial report was the most currently available report as of the audit report date.

Lay employees of the Church hired before May 2013 participate in The Evangelical Covenant Church Lay Pension Plan (the Lay Plan). This multiemployer plan, administered by the Church, is noncontributory and provides defined benefits based on years of service and remuneration near retirement. This Lay Plan was previously a part of The Evangelical Covenant Church Retirement Plan (the Plan) and was administered by the Board of Benevolence of the Evangelical Covenant Church. The Lay Plan began operations on January 1, 2014.

Eligible employees are all lay employees of the Church and its related entities. Participants with five years of service are entitled to pension benefits upon retirement. Retirement benefits are paid to pensioners or beneficiaries in various forms of joint and survivor annuities, including a lump-sum payment option if the earned benefit is less than \$10,000. Pension expense, representing the Church's required contribution to the Lay Plan, was \$0 and \$13,991 for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. The contributions made by the Church represented approximately 0% and 15% of the total contributions made to the Lay Plan in 2023 and 2022, respectively. To the extent the Lay Plan is underfunded, future contributions to the Lay Plan may increase. Effective December 31, 2021, the Lay Plan was frozen.

The Lay Plan is a Church plan (not an ERISA Plan) and is not required to file Form 5500. The Plan's fiscal year is from January 1 to December 31.

Total contributions from all employers to the Lay Plan for the year ended December 31, 2021, are as follows:

<u>Pension Fund</u>	<u>FEIN</u>	<u>2021</u>
Evangelical Covenant Church Lay Pension Plan	46-4271385	\$ 93,233

As of December 31, 2022, the Lay Plan's total net assets available for benefits were \$10,749,856. As of December 31, 2021, the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was \$10,376,206. As of December 31, 2021 and 2022, the Plan was 100% funded, based on the Church Plan assumptions utilized by management. The December 31, 2021, actuarial report was the most currently available report as of the audit report date.

Full-time employees hired in May 2013 or thereafter are covered under a 403(b) contributory plan. The Church contributed \$516,073 and \$489,425 to the 403(b) contributory plan in the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. As the 403(b) plan covers employees of other institutions, asset and benefit information applicable to the Church is not available.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

10. NET ASSETS:

Net assets at September 30, 2023 and 2022, consist of the following:

Net assets without donor restrictions:

Undesignated	\$ 17,371,067	\$ 16,261,669
Board designated for Financial Relief Initiative program	6,215,650	6,215,650
	23,586,717	22,477,319

Net assets with donor restrictions:

Subject to expenditure for specified purpose:

Kingdom Builders Frontier Friends	2,960	-
Friends of World Mission	557,487	612,869
CovKids	338,315	290,732
Serve Globally	759,983	783,597
Covenant World Relief	1,017,607	1,011,836
Start & Strengthen Churches	135,619	395,857
Short-Term Missionaries	1,720,053	1,885,396
Make & Deepen Disciples	383,654	496,915
Sustaining Pastoral Excellence	223,461	262,565
Love Mercy Do Justice	762,400	769,375
CovEnterprises	60,081	87,892
Annuity agreements	176,024	146,144
Other	606,917	185,704
	6,744,561	6,928,882

Subject to the passage of time:

Irrevocable trusts	629,388	583,734
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Subject to the Church's spending policy and appropriations:

Term endowments:

Start & Strengthen Churches	10,503,926	10,009,873
Covenant World Relief	2,126,457	2,299,746
Other	348,137	301,977
Endowment funds restricted in perpetuity	2,264,067	2,133,658
	15,242,587	14,745,254

Total net assets with donor restrictions

22,616,536	22,257,870
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Total net assets

\$ 46,203,253	\$ 44,735,189
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The Church's governing board, through specific action, has created self-imposed limits on net assets without donor restrictions. The board has set aside \$6,215,650 for its Financial Relief Initiative program as of both September 30, 2023 and 2022. These net assets can be drawn upon if the board approves such action.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

11. ENDOWMENT FUNDS:

The Church's endowment net assets consist of separate investment accounts established for a variety of purposes. As required by GAAP, net assets associated with endowment funds are classified and reported based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions. Most of the Church's endowment funds required to be held in perpetuity are in the Covenant Endowment Trust (CET). CET is managed by the CTC as Trustee. It was created as a supporting organization to provide for the orderly investment and management of gifts with a permanent donor restriction to be consistent with the donor's charitable purposes and objectives for the benefit of the Church, all its churches and all organizations affiliated with it. While it contains gifts for the Church, the majority of the fund is for the benefit of other Covenant entities. The Church's endowment net assets also include invested funds held under term agreements for Start & Strengthen Churches and Covenant World Relief.

The Church has interpreted the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift, as of the gift date of the donor funds with a permanent restriction absent explicit donor stipulations to the contrary. As a result of this interpretation, the Church classifies as net assets restricted in perpetuity (a) the original value of gifts, (b) the original value of subsequent gifts, and (c) accumulations made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument at the time the accumulation is added to the fund. The remaining portion of the fund with donor restrictions that is not classified in net assets restricted in perpetuity is classified as net assets restricted by purpose or time until those amounts are appropriated for expenditure by the Church in a manner consistent with the standard of prudence prescribed by UPMIFA.

In accordance with UPMIFA, the organization considers the following factors in making a determination to appropriate or accumulate donor-restricted funds:

- 1 The duration and preservation of the fund.
- 2 The purposes of the organization and the donor-restricted fund.
- 3 General economic conditions.
- 4 The possible effect of inflation and deflation.
- 5 The expected total return from income and appreciation of investments.
- 6 Other resources of the organization.
- 7 The investment policies of the organization.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

11. ENDOWMENT FUNDS, continued:

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended September 30, 2023:

	With Donor Restrictions			Total Funds
	Perpetual Endowments	Term Endowments	Total With Donor Restrictions	
Endowment net assets, beginning of year	\$ 2,133,658	\$ 12,611,596	\$ 14,745,254	\$ 14,745,254
Investment return, net	12,304	822,937	835,241	835,241
Contributions	118,105	1,452,341	1,570,446	1,570,446
Amounts appropriated for expenditures	-	(1,908,354)	(1,908,354)	(1,908,354)
	130,409	366,924	497,333	497,333
Endowment net assets, end of year	\$ 2,264,067	\$ 12,978,520	\$ 15,242,587	\$ 15,242,587

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended September 30, 2022:

	With Donor Restrictions			Total Funds
	Perpetual Endowments	Term Endowments	Total With Donor Restrictions	
Endowment net assets, beginning of year	\$ 2,480,791	\$ 14,068,372	\$ 16,549,163	\$ 16,549,163
Investment (loss) return, net	(347,133)	(1,324,160)	(1,671,293)	(1,671,293)
Contributions	-	1,009,740	1,009,740	1,009,740
Amounts appropriated for expenditures	-	(1,142,356)	(1,142,356)	(1,142,356)
	(347,133)	(1,456,776)	(1,803,909)	(1,803,909)
Endowment net assets, end of year	\$ 2,133,658	\$ 12,611,596	\$ 14,745,254	\$ 14,745,254

Funds with Deficiencies: From time to time, the fair value of assets associated with individual donor restricted endowment funds may fall below the level that the donor or UPMIFA requires the Church to retain as a fund of perpetual duration. There were no such deficiencies as of September 30, 2023 and 2022.

Return Objectives and Risk Parameters: The Church has adopted investment and spending policies for endowment assets that attempt to provide a predictable stream of funding to programs while seeking to maintain the purchasing power of the assets. Endowment net assets include those assets of donor-restricted funds that the Church must hold in perpetuity and those assets that the Church must hold for donor-specified periods or purposes along with related investment earnings.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

11. ENDOWMENT FUNDS, continued:

Strategies Employed for Achieving Objectives: To satisfy its long-term rate-of-return objectives, the Church relies on a total return strategy in which investment returns are achieved through both capital appreciation (realized and unrealized) and current yield (interest and dividends).

Spending Policy: Distributions are made from CET at the rate of 5% annually with payments being made quarterly. The distribution is made first from income and to the extent that income is insufficient, from principal.

12. SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT BENEFITS:

Based on resolutions adopted by the Executive Board of the Church, the Church provides supplemental retirement benefit payments to several former employees. The Church has accrued a liability of \$515,342 and \$625,828 at September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively, to fund these payments. The liability is estimated based on life expectancy of former employees and a discount rate of 7% at September 30, 2023 and 2022. During the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, the supplemental retirement benefit payments were \$98,072 and \$105,329, respectively.

13. ANNUITY AGREEMENTS:

The Church has an obligation to make payments under charitable gift annuity agreements. In accordance with various state regulations, the Church maintains separate trust funds as a reserve to meet the future payments under these agreements.

Annuity agreement information at September 30, 2023 and 2022, is as follows:

Assets - investments designated for annuity agreements	<u>\$ 5,742,239</u>	<u>\$ 5,208,903</u>
Liabilities and net assets:		
Liabilities:		
Annuities payable	\$ 715,603	\$ 699,286
Due to other Covenant entities	4,832,068	4,482,097
Total liabilities	<u>5,547,671</u>	<u>5,181,383</u>
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	48,424	(118,624)
With donor restrictions for annuity agreements	146,144	146,144
Total net assets	<u>194,568</u>	<u>27,520</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 5,742,239</u>	<u>\$ 5,208,903</u>

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

14. FUNCTIONAL ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES:

The costs of providing the various program services and supporting activities have been summarized below on a functional basis. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the program services and supporting activities for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022. The consolidated financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to more than one program or supporting function. Therefore, these expenses require allocation on a reasonable basis that is consistently applied. The expenses that are allocated include salaries and benefits, travel, conferences and meetings, professional fees, board expense, and certain office expenses, which are allocated on the basis of estimates of time and effort, as well as certain occupancy costs, which are allocated on a square footage basis.

Year Ended September 30, 2023

	Program Services										Supporting Activities			Total Expenses
	Start & Strengthen Churches	Make & Deepen Disciples	Develop Leaders	Love Mercy		Serve Globally	General Mission		Total	Communications	Management & General	Fundraising	Total	
				Do Justice	Do Mercy		Mission	General						
Support to global and local partners	\$ 2,988,919	\$ 285,955	\$ 2,015,600	\$ 260,404	\$ 4,756,964	\$ 87,800	\$ 10,395,642	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,395,642	
Salaries and benefits	762,529	322,920	870,503	484,807	4,385,151	-	6,825,910	1,019,145	2,718,285	687,961	4,425,391	-	11,251,301	
Travel	247,268	29,426	115,126	66,674	423,147	-	881,641	41,695	130,736	112,684	285,115	-	1,166,756	
Office and occupancy	157,274	88,725	117,946	67,550	272,448	-	703,943	242,851	524,218	128,846	895,915	-	1,599,858	
Publications, printing and publicity	2,873	2,187	6,831	8,570	122,943	-	143,404	-	82,164	67,777	149,941	-	293,345	
Conferences and meetings	-	-	72,004	-	-	-	72,004	-	397,744	-	397,744	-	469,748	
Professional fees	-	-	8,712	-	868	-	9,580	2,235	216,010	-	218,245	-	227,825	
Board expense	4,669	4,090	22,606	3,551	20,302	-	55,218	3,319	137,343	-	140,662	-	195,880	
Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	147,813	-	147,813	-	147,813	
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	161,238	-	161,238	-	161,238	
Total Expenses	\$ 4,163,532	\$ 733,303	\$ 3,229,328	\$ 891,556	\$ 9,981,823	\$ 87,800	\$ 19,087,342	\$ 1,309,245	\$ 4,515,551	\$ 997,268	\$ 6,822,064	\$ 25,909,406		

Year Ended September 30, 2022

	Program Services										Supporting Activities			Total Expenses
	Start & Strengthen Churches	Make & Deepen Disciples	Develop Leaders	Love Mercy		Serve Globally	General Mission		Total	Communications	Management & General	Fundraising	Total	
				Do Justice	Do Mercy		Mission	General						
Support to global and local partners	\$ 2,519,172	\$ 118,951	\$ 1,913,509	\$ 187,469	\$ 4,571,704	\$ 114,401	\$ 9,425,206	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,425,206	
Salaries and benefits	700,467	433,899	1,021,376	506,281	4,613,828	-	7,275,851	1,165,923	3,042,753	643,967	4,852,643	-	12,128,494	
Travel	166,587	34,218	85,979	42,795	389,675	-	719,254	35,983	218,732	85,952	340,667	-	1,059,921	
Office and occupancy	429,424	97,010	166,733	40,319	266,867	-	1,000,353	237,733	536,672	158,707	933,112	-	1,933,465	
Publications, printing and publicity	10,135	6,554	9,579	2,902	151,919	-	181,089	-	142,888	79,113	222,001	-	403,090	
Conferences and meetings	-	-	643	-	-	-	643	-	413,884	560	414,444	-	415,087	
Professional fees	-	-	7,886	-	7,886	-	7,886	3,018	172,101	2,970	178,089	-	185,975	
Board expense	12,332	12,278	85,886	15,594	32,551	-	158,641	12,027	252,489	-	264,516	-	423,157	
Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135,436	-	135,436	-	135,436	
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	166,704	-	166,704	-	166,704	
Total Expenses	\$ 3,838,117	\$ 702,910	\$ 3,283,705	\$ 795,360	\$ 10,034,430	\$ 114,401	\$ 18,768,923	\$ 1,454,684	\$ 5,081,659	\$ 971,269	\$ 7,507,612	\$ 26,276,535		

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

15. REAL ESTATE HELD FOR SALE:

Real estate held for sale at September 30, 2022, consisted of property located in Dolton, Illinois. During the year ended September 30, 2023, pursuant to an agreement with NCP and New Zion Christian Fellowship Church, the Church property was sold and the two underlying loans with NCP were paid off.

16. TRANSACTIONS WITH AFFILIATED ENTITIES:

In addition to the transactions with affiliated entities noted elsewhere, the following were also noted:

The Church gifted approximately \$1,044,000 and \$1,044,000 to an affiliated organization during the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively. The Church also received approximately \$255,000 from this affiliated organization for administrative and management services provided during both the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022.

The Church received \$1,512,000 from an affiliated organization for administrative and management services provided during both the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022.

The Church received approximately \$548,000 and \$535,000 from an affiliated organization for administrative and management services provided during the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

The Church received approximately \$60,000 and \$68,000 from an affiliated organization for administrative and management services provided during the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

17. EMPLOYEE RETENTION CREDIT:

The Church claimed a tax credit of \$1,629,655, through the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) program offered through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The credit is claimed in relation to qualified wages owed for the year ended September, 2021. The full amount of the credit was received and recognized as grant revenue on the consolidated statements of activities in the year ended September 30, 2023.

Laws and regulations concerning government programs, including the ERC, established by the CARES Act are complex and subject to varying interpretation. Claims made under the CARES Act may also be subject to retroactive audit and review. There can be no assurance that regulatory authorities will not challenge the Church's claim to the ERC, and it is not possible to determine the impact (if any) this would have upon the Church.

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

September 30, 2023 and 2022

18. LIQUIDITY AND FUNDS AVAILABLE:

As part of the Church's liquidity management, it invests cash in excess of daily requirement in investments. There is an established fund designated by management with the objective of setting funds aside to be drawn upon in the event of financial distress or an immediate liquidity need resulting from events outside of the typical life cycle of converting financial assets to cash or settling financial liabilities. In the event of an unanticipated liquidity need, the Church could also draw upon its \$2,500,000 operating line of credit (as further discussed in Note 5), of which \$0 and \$0 was outstanding at September 30, 2023 and 2022, respectively.

The following reflects the Church's financial assets as of the balance sheet date, including amounts not available within one year of the balance sheet date. Amounts not available include amounts illiquid or not convertible to cash within one year, perpetual and term endowments and accumulated earnings subject to appropriation beyond one year, contractual or donor-imposed restrictions, or because the board has set aside funds for specific projects. These board designations could be drawn upon if the board approves that action.

	September 30,	
	2023	2022
Financial assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,406,359	\$ 1,369,643
Assets held for board designated purposes:		
Cash and cash equivalents	276,342	276,342
Investments	5,939,308	5,939,308
Notes and accounts receivable	3,121,380	4,954,415
Investments	40,609,013	43,962,955
Investments whose use is limited	7,070,753	6,504,374
	59,423,155	63,007,037
Less those unavailable for general expenditures within one year, due to:		
Contractual or donor-imposed restrictions:		
Board designated for Financial Relief Initiative program	(6,215,650)	(6,215,650)
Restricted by donor with time or purpose restrictions	(6,744,561)	(6,928,882)
Investments held in annuities	(5,742,239)	(5,208,903)
Investments pledged	(1,328,514)	(1,295,471)
Endowment funds restricted in perpetuity	(2,264,067)	(2,133,658)
Investments not convertible to cash within next 12 months	(5,133,283)	(4,886,933)
Term endowment funds, primarily for long-term investing	(12,978,520)	(12,611,596)
	\$ 19,016,321	\$ 23,725,944

19. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS:

Subsequent events have been evaluated through April 23, 2024, which represents the date the consolidated financial statements were available to be issued. Subsequent events after that date have not been evaluated.

SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT
ON SUPPLEMENTARY DATA**

To the Executive Board of
The Evangelical Covenant Church
Chicago, Illinois

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of The Evangelical Covenant Church as of and for the years ended September 30, 2023 and 2022, and our report thereon dated April 23, 2024, which expresses an unmodified opinion on those consolidated financial statements, appears on page 1. Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The consolidating statements of financial position on page 27 is presented for purposes of additional analysis of the consolidated financial statements rather than to present the financial position of the individual organizations, and it is not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or to the consolidated financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the consolidated financial statements as a whole.

Capin Crouse LLP

Naperville, Illinois
April 23, 2024

THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

Consolidating Statements of Financial Position

Year Ended September 30,

	2023				2022			
	The Evangelical Covenant Church Inc.	CovScholars, LLC	Eliminations	Consolidated Totals	The Evangelical Covenant Church Inc.	CovScholars, LLC	Eliminations	Consolidated Totals
ASSETS:								
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,406,359	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,406,359	\$ 1,369,643	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,369,643
Assets held for board designated purposes:								
Cash and cash equivalents	276,342	-	-	276,342	276,342	-	-	276,342
Investments	5,939,308	-	-	5,939,308	5,939,308	-	-	5,939,308
Prepaid expenses and other assets	130,917	-	-	130,917	109,812	-	-	109,812
Notes and accounts receivable:								
Churches and other affiliates, net	1,353,048	-	-	1,353,048	1,411,363	-	-	1,411,363
Other Covenant entities	1,411,374	-	-	1,411,374	3,096,826	-	-	3,096,826
Other	356,958	-	-	356,958	446,226	-	-	446,226
Real estate held for sale	-	-	-	-	815,388	-	-	815,388
Investments	40,609,013	-	-	40,609,013	43,962,955	-	-	43,962,955
Investments whose use is limited:								
Annuities	5,742,239	-	-	5,742,239	5,208,903	-	-	5,208,903
Investments pledged	1,328,514	-	-	1,328,514	1,295,471	-	-	1,295,471
Property and equipment, net	9,328,462	-	-	9,328,462	9,201,405	-	-	9,201,405
Interest in irrevocable trusts	629,386	-	-	629,386	583,733	-	-	583,733
Total Assets	\$ 69,511,920	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 69,511,920	\$ 73,717,375	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 73,717,375
LIABILITIES:								
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 2,175,584	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,175,584	\$ 2,205,401	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,205,401
Deferred income	735,142	-	-	735,142	1,375,576	-	-	1,375,576
Insurance payable	12,221,292	-	-	12,221,292	15,973,272	-	-	15,973,272
Lines of credit and notes payable	2,113,636	-	-	2,113,636	3,420,126	200,600	-	3,620,726
Supplemental retirement benefits payable	515,342	-	-	515,342	625,828	-	-	625,828
Annuities:								
Annuities payable	715,603	-	-	715,603	699,286	-	-	699,286
Due to other Covenant entities	4,832,068	-	-	4,832,068	4,482,097	-	-	4,482,097
Total Liabilities	\$ 23,308,667	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,308,667	\$ 28,781,586	\$ 200,600	\$ -	\$ 28,982,186
NET ASSETS:								
Without donor restrictions	23,586,717	-	-	23,586,717	22,677,919	(200,600)	-	22,477,319
With donor restrictions	22,616,536	-	-	22,616,536	22,257,870	-	-	22,257,870
Total Net Assets	\$ 46,203,253	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,203,253	\$ 44,935,789	\$ (200,600)	\$ -	\$ 44,735,189
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 69,511,920	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 69,511,920	\$ 73,717,375	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 73,717,375

See notes to consolidated financial statements



Presentation and Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025 Mission and Ministry Budget

	ACTUAL FY 2023	BUDGET FY2024	BUDGET FY2025	25B vs 23A %	25B vs 24B %
BASE MISSION PROVISION					
Church and Individual Giving	\$ 9,741,284	\$ 10,042,591	\$ 10,100,000	3.68%	0.57%
Affiliate Fees	4,177,951	4,426,974	4,567,590	9.33%	3.18%
Annual Bequest Draws	1,874,233	1,855,793	1,561,695	-16.68%	-15.85%
Combined Investment Income	0	0	1,100,000	100.00%	100.00%
Living Legacy	363,208	975,411	760,000	109.25%	-22.08%
Rent and Other Income	238,584	997,603	632,073	164.93%	-36.64%
Total Income	\$ 16,395,260	\$ 18,298,372	\$ 18,721,358	14.19%	2.31%
BASE MISSION INVESTMENT					
Serve Clergy	\$ 1,043,511	\$ 1,058,583	\$ 1,285,542	23.19%	21.44%
Serve Locally	4,204,666	4,451,135	4,167,145	-0.89%	-6.38%
Serve Globally	5,071,496	5,256,998	5,575,507	9.94%	6.06%
President's Office	1,024,989	772,070	1,016,473	-0.83%	31.66%
Finance	1,054,877	1,129,724	1,166,493	10.58%	3.25%
Advancement	1,001,322	1,142,392	1,133,896	13.24%	-0.74%
Operations	1,844,443	1,633,458	1,830,760	-0.74%	12.08%
Marketing & Communications	1,284,044	1,505,422	1,495,542	16.47%	-0.66%
North Park University Support	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	0.00%	0.00%
CHET Support	0	0	50,000	100.00%	100.00%
Other	0	348,590	0	0.00%	-100.00%
Total Base Mission Investment	\$ 17,529,346	\$ 18,298,372	\$ 18,721,358	6.80%	2.31%
PRELIMINARY NET FOR YEAR	\$ (1,134,086)	\$ 0	\$ 0	100.00%	0.00%
ERC FUNDS	1,629,655	0	0	-100.00%	0.00%
FINAL NET	\$ 495,569	\$ 0	\$ 0	-100.00%	0.00%



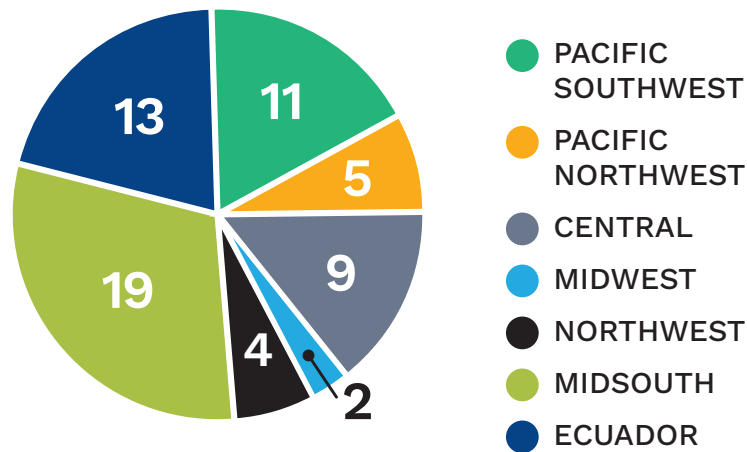
Report from Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos

Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos (CHET) proudly celebrated the graduation of 115 students in December, reflecting the diverse academic programs we offer as well as our commitment to serve the Covenant.

We were fortunate to receive a grant from the Kroner Foundation, enabling us to implement a new teaching and learning platform. Additionally, the acquisition of a donor management software system enhances our ability to provide donors with a more seamless giving experience.

The CHET Board of Directors is deeply grateful for the generous gift from the Evangelical Covenant Church in December, which is a testament to our shared commitment to advancing the mission of God by raising up Latino(a) leaders to serve in churches and communities across the United States and beyond. As we press forward faithfully, we are poised to address our most pressing needs, including advancement, recruitment and retention, and curriculum development.

DECEMBER 2023 CHET GRADUATES BY CONFERENCE:





Covenant Trust

The year 2023 saw Covenant Trust exhibit strength in our mission to help our clients achieve their financial and charitable purposes. Our investment performance was excellent, and our financial performance was solid. **We facilitated \$7.24 million in giving to Covenant causes through current and legacy gifts.**

The year also affirmed the Wall Street adage that the stock market “climbs a wall of worry.” US stocks returned better than 25% despite a continuous onslaught of negative headlines. The reality is that successful investing rarely feels “good” on a day-to-day basis. **The only thing we can say for certain about the future is that it is uncertain.**



Fortunately, effective financial planning doesn’t require clairvoyance. It does involve navigating uncertainty via the important certainties available to us.

Some of those certainties are:

- 1. A dedicated savings plan is the bedrock of all financial planning.** Hope is not a savings strategy. We cannot simply hope that savings will “fall out” after we pay for everything else. We must commit a portion of our budget to savings. In our experience, this is where most financial plans go astray.
- 2. We grow and protect our savings by putting it at risk.** Over time, inflation erodes our purchasing power. For example, a 4% inflation rate makes \$1 today worth \$0.66 in ten years. “Safe” investments, such as money market funds, do not provide a rate of return in excess of inflation (and they are inherently exposed to reinvestment risk). To grow and protect our savings, we must put it at greater risk. Over longer time periods, the higher the expected risk of an investment, the higher the expected return. Since 1928, the return of the US stock market has been three times the return of cash-equivalents and two times that of bonds.
- 3. The risk inherent in a well-diversified stock portfolio declines the longer it is held.** It is a truism that the stock market is volatile. Although the long-term return of US stocks is multiples of what

cash equivalents and bonds have returned, that includes many periods when the market declined more than 40%! But volatility diminishes over longer measurement periods. In the past 98 years, the US stock market's performance has been positive over 87% of five-year measurement periods and 100% of 15-year measurement periods.

4. Minimizing taxes and fees is crucial. The late John C. Bogle, founder of the Vanguard Group, said, "You get what you don't pay for." Taxes and fees, if not efficiently managed, will significantly degrade investment returns. Covenant Trust is an enthusiastic fan of index funds due to their low fees and low turnover—and they outperform most active investment managers over time. Moreover, we assist our clients with tax strategies and tax planning, and we encourage all investors to take full advantage of any tax-deferred savings available to them.

Ultimately, your personal spending plan, investment plan, retirement plan, and giving plan must reflect your unique financial goals and charitable purposes. At Covenant Trust, we help our clients to develop a plan aimed at achieving their financial and charitable calling. We work to ensure that their financial strategies reflect and protect those things most dear to them.

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Through a deep understanding of the challenges and changes of ministry, NCP is a reliable partner well beyond the date an investment is made or a loan is signed. At NCP your funds are more than an investments, they're building for the future. You are more than an investor, you're a ministry partner and an integral piece of our ministry puzzle across the United States.



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our experts are available to provide coaching to Covenant churches on all aspects of facilities from helping a church plant find their first facility, to helping an established church with a loan for renovation, and everything in between.

REAL ESTATE
COACHING



TRAINING
FOR PASTORS
AND LAY
LEADERS

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WAYS WE CAN HELP



Negotiating a lease or purchase, identifying land & facility options, reviewing finances & providing recommendations, selling or leasing current facility, preparing an NCP loan application, capital fundraising resource, and undercover visits.



FINANCIAL & REAL ESTATE TRAINING

As we partner together in ministry, we are very excited to offer this **financial and real estate training** as another tool and resource for you and your team as you continue to make a difference in your local community and Conference.

These trainings are designed for pastors, staff, treasurers and church leadership.

Upcoming Events:

October 5, 2024

Central Conference, Covenant Offices

October 26, 2024

Northwest Conference, Location TBD

November 9, 2024

East Coast Conference

Great Road Covenant Church, Acton, MA

November 23, 2024

East Coast Conference

New York Covenant Church, New Rochelle, NY

GROW WITH US



Report from the President of North Park University

We are **ENCOURAGED** by more than 640 degrees conferred on North Park graduates in 2023. Students formed in Christian community among a rich and diverse student population are well prepared to enter ministry and professions throughout our city, across our nation, and around the world.

The **ENGAGEMENT** of North Park students in faith, learning, and service—both on campus and in the city of Chicago—transforms student lives and the lives of the neighbors they serve. Our University Ministries team organizes and encourages engagement in multiple opportunities for Christian faith development through discipleship, learning, and service.

ENTHUSIASM and momentum on campus this year were evident. The elevation and continuous improvement in the ability of the university of the Evangelical Covenant Church to help our multiethnic student community advance their spiritual, social, and professional mobility is a testament to living out our historic mission in the contemporary context of today.





Report of the Dean of North Park Theological Seminary

1. PROGRAM UPDATE

- a. We continue to collaborate with President Tammy Swanson-Draheim, conference superintendents, and conference staff members to expand the Ignite and Equip model to more Covenant students.
- b. Work continues to advance Next, an initiative started by our Contextual and Lifelong Learning (CALL) leadership (Bret Widman and Cheryl Lynn Cain). Next encompasses a range of educational initiatives with NPTS faculty providing content for churches, conferences, and other groups.
- c. We are close to finalizing an agreement with Midtown Church in the Pacific Southwest Conference to offer a certificate in urban church planting/ministry.
- d. Conversations continue with North Park provost Michael Carr and his designees regarding the reimaged Bible/Christian Studies/Theology degree. The most recent discussions centered on a possible 3 + 2 degree with students earning a BA and MDiv (or perhaps MACF) in five years.
- e. We still hope to formalize an agreement with the Charles H. Mason Seminary of the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) to send us students in the Chicagoland area (talks slowed down as the president of Mason Seminary was out of the country for a time).

2. SCHOOL OF RESTORATIVE ARTS

- a. Although teaching continues at Stateville and Logan Correctional centers, the recent announcement from Governor Pritzker that both Stateville and Logan will close for renovations means we are planning to move our work with men to Illinois River Correctional Center. We do not plan to launch a second cohort at Logan at this time.
- b. Our plans continue to develop a new Center for Restorative Justice (modeled, to a degree, on our Weborg Center for Spiritual Direction) that will encompass the work of the School of Restorative Arts. This center will offer certificates in restorative justice practices for both inside and outside students (at the Illinois River Correctional Center).

- c. We have decided to suspend offering the MA in Christian ministry and restorative arts degree as it is more financially sustainable to offer certificates through the Center for Restorative Justice. We do hope, however, to find ways in the future to make the MARJM viable for inside and outside students at some point.
- d. We have already been in communication with LMDJ of the Covenant and the NPU Center for Civic Engagement to consider potential partnerships for the Center for Restorative Justice.

3. FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATE

- a. We are excited to announce that Dr. Sophia Magallanes-Tsang will be joining NPTS as assistant professor of Old Testament. Her PhD is from the University of Edinburgh. She has taught college and seminary courses in both Old and New Testaments since 2007 and has held full-time teaching positions at Life Pacific University (2014-2020) and Fresno Pacific University (2022-2024). She also has taught for Fuller Theological Seminary in both English and Spanish.
- b. We officially installed the following faculty members into endowed chair positions:
 - i. Michelle Dodson (Milton B. Engebretson Chair in Evangelism and Justice)
 - ii. Hauna Ondrey (Wilma Peterson Chair in Church History)
 - iii. Max Lee (Paul W. Brandel Chair in Biblical Studies)
- c. Dr. J. Nate Clayton was promoted to associate professor of Old Testament with tenure with approval from the Board of Trustees in May 2024.
- d. Dr. Brett Widman will be on sabbatical summer 2025.
- e. Grace Herrera, formerly of NPU's Human Resources Department, joined us on March 4, 2024, as interim director of seminary operations. I continue to work with NPTS staff and NPU leadership (i.e., the HR director and the Senior Cabinet) regarding our staffing needs.

4. FUNDRAISING AND GRANTS

- a. The Lilly Endowment Thriving in Ministry grant concluded at the end of 2023. We do have a \$450,000 Lilly Endowment Sustainability Grant that requires matching funds.
- b. We continue with the Lilly Pathways Phase 2 grant.
- c. We are working closely with Renee Cox and Chris Bakker of NPU's Finance Office on both grant initiatives.

5. SYMPOSIUM AND LECTURES

- a. The Symposium on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture took place September 22-23, 2023, in person on North Park's campus and was also streamed online for registered participants. The theme was "Creation Care: Biblical Foundations and Practical Implications" and featured prominent scholars from around the world.
- b. Our Public Theology lecture series consisted of lectures in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, with the title of our 2023-24 public theology series, "Humility as a Prophetic Practice," drawn from my book, *Humility Illuminated*.
 - i. "Shepherding, Reconciling, and Ministering: Humility in Pastoral Practice" (October 25, 2023)
 - ii. "I Could Be Wrong," exploring the topic of cultural humility (March 6, 2024). More information is posted on the seminary website.
- c. I presented a lecture, "Power and Humility in Theological Education," at the Henry Center at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School on February 22, 2024.

6. CHURCH RELATIONS

I continue to receive invitations to preach and teach in various locations. It is important to note that several engagements are outside the Covenant and help us to foster new connections.

Recent and upcoming engagements include:

- a. Batavia Covenant Church, Batavia, Illinois (February 11)
- b. Resurrection Covenant Church, Boise, Idaho (February 25)
- c. Faith and Race Conference at Radiant Covenant Church, Renton, Washington (February 16-18)
- d. Alaska Conference Annual Meeting (April 10-13)
- e. Sanctuary Covenant Church, Columbus, Ohio (April 19-20)
- f. East Coast Conference Annual Meeting (April 26-27)
- g. Central Conference Annual Meeting (May 2)
- h. Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia (July 15-19)
- i. Brethren in Christ's Great Lake Conference Pastors Retreat (September 26-28)
- j. Mennonite Church USA's Mosaic Conference Annual Meeting (November 1-3)



Paul Carlson Partnership

TOGETHER WITH PARTNERS IN AFRICA AND BEYOND, JOURNEYING FAITHFULLY FORWARD
IN CREATING SOLUTIONS THAT ENDURE OVER TIME AND THROUGHOUT GENERATIONS

2023–2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- **September 2023**—PCP welcomed Phil Ditto as director of international medical and health programs.
- **September 2023**—Paul Carlson Partnership Medical Ambassadors traveled to Congo with a Indigenous People’s Technology and Education Center (ITEC) dental team to bring training.
- **October 2023**—Biking for Congo raised over \$39,126 for the Covenant Church of Congo medical ministry.
- **November 2023**—President Tammy Swanson-Draheim traveled to Congo with Renée Hale, Grace Shim, and other Serve Globally personnel for the 100th anniversary of gospel engagement in Karawa.
- **November 2023**—Paul Carlson Partnership’s Childhood Malnutrition Fund was the featured gift for the Covenant’s Giving Tuesday Campaign. Our goal was \$5,000. Donors gave over \$18,500!
- **January 2024**—Paul Carlson Partnership held a luncheon at Midwinter featuring guest speaker and Medical Ambassador Julie Malyon, RN.
- **February 2024**—Phil Ditto led Medical Ambassadors in three online modules to share, explain, and update attendees on Medical Ambassadors’ approach to ministry and activities.
- **March 2024**—Renée Hale, executive director, presented Paul Carlson Partnership report at Covenant Executive Board.
- **April 2024**—Medical Ambassadors held in-person retreat at Covenant Harbor.
- **May 2024**—Paul Carlson Partnership semiannual Board of Directors meeting in Chicago. Rev. President Théophile Duale and wife, Josephine, of the Covenant Church of Congo were in attendance.



Trip to DR Congo with President Tammy Swason-Draheim for the 100th celebration of gospel ministry in Karawa

November 14–22, 2023, was a great adventure, celebration, and partnership affirmation as President Tammy Swason-Draheim traveled to DR Congo along with other Serve Globally personnel to participate in this grand celebration. Writings in the *Companion*, *CovChurch Now*, and Tammy’s in-person address at Midwinter 2024 communicated many elements of this trip.



Stabilization Center in Loko under Construction

A second malnutrition center is currently being constructed in Loko. Funding for this project was secured by a grant issued from the Protein Foundation in Maine. PCP, with the help of Dr. Eric Gunnoe, submitted its 2024 grant application to the Protein Foundation in April.



PCP Midwinter Luncheon with Julie Malyon, RN

PCP’s Midwinter luncheon included keynote speaker Julie Malyon, RN. Julie shared her experiences in DR Congo as a Medical Ambassador and long-term volunteer with PCP. Her detailed and passionate presentation inspired us all! Our Chicago coffee partners, Everybody’s Coffee, were present and brought fresh brewed coffee and sample bags of Karawa Coffee for everyone.



Container Shipment of Durable Medical Equipment Arrived in Karawa

PCP has persevered since 2018 in securing funds, durable medical equipment, a reputable shipping company, a container, and a feasible process to provide a major shipment of modern medical diagnostic equipment to the CEUM hospitals. The container was shipped in November 2023 and finally arrived in Karawa on April 13, 2024. The medical equipment will now be distributed among the CEUM health zones. Because the equipment draws significant power, current plans are underway to help bolster the solar power at each facility. Thank you to many generous donors who made this shipment possible!



Join the 2024 Biking for Congo Challenge this October!

The Biking for Congo Challenge is Paul Carlson Partnership's annual peer-to-peer fundraising event to support healthcare in DR Congo. Join our collective effort to raise \$50,000 to train healthcare workers, improve access to clean water in remote villages, provide regular medicines and supplies, and care for those who can't afford medical care. Learn more about how to join today by scanning the QR code or visiting paulcarlson.org/biking4congo.





**FUPROCAF Coffee Cooperative:
Hope for Families**

In economic development, FUPROCAF (formerly the Karawa Coffee Project) is poised to enter the global economy in coffee trade within 24 months. Café Africa and Sopagri (global trade education, processes, and export) have re-engaged with FUPROCAF's 2,000-plus coffee producers to work toward that end. Everybody's Coffee in Chicago distributes Karawa Coffee directly to you! Order at roaster.everybodyscoffee.com/karawa.html.



Bridges—Celebration and Strategic Plans

Bridge building and repair continue with our partner Hope International Development Agency. This year the focus is on evaluating and repairing bridges along the Gemena–Karawa route. There is a list of priority locations to continue bridge building over the next several years.

PCP TEAM

Renée Hale, Executive Director

Phil Ditto, Director
of International Medical
and Health Programs

Rebecca Dangel, Director of Partner
Communications

Robert Anderson, Partner Engagement
Representative

paulcarlson.org

AGENDA ITEM

#37



Gather 2025

COVENANT ANNUAL CONNECTION

SAVE THE DATE

June 25-28

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

GATHER.COVCHURCH.ORG



Resolution of Sympathy

We are grateful to God for the following pastors, global personnel, and pastor's spouses whose deaths have been reported to us since we last met in 2023. We will remember these partners in ministry with gratitude at the Ordination and Commissioning Service

RESOLVED, that the 138th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church expresses its sympathy to the families of the Covenant pastors, global personnel, and pastor's spouses who have gone to be with the Lord, and that those families be presented with a program of the worship service in which there will be a time of remembrance and thanksgiving for their lives and ministry.

PASTORS

Chun Sam Yi, June 11, 2019, Las Vegas, Nevada

Thorstein Burtness, September 24, 2021, Aurora, Colorado

Jea Tae Kim, December 31, 2022, San Francisco, California

James H. Stone, February 24, 2023, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Fredrick Holmgren, May 24, 2023, Chicago, Illinois

John K. Larson, June 14, 2023, Batavia, Illinois

Herbert M. Freedholm, July 21, 2023, Palatine, Illinois

George B. Elia, October 2, 2023, Raleigh, North Carolina

Paul A. Johnson, November 7, 2023, Minneapolis, Minnesota

George A. Scranton, November 28, 2023, Seattle, Washington

Philip M. Axelson, December 27, 2023, Warren, Rhode Island

David S. Noreen, December 27, 2023, Westminster, Colorado

Wesley R. Olson, December 31, 2023, Turlock, California

James R. Lundell, January 18, 2024, Davenport, Iowa

Walter D. Berg, January 19, 2024, Marion, South Dakota

David S. Dahlberg, March 10, 2024, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Norman G. Bagaas, March 26, 2024, Tucson, Arizona

Randall J. Klassen, April 6, 2024, Walla Walla, Washington

Marla A. Parker, April 7, 2024, Chicago, Illinois
David W. Johnson, April 13, 2024, Port Orange, Florida
David E. Carlson, April 14, 2024, Red Oak, Iowa
Kari B. Lindholm-Johnson, April 20, 2024, Chicago, Illinois
Robert C. Larson, May 18, 2024, Northbrook, Illinois
Jerome O. Nelson, May 19, 2024, Gary, Indiana
Edward F. Delgado, June 10, 2024, Spring Valley, California

GLOBAL PERSONNEL

Ruth A. M. Widman, July 26, 2023, Batavia, Illinois

PASTOR'S SPOUSES

Sally A. Leigh (Merton), September 2, 2016, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Leola Simmons (R. Dan), May 11, 2020
Alice J. Nelson (J. Robert), October 12, 2020, Skandia, Michigan
Marilyn Noreen (David), January 15, 2023, Westminster, Colorado
Jane Wiberg (Glen), June 19, 2023, Golden Valley, Minnesota
Linda K. Anderson (Timothy), August 6, 2023, Rochester, Minnesota
Nancy J. Sassaman (Marcus), October 10, 2023, Elkhorn, Nebraska
H. Lorraine Holmen (Gordon), October 20, 2023, Plantation, Florida
Noris C. Maldonado (Jorge), October 21, 2023, Hacienda Heights, California
Gudrun Adell (Morland), November 16, 2023, Hayward, Wisconsin
Lois I. Baker (Dwight), December 21, 2023, Eagan, Minnesota
Judith A. Kaufmann (Austin), December 30, 2023, Eagan, Minnesota
Sharon Olson (Dennis), January 9, 2024, Stockton, California
Beverly A. Kraft (Vernon), January 11, 2024, Lodi, California
Glen Perkins (Heather), April 13, 2024, Wichita, Kansas
Verna Johnson (Jerome), April 15, 2024, Mercer Island, Washington
Eloise V. Nelson (LeRoy), May 1, 2024, Northbrook, Illinois
Patricia L. Hallsten (Edwin), May 24, 2024, Naples, Florida



Proposed Resolution of Gratitude for Gather 2024

RESOLVED, that the 138th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church express its gratitude to all who diligently worked to make this event possible:

- To Covenant churches in North America for their continual support and prayers. We are all part of the Covenant's multiethnic mosaic and as a mosaic of mission friends, we continue to bear fruit for God's glory and neighbor's good.
- To our moderator, Julia Sandstrom; vice-moderator, Carolyn Poterek; secretary, Norma Ramos, and parliamentarian, Clarence Chan; who with joy and the utmost level of integrity, served and led this deliberative body.
- To all the delegates, general conferees, and guests who collectively responded and lived out our congregational polity, representing their communities to communally discern God's will for our shared mission and uniting their voices in praise to our God for fruit-bearing efforts that continue to make disciples who make disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world.
- To the Council of Superintendents and ethnic association presidents and their respective teams for their partnership in ministry and their support in this year's gathering. Your prayers and support made this event possible.
- To our denominational team and global personnel for their continual commitment to God's mission, a small but gifted army who bathed this event in prayer and stepped beyond their daily work routines to collaborate and ensure no Gather detail was left unattended and that guests were cared for.
- To the Credentials Committee, who verified and certified attendees' credentials.
- To our sergeants-at-arms and tellers, for their care of the meeting and for delegates; and for providing guidance to delegates with agenda items and meeting resources.
- To Erik Anderson, director of Covenant events, and Jordan Meyers, assistant corporate secretary, for tending to every logistical and programming detail and ensuring Gather 2024 appeared seamless to participants.
- To Jill Ulven, Covenant registrar, for ensuring that every attendee, whether in person or online, had the information they needed to participate fully in Gather 2024.
- To the Operations team members, Jonathan Basa and Karl Haukom Anderson, for holding the administrative and technical dimensions of this gathering closely for the past six months to ensure the table was adequately prepared and set for this convening.

- To our Marketing and Communications team, Cathy Norman Peterson, Kristi Schild, Paul Stewart, Joy Frierson, Jelani Greenidge, Kevin Kempe, Nathan Nicholson, and Jenna Wilson; creative storytellers who with excellence crafted all our digital and print resources, guaranteeing that constituents were informed and engaged in this historic Annual Meeting.
- To all the volunteers and ministry partners collaborating and supporting our production and programming efforts. Your hospitality, grace, and dedication helped to make sure all of God's people could serve.
- To our worship leaders, guest artists, and speakers, who helped us come before the throne of grace as one body to hear God's heart for this present season of ministry, moving faithfully forward.
- To Evelyn M.R. Johnson, who received the Irving C. Lambert Award, and to the T.W. Anderson Award recipient, Scott Peterson, for embodying what it means to be true disciples of Christ, to love God, and to love others as yourself.
- To the Covenant ministries who were generous in their support of various dimensions of our Gather 2024 experience, including:
 - Covenant Living Communities and Services for generously subsidizing this year's worship team
 - National Covenant Properties for generously providing lunch vouchers for all attendees
 - Covenant Ministries of Benevolence for generously subsidizing the virtual voting platform and livestream
 - Covenant Trust Company for generously renting the Freedom Center for our opening night
 - Covenant Benefits for generously providing coffee for our meeting
 - Paul Carlson Partnership and the Karawa Coffee Project for providing coffee for our meeting
 - North Park University for providing financial support for the Gather event
 - meetNKY for providing transportation support for our Thursday night outing to the Freedom Center
- To Pia Restrepo for coordinating our translation team and ensuring key documents for the business meeting and the business sessions were translated into Spanish.

RESOLVED, that the Covenant Annual Meeting express its appreciation to those who with distinction offered Christian witness, service, support, and hospitality to this 138th Covenant Annual Meeting.

IT'S GOOD TO BE TOGETHER!

2025

NEXTGEN & MIDWINTER CONFERENCE
DENVER | JANUARY 20-24

GATHER: COVENANT ANNUAL MEETING
ORLANDO | JUNE 25-28



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