



northwest conference

developing leaders. thriving churches.

# MINISTRY REPORT 2015



## SERVE GLOBALLY

LAKEVIEW  
COVENANT CHURCH

**ANNUAL  
MEETING**

DULUTH,  
MINNESOTA

**APRIL 28-30, 2016**





Serve Globally

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Warm greetings in the Name of our risen Savior, Jesus; the one who calls us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel! I am so pleased that you are here to participate in the **2016 Northwest Conference Annual Meeting** on the beautiful north shore of Lake Superior. Our theme for our time together is “Serve Globally,” and components of these days will focus on the wonderful ways that NWC churches and people engage in mission around the world.



We are delighted to have Dr. Al Tizon, the new Executive Minister for “Serve Globally” (formerly World Missions) for the Evangelical Covenant Church, with us as our speaker and presenter for both the Ministerial Association Meeting and the broader NWC meeting for churches and delegates. As Dr. Tizon is new to his position and participating in the NWC for the first time, I want to encourage you to greet him warmly and make him feel right at home in our midst. I also want him to know that **we have a deep and historic commitment to missions around the world** in the NWC, and that we are “cheering him on” in his new role. Welcome Al!

During the Ministerial Association Annual Meeting, Dr. Tizon will ask our pastors to consider what it means to be called to make disciples of all nations. Then, at the NWC Annual Meeting, we will explore the relationship of what we do as worshipers with what we do the rest of the time. Al will also be preaching at the Ministerial Association Communion Service on Thursday evening, as well as at the Friday evening celebration for general church delegates.

Please note that at the Friday evening Worship Service, there will also be an opportunity to receive an offering to provide funding support for Rev. Soudinh Penkhay, formerly the pastor of Laotian Covenant Church in Brooklyn Center, MN. Pastor Penkhay was consecrated for short-term missionary service at the ECC Annual Meeting last June and recently entered into his new call as a Covenant missionary in Thailand. The NWC has made a commitment to help provide ongoing resources for Pastor Penkhay to serve his people and his Lord in Southeast Asia as he will ultimately become a career missionary with the ECC. Please plan to help us help Soudinh by giving generously!

Further, we are grateful that our time together will include interaction with current Covenant missionaries Nils & Erika Clauson (Mexico) and Julio & Katie Isaza (Colombia). There will also be a Mission Fair that will be geared specifically at the ways in which we engage in sharing the Gospel around the world, as well as a Ministry Fair in which both NWC and ECC ministries continue to be highlighted.

We live in an age when there are many competing demands for our time and resources. In such a time as this, we can become tempted to draw back from our historic and primary commitments, global mission engagement being one of them. Rather, and in light of God’s faithfulness to us, **let’s commit to remaining committed to our commitments!** Further, may our time together serve as a catalyst to strengthen our resolve to global missions and the provision of support for those who are sent by us in the Name of Jesus.

*It is good to be together. Thanks again for being here!*  
*Mark R. Stromberg, Superintendent*



Developing leaders.  
Thriving churches.

The **Northwest Conference** is a mission region of the **Evangelical Covenant Church**. It is comprised of roughly **140 churches** in MN, ND, SD, western WI and northern IA. These churches come in all shapes and sizes. They are **urban, ethnic, town & country** and **suburban**.



Beyond local churches, the ministry of the NWC is also bolstered by **a number of affiliate ministries including five Bible Camps. Minnehaha Academy**; a Pre-K through 12th grade school on two campuses in Minneapolis is also a direct ministry of the NWC. Its mission is to integrate Christian faith and learning.

Ministry Priorities

- CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY
- CHURCH PLANTING
- CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY

Ministry Support

- PASTORAL CARE & DEVELOPMENT
- ADMINISTRATION
- COMMUNICATION
- FINANCE



A simple description of Congregational Vitality is the intentional pursuit of a church toward more faithful and fruitful ministry as it yields to the Holy Spirit’s lead in discerning its mission.



Brad Brisco expands on this by saying: “Imagine your church existing for the sole purpose of participating in God’s mission. God’s Church doesn’t have a mission in your city (or community); instead God’s mission in your city (or community) has a church—your particular, local church. He is calling your church to bring the good news of the Gospel of the Kingdom to a world where bad news is depressingly infectious. ... We must recapture the missionary nature of the Church and in doing so, we must activate ALL the people of God to engage in His mission.”

So I am grateful for the opportunity I have to serve as Director of Congregational Vitality; for the privilege to walk alongside of pastors and congregations in their pursuit of Christ and His priorities for their lives. Within my role I have the unique opportunity to resource and support congregations in the process of seeking God as they discern and align themselves with a clearer sense of vision and purpose in the world. **In a nutshell, Congregational Vitality is about each of us pursuing greater faith and faithfulness with God’s mission.**

On the following page I have provided some additional reflections from NWC churches who have chosen to pursue vitality in their current season. I pray that their testimonies will inspire other congregations to do the same.

For the cause of Christ and His Church!  
Jon Kramka, Director of Congregational Vitality

What are we seeing?  
MORE NWC CHURCHES ARE:

- **Pursuing** Congregational Vitality.
- **Discerning** a renewed sense of mission for their current ministry contexts.
- **Promoting** pervasive prayer and a greater hunger for God.
- **Fostering** a greater level of compassion and urgency for the hurting and lost.
- **Incorporating** assessment and evaluation as healthy organizational practices.
- **Seeing** people come to Christ and connecting into their fellowships.
- **Discovering** fresh ways to engage with and bless their communities.
- **Developing** congregational cultures of honesty, respect and trust.



BETHEL COVENANT,  
ELLSWORTH, WI

“As a young pastor of a 135-year-old congregation, the Vitality Pathway has helped us come together across generations and have honest discussion about where we are and where God might be leading us. Our process has drawn our focus on soil change (fostering congregational readiness) as pervasive prayer directs more of what we are doing. The Pathway continues to provide us with greater focus towards the important, and helping us know how to move forward in mission.”

FIRST COVENANT,  
RED WING, MN

“We began the Vitality process a year and half ago. We knew we were entering an ‘important season’ as a church. The Vitality journey has deepened our understanding of ‘missional’ and our desire to become more healthy. Two recurring themes

congregational vitality



have also emerged for us: a need for spiritual growth in Christ for all people at First Covenant, and growth in our relationships with each other.”

EVANGELICAL COVENANT,  
BIWABIK, MN

“We are grateful for the Congregational Vitality Pathway. One step we have taken within the Pathway is to adopt the 10 Healthy Missional Markers as our standard for moving forward. We now function with 10 Missional Goals and review them

both with leadership and with the congregation on a monthly basis.”

THOMASTOWN COVENANT,  
STAPLES, MN

“The Vitality Pathway as a whole, has been a rich gift to Thomastown Covenant. It has brought common language for a much-needed conversation, tangible goals to work toward and hope through the constant reminder that God, in His love, really does have so much more for us!”





I want to begin my report for this year’s Annual Meeting booklet where I believe it should begin, with a huge thanks to all of you.

At our 2014 Annual Meeting we rolled out a bold new initiative called, “50 by ’25: Our Mission to Plant.” With this announcement we committed to the planting of 50 new churches over

a 10-year period of time. This is a very exciting goal, but also one that we knew would stretch us beyond what we have experienced in the past.

But our God is faithful! To date we have seen seven new churches started in the NWC—one new church about every 2.5 months—which puts us right on track to reach our goal. **Only 43 more to go!**

Our call was for every church to answer the question: “What can we do to see another new church started in the Northwest Conference?” Our belief is that every church can and should do something.

In the New Testament we have record of reproduction, both of disciples and new churches. We are convinced that this is still the call for the Church. We believe that planting is within the reach of every church as we take whatever we have and place it in Jesus’ capable hands. There is no shortage, no scarcity, when we trust our efforts to the Lord.

**Our Church Planting efforts have always revolved around partnerships.** Partnerships with the Evangelical Covenant Church, the NWC and our local churches is a necessity if we are to carry out this ministry priority. Since the 2014 Annual Meeting, where the theme was “Start Churches,” we’ve had many of you contact the Conference office wondering how you and your church could get involved in making the dream a reality.

We’ve seen entire districts of churches join together to plant. We’ve seen individual churches parent a new church plant. We have churches bringing on church planting interns with the intent to resource them and send them out. We’ve seen churches open their doors to share space with a new work. The stories of what God is doing in response to our faithfulness are too numerous to tell.

The vision is taking root and growing! So thanks again for your willingness to say “yes” to Jesus and see new mission outposts started throughout the Northwest Conference.

*By His Grace and for His Glory, Mike Brown, Director of Church Planting*



*“What can we do to see another new church started in the Northwest Conference?”*



CATALYST

**LOCATION:** St. Paul, MN  
**PLANTER:** Jeff Olson  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2014  
**ATTENDANCE:** 93



CITY OF LAKES

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Dave Berge  
**DATE STARTED:** October 2013  
**ATTENDANCE:** 67



THE DOOR

**LOCATION:** Blaine, MN  
**PLANTER:** Jack Shields  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** 38



GENESIS

**LOCATION:** St. Louis Park, MN  
**PLANTER:** Steve Wiens  
**DATE STARTED:** June 2014  
**ATTENDANCE:** 285



GRACE OUTREACH

**LOCATION:** St. Paul, MN  
**PLANTER:** Paul Robinson  
**DATE STARTED:** July 2013  
**ATTENDANCE:** 36



LA BENDICION

**LOCATION:** Brooklyn Park, MN  
**PASTOR:** Juan Lopez  
**DATE STARTED:** March 2009  
**ATTENDANCE:** 60



LAOTIAN

**LOCATION:** Brooklyn Center, MN  
**PASTOR:** Soudinh Penkhay  
**DATE STARTED:** July 2002  
**ATTENDANCE:** 35



LIVING SPRINGS

**LOCATION:** Brandon, SD  
**PASTOR:** Ben Zabel  
**DATE STARTED:** January 2000  
**ATTENDANCE:** 116



NEW COVENANT

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Mauricio Dell'Arciprete  
**DATE STARTED:** October 2014  
**ATTENDANCE:** 85





**RENEW**  
**LOCATION:** Eau Claire, WI  
**PLANTER:** Jamie Staples  
**DATE STARTED:** August 2014  
**ATTENDANCE:** 90



**SEEDS**  
**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Dale Durie  
**DATE STARTED:** September 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** 30



**VERBO EN ACCION**  
**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PASTOR:** Juan Ovando  
**DATE STARTED:** April 2009  
**ATTENDANCE:** 165



Children and family ministry ...  
a Kingdom perspective.

Ministry with children and families is a constant reminder to me that God’s Kingdom is upside down. **Throughout scripture, we are reminded that Jesus always made a place for the outsider and the underdog—women, lepers, prostitutes, and yes, the children.** “Let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Mark 10:14).



Midway through my fourth year of ministry at the Northwest Conference, I offer a look back at 2015. We’ve provided encouragement, networking and support, and even held events—some wildly successful; some curiously small. But most importantly, I am proud to say we’ve worked to develop a culture where children and family ministry is an important priority in our churches. I am seeing churches develop intentional peer, family and intergenerational ministry, all of which equip the next generation to have faith and remind us of the hopeful nature of God’s Kingdom.

**The Northwest Conference focuses on developing ministry leaders, professional and lay, who understand the importance of ministry with children and families.**

Broadly, Children & Family Ministry’s priorities of resource identification and promotion, personal and professional development, and networking and connections have remained the same during my service at the Northwest Conference. This past year has added new emphasis on equipping church plants—ensuring our newest churches can hit the ground running with resources, best practices and encouragement as they build strong ministries with families and kids.

I am grateful to the seven members of the Children & Family Ministry Commission who volunteer their time to serve alongside me. Together, we will continue to work toward equipping churches to hold a Kingdom perspective by pursuing strategic ministry with our littlest ones and their families.

*Kara Stromberg, Director of Children & Family Ministry*



**ROOTS**  
**LOCATION:** St. Paul, MN  
**PLANTER:** Touger Thao  
**DATE STARTED:** June 2013  
**ATTENDANCE:** 70



**THE STORY**  
**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Matt Anderson  
**DATE STARTED:** September 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** 70

Learn more about  
Northwest Conference  
Church Planting at  
[northwestconference.org](http://northwestconference.org)

2015 FUNDING BY CHURCH

<b>Catalyst Covenant Church</b> St Paul, MN.....	<b>LaBendicion Covenant Church</b> Brooklyn Park, MN.....	<b>Roots Covenant Church</b> St Paul, MN.....
\$45,320	\$4,292	\$28,640
<b>City of Lakes Covenant Church</b> Minneapolis, MN.....	<b>Laotian Covenant Church</b> Brooklyn Center, MN.....	<b>Seeds Covenant Church</b> Minneapolis, MN.....
\$34,008	\$18,516	\$16,000
<b>The Door Covenant Church</b> Blaine, MN.....	<b>Living Springs Covenant Church</b> Brandon, SD .....	<b>The Story Covenant Church</b> Minneapolis, MN.....
\$31,200	\$7,500	\$16,000
<b>Genesis Covenant Church</b> St Louis Park, MN.....	<b>New Covenant Church</b> Minneapolis, MN.....	<b>Verbo en Accion Covenant Church</b> Minneapolis, MN.....
\$46,660	\$44,999	\$1,800
<b>Grace Outreach Covenant Church</b> St Paul, MN.....	<b>Renew Covenant Church</b> Eau Claire, WI .....	
\$26,004	\$50,000	





**DATE:** April 10-11, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Minnehaha Academy South Campus, Minneapolis, MN  
**PURPOSE:** A service and learning overnight event for high school students.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 225



**DATE:** May 2, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Redeemer Covenant Church, Brooklyn Park, MN  
**PURPOSE:** Serve. Learn. Grow.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 130+



**DATE:** Monthly during school year  
**LOCATION:** Salem Covenant Church, New Brighton, MN  
**PURPOSE:** Encouragement, connection and learning for Youth Pastors and Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 15-25 each month



**DATE:** August 6-8, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Crossroads Church, Woodbury, MN  
**PURPOSE:** An unforgettable, spiritual, high-energy event for middle school/junior high students.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 661



**DATE:** October 10, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Crossroads Covenant Church, Forest Lake, MN  
**PURPOSE:** A day for those serving Children & Families.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 15 churches



**DATES:** Monthly during school year  
**LOCATION:** Salem Covenant Church, New Brighton, MN  
**PURPOSE:** Connection, prayer, encouragement and learning for Children & Family Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 12-15 each month



**DATE:** June 20-27, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Adventurous Christians, Grand Marais, MN  
**PURPOSE:** A leadership development adventure for high school students in the BWCA.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 15 students



**DATE:** January 2015  
**LOCATION:** MN, WI and IA  
**PURPOSE:** A one-day conference to equip Children and Youth Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 1,000+



**DATE:** March 1-3, 2015  
**LOCATION:** Covenant Pines Bible Camp, McGregor, MN  
**THEME:** Rhythms of rest and renewal.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 8



How would you have described your faith when you were an outwardly confident, yet inwardly insecure, high school student? What about when you were an awkward sixth grader or a skeptical, bully-esque eighth grader? At that critical time in your faith journey, who were the people encouraging you to think deeply about your faith while not being afraid of your inquisitiveness or your belligerence?

**In the Northwest Conference, we strive to equip our youth ministry people to be healthy leaders who know how to journey with our teenagers and their families.** We design and collaborate on events with adolescents in mind, to challenge them with the things of God in a language they understand. We gather as leaders to spend time supporting and praying with each other and reminding one another that we're not crazy to answer this call to love teenagers in the Name of Jesus. We partner with other ministries for education and networking, seeking to aspire to be the best youth workers we can be.

This year we are coming off of the largest event our denomination hosts: CHIC 2015. Over 6,000 high school students and leaders (1,372 from the Northwest Conference alone) gathered for a week of worship, experiential education, challenging messages and fun! Churches spend years fundraising, recruiting and preparing for this unique ministry event. According to the stories of life change and transformation, it's worth every minute.

Whether it's helping to lead a massive denomination-wide event, donating a cake for a mission trip fundraiser, or engaging a student in a quiet conversation over a Coke at McDonald's, consider what your role is in coming alongside this next generation. **Join us as we seek to develop faithful and spiritually healthy adults who walk with our adolescents on their faith journeys.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Ginny Olson, Director of Youth Ministry*





# PASTORAL CARE & DEVELOPMENT

Within the broader mission of developing healthy missional leaders, our focus is on the personal and professional growth of our pastors and ministry staff. The challenges, both personal and professional, have led to a much more challenging life for those in ministry and a staggering dropout rate.



## PROFESSIONAL PRESSURES

- **Consumerism of Today’s Christian** – Most pastors were not trained to run a “small business” in a fast-changing culture where there is no built-in loyalty of “customers” and an abundance of choices—but that is what ministry often feels like today.
- **The Draining Nature of Counseling** – The complexity of people’s problems today can be overwhelming for the compassionate pastor who got into this to help people but often with no formal training in counseling.
- **Speed of Culture and Information** – Our minds are overwhelmed with the growth of information, but have little time for contemplation.



## PERSONAL PRESSURES

- **Difficulty in Achieving any Helpful Separation Between Personal Life and Ministry Life** – When expressions are used like “the church family,” it certainly emphasizes that this is a group of people a pastor leads but also a group that are like relatives in some sense. It is quite difficult to make the separation between personal and professional.
- **Ignorance of Good Mental and Emotional Practices** – Pastors often see signs of burnout as something else to be conquered as opposed to a warning sign that, “I am going about things in the wrong way.”

## LAST YEAR’S NEW PRIORITIES

### Mini-Retreats

One of our projects for 2015 was the creation of several one-day events or 24-hour mini-retreats, focused on relevant topics. Our goal was to offer these experiences in regional settings so that the cost and travel time was manageable. We planned to have four events during the year and we accomplished six. We held retreats in May, August, September, November, January and March, using Lake Beauty Bible Camp, Covenant Pines Bible Camp and two conference centers in the Twin Cities. One of those six events sparked the re-forming of an affinity group for chaplains, called Chaplain’s Connection, which now has its own leadership team and a yearly schedule.

### Local Church Pastoral Care & Development Teams

To assist in developing a more comprehensive partnership between pastors and local churches, we have created initial framing resources to look again at this vital connection. Those resources were made available at the Annual Meeting last year and throughout the year as churches requested. Conversations growing out of these resources have allowed us to resource a number of churches toward a more healthy future in this area.

*Jeff Burton, Director of Pastoral Care & Development*

*Judy Swanberg, Associate Director of Pastoral Care & Development (retired in early 2016)*



## New projects

With the growth of the NWC Spiritual Directors Network, and the growing demand for this experience for pastors and ministry staff, we are revamping the process of matching directors with those seeking direction.

We are looking into the possibility of developing a pathway to match pastors with mentors as mentors are re-requested. While this has been done on a limited basis with a lot of informality, the requests are coming more often, so it invites closer consideration of a more formal process.

Additional printed guidelines are being developed for local church pastoral care and development teams. These relate to topics such as vacation/study leave policies, and healthy pastoral schedules based on job expectations and particular church settings.

We are also developing a marriage retreat that is focused on building health and vitality into the marriage where one or both are involved in vocational ministry.

## SIGNS OF HEALTH

I (Jeff) was recently asked by the officers of the Ministerial Association about the overall health of our pastors. One of the first comments that came to my mind is, “I see a movement toward deeper relationships and more transparent sharing when I am with

groups of pastors.” This is encouraging given that pastors, trained in the art of keeping secrets, are often secretive about their own struggles. Building healthy, open peer connections continues to be critical to our mission.



## Northwest Conference Finance



**In last year’s report I identified one of the priorities for the position of Director of Finance to be resourcing congregations in the area of sound financial operations.** At our meeting I verbally (somewhat jokingly) mentioned that I wanted to have a “Connection” event like other ministry areas hosted by the NWC.

As I have responded to questions over the last year, and worked toward developing sample policies, it has become apparent that conversation with others will result in a better product (sample policy). For instance, when we are interpreting the IRS rules about expense reimbursement that are written more directly to a for-profit business, how do we best translate those rules to a ministry context? I am pleased

to report that by the time of the 2016 Annual Meeting, the Finance Connection will have had its first meeting!

As of this writing it is still in the planning stages, but I hope to engage a group of people at the NWC office and connect to more finance leaders through video conferencing.

*Sandy Norris, Director of Finance*

## CHET Northwest Conference



CHET Northwest Conference is our local satellite of Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos (CHET), the ECC Hispanic Leadership Training Center. Twice a year, for 13 consecutive Monday nights, dozens of Spanish-speaking followers of Jesus converge on Minnehaha Academy where we offer pre-ministerial level courses on the Life of Jesus based on the Gospel of Matthew and the Book of Acts. Over the course of the year we also instruct students at workshops on the topics of forming effective teams, discovering and developing spiritual gifts, becoming an effective teacher, leading from within, as well as workshops for credit at the NWC Annual Meeting as well as at Imagine.

**This past year we graduated 12 students from the pre-ministerial level, and had our first graduate of the “Programa Ministerial,” Martha Luna who serves at La Bendición Covenant Church in Brooklyn Park, MN.**

We greatly appreciate the hard work of our students, tutors and tutor-assistants, and especially the Board of Directors for CHET Northwest Conference. In the past year, members have included Mike Brown, Mauricio Dell’Arciprete, Amy Eikenberry-Barber, Greg Ellis, Juan Lopez, Martha Luna, Eluvia Ovando, Juan Ovando, Mark Stromberg, Cheryl Theilen, and Kyliah Villa. On Jan. 1, 2016, I began a new role as Coordinator of CHET Northwest Conference. You can find more information at [www.chetnorthwestconference.org](http://www.chetnorthwestconference.org).

*Greg Ellis, Coordinator of CHET Northwest Conference*

## Northwest Conference Communications

**In 2015, we designed, built and launched a new Northwest Conference website.**

In addition to an updated look to match the visual direction of recently developed brand materials, the new site is mobile responsive and features more streamlined overall organization.

Following the structure of our Ministry Priorities and Ministry Support categories, the new site delivers a more clear path to commonly accessed information, while providing more focused information related to overviews of the NWC ministry and partner organizations. We’ve also reduced overall page count, and worked hard to make related information more contextual while following current design trends.

Additionally, we redesigned our email newsletters (across all email communications we maintain a 50% or higher open rate, compared to an industry average of 28% for religious organizations), and designed coordinated print promotional brochures for the Ministry Priorities and an overview of the NWC.

*Bryan Malley, Director of Communications*



## Northwest Conference Administration

**CHIC:** The NWC worked with Richfield Bus Company to provide bus transportation to CHIC. A total of 1,086 riders from 68 churches (including 1 Midwest Conference and 2 Canadian churches) boarded 21 buses at 18 bus stop locations. Thank you Richfield Bus for serving us so well for so many years!

**CREDENTIALING:** Our Committee on Ministerial Standing (COMS) interviewed 16 ordination candidates, 9 ministerial license candidates and 4 individuals requiring a license update in 2015. I provide the administrative support for this process and enjoy working with the credentialing candidates, the COMS and the Ordered Ministry.

**FINANCE:** I am so impressed with the work that Sandy Norris (Director of Finance) does with churches and have enjoyed assisting her. I have learned many things from Sandy that have helped me to be more efficient and proficient in my work.

**STAFF:** Jessa Anderson joined the staff in January 2015 and has provided support for communications, events, hospitality and database management. We appreciate her energy and positive attitude.

Thanks for the privilege of serving and supporting the ministry of the Northwest Conference.

*Cheryl Theilen, Director of Administration*





Opening Eyes, Opening Minds,  
Opening Doors

At Minnehaha Academy, we help students discover their God-given talents and abilities by providing a rigorous academic education immersed in the Christian faith. From our youngest learners in the preschool classroom to the Upper School students who are preparing for college, we provide exceptional academic, athletic and co-curricular opportunities guided by Christian values and principles. Through these opportunities, our students discover what it means to lead a life of significance through servant leadership. We'd like to introduce you to just a few of the many students who exemplify the caring community, exceptional academics and the distinctively Christian culture at Minnehaha Academy.



MEET SOPHIA, GRADE 3

**Sophia decided she had enough toys and didn't need anything for her ninth birthday.** So instead of gifts, she asked her friends to bring food items to be donated to The Sheridan Story, a food shelf/nonprofit run by MA grad Rob Williams ('03). Kristi Classen, her third grade teacher, wasn't surprised. "She's always thinking of others," she said. As for Sophia, she said they were able to collect and bring in a lot of food and "it just felt good to help."



MEET SIERRA, GRADE 11

**"I am Sierra, and I like to read, write and speak. As I get older, I have realized more and more that Minnehaha Academy provides me with the space, the education and the encouragement for me to thrive.** I have noticed that when I'm passionate about a project I want to pursue or eager to be a leader in a certain field, there is someone next to me who is just as excited for me to pursue that project or to be that leader. At Minnehaha, you're always going to have programs and opportunities to pursue what you're already passionate about or maybe what you're curious to explore. You can write a speech for chapel if you want to, you can program an experiment for space if you want to. And when you



fail, you will always have a teacher or a classmate who comes to hug you and tell you that you can grow. Minnehaha is a place to grow."

MEET LIAM, GRADE 9

**Liam might be small in stature, but his big heart has endeared him to the entire community.** This winter, he took a leap of courage and decided to go out for the Boys' Basketball Team. "Watching Netflix, playing video games didn't seem right to me," Liam told local television news KARE 11. "So I said to myself if I didn't play basketball then I will always regret that decision not to."



The fact that Liam was a ninth-grader who was new to the sport didn't keep the upperclassmen and experienced players from caring for him and encouraging him. The team rallied around him and worked hard to give him ball time. Then, during a Thursday evening C-squad game, Liam got the ball. He took a shot and made his first three-point basket during a game. A mom in the stands caught the moment on tape, and captured the exuberance of the entire team as they rushed the court during the game to celebrate with him. Liam's perseverance and courage was an unexpected lesson for the team and entire Minnehaha Academy community. "He never really stuck in my mind as a kid who could have such an impact on me like he has," said teammate Bennett Theisen.

MEET ALEX, GRADE 10

**Alex has several talents he's pursuing. He has a passion for electrical and software engineering, but also is a gifted musician, and sees that as an amazing way to reach people in ways technology cannot.**

His teachers are encouraging him to do both. "Many engineers, mathematicians and scientists are also musicians," said Karen Lutgen, Upper School Choral Director. "Alex is a perfect example of that." He has big dreams for himself, but for now, "I'm just a student working towards being an engineer by day and a musician by night, building up my skills and trying to brighten someone's day along the way," he said.



MINNEHAHA ACADEMY, A NORTHWEST CONFERENCE SCHOOL

- Founded by NWC pastors and lay leaders 102 years ago, Minnehaha Academy remains a vital ministry of the Northwest Conference.
- Families of NWC churches are eligible to receive 100 percent of demonstrated financial need.
- MA is excited to continue our scholarship program for up to three students in grades K-12 (depending on space availability) from each NWC church. For more details or to apply, please call 612-728-7776 or email Admission@MinnehahaAcademy.net



"At Minnehaha Academy, I have learned how to have meaningful relationships. The time that teachers and faculty invest in the students here is truly unique. There are tons of ways to be a part of everything—from varsity athletics to theater—really anything!"  
-Saakje, grade 12



"Minnehaha Academy has taught me to open my views and approach challenges in many different ways. I am grateful for the strong relationships with my peers and teachers and how each teacher deeply cares about my success."  
-Steven, grade 11



"No one is ashamed of Jesus' name, and though my own faith has grown and changed during different parts of my life, I have always been able to grow in Jesus at MA."  
-Emma, grade 10



"I have learned how to work hard at Minnehaha Academy. It is a challenging school, but, if you put in the work, you get great satisfaction."  
-Luke, grade 11



"Minnehaha Academy has taught me how to navigate the world as a Christian."  
-Christen, grade 12

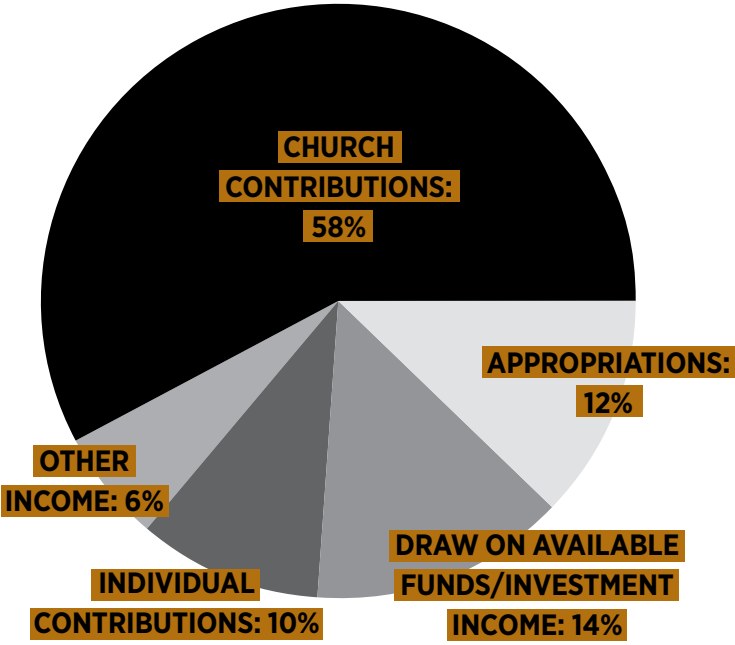
MINNEHAHA ACADEMY,  
BY THE NUMBERS

- 18 AP courses
- 20 performing groups
- 26 varsity teams
- 100% college acceptance rate
- 2 science experiments annually destined for space
- 3 state-of-the-art STEM labs

Visit [minnehahaacademy.net](http://minnehahaacademy.net) for more info



2015/16 NWC BUDGET  
INCOME: \$1,497,013



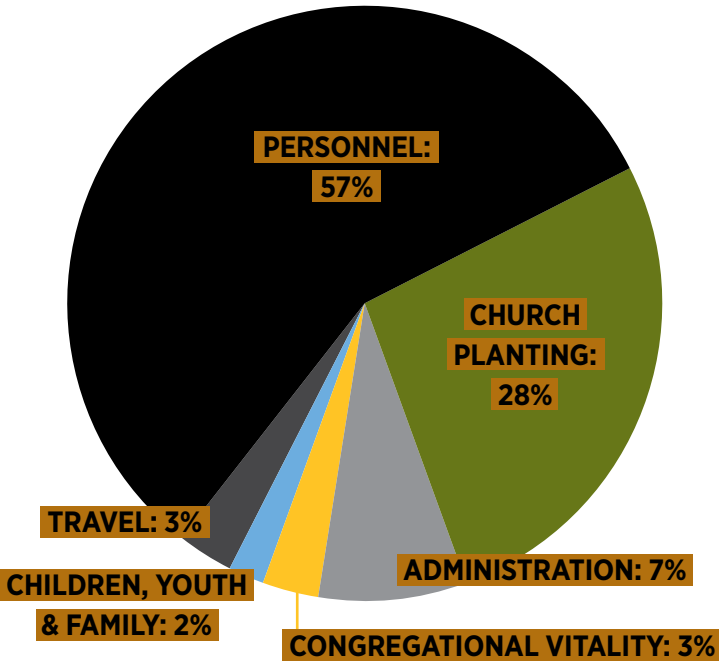
2015/16 INCOME Notes:

**Individual Contributions:** Includes designated and undesignated contributions to the NWC.

**Appropriations:** Money the NWC receives from the ECC for Church Planting. The NWC and ECC invest equally in all new church plants.

**Draw on Available Funds:** The NWC has cash reserves of \$1,447,059 (12.31.15) designated for Congregational Vitality (\$123,162); Church Planting (\$492,270); Children, Youth & Family (\$123,751);

2015/16 NWC BUDGET  
EXPENSE: \$1,497,013



and Unrestricted/Discretionary (\$707,877). Some of these funds are readily available, while some are in dedicated Trust Accounts with Covenant Trust Company and can only be withdrawn at a rate of 5% per year.

2015/16 EXPENSE Notes:

**Personnel:** Compensation for all staff included. Staff time used for direct ministry to churches for Congregational Vitality, Church Planting, Children, Youth & Family and Pastoral Care & Development.

Mission

The Mission of the Northwest Conference is to engage, empower, and equip healthy missional leaders, as we believe that this is an essential component in growing healthy missional churches.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Jim Volling**, Chair and  
Minnehaha Academy Liaison  
Excelsior Covenant, Excelsior, MN
- Jan Bros**, Vice Chair  
Abbey Way Covenant,  
Minneapolis, MN
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Forest Lake, MN
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- ADVISORY**  
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- Herb Frost**, Chair  
NWC Ministerial Association
- Christi Pease**, Director  
NWC Women Ministries

STAFF (AS OF 2.1.16)

- Mark R. Stromberg**  
Superintendent
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- Mike Brown**  
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Dir. of Children & Family Ministry
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- Greg Ellis**  
Coordinator of CHET NWC

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Stay connected with news, training opportunities, and stories from around the NWC. Pick up a copy of the quarterly IMPRINTS newsletter at your church, subscribe to the UPDATE e-newsletter, and check our website often for event postings and stories.

- 3106 47th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406
- 612.721.4893 or 1.800.756.6692
- northwestconference.org/info@northwestconference.org

SPECIAL GIFTS  
GIVEN

SECOND MILER GRANTS

- Faith Covenant Church, Burnsville, MN - \$1,914.60
- Awaken Covenant Community, St Paul, MN - \$2,267.50
- Crossroads Covenant Church, Forest Lake, MN - \$2,042.50





# CHURCHES IN THE NWC (AS OF 12.31.15)

## IOWA

Grandview, Larchwood

## MINNESOTA

Alexandria Covenant, Alexandria  
Catalyst Covenant, Alexandria  
Evangelical Covenant, Anoka  
Restoration Covenant, Apple Valley  
Evangelical Covenant, Baudette  
Evangelical Covenant, Bemidji  
Evangelical Covenant, Big Falls  
Community Covenant, Big Lake  
Evangelical Covenant, Biwabik  
Good Shepherd Covenant, Blaine  
The Door Covenant, Blaine  
Bloomington Covenant, Bloomington  
Evangelical Covenant, Braham  
Brookdale Covenant, Brooklyn Center  
Laotian Covenant, Brooklyn Center  
Blue Oaks Covenant, Brooklyn Park  
La Bendicion Covenant, Brooklyn Park  
Redeemer Covenant, Brooklyn Park  
Buffalo Covenant, Buffalo  
Faith Covenant, Burnsville  
Big Lake Evangelical Covenant, Cloquet  
Elim Mission, Cokato  
Evangelical Covenant, Cook  
Evangelical Covenant, Crookston  
Evangelical Covenant, Dassel  
Lake Jennie Covenant, Dassel  
Dawson Covenant, Dawson  
First Covenant, Duluth  
Lakeview Covenant, Duluth  
Salem Covenant, Duluth  
Edina Covenant, Edina  
New City Covenant, Edina  
Calvary Covenant, Evansville  
Excelsior Covenant, Excelsior  
Fairmont Evangelical Covenant, Fairmont  
Maywood Covenant, Foley  
Crossroads Evangelical Covenant, Forest Lake  
Fridley Covenant, Fridley  
Riverwood Covenant, Greenfield  
Harris Covenant, Harris  
Palmyra Covenant, Hector  
Gethsemane Covenant, Hermantown  
Emmaus Road, Hopkins  
Community Covenant, Huntley  
Oak Heights Covenant, Hutchinson  
Evangelical Covenant, International Falls  
Evangelical Mission Covenant, Kennedy  
Kensington Covenant, Kensington

Community Covenant, Lake Bronson  
Lancaster Covenant, Lancaster  
Rice Creek Covenant, Lino Lakes  
Grace Covenant, Little Falls  
Ben Wade Covenant, Lowry  
Mahtowa Covenant, Mahtowa  
Maple Grove Covenant, Maple Grove  
Abbey Way Covenant, Minneapolis  
Bethlehem Covenant, Minneapolis  
City of Lakes Covenant, Minneapolis  
Community Covenant, Minneapolis  
Crosstown Covenant, Minneapolis  
First Covenant, Minneapolis  
New Covenant, Minneapolis  
Seeds Covenant, Minneapolis  
The Sanctuary Covenant, Minneapolis  
The Story Covenant, Minneapolis  
Verbo en Accion Covenant, Minneapolis  
Monticello Covenant, Monticello  
Evangelical Covenant, Moose Lake  
Fairview Covenant, Mound  
MainStreet Covenant, Mound  
Salem Covenant, New Brighton  
Evangelical Covenant, New London  
Vista Evangelical Covenant, New Richland  
Crossview Covenant, North Mankato  
Calvary Covenant, Northome  
Lewis Lake Covenant, Ogilvie  
Christ Community Covenant, Owatonna  
Salem Mission Covenant, Pennock  
Plymouth Covenant + The Extension, Plymouth  
Karmel Evangelical Covenant, Princeton  
First Covenant, Red Wing  
NewDay Covenant, Rochester  
Rochester Covenant, Rochester  
Salem Road Covenant, Rochester  
Nueva Vida Covenant, Rogers  
Evangelical Covenant, Roseau  
Roseville Covenant, Roseville  
Evangelical Covenant, Rush City  
New Life Covenant, Saginaw  
Emmanuel Covenant, Shoreview  
Lake Union Covenant, South Haven  
Hope Covenant, St. Cloud  
Genesis Covenant, St. Louis Park  
Awaken Covenant, St. Paul  
Catalyst Covenant, St. Paul  
First Covenant, St. Paul  
The Gallery Covenant, St. Paul  
Grace Outreach, St. Paul  
Roots Covenant, St. Paul  
Thomastown Covenant, Staples  
Bethany Covenant, Stillwater

Evangelical Covenant, Thief River Falls  
Evangelical Covenant, Trimont  
Community Covenant, Upsala  
Viking Covenant, Viking  
First Covenant, Virginia  
Evangelical Covenant, Warren  
Real Life Covenant, Waseca  
Oster First Covenant, Waverly  
Bethlehem Covenant, Wheaton  
First Covenant, Willmar  
Winthrop Evangelical Covenant, Winthrop  
Crossroads, Woodbury/Cottage Grove/Eagan  
First Covenant, Worthington  
Linwood Covenant, Wyoming

## NORTH DAKOTA

Teien Covenant, Drayton  
Knollbrook Covenant, Fargo  
Hope Covenant, Grand Forks + Emerado

## SOUTH DAKOTA

Komstad Covenant, Beresford  
Living Springs Covenant, Brandon  
Swedona Evangelical Covenant, Brandon  
Evangelical Covenant, LaBolt  
Evangelical Covenant, Lake Norden  
Prairie Hills Covenant, Sioux Falls  
South Sudan Covenant, Sioux Falls  
Elim Evangelical Covenant, Stockholm

## WISCONSIN

First Covenant, Ashland  
Prairie Lake Covenant, Chetek  
United Covenant, Clear Lake  
Renew Covenant, Eau Claire  
Bethel Covenant, Ellsworth  
Zion Covenant, Ellsworth  
Calvary Evangelical Covenant, Grantsburg  
Cedarbrook, Menomonie  
Prince of Peace Covenant, Mondovi  
Prairieview Covenant, New Richmond  
Mission Covenant, Poplar  
First Covenant, River Falls  
Siren Covenant, Siren  
Calvary Covenant, Stockholm  
Lund Mission Covenant, Stockholm  
First Covenant, Superior



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tools at [northwestconference.org](http://northwestconference.org)