



# Annual Celebration

**Faith Covenant Church**  
35415 W. 14 Mile Rd, Farmington Hills, MI 48331

## GLC Documents 2023-2024

### Many Members, One Body

- ◆ Delegate Documents
- ◆ Ministry Reports
- ◆ Church Plants
- ◆ Camps



**THE GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE**

Messiah Church  
Four Rivers Church  
LifeChurch Riverside  
Lighthouse Church  
City Covenant Church  
Christ Covenant Church  
Faith Covenant Church  
Grace Ev. Cov. Church  
LifeChurch Auburn Hills  
Forest Park Covenant Church  
St. John's Evangelical Covenant Church  
Mosaic Covenant Church Of Grand Rapids  
Revival Covenant Church  
LifeChurch Livonia  
AustinTown Community Evangelical Covenant Church  
Breitton Woods Covenant Church  
Harbert Community Church  
New Community Covenant Church  
Citadel of Faith Covenant Church  
Kalamazoo Covenant Church  
Keystone Church Of Hazelwood  
Redeemer Church  
One Church Louisville, Inc.  
Cityview Covenant Church  
Stoneridge Covenant Church  
Hope Community Church  
Evergreen Evangelical Covenant Church  
New Hope Church  
Dearborn Evangelical Covenant Church  
Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church  
One Hope Covenant Church  
Pleasant Community Church  
Covenant Mountain Mission  
Bachelor Evangelical Covenant Church  
LifeChurch Southfield  
Life Covenant Church  
Tustin Covenant Church  
Wallers Creek Covenant Church  
First Covenant Church  
Fruitland Ev. Covenant Church  
Portage Lake Bible Camp  
Bethany Covenant Church  
Christ Community Church  
First Ev. Covenant Church  
Emmanuel Mission Church  
West Bay Covenant Church  
Life Transformation Church  
Federated Covenant Church  
New Wine Covenant Church  
Esperanza Covenant Church  
Camp Mission Meadows  
Zion Covenant Church  
Mission Covenant Church  
Evangelical Covenant Church  
Redeemer Ev. Cov. Church  
Miracle of Faith Ministries  
Saranac Community Church  
Scandia Ev. Cov. Church  
Journey Covenant Church

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# Delegate Orientation

## Standing Rules

### 2024 Great Lakes Conference Annual Meeting

**WELCOME** to the Annual Meeting of the *Great Lakes Conference*. It is the hope of the Great Lakes Conference Board that these pages will acquaint delegates with the procedures and information for this meeting, described in the **Constitution of the Conference** as the **Annual Meeting**. After the appropriate vote, this document will serve as the “Standing Rules” for the Annual Meeting.

The **purpose** of this Annual Meeting is the same as the purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ - at all times and in all situations - *to discern and to do the will of God*. Depending on the circumstances, there are several ways this may be done; the circumstances of the Annual Meeting - the size of the delegation, the complexity of the issues that will come before us - require that we proceed more formally than is usually necessary in smaller Christian gatherings. We proceed according to the **Conference Constitution and Bylaws** as well as **Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised**. At first, some of the language used on the floor of the Annual Meeting may seem strange to you, but you will soon understand it as a kind of oral “*shorthand*” that keeps the business moving along. A brief glossary of some common parliamentary terms is at the end of these pages. The reason for a rather strict adherence to these rules may be stated as follows:

- It protects the right of the majority to decide.
- It protects the right of the minority to be heard.
- It protects the rights of individual members, both those present and those absent.
- It prevents a “railroad” of the Annual Meeting by manipulation.
- It prevents an emotional “stampede” of the Annual Meeting.

Though other elements are factors, three elements basically determine the direction of each Annual Meeting:

- the delegates
- the GLC Executive Board
- the Chair

#### I. THE DELEGATES

The individual delegate is the principal “*building block*” of the Annual Meeting. This person must act to receive the reports, to approve recommendations, and to question and debate the issues. Every delegate has the right to speak in the Annual Meeting, but those who do not speak are just as vital to the process as those who do- the power of decision rests with all the delegates.

Discussion, debate, the exchange of ideas and information are, however, at the heart of the process, so these are encouraged. Here are some **guidelines** if you wish to speak on the floor of the meeting:

1. Approach a microphone (real or virtual) and wait for the Chair to call on you.
2. Seek the floor only when the subject you want to talk about is under discussion.
3. When you have been recognized, speak to the Chair and tell him/her what is on your mind. *You do not have to make a speech to the Annual Meeting; you are speaking to just one person, and the others are listening in.*
4. If you have a question about procedure, ask the Chair; if you have a question about the subject under discussion, the Chair will call on the person who is most likely to have the answer.
5. You may speak once to an issue, and not again on the same issue as long as someone else, who has not yet had a turn, is seeking the floor.

If you have an item that does not relate to the proposed Agenda and you wish to present it to the meeting, it is preferred that you present this, in writing, to the Chair prior to the Annual Meeting. Opportunity for changes and/or additions is given at the time of adopting the Agenda.

# Delegate Orientation

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## II. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Members of the GLC Executive Board, and others so designated, are the chief “*resource persons*” on the floor of the Annual Meeting. The GLC Executive Board is the mover of almost all the recommendations that arise from the Agenda, which it also prepares. All recommendations are subject to the amendment, referral, or rejection of the Annual Meeting.

As the mover of most of the recommendations on the Agenda, a spokesperson for the Board is usually granted what the Rules call “*preference in recognition*.” This is the privilege of a mover to speak first to his own motion. (*Please note that motions arising from a Board, Commission, or Committee do not require a second; they already have more than one supporter.*)

## III. THE CHAIR

The Chair of the Annual Meeting is the Chair of the GLC Executive Board. The Chair’s responsibilities are:

- to interpret and apply the rules of the Meeting
- to expedite the business of the Meeting
- to see that all persons involved in the Meeting are treated fairly
- to clarify what is happening
- to advise delegates in the procedures of the Meeting
- to maintain the discipline and joy of Christian fellowship

A final word about “**decorum**” in the Meeting. There are rare times when spontaneous applause expresses affirmation and unanimity in the Meeting. However, applause during a debate, when there is an obvious difference of opinion, is not fair to the opposing side.

Motives of other persons may never be impugned during a debate. The merits of the motion, and not the motives of the mover, are the issue under debate.

***When the Meeting is in session, move to and from your seat quickly and quietly.***

## 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. 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 CHAIR** - A delegate is testing the Chair’s ruling against the opinion of the Meeting. The motion to appeal requires a second. An affirmative vote by the Meeting sustains the Chair’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.

**DIVISION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING** - This is a vote by rising. It may be demanded by any delegate to verify a vote taken by a voice or by show of hands or may be ordered by the Chair 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 Chair may order a count by the *Sergeants-at-Arms*. A majority of the Meeting may also order a count.

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

**MR. or MADAME CHAIR** - The traditional form for addressing the Chair from the floor of the Meeting.

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

# Delegate Orientation

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**PARLIAMENTARIAN** - An advisor to the Chair 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 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.

**PUTTING 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. He need only agree that the motion deserves the attention of the Meeting.

**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 Chair.

**TABLE, MOVE TO** - (Or "**LAY ON THE TABLE**") Unlike a referred motion, a tabled motion goes nowhere. No one considers it, or studies it, or does anything with it, until a motion passes to "*take it from the table*". If this never happens, the tabled motion is never again considered.

Prepared, in the main, by [Everett L. Wilson](#) (*Moderator of the 1985 Covenant Annual Meeting*) in consultation with Robert H. Peterson (*Moderator-1983*).

Revisions by [Evelyn M. R. Johnson](#) (*Moderator-1986*) and Duane Aschenbrenner (*Parliamentarian-1986*).

Revisions by [Rev. David S. Dahlberg](#) (1992)

# Agenda

44th Annual Meeting  
April 20, 2024

## I. Organization of the Meeting

- A. Call to Order..... Doug McCann
- B. Approval of Agenda ..... Doug McCann
- C. Welcome.....Doug McCann
- D. Approval of Standing Rules.....Doug McCann
- E. Approval of Committees.....Doug McCann
  - i. Credentials ..... Jody Eidnes
  - ii. Tellers.....Jody Eidnes, Peg Wolter
  - iii. Sergeants-at-Arms.....John Butsky, Tim Swafford, Suzy Grecu, Marc Dissosway
  - iv. Parliamentarian.....Steve Ormond

## II. Greetings from the Evangelical Covenant Church.....Paul Robinson

## III. Report of the Credentials Committee..... Jody Eidnes

## IV. Report of the Nominating Committee.....Sara Charlton

- A. GLC Executive Board Members .....Doug McCann
  - i. Election of Officers and Trustees
- B. Election of GLC Superintendent.....Doug McCann

## V. Award- Church Planting.....Rick and Terri McGarry

## VI. Superintendent Report ..... Garth McGrath

## VII. Closed/Disaffiliating Churches..... Garth McGrath

- A. Bethany Covenant Church, Lyndhurst, OH

## VIII. Award- Church Vitality.....Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI

## IX. Joining Churches.....Garth McGrath

- A. Life Church Auburn Hills, An Evangelical Covenant Church, Auburn Hills, MI
- B. Healing Covenant Church, Paducah, KY

## X. Treasurer's Report (2023 GLC Financials)..... Brian Rudy

## XI. Award- Church Leadership..... Bethany Covenant Church, Lyndhurst, OH

## XII. New Business:

- A. Ministry Planning Cycle.....Garth McGrath, Peg Cichon
- B. 2024 Budget ..... Brian Rudy
- C. Interim Budget for 2025.....Brian Rudy
- D. Approval of 44th Annual Meeting Minutes..... Doug McCann
- E. Approval of Ordination Candidates .....Ken White

## XIII. Award- Church Outreach.....Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI

# Agenda

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- XIII. Award- Church Outreach.....Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI
- XIV. Old Business:
  - A. Proposed Constitution and Bylaws Amendments.....Sara Charlton
  - B. Church Planting Initiative.....Alan Tumpkin
  - C. Response for Request for Financial Pie-Chart .....Brian Rudy
  - D. Strengthening Communication with Conference Churches .....Garth McGrath
- XV. GLC Staff Q & A ..... GLC Staff
- XVI. Recognition of Retiring GLC Staff .....Garth McGrath
  - A. Jack Nichols
- XVII. Election Results for Officers & Trustees. .... Doug McCann
- XVIII. Installation of Officers & Trustees..... Garth McGrath
- XIX. Expression of Thanks to Retiring GLC Executive Board Members.....Garth McGrath
- XX. 2025 Annual Celebration Location..... Jody Eidnes
- XXI. Adjournment.....Doug McCann

# GLC Nominations

## Great Lakes Conference Executive Board

### Officers

#### **Doug McCann, Stoneridge Covenant Church, Allison Park, PA (Chair and Trustee)**

Doug recently retired from Highmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield where he worked as an actuary for 29 years. Doug is married and has three grown children. He enjoys bicycling and swimming in his free time. Doug has enjoyed serving on the GLC Executive Board as he has been able to use what he has learned to further God's Kingdom and make good use of his time in retirement.

#### **Sara Charlton, St. John's Ev. Covenant Church, Millersburg, OH (Vice Chair and Trustee)**

Sara has served St. John's as the solo pastor since November 2018. She grew up in a non-Christian home and came to know the love and saving grace of Jesus Christ during her freshman year at North Park University. After getting her B.A. in History and then her MDiv from North Park Seminary, she served as an interim pastor in Kansas for fifteen months before coming to the GLC. Sara is currently the Vice Chair of the GLC Board. In her spare time, Sara enjoys reading mysteries, baking, and spoiling her niece.

#### **Brian Rudy, Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI (Treasurer and Trustee)**

Brian has been a member of Thornapple since 1991 and in that time, he has served in many adult, youth, and children's ministries. He served as an elder from 2008-2013 and has been elected to serve again as an elder for 2019-2024. Brian has primarily worked as a finance executive for various companies, often during periods of growth or transition. He is an advocate for good process and best practices. Brian is married and has 3 children. He enjoys the outdoors, learning, travel, sports, and board games. Brian would like to serve on the GLC Executive Board because as he struggles to understand the recent cultural shifts away from God and away from others, he has hope because of Christ. He is encouraged by our opportunities to worship, work, and witness together that all may hear His voice and know His love. Brian looks forward to journeying together in helping every GLC congregation become a healthy, missional church. That we may be one in Christ.

#### **John Goss, Grace Evangelical Covenant Church, Clay, NY (Secretary and Trustee)**

Since becoming a part of the Covenant eight years ago (when he was called to serve as the pastor of Grace Church), John has come to appreciate the people and work that is done not just at the local Covenant church level but more broadly at the conference level. He looks forward to serving at the conference level and being able to contribute to the work of the Kingdom in new ways. His desire is to help the GLC serve churches as they engage in the work of making disciples of Jesus. John and his wife, Cheryl, have been married for 22 years and have four children ranging in age from 15 to 21.

### Trustees

#### **Debbie Abbott, Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI**

Debbie is a member of Thornapple Ev. Cov. Church. She and her husband are part of a 'life group' that meets twice monthly with four other couples from Thornapple. For 20 years, they have been their study and prayer partners, a huge blessing. She is involved in a weekly Bible study. She serves on the hospitality team which includes ushering, greeting, assisting with funeral receptions, and creating meals for church families as needed, etc. She also serves on a team that hosts meals after worship for college students and recent grads. For the past three summers, she has co-led the VBS 'Bible Discovery' station and looks forward to doing that again this summer. She has recently retired from Calvin University, a Christian liberal arts school where she served 17 years as the administrative assistant for the School of Education. In this role she managed the program budget, planned events, managed a team of student workers, assisted with course scheduling and awarding scholarships, and supported the Dean and faculty.

She and her husband, Steve, have been married for 42 years. Her home has been in Grand Rapids, MI her entire married life. Their daughter and her husband live in northern California and are parents to their three grandsons. Their son and his wife live in Grand Rapids, MI and are parents to their granddaughter. Her father passed early this year and her mom lives in a retirement community near where they live. She enjoys 'working' in her garden, reading, cooking, and adventuring with her husband and family.

Since joining a Covenant church she has experienced the benefits and blessings the GLC provides to local churches. She has admired the work the superintendent, most recently Garth, does for local pastors and congregations. She prays the Lord will use her willingness to serve in ways that are helpful to Garth in continuing that work.



# GLC Nominations

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## Great Lakes Conference Executive Board

### Trustees

#### **Mark Nelson, Austintown Evangelical Community Church, Austintown, OH**

Mark's current ministry role is the Lead Pastor of Austintown Community Ev. Cov. Church in Austintown, Ohio, a mission-minded community situated outside of Youngstown. It is his joy in ministry to see people grow in faith and understand the extravagant grace of God given to us through Jesus Christ. He has been married to his wonderful wife, Corrie for 22 years. They have four incredible daughters: Lily 18, Sophia 17, Evangeline 14, and Charlotte 13. He feels that to serve on the GLC Executive Board will be a humbling opportunity to continue to grow as a leader, as well as bring his past experiences in camping ministry, missions, and pastoral ministry to the table.

#### **Steve Ormond, Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI**

Steve and his wife Sue are members of Faith Covenant Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan and are presently active in worship and various small groups, outreach, and mission support, including in the Dominican Republic and in the city of Detroit. They have been members of Faith since the early 1990s and were also members of the Dearborn Covenant Church in the 1980s. They have both served in multiple mission and church leadership roles during those years and up to the present time. He has previously served on the GLC Executive Board .

Steve is an attorney, a member of the Michigan Bar, and Of Counsel to Clark Hill PLC, a multi-national law firm with offices in many locations. He describes his present law practice as "semi-retired". His education and legal practice involved international and domestic business and litigation in a variety of interesting subject matters, including contract disputes, immigration, trade regulation, anti-trust, environmental, and others. He reads widely and follows international and national matters, particularly as they impact Christians and the ability of Christians to be faithful to the Great Commission. He feels his background in the law can be helpful and feels his temperament will work well in a board setting.

Steve and Sue have three grown children and two grandchildren, living nearby and in the Chicago area. He has retired from his hobby of sailing. Still, Steve feels there is much about sailing that can be used as a metaphor for our Lord's power, grace, beauty and, yes, risk.

#### **Arthur V. Tucker, Jr. (Art), Covenant Community Church, Fairfield, OH**

Art is currently serving on the Council of Covenant Community Church as recording secretary (second year of a three-year term). He is also the church's comptroller (a non-board position) responsible for preparation of the financial statements and related tasks. He also serves in men's ministries and the nursery. Previously, he has served on the Council (of CCC) for six three-year terms, either as treasurer, financial secretary, or stewardship & properties chair. He has also served on the building committee and the pastoral search committee.

He is currently retired, having served as corporate controller for Chemed Corporation in Cincinnati. His departments were responsible for preparation of internal and external financial reports, compliance with GAAP, and daily cash management and banking relationships. He is a CPA in the state of Ohio and a member of the AICPA and Ohio Society of CPAs. In retirement, he enjoys volunteering for several organizations including Habitat for Humanity, the Fairfield Food Pantry (treasurer), and volunteers in tax preparation for low-income tax payers and retirees. His wife of 50 years, Linda, passed away in February of 2022. She was his high school sweetheart and the love of his life. She was a retired RN and wonderful mother and grandmother. Their son Jason, and his wife, Suzy, live in nearby Madeira and have two children – Emma (23) and Owen (20). Their daughter Kara, and her husband, Pierson, live in Concord, MA and have two children – Felix (16) and Pieter (13). He also has a Siamese cat, Arnie, who is nine months old. He and Linda joined the church in January 1979. He wants to give back to the GLC which has been very supportive of his congregation from its beginning. He also wants to learn more about the Conference's inner workings and how his local congregation can be supportive of its mission. In his leisure time, he enjoys golf, pickleball, and walking for exercise, and spending time with his children and grandchildren.

# Sample Ballot

GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING  
April 20, 2024

## **GLC EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Officers elected annually for 1 year term*

Chair –

\*Doug McCann

\_\_\_\_\_

Vice Chair –

\*Sara Charlton

\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary –

John Goss

\_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer –

Brian Rudy

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Trustees - (Vote for 4)**

*Elected for a 3-year term*

Debbie Abbott

Steve Ormond

Art Tucker

\*Mark Nelson

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Denotes incumbent

# LifeChurch Auburn Hills

## Report on New Churches Joining the Covenant (New)

**Church Name:** Life Church Auburn Hills, An Evangelical Covenant Church

**Church Location:** 641 S Briar Vale Dr., Auburn Hills, MI 48326

**Conference:** GREAT LAKES

**Name of Pastor:** Donearl Johnson

**Number of Charter Members:** 43

**Estimated Average Sunday Attendance:** 68

### A Brief History of the Church

LifeChurch Auburn Hills (LCAH) 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 a great response from a beautifully diverse community. We were very 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, international potlucks and witnessed individuals connect, eat, develop relationships, and grow spiritually. Although our physical gatherings were soon disrupted because of the pandemic in 2020, by God's grace, we were able to pivot and 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 placed on our new church plant, we were able to faithfully navigate through the pandemic, social, racial, and political tension by addressing issues head on while keeping God's Kingdom at the forefront.

As we were afforded the opportunity and felt led to resume physical gathering in 2021, we prayerfully and carefully moved forward. In a season of unrest and uncertainty, we continued to trust God even as we experienced some loss of support. There were some who did not return for various reasons including the weight of fully living into the reality of being a multiethnic community. Nevertheless, we relaunched with great hope and expectation as we continue to create space for people from diverse backgrounds and all walks of life to have a transformational encounter with God and experience life as He designed. Through the implementation of creative and innovative initiatives and events we continue to go deeper in our relationships with God and one another through community groups, connecting and engaging young men through our Friday night basketball outreach, partnering with other organizations to provide needed support to our school district, strengthening and empowering families through value added workshops, and gathering together on Sundays to worship and celebrate Jesus, our risen savior!

### Parented or Partnered by Churches in the Covenant or Conference?

LifeChurch Auburn Hills was parented by LifeChurch Southfield. Under the leadership of Alan Tumpkin, Donearl Johnson (Lead Pastor) and Cameron Underdown (Co-Planter) had the privilege of serving an internship in 2018 at LifeChurch Southfield to learn more about effective systems of the church. They both served in multiple capacities in preparation of the launch of LCAH and have benefited from the partnership of the LifeChurch Network (Canton, Southfield, Livonia). Life Church Southfield and Livonia are plants of LifeChurch Canton which was started in 2002, by Alex and Marcie Rahill. The Network was awarded the "Arv Anderson & Larry Sherman Award" in Church Planting in 2019 from the GLC.

### A Brief Description of the Church's Meeting Place

God has blessed us with a great relationship with our school district and we have been able to gather and conduct many outreach events in one of our Elementary Schools (Auburn Elementary). The school has a cafeterium where we host our Sunday gatherings. Also, we use several classrooms for our Life Infants, Life Kids, and Life Students to engage, educate, and empower the next generation. The school is located in a centralized location and is in very close proximity to our High School (Avondale) which is well known among families in Auburn Hills. We received permission to install professional lighting that has been a mutual benefit for the school community and LCAH. We are still mobile, therefore we set up and tear down signage and other equipment every Sunday.

# LifeChurch Auburn Hills

Con't

## Report on New Churches Joining the Covenant (New)

### How Did the Covenant and Conference Help this New Church Get Started?

The Covenant and the Great Lakes Conference (GLC) were critical to the launch of LCAH. I (Pastor Donearl Johnson) was introduced to Alan Tumpkin, who serves as the Director of Church Planting for the GLC. He invited me to Midwinter in January 2018; this was my first introduction to the Covenant. I was able to witness a community passionate about the mission of God, committed to His Word, and a group that was not just diverse visually, but also in voice (leadership/influence). I immediately knew that I had found my tribe because of the call that was on my life. My wife Jenetta and I were invited to the Church Planter Assessment Center. On the first day, we were encouraged to find out that the leaders had been praying over the prospective church planters the previous night. We were informed that they were there to carefully discern three things; 1) If we were called to church planting, 2) If we were a fit for the ECC and 3) if this was the right time. It was encouraging to see how serious and thorough the Covenant was regarding this process. After successfully completing the church planting assessment, we were invited to a training to get acclimated to successful practices and leadership strategies. It was a blessing to witness a balanced approach regarding the necessity of being both spiritual and strategic. The GLC was highly instrumental in originating and managing the process for assessment, training, and coaching as they progressed through the launching phase and beyond.

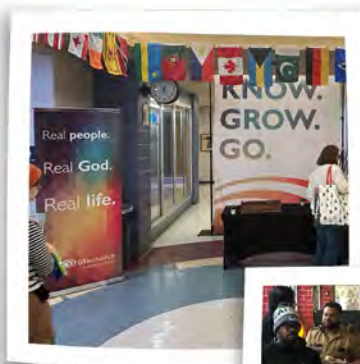
### What Are Effective Ministries the Church Is Currently Providing that Impact People's Lives?

Our community groups have been significantly impactful in engaging in the study of the scriptures, getting to know more about ourselves and others, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus, and helping individuals to discover their gifts and challenging them to use them for God's glory and their neighbor's good. Our outreach system has also been critical as we have created opportunities to meet people where they are and foster relationships, build community, and have provided value added opportunities to bless our community. Also, our worship system has been instrumental in creating a welcoming place for diverse people to gather and have a real encounter with God, receive a relevant word, and be both encouraged and challenged to live the life Jesus came to give us.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

(Conference Superintendent)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Healing Covenant Church

## Report on Churches Joining the Covenant (Adoption)

**Church Name:** Healing Covenant Church

**Church Location:** 1347 S. 6th St., Paducah, KY 42003

**Conference:** GREAT LAKES

**Name of Pastor:** Dawn Choate

**Number of Charter Members:** 31

**Estimated Average Sunday 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 for many years in a difficult church environment that eventually became untenable. As a former pastor of this group when we were all in an Evangelical Covenant Church serving in leadership together, I was invited to join them. While I did not consider myself the "pastor" at that time, the group looked to me for leadership and to maintain a relationship with the ECC as I have been involved in the ECC for over 12 years. We did not know for certain where this would lead, but we have all served together for many years in not only church life and leadership, but in the nonprofit that I founded, Healing Projects. Healing Projects' mission is to simply "love our neighbor" and has served in all forms of mission work and disaster relief both locally and globally.

When summer turned to autumn and the lake was no longer a viable meeting place, we began to have more serious conversations about whether or not we were becoming a church family. Interest was very high and so, in January of 2023, we opened our nonprofit headquarters located in the town of Paducah, Kentucky, to begin the process of meeting more regularly as a church family. I was asked to be the Lead Pastor and accepted that call. The core group of six families grew, and by the end of summer 2023, we were meeting weekly on Sunday mornings at the Paducah location. We spent the fall season working through as a core group studies from 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, it was our desire to be very intentional in 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 services to the public and have been meeting as a church family since that time.

While our church has not been planted by the ECC or partnered with any specific ECC church, our connection with the ECC and the GLC has remained strong for over a decade. I previously held the Bi-Vocational License with the ECC for many years, attended most conferences and retreats, and have taken many of these same team members to ECC events in the past. Our church family remains passionate about missional and nonprofit service and since opening our doors has served foster children, hungry and homeless in our community, and tornado survivors, among other missional projects. We hosted a Merge Ministry team from the ECC and enjoyed a week of service together rebuilding homes from the tornado damage in Kentucky. We prayerfully considered whether to plant "on our own", or to seek to become part of something bigger than just the work God was doing in and through us in our community. Our church agrees wholeheartedly that the ECC and the GLC are a body of Christ followers that is a beautiful complement to the work God wants to do in us. Our long history of relationships with the ECC provides a strong foundation for this relationship so that, even if we have not been officially planted by the ECC, there is no doubt the relationships, resources, and history of the ECC have contributed greatly to the work God continues to do in the South and in western Kentucky.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Conference Superintendent)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_







# GLC Minutes of the 43rd Annual Meeting

Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church - Grand Rapids, MI

April 22, 2023

## I. Organization of the Meeting

### A. Call to Order

Doug McCann

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

### B. Approval of Agenda

Doug McCann

Motion was made by the Executive Board to approve. Motion was approved.

### C. Welcome

Doug McCann

Doug recognized how much we have grown as a conference since 1885, both in number and in diversity. He mentioned that the land we are on currently was once owned by indigenous tribes, many of whom are still in the area. He recognized those in attendance who are part of the larger ECC.

### D. Approval of Standing Rules

Doug McCann

Motion was made by the Executive Board to approve. Motion was approved.

### E. Approval of Committees

Doug McCann

i. Credentials

Jody Eidnes

ii. Tellers

Jody Eidnes, Peg Wolter

iii. Sergeants-at-Arms

Bryan and Jill Van Doornik

iv. Parliamentarian

Steve Ormond

Motion was made by the Executive Board to approve all four of the above committees. Motion approved.

## II. Greetings from the Evangelical Covenant Church

Tammy Swanson-Draheim

Tammy asked for continual prayers for the Covenant Church. A video was shown about the good work that the ECC is doing.

## III. Report of the Credentials Committee

Jody Eidnes

Jody reported that in attendance are 86 delegates and 12 board members for a total of 98 delegates representing 47 churches, 1 association, and 1 camp. Bob Hoey motioned to approve the report, and it was seconded. Motion approved.

## IV. Report of the Nominating Committee

Sara Charlton

Sara Charlton, Chair of the Nominating Committee and Vice Chair to the Executive Board, presented the nominations for Conference Board positions.

## Trustees

John Goss, Grace Evangelical Covenant Church, Clay, NY

Gina Roberts, City Covenant Church, Detroit, MI



# GLC Minutes of the 43rd Annual Meeting

Con't

## Officers

Chair - Doug McCann, Stoneridge Covenant Church, Allison Park, PA (also nominated to his remaining 2 year trustee term)

Vice Chair - Sara Charlton, St John's Evangelical Covenant Church, Millersburg, OH

Secretary - Amorette Clausen, Forest Park Covenant Church, Muskegon, MI

Treasurer - Brian Rudy, Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI

## A. Election of Officers and Board Members

Doug McCann

Ballot was developed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Executive Board. Ballots were distributed and collected.

## V. Good News Report- Church Planting

Life Church Riverside, Detroit MI

Alan Tumpkin recognized Georgia Hill, pastor of LifeChurch Riverside. She began her residency, got a Covenant Agreement, and planted a church online in the midst of the pandemic. Because of her gifts and roots in Detroit and her ministry, it began to flourish online. Within a year the church was self-sustaining. The church meets in person currently. Georgia shared that she sees God moving in the empowerment of leaders and also in the interactions of the church as they reach out into the community.

## VI. Superintendent Report

Garth McGrath

Garth thanked the group as over \$3000 was given to the Pastor's Crisis Fund last night. The GLC consists of 74 churches in 8 states. He recognized the difficulty of the past few years and expressed gratefulness that God is sustaining us. God wants his mission to move forward; our churches are still his chosen vessel to reach our communities. We are living in a post-Christian world, so in order to fulfill the Great Commandment and the Great Commission our churches will need to readjust. Our conference will help us do that. Prayer, Missional Vitality, Leadership Development, Outreach, and Church Planting are the ways the GLC can help. A video was shown to highlight these areas. Garth shared that pastors are fatigued right now. He asked that attenders tell their pastors how much their ministry has meant to them. Encourage your pastors to stay connected with their local cluster of peers and attend the ECC conference. Garth shared the tragic loss of Diamond DeYampert and reported how the GLC supported that church plant, Freedom Room, and that there will be some changes to the church planting process. Mark Nelson prayed for Garth.

## VII. Closed/Disaffiliating Churches

Garth McGrath

**A. Love of Christ Christian Center, Detroit, MI.** This was a bi-vocational church plant in 2010. The church decided to formally close. The motion was made to approve the closure of the church. Motion carried.

## VIII. Good News Report- Church Vitality

Covenant Community Church, Fairfield OH

A video was shown highlighting the church's experience with the Missional Vitality process, specifically the Trellis workshop and then the Finding Your Why workshop. The church decided to fund a Habitat for Humanity house, which reflected the mission they created. God is working in the community through the church because of their generosity. A pastor from the church shared some other ways God is working in their church and community with a focus on families. Garth prayed for the church.

## IX. Treasurer's Report (2022 Financials)

Brian Rudy

Brian shared the 3 things we want from the financial reports: We want them to be honest, to tell us whether we are OK, to tell us whether we are being good stewards. Brian thanked Kim Carlson and Katherine Kayser, the generosity of our churches and individuals in the GLC and ECC. 2022 was a year of blessing and challenge. Church support was the lowest since 2004 and has been decreasing since 2017. There has been a 38% decline in church support in the past 10 years, adjusted for inflation. Brian walked us through the financial highlights for 2022 as provided in the financial documents booklet.

# GLC Minutes of the 43rd Annual Meeting

Con't

## X. Good News Report- Church Leadership

Church Chair Event: Garth McGrath

Garth asked Comelia from Kingdom Embassy Church in Muskegon, Michigan to speak about the Church Chair Event. Her takeaway was about ideas for better digital communication. She also felt encouraged to hear about other churches. Melissa Phillips from Dowagiac, Michigan shared how what she heard at the event empowered her to meet with her pastors and ask questions about how to do better. She was encouraged by others who are feeling similarly, dealing with similar things. Dick Kamps from Forest Park Covenant Church in Muskegon, Michigan shared that it covered a large variety of topics. He appreciated hearing about the pastor/chair relationship, which should be built on mutual appreciation of each other's roles so the church mission can move forward. He felt a sense of camaraderie among the chairs and a sense of support, appreciation, adoration. Garth prayed for our church chairs.

## XI. New Business

### A. Proposed Constitution and Bylaws Amendments

Doug McCann

We have fulfilled the process for proposing the amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. The current and proposed versions of the Constitution and Bylaws are in the delegates' packets already. They will also be distributed to the churches, prior to January, and voted on at the next annual meeting. There will be opportunities to learn more about the documents before we get to this point next year. A motion that the Constitution and Bylaws documents be incorporated in the minutes of this meeting. A motion was made by Bob Hoey and seconded. The motion carried. A question was asked, whether a summary of the changes will be distributed. Doug said yes, the proposed changes will be fully known.

### B. 2023 Budget

Brian Rudy

Brian explained the 2023 budget as it is printed in the financial booklet. A question was asked about the 15 churches in the conference who are not giving to the conference. Doug answered that there is not a strict "rule" about what churches give. Doug recognized Jody Eidnes who spoke about the beauty of the Covenant, doing things together that we cannot do alone. Since churches participate in the conference voluntarily, churches are not required to give but it is our hope and wish that our churches will give. A remark was made that the budgeted church support is less than what was given in 2022. Brian answered that there is a trend of a decrease in giving, but the need is there to give. Our expenses cannot exceed revenues indefinitely. A question was asked clarifying the consolidated and general fund. A comment was made that it would be helpful to know exactly what those dollar amounts are for, so we have a clear sense of what we are giving for. Where is the money going and how is it being spent? A comment was made that the video shown about the GLC would be very helpful for people in churches to see so they know what their giving is for. A comment was made that we have an obligation to give because God asks us to give. The budget comes as a motion from the Executive Board. The motion passed.

### C. Interim Budget for 2024

Brian Rudy

We need approval to adopt the interim 2024 budget since the meeting isn't until April. A motion from the board was made. The motion carried.

### D. Approval of 43rd Annual Meeting Minutes

Doug McCann

We need the Executive Board to have authority to approve the meeting minutes. The motion was made and approved.

### E. Approval of Ordination Candidates

Doug McCann

Ken White shared that we affirmed 42 ministry licenses consisting of 16 bi-vocational and 26 minister's license as well as 3 ordinands. The ministry licenses need approval from the annual meeting. A motion was made, seconded, and approved.

## XII. Good News Report- Church Outreach

Baptisms: Garth McGrath

There were many baptisms over the year that we can celebrate!

# GLC Minutes of the 43rd Annual Meeting

Con't

## XIII. Old Business

### A. Church Planting Initiative

Alan Tumpkin

In 2019, we had funds given to us for planting churches. We have been able to plant many churches with more on the horizon. He implored attenders to give to the church planting mission.

### B. Helping GLC Churches with Financial Matters

Jody Eidnes

Jody shared that the Covenant has a grant for churches who are under-resourced. They can get 1 year of accounting help. A cohort for generosity has begun. It is a year-long, 4-session commitment and 7 churches have taken advantage of it. A new one will begin after this one ends. There are multiple training sessions throughout the year. There will be an event Sept 23 for churches, and there will be a session for Understanding Church Finances.

### C. Strengthening Communication with Conference Churches

Garth McGrath

We would love for churches to show the GLC conference ministry video on Sunday morning; it will be sent to pastors and chairs via email. We can also make it available in shorter segments if needed. We have a GLC facebook page (Great Lakes Conference of the ECC). We also have an E-newsletter sent through email.

## XIV. GLC Staff Q & A

GLC Staff

Staff was available to answer questions. Bruce commented that he would encourage staff to send their prayer requests to churches. Julie asked how we find out about various opportunities and events available. Garth answered that they communicate primarily through pastors and church chairs. Steve commented that we need to leave here feeling a “glass is full” mentality and affirmed our staff. Jared shared that his church has been in transition and thanked the staff for support. He committed to do better with giving and increasing awareness within his church of what the GLC is doing. Bob observed that our staff has grown throughout his years in the conference. Our staff represents a tremendous amount of support for our churches. Doug prayed for our staff.

## XV. Election Results for Officers & Board Members

Doug McCann

Jody shared that the results of the election were unanimous.

## XVI. Installation of Officers & Board Members

Garth McGrath

Garth addressed the board and installed the new members.

## XVII. Expression of Thanks to Retiring Board Members

Garth McGrath

Garth presented Bruce Baehr with a gift and thanked him for his work on the GLC board.

## XVIII. 2024 Annual Meeting Celebration Location

Jody Eidnes

Jody shared that Faith Covenant Church in Farmington Hills, Michigan will host the 2024 Annual Meeting. The date is not confirmed yet.

## XIX. Adjournment

Doug McCann

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Motion carried.

# President's Letter - Tammy Swanson-Draheim

*Dear Friends in the Great Lakes Conference,*

Greetings and grace to you all as you gather in Jesus's name to celebrate what God has done within your conference this season.

**As you join in worship and the business tasks before you, I hope and pray that you will experience the gift of being united in mission and the blessing of being present to one another. I look forward to hearing more of how God has been doing immeasurably more through you.**

**A few of the many areas where I continue to experience God's faithfulness:**

**Prayer:** Our Covenant Offices team continues to lean in to prayer. Each of our staff teams has been praying for one of our 11 conferences. The President's Office team has been curating a monthly prayer email being sent out to anyone who would like to subscribe, and we have been delighted to receive prayer requests as well as hear stories of how God is answering prayer throughout the Covenant. If you would like to join this list, please visit [covchurch.org/now](http://covchurch.org/now). I hope you will continue to find these monthly prayer emails an encouraging resource. Our 3StrandStrong collaboration in mission (local church, regional conference, and denominational team) is strengthened through our steadfast prayers.

**Presence:** My travel schedule takes me many places where I get to see God's people engaged in God's mission. This year I have worshiped in many different settings and languages and have met with numerous groups of people. I am grateful to see how **the good news of Jesus is reaching people everywhere!** I plan to continue to visit and celebrate with local churches, pastors, and leaders, as well as our global partners in each of the regions where God is working through the Covenant. What a joy and privilege to experience the diversity of the kingdom of heaven.

**Pivot:** This word seemed to encapsulate how ministries redefined their approach to local church life at the beginning of the pandemic. As we re-engage a post-pandemic ministry model, the Covenant's denominational staff is also in a place of pivoting through the beginning stages of our reorganization. This year we began a multi-phased "return to office" approach as we continue to restructure. Please pray with us and for us as we assess our structure, systems, and methods of delivering resources to better serve our local churches and conferences. We all have a wonderful opportunity to re-imagine ways to reach people with God's love.

Thank you for endeavoring in Jesus's name to be the good news. May all glory be to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

*In awe of what God has already done and what he will do!*



Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT, EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

# GLC Executive Board Chair - Douglas McCann

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the Board routines we started a year or so ago is a weekly prayer meeting. We did not intend it this way, but a side benefit has been to give Board members an opportunity to better understand the ministry rhythms of the Conference. We hear from churches facing incredible challenges from within and without. We hear from pastors who, while comforting and encouraging their flock, are beset by threats to the health and well-being of themselves and their family. The pain and heartache caused by these situations is profound.

I am grateful that in many of these situations the GLC can come alongside these pastors and congregations to offer comfort and assistance through the ministry of Garth and the GLC staff. I have learned that Garth spends a lot of time on the road. He wears out a vehicle every four years so that he can be present in person to help pastors or congregations through crises. Jody Eidnes not only keeps the Conference functioning in a well-organized manner, she also coordinates our Leadership Development ministry. Alan Tumpkin and Phil Carr assist in the difficult ministry of church planting. Peg Cichon helps churches regain missional traction and often travels to facilitate workshops at their location. Kim Carlson keeps our financial house in good order and exercises stewardship by maximizing revenue and minimizing expenses. Peg Wolter and Jani Gustafson have the huge task of supporting the efforts of all these people. I cannot find the words to express my profound respect and appreciation for the ministry of these people to the churches and pastors of the Great Lakes Conference.

In my report last year, I used the picture given in Psalm 40:1-3 (NLT) where David talks about being lifted out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and mire, having his feet set on solid ground, and being steadied as he walked along. The ministries above seem mostly focused on being lifted out of the mud and mire and having feet set on solid ground. These are important ministries that must continue.

But we are also paying attention to being steadied as we walk along. “Walking along” involves change and choosing a direction. In addition to responding to immediate needs, we are seeking God’s will as to what changes to make in our ministry direction. Our Constitution expresses the GLC’s purpose by saying: “... the GLC exists to serve the local churches and to minister on their behalf ...” This is further explained in terms of assisting individual churches in their ministry, facilitating groups of churches in their shared ministry, and linking the denomination with the local churches for the benefit of the local churches.

With our Constitution’s emphasis on the local churches, we started a few months ago to invite the local churches and their representatives to be core participants in the Conference ministry planning from beginning to end. Many of you have already helped us by explaining the ministry direction of your church, the ways God has equipped you for this ministry, and any needs you may still have in pursuing your mission. Thank you! If you have not yet helped us in this way please do so. It’s not too late. All contributions will be accepted at any time.

Between now and the next Annual Celebration, we intend to consult with you, the delegates to this Annual Celebration, on the development of the GLC ministry direction. Please help us by fully participating in this consultative portion of the process.

We are developing a new Ministry Plan in conjunction with the churches as part of a bigger goal. We want to embody the theme of this year’s Annual Celebration: “Many members, one body”. Our hope is that by closely linking the ministry of the Conference to the ministry of the churches that the body will draw closer together and become even more mutually supportive and fruitful.

I would like to close my report with a big Thank You! The budget the Board proposed for 2023 had no increase in the church support of the Conference. Even holding steady seemed like an optimistic projection because we had gone through several years of decreasing church support, starting well before the pandemic. At the time of this writing the 2023 numbers are still being finalized. But it is safe to say that the church support of the Conference showed a healthy increase. This is very encouraging to us.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas McCann  
GLC Executive Board Chair

# Superintendent Report - Garth McGrath

*I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 1:3-6*

At the close of 2023, I once again join the Apostle Paul in giving thanks to God for the faithful partnership in the gospel shared by the churches of the Great Lakes Conference. I am thankful for the local ministry of our churches and for the contributions they continue to make in order to sustain our shared ministry at both the conference and denominational levels. Because of our partnership in the past year, people throughout our region heard the gospel, witnessed churches embracing ethnic diversity, were prayed for, were invited to follow Jesus, were served in practical ways, were disciplined, and were encouraged to use their gifts for God's glory and neighbor's good. In the pages of this Annual Report, you will read about initiatives of the Conference directly tied to our mission priorities of Church Planting, Missional Vitality, Leadership Development, and Outreach. Here are some introductory comments and highlights:

**CHURCH PLANTING:** Thanks to a generous matching grant (provided in 2019) to plant four churches and thanks to proceeds from the sale of the Redeemer Covenant Church building in Caledonia, MI in 2021 (70% of which can be used for new church plants), the GLC has had the resources to start new churches in recent years. In 2023, we started New Wine Covenant Church in Mason, MI, under the leadership of bi-vocational pastors, Rick and Terri McGarry. Alan Tumpkin (half-time Director of Church Planting) and Phil Carr (part-time Church Planting Coach, whose position was funded by a grant) guided, coached, supported, and provided pastoral care to the McGarrys and to the Church Planters in our other recent church plants in Auburn Hills, MI (LifeChurch Auburn Hills); Detroit, MI (LifeChurch Riverside); Grand Rapids MI (Mosaic); Muskegon MI (Kingdom Embassy); Elkins, WV (One Hope); and Columbus, OH (Life Transformation).

**MISSIONAL VITALITY:** Our Missional Vitality ministry gained momentum in 2023 as 18 of our churches engaged with the resources we offer in partnership with our ECC denominational Missional Vitality Team. The resources include the "Periodic Health Checkup" survey tool, the "Finding Your Why" workshop, the "Living Your Why" workshop, the "Leadership Math" tool, a "Pastoral Transitions" guide, "Heart, Mind, Soul", "Change Strategy", and Missional Vitality Coaching and/or Consulting for Pastors and Leadership Teams/Councils. There continues to be no cost to local churches for any of the workshops, vitality tools, or coaching/consulting. The GLC is able to underwrite the use of these resources thanks to our partnership with the ECC and thanks to funds generated by the sale of our Caledonia, MI church building (Redeemer) in 2021 (30% of which may be used for Missional Vitality purposes). Peg Cichon, our Missional Vitality Liaison with the ECC, does a tremendous job of guiding our churches in the use of the wide range of vitality resources available to our churches.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Our leadership development priorities in 2023 once again coalesced around equipping pastors and elected lay leaders for the challenges created by our rapidly changing culture, providing leadership training to address particular needs in local churches, assisting in pastoral transitions, supporting pastors in their credentialing process with the ECC, and caring for our pastors and lay leaders as they lead their churches.



# Mission Vitality Report

Peg Kohring Cichon  
GLC Annual Meeting  
Missional Vitality  
April 2023 - April 2024

Missional Vitality has resources for healthy missional churches and churches wanting to gain missional traction. A list of questions to help your church decide what may be helpful and a description of the resources follows this Annual Meeting report.

These are the Missional Vitality Resources that have been facilitated by Vitality staff:

## Finding Your Why

Bethany Covenant Church, DuBois, PA; Bethany Covenant Church Lyndhurst, OH; First Covenant Church, Youngstown, OH; Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI; and Stoneridge Covenant Church, Allison Park, PA

## Living Your Why

Bethany Covenant Church, DuBois, PA and Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI

## Change Style Assessment and Heart Mind Soul

Stoneridge Community Church, Allison Park, PA

Participated in ECC Vitality Team on 10 calls and 3 training sessions.

Great Lakes Conference Training - Leadership Math and Conflict Resolution





# Mission Vitality Resources

## Vitality Resources

Missional Vitality equips local churches for strong congregational life and healthy leadership through assessments, workshops, and resources. All resources have been translated into Spanish. Contact Peg Kohring Cichon, Great Lakes Conference Vitality Liaison for more information: pegkohring@gmail.com or call 616-510-1221

## Core Congregational Strengths

- **Does your church have a clear vision of why it exists and a plan for implementing the vision?**
  - o Finding Your Why – In-Person workshop led by Covenant facilitator - In-person, 5½ hours
  - o Living Your Why – Self-led Video Lesson designed for Leadership Retreat or over multiple sessions. Pre-worksheet helps prepare by assessing VIM: Vision, Intention, Means. A one-day leadership team retreat or divided over 3-4 leadership meetings
- **Does your church need a comprehensive online assessment of congregational health targeting missional identity, leadership, and vision?**
  - o pH Check – church-wide assessment with Covenant-led debriefing afterward
- **Do your ministry teams and leadership understand how each member makes change decisions?**
  - o Change Style Assessment – Facilitated presentation and paper-based assessment - 2 hours
- **Does your church need to understand the people assets in your congregation to develop for developing new leaders?**
  - o HMS-Heart Mind Spirit – Virtual or in-person workshop (in person is best!) - 2½ hours
- **Is your church in a transition and needs to be reminded of its history and its current makeup or reengage its neighborhood?**
  - o Transition Resources: Congregational Snapshot – Self-led booklet w/questions, designed for a Leadership Team or any team

## Healthy Interpersonal Relationships

- **What is healthy leadership, and how do you develop it in your church?**
  - o Leadership Math – Virtual workshop - 2½ hours
- **Is there a need to strengthen emotionally healthy relationships in your congregation?**
  - o Trellis – In-person workshop led by Covenant facilitator - In-person, 5½ hours

## Navigating Problem Issues

- **Are you experiencing a sense of loss during change, such as a pastoral transition or church closure?**
  - o Transition Resources: Processing Loss in Congregations – Self-led, 2 video sessions, 10-15 minutes + activities/handout
- **Are there long, unaddressed conflicts in your congregation, leadership, or ministry teams that must be resolved?**
  - o Transition Resources: Navigating Church Conflict – Self-led 20-minute Video lesson + PPT, handouts, and template
  - o Pathway to PEACE – Virtual or in-person workshop led by Covenant facilitator - In-person, 2½ hours
- **Is your church experiencing in-fighting and power struggles, or is a pastor constantly battling leadership?**
  - o Transition Resources: Healthy Systems – 5 self-led sessions, 15 – 20 min + discussion/study guide
  - o Transition Resources: Navigating Church Conflict – Self-led 20-minute Video lesson + PPT, handouts, and template

# GLC Ministerial Association Chair - Ken White

Over the past year, I have served as the Chair of the GLC Ministerial Association (MA) along with MA officers Jay Fast, Carl Franzon, Lynne McLaughlin, and Debbie Montzingo, with Garth McGrath serving as an ex-officio member. Our Conference is spread far and wide, with many states not even near a Great Lake! We have churches in Michigan, Ohio, the western half of Pennsylvania, western New York, Kentucky, Tennessee, the western half of Virginia, and West Virginia. There are nearly 200 credentialed ministers in the conference. This past year, the GLCMA coordinated the Fall Pastors Retreat with speaker Dennis Edwards, Vice President for Church Relations and Dean of North Park Seminary. The Following were Reflection Questions and Answers shared with the Executive Committee of the ECC that I serve on as the ministerial chair of the GLC. I present this as the annual report for this past year.

**1. *What are the most significant challenges currently facing those in your association? What resources are needed for responding to these challenges?***

The most challenging aspect of pastors' lives continues being living in a culture that is polarized, making it difficult to speak and live out the gospel. During the COVID pandemic (2020-22) one pastor said that it became unwise to use scripture to cite a basis for action. It is difficult to be a faithful biblical witness during a time when both sides cite the same scriptures. The issues at stake are significant, concern justice, relate to overcoming prejudice and violence. Along with this is the day to day stewardship of the local church. Pastors are called to find new ways of going forward while maintaining ministries. Strategizing for the future has always been a challenge, and a challenge not to compromise oneself. I've seen ministers continue to be resilient in light of all this.

**2. *Where do you see the Spirit at work amongst your association members?***

Association members are committed to their walk with God. They pursue healthy boundaries, spiritual depth, and sabbath rest. They continue to express a commitment to the gospel and are deeply engaged in acts of service to the community. New churches continue to rise up.

**3. *How can we learn from your association in order to facilitate connection with others in ministry? What are ways we can pray for greater connection?***

We have new pastors in the LifeChurch network in the Detroit area who work together toward a common goal, using resources in common to move their mission forward. Dawn Choate at Healing Covenant Church in Paducah, KY through Healing Projects (a community of volunteers), passionately serves neighbors, both locally and globally. Their motto "No task too small, no person too insignificant." Arthur and Ardena Duren continue to serve the greater Muskegon community, one example is after-school programs for children. Pray for these and other ministers to be faithful in their witness.

**4. *How is your Ministerial Association living into the Six Fold Test?***

There is a new multi-cultural church in Grand Rapids (Mosaic Covenant Church of Grand Rapids), along with the ongoing multicultural work of One Church in Louisville, Kentucky. There is strong multi-cultural work in Detroit with the LifeChurch Network, along with Citadel of Faith and Hope Community church in Detroit, and our continuing works in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Muskegon.

# GLC Spiritual Directors Network

2023 is the ninth year the Spiritual Directors Network of the Great Lakes Conference (SDNGLC) has been operational as an ongoing Special Ministries category and the fourteenth year of its existence. We continued to find ways to gather remotely as a Network in 2023 as we began to consider our future form.

While we have not fully returned to our previous practice of offering two in person retreats, we did gather this past year to begin the conversation about what the Network will become in the future. This conversation is important as our key members are seeking to retire or move on from their current roles. We are engaging in intentional visioning conversations that will form the foundation for our next stages as a Network.

In terms of ongoing support and resourcing for our members, we have begun to work with an organization called Journey Center of Michigan (JCM) to invite us into contemplative experiences on a regular basis. It is anticipated that this association with JCM will provide retreat options and offer enrichment and continuing education opportunities for the Network members.

We currently have 15 active spiritual directors engaged throughout the Conference. All are eligible to attend the retreats and are seeing directees on a regular basis. Of the individuals being seen regularly, roughly 40–45% are Covenant pastors. Many of our members conduct retreats at and classes in their congregations and elsewhere, some also have ministries in prisons, inner healing, and on miscellaneous other topics. Several of our directors offer direction at women's and men's retreats at Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp (PLCBC). Through those associations, PLCBC has added a Contemplative Retreat to their retreat season, led by SDNGLC directors. Through all these efforts, many people are ministered to each year. Sharing our experiences with each other is part of the resourcing and networking advantages we receive when we gather at our annual retreat.

Given there was a surplus in our account at the end of 2023, we are not requesting annual support from the Conference for 2024. We do anticipate requesting funding for future years to allow our retreats to be offered to the Network members at no cost to them. With the recent pledge to pay for the first 6 sessions for pastors and church leaders, the Network will benefit accordingly.

We have submitted our annual financial summary as part of this process and it is with deep gratitude, for the ongoing support of the Great Lakes Conference, we submit this annual report for 2023.



# GLC Women Ministries

Greetings from the Women Ministries Team of the Great Lakes Conference.

The past year marked a significant transition in Women Ministries in the Great Lakes Conference. For many years our team has been responsible for planning the fall retreats for women at the camps in our region, and historically there have been two retreats. One at Camp Mission Meadows serving churches on the eastern end of our Conference and one at Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp serving churches on the western end of our Conference. In 2023, the camp staff at each of our camps planned the retreats with input from our Women Ministries Team. And instead of having two retreats, there were three. We were delighted to have Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp host a retreat in the fall for women in the southern part of our Conference.

The Women's Fall Retreat at Portage Lake Bible Covenant Camp featured Julia Sandstrom, the Teaching Pastor at Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church in Grand Rapids, MI, as the speaker. Forty-nine women from eight churches attended the retreat.

The Women's Fall Retreat at Camp Mission Meadows featured Rachel Johnson, Director of Music and Family Ministries at Northbrook in Northbrook, IL, as the speaker. The theme was "Drawing Close to God." Seventy-five women from eight churches attended the retreat.

The Women's fall Retreat at Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp in Virginia featured Sara Charlton, Pastor of St. John's Ev. Cov. Church in Millersburg, OH, as speaker. The theme was "Honey in the Rock". Twenty women from seven churches participated.

Comments by attendees of each of the retreats were very positive. Worship services were uplifting. The messages were encouraging. The fellowship was rich. And the new friendships people made were a blessing. We encourage women from all of our GLC churches to check the camp calendars for the 2024 Women's Fall Retreats.

Moving forward, the GLC Women Ministries Team anticipates serving as a resource to help local churches initiate ministries to women in their congregations. If your church would like to be resourced in this way, please contact Phyllis Van at 614-657-6504.



# NAJO - North American Japanese Outreach

NAJO Ministry ----- Shunichi and Masako Miyamoto

We came to Michigan in 2010. We're so thankful to the Lord that our ministry is still strong.

## Praises:

### ESL (English as a second language) at Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI

Three new conversational partners joined our team. They are all in their 20's and understand Japanese. They are so helpful to understand the difference of our cultures. We decided to have a short Bible study in English knowing that 99% of these people's background is non-Christian. From time to time we see puzzled looks on the faces of the ESL attendees when we share Bible verses like "Don't let your hearts be troubled", "Come to me, all who labor...". But in our country we grew up always hearing the words "make your own efforts and rely upon yourself".

### Other classes -

We have cooking, paper craft cards, Sara's scrap booking, Karen's cross-stitching classes. We have on-line Bible studies (sometimes in person in Grand Rapids). We participate in One Voice Prayer Group and Bible study with Japanese in various countries. Shunichi concluded a devotion "Meeting 365 person in the Bible" for the One Voice Prayer members. He decided to do it again, but bi-lingual with illustrations on Facebook 2024.

Within our NAJO Board we had two families move out of Michigan. Our board chair was in one of the families that moved away. Thankfully, one of our Faith Covenant Church members took the position of Board Chair for NAJO so that we can continue to do our mission work. We're a small group but support within the ministry is joyful and harmonious. Last year, we visited 22 cities. We were able to preach for 18 Sundays, we participated in five seminars. We visited four places to have Michigan reunions with the Japanese people that had moved back to Japan. We traveled over 11,433 miles and there were 36 lives committed to Jesus.



# GLC Executive Board and GLC Staff

2023

**Chair**.....Doug McCann  
Stoneridge Covenant Church, Allison Park, PA

**Vice Chair**.....Sara Charlton  
St. John's Ev. Cov. Church, Millersburg, OH

**Secretary**.....Amorette Clausen  
Forest Park Covenant Church, Muskegon, MI

**Treasurer**.....Brian Rudy  
Thornapple Ev. Cov. Church, Grand Rapids, MI

**Trustee**.....Gina Roberts  
City Covenant Church, Detroit, MI

**Trustee**.....Mark Nelson  
Austintown Comm. Ev. Cov. Church, Austintown, OH

**Trustee**.....Ardena Duren  
Kingdom Embassy Cov. Church, Muskegon, MI

**Trustee**.....Harvey Cozart  
Lighthouse Church, Richmond, KY

**Trustee**.....Jim Russell  
Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI

**Trustee**.....Connie Berry  
Faith Covenant Church, Westerville, OH

**Trustee**.....John Goss  
Grace Evangelical Covenant Church, Clay, NY

**Superintendent**.....Garth McGrath  
*email - garth@greatlakes.cc*

**Director of  
Church Planting**.....Alan Tumpkin  
*email - alan@lifechurchsouthfield.org*

**Conference  
Administrator**.....Jody Eidnes  
*email - jody@greatlakes.cc*

**Finance Officer**.....Kim Carlson  
*email - kimpamcarlson@att.net*

**Finance Assistant**.....Peg Wolter  
*email - peg@greatlakes.cc*

**Administrative  
Assistant**.....Janelle Gustafson  
*email - jani@greatlakes.cc*

# Great Lakes Conference Churches

## 2023

Four Rivers Church	Calvert City	Kentucky
Grace Community Covenant Church	Louisville	Kentucky
One Church Louisville, Inc.	Louisville	Kentucky
Lighthouse Church	Richmond	Kentucky
Christ Community Church	Allegan	Michigan
LifeChurch Auburn Hills	Auburn Hills	Michigan
Evergreen Evangelical Covenant Church	Branch	Michigan
Life Covenant Church	Canton	Michigan
Evangelical Covenant Church	Cheboygan	Michigan
Dearborn Evangelical Covenant Church	Dearborn	Michigan
Citadel of Faith Covenant Church	Detroit	Michigan
City Covenant Church	Detroit	Michigan
Detroit Bible Tabernacle	Detroit	Michigan
Hope Community Church	Detroit	Michigan
LifeChurch Riverside	Detroit	Michigan
Messiah Church	Detroit	Michigan
Federated Covenant Church	Dowagiac	Michigan
Faith Covenant Church	Farmington Hills	Michigan
Bachelor Evangelical Covenant Church	Fountain	Michigan
Esperanza Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	Michigan
First Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	Michigan
Mosaic Covenant Church of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids	Michigan
Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church	Grand Rapids	Michigan
Harbert Community Church	Harbert	Michigan
Kalamazoo Covenant Church	Kalamazoo	Michigan
Bretton Woods Covenant Church	Lansing	Michigan
Evangelical Covenant Church	LeRoy	Michigan
Christ Covenant Church	Livonia	Michigan
LifeChurch Livonia	Livonia	Michigan
Faith Covenant Church	Manistee	Michigan
New Wine Covenant Church	Mason	Michigan
Kingdom Embassy Covenant Church	Muskegon	Michigan
Miracle of Faith Ministries	New Baltimore	Michigan
Evangelical Covenant Church	Northport	Michigan
Forest Park Covenant Church	Norton Shores	Michigan
New Hope Church	Richland	Michigan
Saranac Community Church	Saranac	Michigan
Crossroads Community Church	South Lyon	Michigan
LifeChurch Southfield	Southfield	Michigan
West Bay Covenant Church	Traverse City	Michigan

# Great Lakes Conference Churches

2023

Tustin Covenant Church	Tustin	Michigan
Evangelical Covenant Church	Whitehall	Michigan
Fruitland Evangelical Covenant Church	Whitehall	Michigan
Grace Evangelical Covenant Church	Clay	New York
First Covenant Church	Jamestown	New York
Zion Covenant Church	Jamestown	New York
Redeemer Evangelical Covenant Church	Liverpool	New York
First Covenant Church	Ashtabula	Ohio
Austintown Community Ev. Cov. Church	Austintown	Ohio
Life Transformation Church	Columbus	Ohio
Revival Covenant Church	Columbus	Ohio
Sanctuary Columbus Church	Columbus	Ohio
Journey Covenant Church	Cuyahoga Falls	Ohio
Covenant Community Church	Fairfield	Ohio
Redeemer Church	Hamilton	Ohio
Bethany Covenant Church	Lyndhurst	Ohio
St. John's Evangelical Covenant Church	Millersburg	Ohio
Faith Covenant Church	Westerville	Ohio
First Covenant Church	Willoughby Hills	Ohio
First Covenant Church	Youngstown	Ohio
Stoneridge Covenant Church	Allison Park	Pennsylvania
First Covenant Church	Bessemer	Pennsylvania
Bethany Covenant Church	DuBois	Pennsylvania
Emmanuel Mission Church	Kane	Pennsylvania
Cityview Covenant Church	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania
Keystone Church of Hazelwood	Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania
Evangelical Covenant Church	Port Allegany	Pennsylvania
Scandia Evangelical Covenant Church	Russell	Pennsylvania
Mission Covenant Church	Sugar Grove	Pennsylvania
Pleasant Community Church	Warren	Pennsylvania
Wallens Creek Covenant Church	Duffield	Virginia
New Community Covenant Church	Buckhannon	West Virginia
One Hope Covenant Church	Elkins	West Virginia



# GLC Camp Board & Nominations

## Mission Meadows, LLC Board

Report of the GLC Executive Board to the 2024 GLC Annual Meeting

### **Elected 2024 by the GLC Executive Board:**

Position 5: James Swanson.....begin second term, expires 2026.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 6: Carolyn Palmquist.....begin third term, expires 2026.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 7: Fred Rizzuto.....begin third term, expires 2026.....Non-Covenant Church Member

### **Not up for renewal this year, and continuing to serve:**

Position 1: Tom Jones.....middle of third term, expires 2025.....Non-Covenant Church Member  
Position 3: Aaron Reinard.....middle of third term, expires 2025.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 4: Steve Zimmerly.....middle of third term, expires 2025.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 2: Tami LaPaze.....middle of first term, expires 2025.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 8: Paul Aley.....middle of first term, expires 2025.....Covenant Church Member  
Position 9: Unoccupied

### **Balance of Covenant/Non-Covenant Board Members:**

2/3 of the Board Members must be members of Covenant Churches

If the nominees are elected...

6/8 Cov = 75%

2/8 Non = 25%

The ratio of proposed board members meets the criteria.

## **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THOSE BEING ELECTED**

### **Carolyn Palmquist**

Carolyn is a member of Deer Grove Covenant Church in Palatine, IL. She provides outsourced accounting support for her home church as well as many churches and church preschools in the Central Conference. She took over the Mission Meadows Board treasurer position in the spring of 2022. Carolyn and her husband, Dan, have two grown sons. She is a life-long camper and supporter of Camp Mission Meadows (CMM) and can bring organizational, accounting, and relational skills as well as enthusiasm for the continued ministry of CMM. Carolyn worked on the CMM staff in 1980-1982 and was on the planning committee for the 2013 staff reunion. She grew up at Bethany Covenant Church in Lyndhurst, Ohio.

### **Fred Rizzuto**

Fred worked at Camp Mission Meadows for nine summers as a youth from age 16 to 25. These were the most formative summers of his life for his faith. Because of this, he wants to help ensure that Camp Mission Meadows is functioning at a level that is self-sustaining for generations to come. It is important to both himself and his community that Camp Mission Meadows remains an anchor for faith-based camping on Chautauqua Lake, amidst a time when other camps in the region are closing their doors and operations. Fred is married to Danyel and has two children. Part of his family had the recent opportunity to assist Camp Mission Meadows with cooking and serving lunch for a large group of campers. In his own words: "Spending those few hours there 'working' was such a refreshing experience. I was again reminded of the magic of the place. I want to be a part of preserving that spirit for generations to come." In his spare time, Fred enjoys photography, travelling with his wife, fishing with his boys, watching his youngest play sports, and being a fan of Babe Ruth.

# GLC Camp Board & Nominations

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## Mission Meadows, LLC Board

Report of the GLC Executive Board to the 2024 GLC Annual Meeting

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THOSE BEING ELECTED

#### **James Swanson**

From James's childhood up to the present, Christian camping has played a significant role in his personal spiritual formation and pastoral ministry. It was at kids' camp that James took ownership of his faith and his infant baptism. He and his wife, Dawn, have participated and spoken at numerous children, youth, and family camps and retreats, including Camp Mission Meadows. James and Dawn are blessed with eight children, six of whom they adopted, who have and continue to be blessed by camp. Some of their older children have served on summer, winter retreat, and yearly staff at Covenant Point in Iron River, Michigan. Along with mapping out the worship and preaching rhythms for the Christian Year, James is quick to place on his local church calendar every camp and retreat for his faith community to enjoy. One of James's passions is coming alongside and ministering to the camp staff and their families which he did for ten years while at Grace Covenant Church in Iron River, Michigan (Covenant Point's staff attend Grace Covenant). James is also passionate about sharing the blessings of camp with his community, GLC, ECC and local congregations. James is delighted and excited about serving on the board for Camp Mission Meadows.

## Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp

Report of the GLC Executive Board to the 2024 GLC Annual Meeting

#### **Elected 2024 by the GLC Executive Board:**

- Position 4: Christopher McPeak .....begins first term, expires 2027.....Covenant Church Member
- Position 5: Eric Lans .....begins second term, expires 2027.....Non-Covenant Church Member
- Position 6: Cindy Pointe .....begins second term, expires 2027.....Covenant Church Member

#### **Not up for renewal this year, and continuing to serve:**

- Position 1: Krista Umanos.....serving second term, which ends in 2026.....Non-Covenant Church Member
- Position 2: Craig Smith .....serving first term, which ends in 2026.....Covenant Church Member
- Position 3: Michelle Bennett .....serving first term, which ends in 2026.....Covenant Church Member
- Position 7: Steve Hansma .....serving second term, ending in 2025.....Covenant Church Member
- Position 8: Stephanie Taylor .....serving first term, ending in 2025.....Covenant Church Member
- Position 9: Mark Schut .....serving second term, ending in 2025.....Covenant Church Member

#### **Balance of Covenant/Non-Covenant Board Members:**

2/3 of the Board Members must be members of Covenant Churches

If the nominees are elected...

7/9 Cov = 77%

2/9 Non = 22%

The ratio of proposed board members meets the criteria.

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THOSE BEING ELECTED

#### **Position 4. Christopher McPeak, MD.**

Chris is nominated to serve a 3-year term starting in 2024. If elected he would be eligible for another 3-year term starting in 2027. Chris is an Emergency Medicine doctor in the Detroit area. He has worked at Corewell Health William Beaumont University Hospital in Royal Oak for almost 20 years. He is an active member at Faith Covenant Church in Farmington Hills, MI, where he serves on the worship team. Chris has been involved in missions, helping lead teams in the Dominican Republic and Uganda, and he will be leading a medical team to Uganda this summer. He and his wife, Hannah, have been coming to Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp for 15 years with their 3 now-teenage children. He is a big believer in the mission of Portage Lake and is excited and honored to join the board to continue to change lives for Jesus Christ.

# GLC Camp Board & Nominations

## Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp Report of the GLC Executive Board to the 2024 GLC Annual Meeting

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THOSE BEING ELECTED

#### **Position 5. Eric M. Lans**

Eric was elected to the PLCBC Board for a 3-year term in 2021 and is eligible to serve another 3-year term, if the camp board nominates him to do so. Eric accepted Christ as a boy at PLCBC. Growing up, he attended many kids' camps and family camps at Portage Lake and worked for four summers at camp during high school and college. He served on the PLCBC board once before in the early 2000s and still regularly attends family camps there. Eric is a Certified Financial Planner and part owner of First Financial Advisors, Inc., an SEC-registered investment advisor in Muskegon, MI. He received his BA in Business Administration from Michigan State University and his MBA from the University of Michigan. In addition to serving on PLCBC's board, Eric served two terms on the board of directors (including two years as president) of Harbor Hospice, an affiliate of Trinity Health, and two terms on the board of directors of Pioneer Resources, Inc. He is also the Chair of the La Gonave Action Team, an auxiliary group organized under Global Partners, the international missions organization of the Wesleyan Church, supporting the Wesleyan Hospital in Anse-à-Galets, Haiti, on the island of La Gonave. Eric lives with his wife, Tonia, and three teenage kids, Ella, Zachary and Gabrielle, near Grand Haven, MI. They currently attend Watermark, a Wesleyan church in Grand Haven. Though there isn't a Covenant church near to where he lives, he still has many friends and family in the Covenant and will always have a strong connection to the Covenant Church and especially to Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp.

#### **Position 6. Cindy Pointe:**

Cindy was appointed in 2020 to finish the term of this position. She was elected in 2021 for a 3 year term and is eligible to be elected for one more 3-year term. She is being nominated to be elected this year, 2024. Cindy is a member and regular attendee of First Evangelical Covenant Church in Grand Rapids, MI. She has served on the Leadership Team, as a Sunday School teacher and VBS volunteer, has helped with the Children's Christmas Program and Hallo-luia Party, and has been a communion server. Cindy stays busy as a Speech-Language Pathologist in private practice and facilitates a virtual Mom-In-Prayer group for moms of students attending the University of Michigan. Cindy believes in the camp's mission and has experienced it first-hand via more than 20 years of attending Family Camp 3, Womens' Retreats, and sending her own children to kids' camps. She has served on the PLCBC board as secretary since being appointed in May 2020. Cindy, along with husband Frank, were honored to share why camp is so special to them at the PLCBC Fundraiser Gala in 2019. She loves Jesus and is grateful for the opportunity to serve Him in ministry via the PLCBC board!

# Director of Church Planting—Alan Tumpkin

## 2023 CHURCH PLANTING

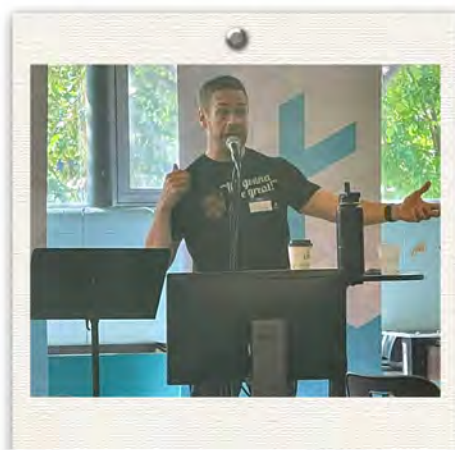
After the pandemic of 2020-2023, the landscape of the universal church has changed dramatically. Church plant experts have painted a grim picture of the modern church, as average attendance has gone from 120 weekly congregants to 65 in the United States. Because of our new reality, I, and our GLC coaches, have worked closely with churches, 0-3 years, to offer them the necessary skills and resources to be fruitful and missional.

In 2023, we had one new church plant, New Wine Covenant Church of Mason, Michigan. This church, led by Rick and Terri McGarry is making an impact in their central Michigan community. Other newly planted churches, Mosaic Covenant Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan; LifeChurch Riverside in Detroit, Michigan; and Life Transformation Church in Columbus, Ohio, each planted in the throes of the pandemic are making a difference in their respective communities.

In addition to coaching, site visits, and church plant training, I've enjoyed assisting Phil Carr, a GLC staff person, in planting New Evangel Covenant Church. Phil was recommended at our church plant assessment in 2023 and has successfully met his benchmarks. At present, Phil and his wife Cynthia are in their first year of planting. Churches, 3-6 years continue to get support through coaching, resourcing, pulpit supply, and site visits.

As we move forward with church planting initiatives in the years ahead, we continue to envision that our preferred model for planting will be the "parenting" model. In this model, the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) and the GLC work together with a parent church to give birth to a new church plant. Research and our own experience continue to show that this model tends to produce the strongest church plants. However, other models for planting may also be utilized and/or considered. Other models include the "partnership" model in which multiple churches contribute to the birth of a new church, and the house-church model which is a group of believers gathering in homes for worship, typically led by a parent church or overseer. We are open to these models, however, as mentioned earlier, plants do better with parents.

Please visit the GLC web site at [www.greatlakes.cc](http://www.greatlakes.cc) to become a Mission Friend for Church Planting.



# LifeChurch Riverside

## 1. Where did you see God at work in and through the church during 2023?

God was at work as our worship attendance grew and our membership numbers increased. This was a real blessing as we witnessed God's love at work among us. Although worship attendance and membership growth can be quantified, there was also an increase in fellowship and friendship among those in worship and also among those who participated in outreach and mission. We had a dedicated team of people who continued the weekly food distribution ministry. These men and women faithfully picked up and distributed food to a local agency which offers food to youth and families. We expanded our Christmas ministry to include a Christmas Party and luncheon for the Winthrop Street Kids, a youth ministry that the church has been supporting since our inception. I enjoyed witnessing LCR folk spending time with the kids and families, singing Christmas Carols and enjoying a delicious meal topped off with a distribution of gifts, including warm winter coats in addition to clothing, books, games, and a bag of Christmas sweets. Our Peggy's Place ministry recently began monthly meetings with youth and families who are currently houseless. Card decorating and game playing are some of the activities that the LCR team bring to this great organization that is located less than five minutes from our worship space at Marygrove campus. God is at work as we step out in mission to our neighbors and as they reach out towards us in love.



## 2. What was the church's biggest challenge for 2023?

Our biggest challenge was learning how to be an in-person church. We had developed the ability to be an online church utilizing Facebook, Zoom and YouTube. We became adept at reaching people digitally but the challenge was to make the shift to weekly in-person services which, unlike most churches, was a first time experience for us! Most churches returned to weekly in-person services. We were still faced with going forward weekly after varying periods where we met first once per month, then twice per month, then three times per month until we were able to meet every Sunday in person. This was a challenge that God made possible for us to overcome for which we are very grateful.

## 3. What are you grateful for on behalf of the church for 2023?

In November of 2023, LifeChurch Riverside began meeting every Sunday in person. We were 'born' as an all digital church plant during the pandemic and gradually introduced in-person worship, first twice-monthly then three times per month, as the Covid restrictions lessened. So, the step towards weekly in-person worship while still maintaining the weekly online presence was a real blessing in 2023! Therefore, I am super grateful for the amazing volunteer crew at LifeChurch Riverside. They came early and stayed late. They served with smiles on their faces and with hands that were ready for work. The Sunday Morning team was always in place and made certain that everything was in place from the parking lot to the worship space. The people were well-organized and on time. After service everyone sprang into action to swiftly return all items to our storage area. This transition from weekly online to weekly online AND in-person is something for which I am praising and thanking God.

#### 4. What needs have resulted for the church from 2023?

We meet in a lovely hall that is on the Marygrove campus which is in Northwest Detroit. We enjoy our current location but the building will be undergoing a major renovation which may cause us to be displaced. We are looking in earnest for a place in Northwest Detroit that will make it possible to continue our relationships with folks in the area and to also grow the ministry and increase our visibility, accessibility, and technology. We are seeking a space to worship, meet, study, and eat where we can continue to be a beloved community of faith that is planted by the river of God.

#### 5. What are your hopes, dreams, and/or goals for the church for 2024?

Hopes - We hope to be a church that authentically lives into our Mission: We exist to make disciples of Jesus Christ who are engaged in the life-transforming ministry of faith and love; and our Vision: A beloved community united in faith, empowered by love, serving people with joy and the mercy of Christ.

Goals - Moving into a worship and fellowship space that meets our mission and ministry requirements. Expanding our ministry to our church with evangelism, leadership, and discipleship training. Increasing our fellowship opportunities with social outings for all ages and healthy lifestyle programs. Growing our faith with classes that deepen our understanding of the Bible and increase desire for prayer and worship. Welcome new members and solidify existing members in meaningful membership in the church. Join with other believers in celebrating the LORD!



# Mosaic Covenant Church of Grand Rapids

## 1. Where did you see God at work in and through the church during 2023?

God is at work in us at the root level. We haven't hit our numerical growth goals, but God is bonding our congregation together with joyful relationships. Our people love Mosaic and they love one another. I believe we are a hidden gem and that the joy shared among our people will be contagious when we get our next wave of new people. God is also taking us to a root level of conviction about prayer and dependence on him, and keeping this as part of our core DNA and priorities.

## 2. What was the church's biggest challenge for 2023?

Our biggest challenge in 2023 was losing core members to moves and divorces. We are a close family, so every loss hurts and we miss our friends. We also aren't very big, so losing a wave of people has hurt our momentum and our volunteer corps. It's been hard to see some of our new believers drift away as well.

## 3. What are you grateful for on behalf of the church for 2023?

I'm grateful to see the deep relationships people are building with one another. I feel like lifelong bonds are being made and people genuinely look forward to seeing one another on Sundays and at small groups.

## 4. What needs have resulted for the church from 2023?

We need to grow and are exploring new and creative ways to do this. God has also convicted us of our need to pray. I think if all of our growth plans were working, we would continue taking prayer for granted. But in a period where we haven't gotten the results we'd like from our plans and strategies, God has spoken to us that it's by HIS might and power and Spirit, not ours, (Zechariah 4:6) and we need to be calling out to him in prayer on a regular basis. I'm thankful for the way our church has responded to this challenge.

## 5. What are your hopes, dreams, and/or goals for the church for 2024?

On a practical level, please pray with us as we look for a new Sunday morning worship location. We'd like a space with clean, ready-made kids ministry classrooms and less setup to do each week. We also look forward to introducing ourselves to a new neighborhood and doing some neighborhood engagement with new people. We do hope to grow numerically this year. We look to try some new ideas for outreach and pray for fruit that lasts.



# Life Transformation Church

## 1. Where did you see God at work in and through the church during 2023?

We baptized our first member who drove up with his family from Appleton, Wisconsin. This sparked another family watching us online consistently. We organized a Back to School Prayer event in our neighborhood for each of the schools starting at the elementary and ending at the high school. We also put together an evening of prayer with churches in the neighborhood which consisted of six different denominations, and supplied 650 toys at two elementary schools for Christmas, giving each kid one toy. We provided meals for human trafficking survivors as they took classes on their journey to healing, and served over 600 people in our Worship at Work outreach with our community partner Compassions Way (Homelessness Initiative). We also saw our social media get more consistent and it grew from one person to a team of two.

## 2. What was the church's biggest challenge for 2023?

Our biggest challenge was trying to find a new place to worship in the area we felt God leading us to. We knocked on the doors of at least four churches just trying to get them to share space. Which they all could have done, especially a couple of the churches had areas that they weren't even using but still refused to share. That was very disheartening! So we felt homeless even though we had a place to worship, it just wasn't the area we felt called to. Which in turn hindered our growth because it's hard to invite people out and then tell them we're moving 17 miles away to the opposite side of town in the near future.

## 3. What are you grateful for on behalf of the church for 2023?

We are grateful that our discipleship group is trained and ready to start 3 new groups. We have engaged in ministry in the area we felt called to without having a worship space. I participate in a neighborhood Pastors' meeting monthly to encourage, pray, and collaborate together. We are grateful that God continues to give and show us favor when things can seem dim. We are grateful for everyone at LTC and their commitment and support to continue to hang in there during the rough times of church planting because no one has ever been a part of planting a church.

## 4. What needs have resulted for the church from 2023?

We need to recruit more members and seek leaders to serve in Children & Youth ministry. We would also like to move our services to Sunday but that would require the replacement of seventy-five percent of our support help. So that's definitely a matter for prayer, but God is faithful! We must have a greater evangelistic outreach in the area where we are planted, and continue to look for those that can be generous in financial giving, so that God's work can continue.

## 5. What are your hopes, dreams, and/or goals for the church for 2024?

We hope to see the church grown internally with more members and externally with more community partners and outreach. With our transition from the suburbs to the city, we hope to have our first launch service in June of 2024 because since we started during Covid we haven't had one. We hope to add more churches and non-profits into our community events. One goal, August of 2024, is to have a program called RESET that teaches elementary school students about Jesus. We are looking to expand the program to the middle school with other church partners. We dream of seeing the kingdom of God flourish in the King-Lincoln Bronzeville area so that churches will be overflowing, poverty is erased, families are restored, crime goes down by 50%, a transition house is established for inmates being released, and for every school in the neighborhood to have a church partner.





# New Wine Covenant Church - Mason, MI

## 1. Where did you see God at work in and through the church during 2023?

We saw our launch team really embrace what it means to be a church plant. They worked so hard on our gathering events from designing our space, constructing lighting, cooking amazing meals, to creating a welcoming environment. We hosted a makerspace for Christmas, a trailwalk celebrating the birth of Christ, a gratitude tea party, a neighborhood party, and even a community wide outdoor escape room. We made a lot of friends! Consequently, our name is known in our community, and we are viewed favorably by the people in our community.

## 2. What was the church's biggest challenge for 2023?

Our launch came upon us quickly, as we gained access to a building just before fall when it was ideal to begin our "W" launch plan. So, we had less than a month to prepare our space and begin gathering events. It was a whirlwind, especially for bi-vocational pastors.

## 3. What are you grateful for on behalf of the church for 2023?

I'm grateful that God has sustained our energy and our joy and has kept our launch team healthy.

## 4. What needs have resulted for the church from 2023?

Our greatest need is to understand how our community connects and how we can best position ourselves to love our community well.

## 5. What are your hopes, dreams, and/or goals for the church for 2024?

We hope to enjoy our time gathering and continue to have meaningful outreach in our community. Our daily prayer is that God will give us the faithfulness to do what is before us to do today and the love to share with who he brings tomorrow.



# Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp - PLCBC

*We exist to help people experience the transforming power of God at camp by engaging in real FUN, real FAITH, & real FRIENDSHIP*

Camp is a 'thin place.' It is a place where it seems that the boundary between Heaven and Earth is particularly thin. It is a place where we readily encounter God without the kind of distraction we experience in our regular spaces. In other words, people meet God at camp. They meet others who are meeting God at camp. And these meetings end up transforming lives, marriages, families, youth groups, churches, and even communities. God has always moved in thin places to make the abstract become concrete. Whether in a burning bush, a mountain top, a stable in Bethlehem, a chapel, or a lake-side cross, God coalesces memories, inclinations, and questions into confidence and offers next steps for abundant living. We have witnessed this many times over this year as God has become real for people at camp.

## Retreat Season

We began the year by hosting several retreats from the Hope College worship team to large church groups from Community Bible Church in Brighton, MI and Magnify Church in Rockford, MI. Each of these retreats provided space for churches and leaders to disciple students and simply be present in a place where they could meet God together. These non-Covenant groups help to fund Camp's mission while Camp provides space to help others fulfill theirs. Winter and spring weekends were also filled with our own programming including College-age, High School, Contemplative, and Fishing retreats.

Shortly before the summer staff arrived, we hosted school groups from the community over several days providing small group and low ropes initiatives that allowed for learning opportunities outside the classroom. These gatherings continued in the fall as we reengaged with Manistee Middle School – the first time since Covid – in Adventure Learning for 6-8 graders. We also held GLC retreats for men, women, jr. highers, trailblazers and two different quilting groups. This was in addition to contract groups from Word of Faith Church in Detroit, MI and the Slavic Baptist Church in Elkhart, IN. We closed out the year by bringing back a retreat from the past – the Old Christmas weekend. Combining time at camp with events happening in Manistee – including a downtown Victorian parade – a small group of families worshiped, played games, and ate together ushering in the Christmas season.



# Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp - PLCBC

## Summer 2023

Summer is an amazing time to be at camp not simply because of the weather and the lake but also because there is an energy here embodied in all the kids and adults who gather. This summer was no different. Through worship, Bible studies, ridiculous games and skits, and time doing life together, campers experienced the realness of God. By the numbers, this is what summer looked like:

**40 staff (full for the first time since Covid!)**

**643 kids campers**

**443 family campers**

**77 first time commitments**

**200 renewed commitments**

**323 found Christian friends**

**30 baptisms!!**

What can't be quantified are the staff and campers who went home and transformed families, peer groups, and relationships because of their experience with God at camp.



## Staff

Following a busy summer, we were excited to welcome Ruth Hendrick to our staff as Office Manager taking over for Kathy Smith who retired after 22 years of service at camp. A huge thank you to Kathy for all her years of gracious and faithful service navigating each challenge with warmth and care for over two decades. Ruth is a former summer staffer and has gifts in administration, creativity, and hospitality. She is a gift to our staff keeping us daily on track and energized with her spirit. She and her husband Jake along with their kids – Joel, Jack and Chloe – moved from Grand Rapids to Manistee in September.

We experienced another transition in October as our Program Director Kirstin Crawford moved to Traverse City. After two years of pouring into summer staff and helping to facilitate year-round programming, she took a job in another area to which she felt called. Thanks to Kirstin for all her good work at camp! Please be in prayer as we continue to search for a Program Director to fill out our staff.

Another search that has proved challenging is finding interns to serve throughout the retreat season. In the spring and fall, we had several young adults fill this role for a few months or a few weeks at a time. Thanks to Tyler Hanson, Matthew Saxby, Willy Condon, Fisher Spessard, Emily Eix, Hope Condon, and Connor Fritz for all their help to make ministry happen. Lastly, in looking to fill a full-time position for Marketing Director, we have done so with two part-time jobs. We are excited to welcome Jada Samuels as our Marketing Director and Markus Tepandi as our Media Director. They have added their expertise with social media content, video editing, and web-site management, along with their skill in marketing and design, to our work here. We are incredibly grateful for their addition to our staff. A huge thanks also goes out to the remainder of our team who has carried the burden during this season when we have been so under-staffed. To Patti Church, Randy Bennetts and Eric Ek, I can't say thank you enough; you have kept camp flourishing through it all.

# Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp - PLCBC

## Capital Projects

In our efforts to be good stewards of this 'thin place', we are continually seeking ways to improve and renovate our facilities. This year, we replaced the audio and video systems in the chapel which has greatly enhanced the experience of worship in that space. It was a much needed \$45,000 project that was realized due to the generous gifts of donors at the Gala and throughout the year. Another project that received attention was the Welcome Center carpet. After years of patching the rips in the seams, we raised \$10,000 to redo the entire building with carpet squares. We also partnered with Geoff Carlson to update our network all over camp which involved installing all new indoor and outdoor access points. While camp is mostly about disconnecting, this will be good news for everyone who must rely on the internet to stay remote while up north. We are also in the process of developing the area between the Speaker's Cabin and the maintenance garage into an RV park. This will be for the purpose of allowing volunteers to stay for a week or weekend, giving to the ministry of camp. We expect this project to start in the spring.

## New Dining Hall

After years of praying, raising funds, wading through a pandemic, and planning, it is our intention to break ground on a new Dining Hall in August of 2024. We have spent significant time tweaking the design, with the help of Post and Associates, and are now working toward a final budget for the project. The initial cost to build was \$3.3 million, but now has risen at least 30% post-Covid. We are also in the process of gaining the appropriate building, septic, and environmental permits to start building. We have raised approximately \$2.3 million with another \$1 million pledged. We are excited about the potential this brings for ministry and excited to see how God will work in the midst of this huge undertaking.

## Finances

I am so incredibly grateful for the generosity of the Portage Lake family who faithfully gives to the ministry of camp every year. With every donation comes a story of the way God has touched lives here. This year we made the decision to significantly increase the compensation of our summer staff to invest in our commitment of getting quality candidates to work at camp. That resulted in a full summer staff, older in age and with more experience than in recent years. This translated into excellent ministry and an enhanced camper experience. However, this along with rising food costs, increased insurance payments, larger program expenses, and diminished year-end giving resulted in a significant financial loss over last year. This was disappointing, but we know that God is faithful. With wise counsel, a commitment to robust fundraising, and good stewardship of resources, we will rebound this year and continue to flourish financially.

Camp is a thin place where the abstract becomes concrete. It also serves as a place that anticipates a time when the whole created order will be a thin place – God walking with his people once again ... and forever. In the meantime, thank you for all you do in helping keep this place sacred! Please continue to remember camp in your prayers and support.

Grace & Peace,



Marc Eix

Executive Director

Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp

# Mission Meadows, LLC

**Our Vision:** A relational approach to a Christ-Centered experience

**Our Mission:** To RAISE up the next generation of Jesus followers through Relational-Accepting-Intentional-Safe and Encouraging summer camps, weekend retreats, and community programming.

**Overall:** 2 Corinthians 9:8, “And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work” has been the theme for Mission Meadows in 2023. God has provided countless blessings, from a child learning about God’s grace to the camp becoming financially stable for the first time in many years.

God used the camp experience to transform lives! Kids were reoriented toward slowing down, loving others, and seeking God. While the community may have been temporary, the connections and growth can last a lifetime.

**Summer:** Reflecting on this past summer at Mission Meadows fills my heart with immense joy and gratitude. As the Director, I am thrilled to share the remarkable success of the summer as we developed a spiritual commitment to our staff and campers while having moments of fun and adventure. Our camp continued to increase registrations, and we awarded over \$25,000 in scholarships. Throughout the summer, we witnessed camp’s transformative impact on young people. Each moment at camp was filled with laughter, friendship, and personal growth.

**Staff:** Mission Meadows maintains a small year-round staff of five people and one intern. This summer, we had 20 staff members, and 16 are hoping to return for the summer of 2024. Despite the number of returnees, Mission Meadows struggles with getting staffing to pre-pandemic levels.



# Mission Meadows, LLC

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**Volunteers:** Throughout the year, Mission Meadows had over 30 volunteers. Volunteers have been the key to Mission Meadows running smoothly. We are thankful for the many hours of hard work our volunteers have put into Mission Meadows. In 2024, we will have another work week from May 24th to 31st. We look forward to many hands making the workload a little lighter.

**Retreats:** Mission Meadows continues to be an excellent location for retreat groups. We currently serve church groups from many denominations, as well as school, community, and homeschool groups. Additionally, we have held Women's, Men's, Trailblazer (grade 3-6), Junior High, and Senior High retreats throughout the year. Over 2000 people have been a part of a retreat at Mission Meadows!

**Finances:** Mission Meadows has been blessed with a generous donation to eliminate the pool loan. Eliminating the pool loan has freed up over \$2,000 a month in interest alone! Additionally, Mission Meadows has been awarded numerous grants and donations that have allowed us to expand one of the cabins, obtain chapel stage lighting, obtain an excavator, and purchase numerous outdoor seating. The future is bright for Mission Meadows and we look forward to seeing what the next year brings us.

Blessings,  
Jackie Haines  
Director  
Mission Meadows, LLC



# Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp

**Rooted! 2023**

**Jer. 17:7-8**

*But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”*

Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp  
2390 Horse Hollow Road  
Jonesville, Virginia 24263  
cmmbc1950@gmail.com  
cmmbc.org

WOW! What a year of learning to lean. What a year of being reminded that when we are rooted in the Lord, He gives us all the nourishment we need, all the SONshine we need. He gives us all things for our best growth in His time. We started out the year with a new Grounds Manager and a new Director. Tammy left us in April. But God never left. He stayed and reminded us who was in charge and what our goal should always be. BE still and know.... Wait for it.... Those were quiet, gentle words that rang in our minds most days.

We started the year of getting things ready for the camping season with one work group (Grand Valley State University accompanied by men from First Ev. Cov. in Grand Rapids). They did such a phenomenal job on the projects they undertook for the week. Then Steve Johnson came and volunteered a week of his time to do more of the needed work. We had 3 workdays with many local volunteers coming to help and lots of individual days of hard work and long hours of praying. Praying because we only had one (definitely coming) group for one of our four weeks of scheduled camps. Then.....

**Camping season came.** Boy did it come with a bang. We had no mission group for Senior Camp (grades 8-12) so we reached out locally for help. A local evangelist stepped up and helped us plan a week of nightly meetings by different volunteer speakers bringing their own musicians each night. Youth came, four young people got saved, and three teens volunteered to help counsel our other camps. Pathfinders (grades K-5) brought Buoy Youth from Anchor Covenant in Lake Geneva, MI. They showed up with so much energy, very detailed plans, and enthusiasm that just screamed WE ARE READY, FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, WATCH US ROAR. The week saw 65-70 campers each day. Friendships and great forever memories were made. God's love was so very evident. Roots were planted in Jesus.

Arts Camp (grades 2-5) changed to include a music and drama segment this year. Art projects, songs and dramatic presentations were the highlight of the week. We had a one day Soccer Camp that brought 12 campers when we thought there wouldn't be one at all because of no help. Champro donated balls, shin guards, and shirts for the camp.

Trailblazers (grades 4-7) saw 20 campers with staff that the Lord provided one by one. No joke. I would be thinking, "Lord, where do I get the person for this job?" and each time He answered with, "I've got that covered. Be patient." And wham, that need was met. Then the bees tried to stop us. Several boys got stung. We moved their cabins into the upstairs of the dining hall. The boys were happy (air conditioning and close to the bathrooms) and five were saved during the week.



# Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp

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We raised approximately \$800 for mission projects this year. Between campers, workers and renters, the Splash Pad saw many visitors over the course of summer. First Baptist of Pennington Gap youth came and helped put away mattresses at the end of the summer. Other individuals came to help us get ready for winter. October saw us saying goodbye to the Grounds Manager. They decided to not stay. We saw 20 women attend our Women's Retreat in October. The speaker was Sara Charlton from Millersburg, Ohio. We had a great time of fellowship.

It has been a long winter here. Fortunately, one of our camp board members is graciously staying on site at the camp until our new people are here. They are coming at the end of May or first of June. They are currently in Belgium. The wife, Carrie, grew up here in the area and was a camper here, got married here, and has a real heart for the camp. The husband, Martjin, is from Belgium. They both have played pro basketball for the European league. They have two beautiful children, a girl and a boy.

What do we see as God's plan for the 2024 camping year?

**Theme: Fingerprints of God**

**Key Verse: Psalm 139:14**

*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

- Workers needed: CMMBC needs many volunteers and mission teams to maintain and improve the facilities. Individuals and groups are invited to help us get ready for Bible Camps and to continue the work on enclosing the cabins.
- Hired summer staff: We have summer positions open for Program, Worship, and Kitchen interns as well as Summer Camp Counselors. More information and applications are available at [cmmbc.org/summer-camp-staff](http://cmmbc.org/summer-camp-staff).
- Summer Mission Teams: We need commitments of mission teams for our camps. Without mission teams we cannot do camps. Camps available include:

**Soccer Camp (grades K-12)**

June 10-14 -- This can change if any team would be interested in helping

**Arts Camp (grades 2-5)**

June 17-21 -- Local volunteers--additional help welcomed

**Pathfinders (grades K-5)**

June 24-28 -- Mission team needed

**Trailblazers (grades 4-7)**

July 8-12 -- Mission team needed

**Senior Camp (grades 8-12)**

July 21-26 -- Mission team needed

**Bike Camp (grades 7-12)**

Dates to be determined by a mission team



Cindy Laws, Director  
Covenant Mountain Mission Bible Camp



# Lego City



## Lego and God's Word: a Powerful Combination



What is it about Lego that is so engaging? Put a few Legos in anyone's hands and they will snap the bricks together. Give them a few more bricks and next thing you know they have built something. It is almost irresistible. It's like the Lego calls to us and says, "Come on, you can do it, build something- create something." God's word also has a lot to say about creation and building. The Bible tells us we have been wonderfully made and that we are to build our lives upon the foundation of Christ's words. It also says that we are holy buildings- temples in which God's Holy Spirit resides and together we are living stones that are being built into a dwelling place for our God.



The Great Lakes Conference office has created a VBS/after school/school holiday program that combines the awesome engaging power of Lego with the awesome life changing power of God's Word. This program has been designed for children ages 5-12 (older kids make great helpers). The children will assemble a large Lego City while exploring what God's word has



to say about creation (what God did and what we were created for), the foundations upon which our lives are built, and how we fit together (like Lego) with purpose and reason, and are being built together into the entity known as the Church.

The GLC Lego City may be reserved/checked out for a few days or several weeks. If your church is interested in using the Lego City, please contact the conference office (248-595-8098; [jody@greatlakes.cc](mailto:jody@greatlakes.cc)). There may be a deposit fee that will be returned to the church if the City is in good shape. If your church wishes to donate toward the Lego City, we could always use bricks. The Lego doesn't need to be new, just whatever your folks have hanging about.



# Notes

# Notes

# GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE



21840 W. Nine Mile Rd.  
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*For just as the body is one and has many members,  
and all the members of the body, though many,  
are one body, so it is with Christ.*

1 Cor 12:12

[www.greatlakes.cc](http://www.greatlakes.cc)  
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