

Annual Celebration

Camp Mission Meadows 5201 E. Lake Rd, Dewittville, NY 14728

Nomination Biographies

Great Lakes Conference

Executive Board Members

Mission Meadows, LLC

Operating Managers

Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp

Board of Directors



Officers

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

Sara has served St. John's as the solo pastor since November 2018. She grew up in a non-Christian home and became an intentional follower of Jesus three months into her freshman year at North Park University. She arrived on campus knowing of God but not knowing God in a personal way. Sara accepted an invitation from a group of friends to join a weekly prayer group where it felt safe to ask questions about Jesus, and even learned how to pray and communicate with God. She accepted Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior in one of those prayer meetings, and then joined a local Covenant Church where she could be mentored and supported as she grew in her faith. Jesus is now her way, her truth, and her life as she daily follows His call to serve and love His people.

After getting her B.A. in History and then her M.Div from North Park Seminary, she served as an interim pastor in Kansas for fifteen months before coming to the GLC. Sara has served as the Vice Chair of the Conference Board for two years and, if elected, would be honored to serve as Board Chair for the coming year. In her spare time, Sara enjoys reading mysteries, baking, and spoiling her niece.

Vice Chair - Steve Ormond, Faith Covenant Church, Farmington Hills, MI

Steve says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: I came to Jesus at the age of 19, mostly as a result of a young woman's persistence. She persuaded me to read the Bible after I took the curious position that the Bible was myth without ever having read it. Her argument went like this: "Would you just stop talking about it and read it?" I did and it was life changing as Jesus invited me to live. I'm still a work in progress but can't imagine trying to do life without Him (and that persistent woman, Susan, became my wife in 1973).

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 1990's and were also members of Dearborn Covenant Church in the 1980's. They have both served in multiple mission and church leadership roles during those years and up to the present time. Steve was elected to the Conference Board last year for a 3-year term and is willing to serve as Vice-Chair if elected to do so.

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 "mostly-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 matters, 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 has been glad to use his background in law to be of assistance to the GLC staff and Board.

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.

Treasurer - Mickey Tresh, Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI (appointed to a trustee position to fill an incomplete trustee term that ends in 2026)

Mickey says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: I grew up in a home that valued following the ways of God's love and peace, but I did not know Jesus as Savior or Lord. When I was 23, I became frustrated trying to reconcile scripture and orthodox Christianity with what I considered my own "spiritual beliefs". One afternoon I lay on my bed and cried out to God saying, "I am tired of trying to figure you out based on what I think you should be - I give up!! Please just show yourself to me!" And over the course of the next few months, He did! He opened my mind and my heart to Jesus and the scriptures, and He brought people into my life to disciple me. I am still awed that the creator and King of all things would care to have answered that prayer in such a clear and direct way.

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Presently Mickey is involved at his church on the Finance Committee, as a member of a small group, and participant in a men's Bible/book study. Over the years he has served as an elder, treasurer, children's worship leader, small group leader, as a member of the choir and worship team, and part of various committees.

From 2014-2019, Mickey served on the GLC Executive Board and saw the good and necessary work the Conference does in supporting both existing churches and church plants. He found it helpful to learn what is going on among the church body beyond his home church and enjoyed interacting with a board where many of the board members are pastors. Mickey found it rewarding to work through difficult issues and situations as a board, together discerning the best ways to reflect the Kingdom of God in both the process and the resulting decisions. He greatly respects Garth and Garth's passion for the work of the GLC. He looks forward to the prospect of serving again.

Mickey's professional expertise is in accounting and financial planning & analysis. At present, he works for a midsize manufacturing company. He also has more than 20 years' experience as Treasurer of non-profit boards. Mickey enjoys helping non-finance people understand the finances. He brings a thoughtful, analytical approach to things. Mickey is constantly learning and desires to grow in Christ. He notices when a discussion involves misunderstanding and he likes to help people work through situations to understand where the other is coming from, so all perspectives are heard. One of his joys is bringing clarity to situations and helping decision-makers make good decisions.

Micky and his wife Karalyn have been married 35 years and have 4 grown children, two of whom are married. Three of their 4 children live in Grand Rapids, and one lives in Tennessee. Karalyn and Mickey feel fortunate that their kids like to be with them and each other - as a group they are in each other's lives almost daily and enjoy spending time together. In March, Mickey and Karalyn are expecting their first grandchild and their second in July - a new phase in family life!!

Secretary - John Goss, Grace Evangelical Covenant Church, Clay, NY

John says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: I came to Jesus in faith as a child in a Sunday school class at the age of seven. It was later as a high school student that I came to walk closely with Him and desired to follow Him with my heart and not just through religious actions. It was at this point that I came to find Him as the one in whom I could trust completely and began to sense Him leading me.

Since becoming part of the Covenant nine years ago (when he was called to serve as the Lead Pastor of Grace Ev. Covenant Church), John has come to appreciate the people he has gotten to know and the work that is done not just at the local Covenant Church level, but more broadly at the Conference level. John was elected to a 3-year term as a Trustee of the Conference in 2023 and has appreciated the opportunity to help shape and guide the ministry of the Conference in that capacity, particularly the ministries that focus on making disciples of Jesus. In addition to serving as a Trustee, a year ago John was elected to serve as Secretary of the Conference Board and - if re-elected - would be happy to serve in the same capacity for the coming year. John and his wife, Cherryl, have been married for 23 years and have 4 children ranging in age from 16 to 22.

Trustees - Renominations

Ardena Duren, Kingdom Embassy Covenant Church, Muskegon, MI

Ardena says the following about how she became an intentional follower of Christ: I came to Jesus at 19. I have attended church ever since I was a child, but at 19, I came to know Jesus personally for myself. I was invited to visit a friend's church where I met Jesus, who I have embraced wholeheartedly.

At Kingdom Embassy, Ardena serves on the Lead Team, works in the Children's Ministry and Women's Ministry, and is the director for the Kingdom Community Center, an after-school program for students. Ardena is a retired educator. She has taught in the classroom and has been a school administrator. She has been married to Pastor Arthur Duren for 39 years (June 2025). They have two adult children and seven grandchildren. Ardena has been involved in church work since she was a teen. She believes it is an honor to serve the church, and for the past three years she has served on the Great Lakes Conference Board. If re-elected, she looks forward to serving for another three years.

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Trustees - Renominations

Harvey Cozart, Lighthouse Church, Richmond, KY

Harvey says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: During my senior year in college, I was approached by a young woman who was out sharing the gospel with some other students. She asked me if I had a relationship with Jesus, not religion, but relationship. This was the first time that I was actually presented the gospel by a fellow student. This put me on a journey to seek out who Jesus was and what it meant to have a relationship with Him. During that season, she also invited me to a Christian fellowship that gathered on the campus. Eventually, I did attend the fellowship and was able to witness authentic Christian community for the very first time. It was through the witness of this Christian community and the grace of Christ who revealed Himself to me in the mist of my brokenness, emptiness and pain, that I embraced Jesus as my Lord and Savior in 1994. I have never looked back or been the same since.

Harvey was introduced to the Covenant by John Teter, a Covenant pastor who had been on the staff of Intervarsity Christian Fellowship in California. Harvey served as a campus pastor with Intervarsity for 10 years at Eastern Kentucky University and the University of Kentucky. Sensing a call to pastoral ministry, Harvey went to Asbury Theological Seminary where he received an M.Div. and eventually a D.Min. He then served for eight years as the Associate Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Richmond, KY. In 2017, Harvey became a church planter for the ECC and planted Hope City Covenant Church in the inner-city area of Richmond. In 2019, the plant merged with Madison Community Church. So that in 2020, the two became Lighthouse Church. He has been the pastor of Lighthouse for the past five years. At present, he also leads an initiative in the Richmond community called Give and Go, a sports ministry mentoring program for youth in Richmond. He is married to Melissa (for 28 years), who serves as a staff counselor at Eastern Kentucky University. They have two children. Melissa and Harvey spend a lot of time traveling to watch their children participate in sports. Harvey is grateful to have a voice for the southern region of the Great Lakes Conference. He wishes to speak to the needs of rural churches in the south, especially around bringing together racially divided churches to help move them forward in multi-ethnic ministry.

Trustees - New Nominations

Amanda Ratcliff, Hope Community Church, Detroit, MI

Amanda says the following about how she became an intentional follower of Christ: I came to know Jesus in college. I engaged with my Catholic religion, from my upbringing, then explored a variety of other faiths, including Mormonism and Jehovah Witness. I attended a women's Christian Saturday night Bible study, which led to visiting the church and I surrendered my life to Christ at the altar of that church.

Amanda is currently in a community group at Hope, attends women's ministry events, and serves monthly with the children's and youth ministry. She recently transitioned out of being the interim children's director after a year of service. Amanda is grateful for the impact of her local church over the last eight years.

Personally, Amanda has intentionally sought emotional and spiritual health, which has impacted her and her family greatly. With the support of Hope Community, she has grown in her faith walk and has been able to live with more authenticity and vulnerability. She would love the opportunity to give back by serving on the GLC Board. In the past, Amanda has served on the Tax Increment Finance Authority board. Thanks to her background in finance and accounting, she has also served as Treasurer for a former church and the college Latino Student Union group. She enjoys numbers and working with and analyzing spreadsheets and formulas in Excel.

Currently, Amanda stays at home with her young children. She has been blessed to be able to do this for the past 6 years. One of Amanda's goals has been to make sure her children feel seen and known, and to reflect Jesus' love for them. She feels it has been remarkable to watch them grow and see the intricacies of who God is forming them to be. Chris and Amanda have been married for 12 years. They have 4 children: Cecilia (9), Nolan (7), Daniel (5), and Rosalie (almost 3). They live and work and go to school in the city of Detroit. Amanda feels they have received an incredible amount of support in the form of their local church as well as friendships they have made since living in Detroit. She loves reading fiction, thrift shopping, walking, and visiting with friends.

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Trustees - New Nominations

Karen Yeversky, Zion Covenant Church, Jamestown, NY

Karen says the following about how she became an intentional follower of Christ: I was raised in a Christian family and in the church and have attended church all of my life. It was at Camp Mission Meadows, when I was about eight years old, that I first made a commitment to follow Jesus. I recommitted my life at camp numerous times, maybe just to "be sure." In my high school years, a camp pastor asked if anyone wanted to make a commitment to serving in Christian ministry, and if so, he invited us to meet on the beach early Saturday morning. Smart man – no "caught up in the campfire emotion" of Friday night; we had to get up early on the last day of camp to do this. At the time, I had no idea what that ministry would look like. Ironically, I eventually came full circle and served for 31 years in Covenant camping, 12 years at Covenant Harbor and 19 at Mission Meadows.

At Zion Covenant Church where Karen is a member, she is involved with the following ministries: middle school (during Sunday school and as a small group leader), Pastoral Relations Team, and Hospitality Ministry (i.e. funeral lunches, Sunday coffee). Previous ministries at the church that she has been part of include: Leadership Team (as Chair), Pastoral Search Teams, Vitality Ministry Team, Children's Ministry (long ago), and delegate to ECC Annual Meeting.

Karen believes in the Great Lakes Conference and its churches. She also firmly believes in the Covenant slogan "Better Together." She appreciates the various ministries the GLC offers to support churches and their staff - resources that she believes most churches couldn't access without the GLC. At this point in her life she has the time to commit to working with the Board and staff to advance these ministries.

During her time as the Director of Mission Meadows, Karen had the experience of working under the direction of a board, and of working with the GLC Executive Board in various ways, so she is familiar with the GLC, its staff, and the dynamics of board work. Plus, she has had experience managing personnel and budgets. Karen has the gift of inclusion as she is sensitive to all those on a team and seeks to hear from each one. She also has the ability to see multiple sides of an issue and to work toward results made stronger by differing voices.

Karen has been retired from paid work for nearly two years, but is currently building a home with her husband (they are actually doing most of the work themselves). She finds it both fulfilling and an exercise in patience! Prior work experience includes 31 years in Christian Camping ministry, where She had the privilege to see lives transformed by the Holy Spirit, and young adults grow in service and leadership. Eleven years as a Family Advocate in a Child Advocacy Center followed, which involved working with survivors of child sexual abuse and their families. Being able to help people in crisis navigate the criminal justice and child welfare systems, and to help them find their voice, was very fulfilling for her.

Karen has been married to Mark Yeversky for 44+ years. They've worked together for many of those years and are still married! Mark and Karen have three adult children with 2 bonus daughters-in-law: Kyle (Mikaela), Kira, and Jordan (Corinne). They live scattered from Tacoma, WA, to Pittsburgh, PA, to NY, NY, so spending in-person time with them all is a challenge and a blessing. In her spare time Karen enjoys canoeing and kayaking, camping, reading, walking in nature, baking, and hospitality.

Bob Hemmingsen, Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI (appointed to a trustee position to fill an incomplete trustee term that ends in 2026)

Bob says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: I cannot recall a time that I did not believe in Christ. I can recall riding a bus to church as a child and getting a free Bible after coming ten Sundays. I got serious about my faith when I met my wife, Heather. It was then that I started studying God's word in more detail. I started attending church regularly, went to classes, and joined groups.

At Saranac Community Church (SCC) Bob has taught Sunday school classes for both children and adults. He has served on the commissions of Buildings and Grounds, Pastoral Relations, and Missions. He has been the Council Chair of both Buildings and Grounds and Pastoral Relations and has served as the Church Council Moderator twice. Bob has also been on two search committees to replace lead pastors. He has been a member of a small group for several years and helps out in many other roles.

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Trustees - New Nominations

During his time on Pastoral Relations, Bob learned the importance of having a good working relationship with the pastor. They worked together as a team to help the church through some hard personnel issues, by praying and seeking advice from the GLC. Now the church is stronger, and the staff are in a much healthier place. Leadership is one of the gifts that the Holy Spirt has blessed Bob with and it brings him great joy. One of his favorite Bible verses is Colossians 3:17 - And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Bob also believes that he has the gift of helping others. He is a problem solver, and a people person. He likes to help others find creative solutions to problems. Bob believes in telling the truth in love and is not afraid to say what he feels. He listens to others and tries to see things from their point of view. Bob feels that the Great Lakes Conference commitment to starting new churches, helping churches develop, reaching the lost, and helping leaders in the church to grow, are all areas that are extremely important. Saranac Community Church has benefited from the work of the Conference, and he would like to be part of the GLC Executive Board team. Bob finds joy when working with a team to help make things better for others and he has been blessed to work on some wonderful teams with a variety of members.

Bob works with young adults with cognitive disabilities teaching employment, daily living skills, and community access skills. He has been in education for 31 years and tells people that he has the best job in Montcalm County. In his classroom, he wants students to "Have Big Dreams, Work Hard, Make Things Better, and Have Fun". These are their classroom values, and goals. Helping his students learn new skills and seeing their self-confidence grow is very rewarding to Bob.

Bob and his wife are also the current directors of a special education camp in Greenville, MI, Optimist Camp Wah-Wah-Tay-See. This is where they met and fell in love. It is a place that has brought much joy to both of them over the 30-some years that they have been involved with the camp. Bob and Heather have been married for 30 years this coming August. He says that marrying her was the smartest thing he has ever done. They have a number of nieces and nephews. Bob enjoys long car rides with Heather, playing golf, and spending time with friends and family. Heather and Bob enjoy spending time together in the warmth of Florida.

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Renominations:

Tami LaPaze-Paullin, First Covenant Church, Youngstown, OH

Tami is a longtime Covenant church member, and a current member of First Covenant Church in Youngstown, OH. She has served the church primarily in music ministry. Tami is married to Brad Paullin. She works as a middle school educator in the Youngstown City School District, with the vocation of serving as Christian presence among the inner-city youth of her school. Tami believes Mission Meadows has an important purpose: to advance the gospel by spreading God's love. As a grateful recipient of that purpose and love (having attended Mission Meadows as a camper and served on staff in various capacities over many years), Tami is convinced that there is no mission or place in the world that is more hallowed than Mission Meadows. She envisions using her strong relational skills and long history of friendships with people whose lives were impacted by Mission Meadows in younger years to encourage others to support the work of Mission Meadows. She would be honored to be re-elected to serve as a board member, using her God-given talents and relationships to promote the future of God's work at Mission Meadows.

Paul Aley, Bay Indies Covenant Church, Venice, FL

Paul is a long-time Covenanter primarily in the Youngstown, OH area. He is currently a member of Bay Indies Covenant Church in Venice, FL where he lives during the winter months, and attends Zion Covenant Church in Jamestown, NY during the summer months. Paul has been a member of five Covenant churches throughout his adult years, holding various positions of leadership and service, including Sunday school teacher, finance committee member, search committee member and treasurer. He served on the Board of Trustees of North Park University for 12 years. Paul attended North Park College (now University) for two years and then graduated with a bachelor's degree in engineering from Ohio State University. He went on to earn a master's degree and became a CPA in the state of Ohio. He held various positions of leadership in his career, including serving as President of National Machinery Corporation for 17 years, and owner of AgriEnergy Resources. He and his wife, Barbara, have two children (NPU Grads), and seven grandchildren (three of whom are Mission Meadows campers). In 2020, the Aleys built a home three miles from Mission Meadows. In Paul's words, "One of the reasons we moved here was to be able to help Mission Meadows. Barbara was a camper years ago and now enjoys helping in the kitchen as time permits. I enjoy helping on occasion. I believe my management and financial background give me the ability to help at the board level. We both want to see the Camp grow and extend its Christian outreach."

Nominated for First Terms:

J.T. Madison, Evangelical Covenant Church, Port Allegany, PA

- J.T. came to faith in his childhood and cannot remember a time in his life "before God." His faith was nurtured by his parents, the pastors and staff of Zion Covenant Church in Jamestown, NY, and the staff at Camp Mission Meadows.
- J. T. has been the pastor of Evangelical Covenant Church of Port Allegany, PA, for over 14 years. In addition to preaching, leading worship, and administering the sacraments on Sunday mornings, he teaches confirmation, co-leads a teen Bible study and youth group and serves ex officio on all church boards. He also answers the phone, formats and prints the bulletins, selects music for worship services, preps slides for worship both in house and live stream, and other things as needed around the church. In the past, J. T. has been a Youth Pastor, Choir Director, Worship Leader at Northbrook Covenant Church in Northbrook, IL, Port Allegany Ministerium President, and Jamestown/Warren Area Covenant Pastors Cluster Chair.

Mission Meadows, LLC

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Nominated for First Terms Continued:

His wife, Carri, is an elementary school learning support teacher. She also served previously on the Mission Meadows Camp Board. Their daughter Lily is an extremely active senior in high school and can't wait to get started in college next year working towards a medical degree. Carri and J.T. also have a 7-year-old labradoodle, Allie Mae.

- J. T. loves Mission Meadows. It was a formative place for his faith journey in his elementary through high school years. And he has loved being involved with the ministry as a speaker, family camper, retreat-goer, and through his daughter's service on staff the past two summers. J. T. has several years of board experience at the conference level and can't wait to be a part of what's next for Mission Meadows.
- If J. T. is not at home or in his office, he is likely golfing, when the weather cooperates. Additionally, he helps out with the high school marching band and with the music program generally, teaching the drumline and playing saxophone and/or clarinet whenever he can. And this past Christmas J. T. directed the 4th grade chorus for the annual Winter Songs Concert.

Regi Sherman, Elevate Church, Erie, PA

Regi says the following about how she became an intentional follower of Christ: I became a follower of Jesus after meeting my husband, Nathan, in college in 2000. As a child I knew of God and Jesus through VBS and truly believed in Him, but I didn't understand the relationship you could have with Jesus. My family attended church off and on through the years but there was never any consistency in attending. My family was dysfunctional, and I was not sheltered from anything as a child. Abuse, neglect, addiction. pornography, anger, etc.. is what I grew up with. But no matter what I endured I always knew God was there. I desired something more but felt I didn't have the support system to attain it. After I graduated from high school, I immediately left and went to college. At college, I did very well in my first semester, as I seemed to have a fresh start. But it wasn't long until I fell into old habits and started making very poor choices. At the start of my junior year of college I got into trouble with underage drinking for the second time in a year. At that time Nathan and I were friends, and I called him to talk about what happened. Our conversation led to him telling me that this was God's way of telling me that I shouldn't be drinking and there is "nothing like a relationship with Jesus". Those words sat in my mind for days. I was intrigued and wanted to know more. I decided I was done with drinking. Nathan and I started dating shortly after that and I got to meet his family. He and his family have shown me that life will be full of trials and heartbreak and so many things will happen that you just don't understand why they happened, but how you react to those situations and what you hold onto and focus on is most important. Their love for people and faith in God was just something I had never seen before. I knew then that I wanted what they had and the only way to attain that was through Jesus.

Regi attends Elevate Church. She also participates in the Sisterhood Nights (fellowhip) and in fundraising/donation events for various organizations that are held throughout the year. Regi is also involved in a small group ministry with a local church in Edinboro, PA the Hillcrest Church of the Nazarene. She believes in sharing in fellowship with all types of people and groups no matter what church affiliation.

The ministry of Camp Mission Meadows has always been about serving and loving others and providing a place for all to encounter Christ. Regi feels compelled to serve on the board so she can support and serve the staff of Mission Meadows who pour their hearts out in this ministry. Knowing they are loved and supported will help them continue to do what they do. Regi feels she will bring different perspectives to the board of what she sees as a camper, parent of a camper, and parent of a staff member. The needs of each are unique so bringing that perspective can help bring attention to those needs. Regi believes the best thing she brings is her willingness to serve wherever and whenever she is needed. She states: Use me. Send me. I am willing.

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Nominated for First Terms Continued:

Regi's daily "job" is working as a real estate title/closing agent. Purchasing or selling a property/house can be very stressful. What she enjoys most about the work she does is getting to meet new people and help them through the buying or selling process. Too many people are taken advantage of so being able to walk alongside them and guide them is very rewarding.

Nathan is Regi's husband of 22 years. He works in Real Estate/Property Management & Maintenance. They are blessed to have three sons. Grant is 20. He is currently interning for and working at Mission Meadows. Grant was a summer counselor at Camp for the past two summers and plans to be on programming staff this summer. Gabriel (Gabe) is 16. He is a junior at General McLane High School and attends Erie County Technical School as part of the Culinary Arts program. Gabe enjoys weightlifting and works part-time after school for various places/people. Gabe was on junior staff at Camp last summer and is planning to return this summer hoping to serve on CIT. Gavin is 15. He is a freshman at General McLane High School. Gavin plays basketball and runs track. Gavin attends Camp as a camper and hopes to be on junior staff next summer (2026). Turk is their 7-year-old lab/pit mix. In her free time, Regi enjoys going to thrift stores, reading, listening to music, and beating her kids at games and bowling.

Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp

Renominations:

Stephanie Taylor, Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI

Stephanie has served on the Camp Board for the past three years. She has a background in Human Resources and nonprofit work. She currently works as a Development Manager for a unique charter school in Grand Rapids, MI raising funds and planning special events for the school. She has led Bible studies at Thornapple, has been part of the leadership team of Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) (eventually becoming the MOPS team leader), has been a small group leader for the elementary Sunday school ministry at Thornapple, part of the Elementary School Teaching Team and now serves as a small group leader in high school ministry at Thornapple. Stephanie and her husband, Mike, have been attending Family Camp at Portage Lake for 14 years with their sons. They have seen the full picture of the amazing impact that camp has had on both staff and campers, and because of that they continue to invite friends and family members to Camp. Stephanie is nominated for a second 3-year term on the Camp Board. Stephanie is a member of Thornapple Covenant Church.

Nominated for First Terms:

Jake Hansma, First Evangelical Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, MI

Jake was raised in a Christian home. His family was a part of First Covenant Church in Grand Rapids, MI. Faith became real and personal for Jake when he was in 4th grade through the thoughtful teaching and caring ministry of his Sunday school teacher. He has had various involvements with his church throughout his life. These include a young adult junior leadership team focusing on the growth of young people in the church, as well as serving in various church events like the annual Halloween neighborhood outreach and helping to start the Union High School outreach.

Jake is a financial planner with Fiduciary Financial Advisors in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He specializes in working with business owners and self-employed people. He has built and runs a successful practice in his five years in the industry. Jake loves the opportunity to work each day and solve complex problems for people who have amazing success stories of starting and running businesses. His intentions are to operate and grow his business for decades to come.

Sarah (formerly Sarah Westerfield) and Jake have been happily married since August 2024. They actually have PLCBC to thank for their marriage. Sarah and Jake met at camp, they knew *of* each other for many years but got to know one another better in roughly 2016. Friendship became a relationship and now they have chosen to spend the rest of their lives together. The couple originate from two strong PLCBC families and intend to raise and bring their future children to Christ through the Covenant Church and Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp.

Jake likes to consider himself a supporter for camp his whole life. His largest passion to serve has always been in regard to Portage Lake Bible Camp. He sees unlimited merit in bringing people and specifically kids to meet God through summer camp. The majority of his best memories are moments at Camp and Jake hopes he can make those same opportunities for other kids and families. Jake also has a passion for finance and believes his expertise will add value to PLCBC as an organization.

Jake is an avid golfer and traveler! He and his wife love to experience new cultures and environments.

Portage Lake Covenant Bible Camp

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Nominated for First Terms Continued:

Virgil Biggs, Saranac Community Church, Saranac, MI

Virgil says the following about how he became an intentional follower of Christ: At age 26 I was a "nice guy" but not a Christian. I was married for four years to this incredibly strong Christian woman, named Connie. An altar call by a group in our church called the Prodigal Family changed my life forever. I surrendered my life to Christ that evening and began a lifelong journey to be more like Jesus.

Virgil is a member of Saranac Community Church and is involved in the men's Sunday morning Bible study and men's once a month breakfast - both of which he is a frequent leader. Virgil is also a praise team member, he assists in teaching Christian formation to youth, he is a senior high overtime leader during football season, a one-on-one mentor to several people, and is part of a prison ministry. These are all of the current ministries in which he participates, and he states that his prior ministry participation is too many to list. In thinking about why he would like to be part of the PLCBC Board, Virgil feels that many of the youth from his church have been significantly impacted by the Camp, including working at the Camp. He has also benefited from Camp; he has attended several men's retreats at the Camp which were spiritually meaningful. Virgil feels that his serving as Treasurer of the GLC Executive Board for six years allowed him to understand the finances of the Camp in a meaningful way. He is a CPA and financial planner and his background in auditing and tax will hopefully be helpful to the Camp.

Virgil has been married 56 years to his high school sweetheart, Connie. Together they have three girls - Ginger, a financial advisor with Virgil's firm; Tammi, a Covenant pastor and missionary in the Dominican Republic; and Rachelle, an individual and family counselor.

One of the things Virgil enjoys is helping people be financially successful so they can continue to be generous givers. He also enjoys golf and competing in the Michigan and National Senior Olympics in javelin, discus, shotput and hammer throw.



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