

HIGHLIGHTS

The GLC Annual Celebration was designed to incorporate the business of the Annual Meeting and a celebration of the ministry of all that God has done in and through the churches of the Great Lakes Conference during 2018.

Please use this summary to share an official report to your congregation's board, council, or leadership team. You could also publish this summary in your church newsletter or bulletin.

Thank You to Life Covenant Church, Canton, MI

The GLC office staff is grateful to the 2019 host of the GLC Annual Celebration. Life Church Canton was a great facility for holding our Celebration. A big thank you to Sue Allen (Church Administrator), Nathan McWherter (Lead Pastor) and the all of the staff and volunteers for making us feel so welcome.

Thursday – Church Planters & Vitality Training

On Thursday afternoon, current church planters, prospective church planters and church plant leadership met together. The training was book ended by lunch and dinner and was facilitated by Alan Tumpkin (GLC Director of Church Planting). The Vitality Team also met for training during the day on Thursday. Thursday evening included a discussion and workshop for those interested in vitality for their church.

Friday Morning - GLC Ministerial Association Annual Meeting

The GLC Annual Celebration kicked off Friday morning with about 80 members of the GLC Ministerial Association in attendance for their annual meeting. They had only candidate for ordination this year but, as usual, it was the highlight of the meeting. Ken White is currently serving as the interim pastor at Forest Park and it was a gift to hear his story and share in this important step in the life of his ministry. We thank God for the gift of Ken and his wife Marcia and all the experience they bring to their ministry in the Covenant. This year Dennis Carlson again shared about Crescendo, an important new initiative for people to embrace ministry later in life. They also took time to explore how they can open leadership positions in the Ministerial Association by making both COMS and serving as an officer open to people who hold a ministry license. Like an ordained minister, the requirement to serve would include completion of Covenant Orientation and five years of ministry experience. A by-law change was approved that will allow pastors who hold a ministry license to serve. To open the positions of chair and vice-chair to pastors with ministry licenses takes a constitutional change. This was presented and will be up for a vote at the next annual meeting. Additionally, the delegates approved a \$10 increase to dues. This is to allow the Ministerial Association to provide more scholarships. Everyone in attendance was encouraged to strengthen themselves through taking advantage of the free gift of Spiritual Direction available to all our pastors and by attending the Fall Pastors' Retreat with featured speaker Shaun Marshall. This year's retreat will take place at Mohican Lodge and Conference Center in Ohio on October 28-30.

Friday Afternoon Workshops

On Friday afternoon, 8 workshops were offered for our delegates, ministers and participants. Over 100 people attended workshops.

Session A offerings included:

- Hidden Away: Uncovering Our Bias (Rochelle Armstrong - One Church, Louisville, KY)
- When Our Children Speak, Do We Listen?: The Church and Mental Health (Karen Monts - filled in for Robert Warmack)
- Evangelism (Mike Rice - Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI)
- Crescendo - Overview (Dennis Carlson and Dan Wolter - Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI)

Session B offerings included:

- Race and the Church (Ja'mel and Rochelle Armstrong, Matt Ness and Rich Johnson)
- Human Trafficking and Our Call to Seek Justice (Brittany Robinson - Life Church Livonia, Livonia, MI)
- Growing Well - Connections (Kate Buckner - Life Church Canton, Canton, MI)
- Crescendo - Framework and Implementation (Dennis Carlson and Dan Wolter - Faith Covenant Church, Farmington, Hills, MI)

Friday Banquet, Awards, and Worship Service

The celebration continued with the Friday night banquet, where 160 attendees enjoyed a delicious meal. During the banquet, the Great Lakes Conference honored individuals who received awards named for the four core ministry priorities of the GLC. The awards and their recipients were:

- Arv Anderson & Larry Sherman Award in Church Planting - The Life Church Network
- Dave and Beth Chilcoat Award in Church Outreach - Ardena Duren (Kingdom Embassy Covenant Church, Muskegon, MI)
- David Dahlberg Award In Church Vitality - Mike Przybylski (recently retired GLC Director of Congregational Vitality)
- Richard Lucco Award in Church Leadership- Four Rivers Covenant Church Leadership Team (Four Rivers Covenant Church, Calvert City, KY)

Following the banquet, there was a worship service. Music was led by the team from Life Church Southfield, Southfield, MI. The sermon was powerfully delivered by Cecilia Williams, the Executive Minister for the Love Mercy Do Justice mission priority of the Evangelical Covenant Church. One of the most beautiful moments of the service occurred as the attendees brought forward 132 white roses - each of which represented at least 6 people who came to Christ in 2018 as a result of God's work through the Great Lakes Conference churches. Nathan McWherter, lead pastor of Life Church Canton, led the congregation in communion. The communion wafers used were made by woman rescued from human trafficking, a ministry of the Hindustani Covenant Church in India supported by Covenant World Relief. An offering of over \$1,800 (so far) was collected for the GLC Pastor-in-Crisis Fund.

BUSINESS MEETING - KEY FACTS

1. There were a total of 74 delegates representing, 43 churches, 2 associations and institutions and 6 delegates of the GLC Executive Board.
2. Cecilia Williams brought greetings from the Evangelical Covenant Church. She shared the ECC's Triennial video.
3. Board Elections
Officers:
 - Chair - Rev. Tom Sharkey (First Covenant Church, Youngstown, OH)
 - Vice-Chair - Rev. Nicole Laing (Cityview Covenant Church, Pittsburgh, PA)
 - Secretary - Steve Ormond (Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI)
 - Treasurer - Katherine Kayser (Hope Community Church, Detroit, MI)Trustees
 - Mark Henry (Life Church Canton, Canton, MI)
 - Doug McCann (Stoneridge Covenant Church, Allison Park, PA)
 - Brian Rudy (Thornapple Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI)
 - *William Mack (Grace Community Covenant Church, Louisville, KY)
**appointed to complete the term of Ja'mel Armstrong*
4. J.T. Madison (outgoing Chair), Mickey Tresh (outgoing Treasurer) and Justin Bowers were thanked for their time on the GLC Executive Board as their terms of service came to an end.
5. Three churches were voted to be removed from the membership roster of the GLC:
 - The Bridge Covenant Church (Detroit, MI)
 - Trinity Church (Livonia, MI)
 - Trinity Community Church (Cincinnati, OH)
6. Life Church Livonia (Livonia, MI) was voted to become a member church of the GLC.
7. Retired pastor, Bruce Haight, was recognized for his service to Christ Community Church (Allegan, MI). He was joined on stage by his wife Ann to receive a gift.
8. Good News Stories were shared for the four core ministry priorities of the GLC:
 - Church Planting - Life Church Auburn Hills (Auburn Hills, MI)
 - Church Vitality - Zion Covenant Church (Jamestown, NY)
 - Church Leadership - Cityview Covenant Church (Pittsburgh, PA)
 - Church Outreach - Faith Covenant Church (Farmington Hills, MI) - The Lego Project

9. Britt Dahlstrom, the ECC Board of Nominations GLC representative, is looking for individuals to serve on the following boards:

- ECC Executive Board
- Board of the Ordered Ministry
- Board of Pensions and Benefits
- Board of Benevolence
- Board of Trustees of North Park University

She can be contacted at brittm Dahlstrom@gmail.com, or 614-580-0099

10. Garth McGrath - Superintendent Report

Garth shared highlights of each of the four core ministry priorities of the GLC. He also introduced a Church Planting Fundraising Initiative. The GLC aims to plant 2-3 churches a year over the next 5 years and to move the Director of Church Planting position to $\frac{3}{4}$ time in 2020 and full time by 2022. There are currently four planters assessed and approved to plant churches and they are anticipated to launch in 2020. The goal is to raise \$300,000 in 2019. Garth is asking your church to have a Church Planting Sunday and take a special offering. There is a video and brochure that can be used and are available on the Church Planting page of the GLC website (www.greatlakes.cc). He is also asking you (as a delegate) and your church chair to identify potential donors in your church, or foundations in your community that have a heart for lost people that we can share our vision with. (See brochure for Individual Donors).

11. A motion was passed to amend the bylaws of the GLC Constitution to introduce new language that matches changes in our constitution and in the new organizational documents of our conference entities including, but not limited to camps. The new constitution is available online at www.greatlakes.cc

12. Mickey Tresh presented the 2018 Treasurer's Report and the proposed 2019 Budget, that were prepared with the assistance of Kim Carlson, the GLC Financial Officer.

- General fund cash balance decreased from \$588,790 in 2017 to \$546,647 in 2018
- Church support totaled \$500,277 (\$69,700 below budget) - 32 churches increased support
- Operating expenses were \$600,500 (\$42,800 below budget) for a operating loss of \$51,786
- All financial documents can be found online at www.greatlakes.cc

13. The 2020 Annual Celebration will be held April 24-25 at Faith Covenant Church in Westerville, OH.