



December 2020

Dear Fellow Servants of Christ in Great Lakes Conference Churches,

As you gather together for your congregation's Annual Meeting, it is a privilege to greet you on behalf of the 77 churches in eight states that make up the Great Lakes Conference.

I am grateful for the partnership we have in ministry. As you serve people in your community and support the Great Lakes Conference and the larger Covenant Church, together we are able to start new churches, strengthen existing churches, develop pastors and lay leaders, strive for mercy and Biblical justice across our land, and serve God globally in the name of Jesus.

I want you to know that because of that partnership in 2020 we were able to ...

- help Conference churches adapt quickly to new ministry delivery systems for worship, discipleship and evangelism among children, youth and adults in response to COVID realities;
- provide formal vitality coaching to multiple churches to help them regain missional traction;
- raise the temperature for evangelism in 7 churches by engaging their pastors in a 15-month Evangelism Cohort experience;
- guide 8 churches in their search for a new pastor;
- mentor several churches through intense conflict situations in their congregation;
- provide technical coaching to multiple churches regarding financial reporting systems;
- plant Life Church – Riverside in Detroit, MI under the leadership of Pastor Georgia Hill;
- coach the pastors and lay leaders of our 5 most recent GLC church plants:
Life Church – Auburn Hills, MI; Kingdom Embassy Covenant Church – Muskegon, MI;
New Community Covenant Church – Elkins, WV; The Movement Covenant Church – Nashville, TN;
and Lighthouse Covenant Church – Richmond, KY;
- recruit, assess, train, coach and resource church planters for prospective 2021 church plants in Nashville, TN, Mason, MI, Detroit, MI, and Columbus, OH;
- raise funds needed to plant the next church plant (2021) in the GLC;
- resource pastors and churches seeking to understand and address the causes of heightened racial tensions in our communities;
- provide 8 pastors the opportunity to complete the Core 4 Certificate in Biblical/theological training at North Park Seminary in the context of a Cohort at a discounted price;
- enable 17 pastors to take another formal step in maintaining or moving forward in their credentialing process with the ECC;
- and come alongside the Directors of Camp Mission Meadows, Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp and Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp to encourage them as they worked to sustain the ministry of the camps through COVID-19 so they can continue to serve our Conference churches.

As we enter the new year I join the Apostle Paul in saying to you, *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

Gratefully,

Garth McGrath