

# Ministry Report

## TWENTY-EIGHTEEN

*Sharing Our Hope:*

RAISING THE TEMPERATURE ON EVANGELISM



**2019 ANNUAL MEETING**

HOPE COVENANT CHURCH  
GRAND FORKS, ND



# Sharing our Hope

Dear Friends,

We have now gathered once again as Northwest Conference delegates and leaders to conduct the business of the Church. And while there are certainly “business-like” things

to address, we know that our time together goes far beyond budgets and ballots. After all, we have the privilege to be about the work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We have the joy of worshipping Him and having fellowship with one another. We receive the encouragement

of hearing a good word about some of the things that God is doing in and through us in the lives of our congregations and among those beyond the walls of our churches.

With these things in mind, I welcome you to our 2019 NWC Annual Meeting at Hope Covenant Church in Grand Forks, ND. It is appropriate that we are gathered in this place for this year’s theme, “Sharing Our Hope: Raising the Temperature on Evangelism.” This is particularly true because Hope is a church that “walks its talk,” having introduced scores of people to Jesus through its life and mission.

Way to go, Hope Church! Keep it up! May the example of this church and the focus of our time together serve as inspiration as we leave this place and return to our respective places of Christian service.

As in previous years, we are pleased to have a number of special guests with us. Among them include Michelle Sanchez, the ECC Executive Minister of Make & Deepen Disciples.

Moreover, Tim Ciccone, the ECC Director of Youth Ministry is with us once again, as both he and Michelle will have participated in an EMBRACE Workshop for our pastors at

the beginning of the Ministerial Association Meetings earlier in the week. Theresa Marks, ECC Director of Pastoral Care for Ordered Ministry, will also be participating in the EMBRACE Workshop. Welcome to these and others who are joining us from Covenant offices in Chicago!

Beyond our business sessions, we will experience a wonderful time of worship on Friday evening during which we will celebrate the beginning of new church fellowship groups and participate in the presentation of our BLESS prayer cards.

We will also be receiving a special offering to bless Hope Church and its Community Care Center & Food Pantry, which opened this past December and is making a real difference in the city of Grand Forks. We believe that this is a worthy project in light of both our theme and the location of our 2019 meeting.

*“We have the privilege to be about the work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*

Our schedule on Saturday morning will also include the opportunity to hear stories from churches within our own region that have taken steps of faith to share Jesus with those who do not know Him.

It is our hope that as we hear from some of our sister congregations, we will begin to think more creatively about ways that we can share the gospel with those who are near to our own faith communities.

Again, welcome and may God use our time together for His glory.

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



# Become healthier and more missional

In his article, “What’s Dragging You Down?” Mike Bonem introduces the concept of drag coefficient and how that relates to the Church. According to Wikipedia, the term “drag coefficient” is “used to quantify the drag or resistance of an object in a fluid environment, such as air or water.”



Practically speaking, it’s the calculation engineers use to improve aerodynamics of vehicles or airplanes. Reducing the drag improves fuel economy and allows them to travel faster.

if we could calculate the drag coefficient for a church or ministry?” The “drag” would be anything that slows our progress toward fulfilling the mission, or causes us to waste valuable resources.

“What if we could calculate the drag coefficient for a church or ministry?”

So stop for just a second and think about your church’s drag coefficient. What’s dragging you down as a church that if identified and addressed would establish greater health and fruitfulness within your current mission?

And as you think about answering this question, know that we would count it a privilege to walk with you in your process. Because as we partner with churches of our Conference we continue to see how the Congregational Vitality Pathway, resources and process are helping churches become healthier and more missional.

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

## What are we seeing?

When congregations intentionally establish ...

- **Mission-Vision Clarity** where the whole church aligns with a shared sense of purpose;
- **A Connection/Formation Process** that establishes belonging and a pathway toward becoming fully-devoted followers of Christ;
- **Broader Community Connections and Engagement** where congregants are sent as ambassadors of Jesus into their neighborhoods;

- **A Culture of Godly Leadership** whereby Godly character, competence and conviction are being developed/displayed by leaders;
- **Fruitful Organizational Structures** where systems and decision making are Holy Spirit led and centered on mission;

... we see congregations with increased health and bearing greater Kingdom results.



### BETHEL COVENANT CHURCH, ELLSWORTH, WI

“Guided by the Spirit and utilizing the vitality resources of the NWC, our church culture has changed, leading to a new ministry season at Bethel.



“We have seen our decision-making processes move away from fearing tomorrow to having hope in what God can do. Our leaders no longer busy themselves with ‘putting out fires,’ but instead are dreaming big about God’s plans for our future.

“When we disagree, we find ways to move forward together, forgiving one another, thinking the best of each other. When people now come to visit Bethel they describe a very different church than five years ago.

“We are seeing new ministries, new people and new energy bearing fruit in ways we could have never imagined. Praise God!” – Todd Spieker, Pastor

### BROOKDALE COVENANT CHURCH, BROOKLYN CENTER, MN

“The NWC has been very encouraging to me personally in the work of revitalization, which is costly, sometimes, frustrating, but very worthwhile because it is God’s church, his Bride, that we serve.” – Hollis Kim, Transition Pastor

### CROSSROADS COVENANT CHURCH, FOREST LAKE, MN

“I invited the NWC to lead us through a mission/visioning process. That was one of the smartest things I’ve done in a long time. With knowledge, experience and a pastor’s heart, Jon Kramka facilitated a process of discovering the mission and vision that God has

for our church. We now have a clearer picture of our future.” – Brad Friedlein, Pastor

### REDEEMER COVENANT CHURCH, BROOKLYN PARK, MN

“As our congregation launched a ministry planning process in 2018, it’s been so helpful to have access to the voices, insights and experience of the NWC staff. They’ve provided valuable perspective, objectivity, creative suggestions and wise cautions throughout our process.” – Ben Pease, Pastor

### UNITED COVENANT CHURCH, CLEAR LAKE, WI

“I have been very blessed and encouraged through the NWC’s Congregational Vitality ministry. I really appreciate the practical inputs I have received and the support provided through our pastors cohort each time we meet. It is like wind in my sails.” – Dan Pearson, Pastor



# A fresh reminder of God’s faithfulness

Annual Meeting time is always a fresh reminder of God’s faithfulness over the last year. I’m so very grateful to God for his provision in all things, but I am also grateful to all of you who faithfully support the work of starting new churches—and grateful for this family of churches called the Northwest Conference that is on mission together to proclaim the Gospel and see lives changed.



Lifeway research states that only 4 percent of all churches in America ever get directly involved in the starting of a new church. I am thankful that our numbers in the NWC are higher, but my dream is that every church would see itself as a support church for a new church plant. The church

planting that is happening is only possible with churches and individuals who realize that our response to the Great Commission of Jesus is to reproduce disciples and new churches. We truly are “sent” ones!

At our 2014 NWC Annual Meeting we introduced a bold initiative called “50 by ‘25: Our Mission to Plant.” With this announcement we publicly and prayerfully committed to see 50 new churches started in the Northwest Conference over a 10-year period.

God continues to be faithful as we have prayed, listened, met with pastors, leaders and churches. You have responded and our new churches are reaching the unchurched, starting new community-based ministries, and themselves sending people and resources to start even more churches. We continue praying, assessing planting pastors, providing training and support, making sure coaching is provided and raising support. We are continuing to see the fruit that comes from that intentionality. At this Annual Meeting we again get to celebrate the signing of two Covenant Agreements. The signing of these documents signals the official beginning of each new church.

Pastor Michele Arndt is planting The Crossing Covenant Church in Houlton, WI. Pastors JD and ChristianAnn Larson are co-pastoring and planting North City Covenant Church in Minneapolis. God is good! He is raising up gifted leaders with a passion for reaching new neighborhoods, communities and cities, all across our Conference, that we would reach no other way.

Our newest churches are getting off to a great start with strong, healthy support churches—both Covenant and non-Covenant, each coming alongside to provide prayer, people, funding and other tangible support.

Someone famously said the true measure of a church isn’t its seating capacity, but its sending capacity. Multiplying missional outposts with strong evangelistic passion and a clear discipleship strategy is resulting in so many changed eternities, tangible needs being met and so much more. And it’s churches like yours that are stepping up and saying yes to God and providing the resources to make this possible. I firmly believe that nothing will move a church toward greater health and vitality more quickly than getting involved in the planting of a new church.

“... the true measure of a church isn’t its seating capacity, but its sending capacity.”

The impact of your love for God, your passion for seeing lost people come to know Jesus and your generosity are resulting in story after story of individual and family destinies forever changed. Thanks again for your willingness to say yes to Jesus, step out in faith, and be a partner in bringing to life these new churches in the NWC.

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



## AWAKEN EAST

**LOCATION:** Maplewood, MN  
**PLANTER:** Daniel Lukas  
**DATE STARTED:** June 2017  
**ATTENDANCE:** Closed  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$38,000



## DESTINO

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Mauricio Dell’Arciprete  
**DATE STARTED:** October 2014  
**ATTENDANCE:** 110  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$15,000



## THE DOOR

**LOCATION:** Blaine, MN  
**PLANTER:** Jack Shields  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** 30  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$10,400



## EDEN COMMUNITY

**LOCATION:** Coon Rapids, MN  
**PASTOR:** Trin Peterson  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2018  
**ATTENDANCE:** 47  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$26,400



## EPIPHANY

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Kevin Farmer  
**DATE STARTED:** April 2018  
**ATTENDANCE:** 120  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$9,000



## GENESIS EAST

**LOCATION:** White Bear Lake, MN  
**PLANTER:** Aaron Freer  
**RESIDENCY:** June 2017  
**ATTENDANCE:** 62  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$40,800



## IGLESIA UNIDAD

**LOCATION:** Fridley, MN  
**PLANTER:** Erico Ortega  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2018  
**ATTENDANCE:** 32  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$14,664



## LAKESIDE

**LOCATION:** Chanhassen, MN  
**PLANTER:** Steve Anderson  
**DATE STARTED:** June 2017  
**ATTENDANCE:** 90  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$45,600



## LAOTIAN

**LOCATION:** Brooklyn Center, MN  
**PASTOR:** Vong Luangkhamdeng  
**DATE STARTED:** July 2002  
**ATTENDANCE:** 55  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$14,000





LAST CITY

**LOCATION:** St. Paul, MN  
**PASTOR:** Noah Hormann  
**DATE STARTED:** June 2009  
**ATTENDANCE:** 65  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$3,334



LIGHTHOUSE

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Dee McIntosh  
**DATE STARTED:** July 2016  
**ATTENDANCE:** 60  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$39,600



MIDCURRENT

**LOCATION:** Hudson, WI  
**PLANTER:** Sten Carlson  
**DATE STARTED:** May 2017  
**ATTENDANCE:** 150  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$45,600



NORTH CITY

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** JD/ChristianAnn Larson  
**DATE STARTED:** October 2017  
**ATTENDANCE:** Residency  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$16,775



SEEDS

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Dale Durie  
**DATE STARTED:** September 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** 27  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$21,600



THE STORY

**LOCATION:** Minneapolis, MN  
**PLANTER:** Matt Anderson  
**DATE STARTED:** September 2015  
**ATTENDANCE:** Closed  
**APPROPRIATIONS:** \$11,200



Prioritizing ministry with children

Children & Family Ministry in the Northwest Conference has three priorities that have guided our ministry for the last seven years:

- 1. **Networking and connections** – We’ve found most problems can be solved when people gather around a table together in relationship. This is why we place so much value on helping leaders know that they are not alone in ministry.
- 2. **Personal and professional development** – We educate and advocate for those called to pursue credentialing and offer ongoing support for pursuing health in ministry.
- 3. **Resource identification and promotion** – Our office compiles ministry resources that are available to ministry leaders.

Background checks are an important step to weeding out obvious predators and are one part of a robust screening process. This, along with abuse prevention training and careful oversight, are the critical steps that contribute toward a comprehensive safety system for our kids and vulnerable populations.

If your church already has a safety system in place, great. If you’d like to talk about how to get started, we would love to help. The Northwest Conference is proud to offer free sexual abuse prevention training at no cost to two leaders from every NWC church through Ministry Safe. To sign up, please contact me.

Finally, know that the vast majority of adults desire children to be healthy and safe. Unfortunately, our culture believes churches are willing to sweep abuse accusations under the rug. Let’s change the narrative and let the Church lead the way in making sure the next generations can hear the good news of Jesus in a loving and safe environment.

Kara Stromberg, Director of Children & Family Ministry



“Parents expect adults who work with their children to be trained and screened ...”

One of our ongoing efforts is child safety and protection. Parents expect adults who work with their children to be trained and screened—the safety of our kids demands it.

A: ASSESS  
C: COACH  
T: TRAIN  
S: SUPPORT

These are the ways the NWC identifies, equips and sends leaders for the mission of Church Planting.



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





RECHARGE

**DATE:** January - February 2018  
**LOCATION:** MN, WI, ND and IA  
**PURPOSE:** Several one-day conferences to equip Children and Youth Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 800+



GO:SERVE

**DATE:** June 21, 2018  
**LOCATION:** Sanctuary Covenant Church, Minneapolis  
**PURPOSE:** A service and learning event for families and kids  
**ATTENDANCE:** 80



YOUTH PASTOR'S CONNECTION

**DATE:** Monthly (school year)  
**LOCATION:** Salem Covenant Church, New Brighton, MN  
**PURPOSE:** Encouragement, connection and learning for Youth Pastors and Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 20-40 each month



MUUUCE

**DATE:** August 2-4, 2018  
**LOCATION:** Crossroads Church, Woodbury, MN  
**PURPOSE:** An unforgettable, spiritual, high-energy event for middle school/junior high students.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 644



CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY CONNECTION - TWIN CITIES

**DATES:** Monthly (school year)  
**LOCATION:** Salem Covenant Church, New Brighton, MN and NWC  
**PURPOSE:** Connection, prayer, encouragement and learning for Children & Family Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** Up to 15 each month



CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY CONNECTION - WISCONSIN

**DATES:** Approx. bi-monthly  
**LOCATION:** Varies  
**PURPOSE:** Connection, prayer, encouragement and learning for Children & Family Ministry Leaders.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 4-5 each meeting



ADVENTURES IN LEADERSHIP

**DATE:** June 16-23, 2018  
**LOCATION:** Adventurous Christians, Grand Marais, MN  
**PURPOSE:** A leadership development adventure for high school students in the BWCA.  
**ATTENDANCE:** 12 students



MOVE

**DATE:** On hiatus during 2018  
**LOCATION:** N/A  
**PURPOSE:** A service and learning overnight event for high school students.  
**ATTENDANCE:** N/A



Learn more about upcoming Children, Youth & Family events at [northwestconference.org](http://northwestconference.org)



A remarkable year for Youth Ministry

2018 saw NWC high school students unite to follow Christ, middle school students learn what it means to trust Jesus and youth ministry leaders be better equipped for ministry.

In July, 1,114 students and leaders from 69 NWC churches attended CHIC 2018: Unite. Students creatively engaged with Covenant priorities like Serve Globally, challenged themselves to run a 5k for fresh water around the world, or faced their fears while white water rafting. In the evening, 5,000 people would gather to worship together. One of the most powerful moments at CHIC occurred on Tuesday night when students and leaders alike participated in communion. Those who were sensing a call to ministry or missions had the chance to be anointed with oil. The long line of both teenagers and adult volunteers who were waiting to be anointed was awe-inducing.

*"It is a delight to partner with so many wonderful churches and youth pastors."*

Shortly after the high schoolers returned from CHIC, the NWC middle schoolers headed to MUUUCE (Most Unbelievable Ultimate Urban Camping Experience). Crossroads

Church in Woodbury, MN, hosted 644 middle schoolers and their leaders for three days of learning to trust Jesus in the midst of having a lot of middle school fun.

Besides these two big events, a small, select group of students headed to the BWCA in June for Adventures in Leadership. This one-week guided leadership experience does an incredible job of developing young leaders.

Our youth pastors strive hard to make and deepen adolescent disciples. We support each other in these efforts by meeting regularly at our Youth Pastor Connections. In 2019, the plan is to take these Connections to the next level by launching several coaching cohorts. These focused cohorts are designed to help youth pastors grow in their leadership abilities, youth ministry skills and their walk with Christ.

I anticipate 2019 to be even more remarkable than 2018 when it comes to youth ministry in the NWC. It is a delight to partner with so many wonderful churches and youth pastors.

*Serving with joy, Ginny Olson, Director of Youth Ministry*





# Encouraging the health of our pastors

The number of pastoral transitions continues to be very high compared to historic levels. Such circumstances have led to the development and use of resources to meet these unique times.



A new resource that we utilized this past year was a three-day retreat for pastors in their first lead pastor or solo pastor role.

We had seven pastors walk through that experience, and given the ongoing transition in local church leadership, it is likely we will take

another group of seven or more pastors through this same retreat in the coming year.

The retreat is followed by a year of reading on topics introduced at the retreat, and then gathering monthly in person or by video conference to discuss insights from the reading.

Since we have used retreats for pastors over 55 to help navigate transitions, and the above retreat for pastors in first calls to navigate first years, our next project is a retreat that addresses mid-career topics.

In last year’s Ministry Report I mentioned that the Covenant Ministerium was invited to take part in some significant research being funded by a Lilly Endowment that is entitled “Flourishing in Ministry.”

As a denomination we were able to meet the threshold of over 400 participants in order to get personalized data on our group. The research team leader, Dr. Chris Adams of Azusa Pacific University, presented preliminary findings at the Covenant Annual Meeting in Minneapolis in 2018.

There are four specific areas that are measured: **Everyday Happiness**—physical, emotional and spiritual health; **Self-**

**Integrity**—understanding our identity and role clarification; **Thriving**—our values, a sense of purpose, breadth of healthy relationships; **Resilience**—our capacity to adjust/adapt to change, self-regulate, handle stress.

For Covenant clergy as a group, Thriving was our highest score, and Self-Integrity was our next highest score.

The fact that these two areas are strong is something to celebrate. I am most impressed by the Self-Integrity measure being high, because identity and role clarification are very difficult to keep straight in this complex role.

Everyday Happiness is moderate but with a wide variability of responses. There is still work to do in good self care. The increasing stress of the role and the culture it is lived out in make attention to physical, emotional and spiritual health critical.

*“We move on to the next stressful thing, but we didn’t fully recover from the last stressful thing.”*

Speaking of stress, our lowest score was Resilience. We are in greater danger of burnout. This is not necessarily related to working unreasonable schedules, as much as it is inadequate recovery from stressful situations. We move on to the next stressful thing, but we didn’t fully recover from the last stressful thing.

We will be working with other conference staff around the Covenant and with Develop Leaders/Ordered Ministry to use this information to encourage the health of our pastors.

Jeff Burton, Director of Pastoral Care & Development

# Time and tide waits for none of us

As we have now arrived at our 2019 NWC Annual Meeting, I will look forward to sharing with you a number of things relative to NWC work and ministry during my verbal report. However, please bear with me as I use the page allotted to me to share some of my random musings looking back and looking forward:

*“We have but a brief time to seek to make a difference for the Kingdom of God.”*

1. It hard to believe that I have now been serving on the staff of the NWC for over 18 years. Where did the time go? WOW!
2. When I see the students who will be graduating from Minnehaha Academy next month, it dawns on me that most of them were not even born prior to my arrival at the NWC office. OUCH!
3. Some of our NWC pastors were in elementary school when I was called to serve the NWC. UGH!
4. Back to Minnehaha ... when I look across the street at MA, I realize that the entire structure that had been the school facility when I was a student has now been completely erased from the property, as if it never existed. YIKES!
5. I have participated in pastoral installation services in some of our churches 3-4 times. UFTA!
6. Many of the historic leaders within the ECC and NWC are no longer with us, including three former beloved superintendents, Carl Janson, Stan Henderson and Paul Erickson. SIGH!
7. It is also difficult to believe that I have already served two terms as NWC Superintendent and am now up for a possible third term. HMM ...

I ponder how these things can be true—but they are, and so much more. And it serves as a reminder to me that time and tide waits for none of us. We have but a brief

time to seek to make a difference for the Kingdom of God. It is also a sober reminder that whatever contribution we make will probably be limited and not nearly as significant as we would all desire.

However, rather than being disheartened by this, it should cause us to depend even more heavily on the Lord for our strength ... and for His mercy. And maybe, it should also cause us to take ourselves a bit less seriously, even while we take our commitment to Christ and the ministries to which we have been called very seriously.



Please know that, as NWC Superintendent, I have taken my call seriously. I have felt both the joy and the burden of it. I have experienced both words of encouragement and those that are malicious. I have seen both churches and pastors at their best, and at their worst. I have been given too much credit for things that is not mine to receive. I have also been called upon to bear the brunt of burdens that were really not mine to bear.

Yet, in the midst of it all, I have believed that I was called to this role to assume this responsibility at this particular point in time. Moreover, I believe that circumstances in the life of our denomination, conference, school and camps have confirmed this.

These things also compel me to be open to continue to serve in this role for a season, but only if that is the will of the Church. I am neither entitled to the Superintendent office, nor owed anything. If I continue, it is by God’s grace and your discernment. May His Will be done. To God alone be the glory!

Mark R. Stromberg, Superintendent

# Finance



As Director of Finance, I continue to resource and coach local church leaders in stewarding God’s resources in the local congregation. I field questions about clergy compensation, online giving platforms, restricted fund accounting, donation deductibility, appropriate expense reimbursements, employee benefits and even some nitty gritty QuickBooks technical questions. I enjoy interacting with servants who invest so generously—often with little recognition.

The Northwest Conference partnered with Lakeview Covenant Church (Duluth, MN) in the Fall of 2018 and Linwood Covenant Church (Wyoming, MN) in March 2019 to host Financial Training workshops sponsored by National Covenant Properties. I was invited to present a couple of modules at these events. Participants learned fraud risk assessment and prevention skills, why financial statements matter, aligning budgets with ministry plans and much more. I am thankful for the individuals who sacrificed a Saturday, and in some cases, traveled a significant distance to participate. We offer this training again at Alexandria Covenant Church (Alexandria, MN) Fall 2019.

Specific accounting tasks continue for our church plants. I provide six months of accounting services to churches coming to fruition under the 50 by '25 Church Planting initiative.

Sandy Norris, Director of Finance

# Latino Ministry



As Coordinator of Latino Ministry, my primary goal is to plant new churches that effectively minister to the Spanish speaking community in our region. Currently, we have five Latino-ethnic churches in the NWC reaching out to hundreds of Latinos. However, the most important number is not how many are currently “being reached,” but rather how many are “yet to be reached.” Around 276,000 Hispanics reside in Minnesota, making it the 28th largest Hispanic population in the nation. Statistics show that the vast majority are not affiliated with any Christian group or denomination, hence our urgency to send more “workers to the field.”

Last year, for the first time in the history of ECC, we celebrated our first bilingual church plant sent out from another bilingual ECC church plant! This is only the beginning. We already have more Latino churches preparing to launch. Preparing the next generation of Latino leaders is essential to accomplishing our task. Last year we changed the structure and implementation of CHET NWC, shifting from a centralized approach to a multisite and multiplying model. Now we have two locations (Brooklyn Park and Minneapolis) that are serving 40+ students from different congregations. The Northwest Conference continues to look for the best ways to support and resource the growing Spanish-speaking population in our region. We are committed to equipping Latinos and Latinas for pastoral and lay ministry, evangelism and discipleship, church planting and community transformation. Thank you for your ongoing support as we minister to these communities that God has placed in our midst!

Mauricio Dell'Arciprete, Coordinator of Latino Ministry

# Communications

While 2018 was largely a year of maintenance and assessment, our staff began to dream about and lay the groundwork for some major changes in our communication efforts.

Throughout the year, I continued to coordinate and produce stories for our website, print newsletters and regular email communications, as well as support MUUUUCE, MOVE, Go:Serve, CHIC, Adventures in Leadership and a variety of smaller regional events through design and branding for promotional materials on our website and in print.

One of the communication vehicles we have historically used to “get the word out” was our triannual newsletter called IMPRINTS. As we assessed the effectiveness of IMPRINTS in reaching those in local congregations and affiliate ministries, we concluded that there are approaches to communication that will be more effective, as well as more efficient in reaching our intended audiences in the future.

The Fall 2018 issue of IMPRINTS was the last to come out in print. In its place, we will be taking steps to ensure our website is a place where our NWC churches and participants can go to be better resourced and supported. We will also continue to produce regular email newsletters, as well as increase our efforts to utilize our social media channels. Stay tuned!

Bryan Malley, Director of Communications



# Administration

**CREDENTIALING:** Our Committee on Ministerial Standing (COMS) interviewed nine ordination candidates, 21 ministerial license candidates and 12 individuals requiring a credentialing update in 2018. I provide the administrative support for this process and enjoy working with the credentialing candidates, the COMS and the Ordered Ministry.

**ECC ANNUAL MEETING:** We recruited volunteers and provided behind-the-scenes support for Gather (the Covenant Annual Meeting) in Minneapolis in June. I was given the honor of vesting stoles on those being granted permanent credentials during the Service of Ordination and Commissioning.

**CHIC:** The NWC worked with Richfield Bus Company to provide bus transportation to CHIC. A total of 943 riders from 63 churches boarded 18 buses at 19 bus stop locations.

**SECOND MILER:** Second Milers have furthered the ministry of Conference churches and ministries by providing financial support for specific ministry projects since 1959. There have been 401 appeals resulting in grants totaling more than \$500,000. As giving patterns and funding methods have changed, it seems Second Miler’s effectiveness has waned. The fourth quarter appeal (#401) was the final appeal. We are thankful for the faithful giving of many for so many years.

Cheryl Theilen, Director of Administration







# Students Shine at Minnehaha Academy

We see the light that shines in each child. Our calling is to cultivate curiosity and build confidence in each child so his or her light can shine bright in the world. We are a welcoming community that values faith, academics and personal passions. We encourage students to explore their God-given gifts and talents as we support their development to become next generation thought leaders and change makers.

President Dr. Donna Harris notes, “The foundation of the work we do as a Christian school is tightly anchored to the greatest story ever told, God’s book, the Bible. The Good News of this magnificent book has the power to stir and transform us just like the pages of a well-loved and worn children’s book. When we are drawn into the redemptive story of God’s purpose, His plan, His promises, His love and grace, we are forever changed.... We pray that our students will grow in character and leave enduring legacies of honor as they embrace their place in God’s epic story of stories.”

## TOGETHER WE RISE—TRAGEDY AND TRANSFORMATION

On Aug. 2, 2017, the unthinkable happened. As a result of a gas leak, a massive explosion ripped through the center of

our Upper School causing unimaginable tragedy and destruction. On that day, Minnehaha Academy was changed forever.

While our school community took time to mourn and heal, leaders faced monumental decisions—decisions that could ultimately shift Minnehaha Academy’s trajectory and the future, forever. The board and administration prayerfully decided the most appropriate way to honor the past and pay respect to the tragic events of Aug. 2 would be to set a course for transformation.

Together We Rise Campaign Chair, Trustee and current MA parent Marc Belton writes, “There has never been a moment as significant in the school’s history as this, save for its founding in 1913. We have an unprecedented opportunity to fulfill a vision that was set forth by President Dr. Donna Harris: ‘Trusting in our faithful Savior, our hope and our strength, Minnehaha Academy will use its unforeseen circumstances, unprecedented opportunity, elevated profile, and future-focused momentum as a springboard for growth, transformation and increased kingdom impact.’



“This campaign—the largest in the school’s history—will provide the resources required to complete the Upper School, build a new Middle School at 3100 West River Parkway, renovate the Lower School to accommodate the high demand for enrollment at those grade levels and grow the school’s endowment. Our immediate goal is to raise the first \$30 million by Aug. 1, 2019, which will allow our students to return to Minnehaha’s home campus for the beginning of the 2019 academic year and build the Middle School campus, enabling growth. I am delighted to report that we are well on our way to reaching this first milestone with generous gifts and pledges totaling more than \$13 million as of March 1.”

We ask for your continued prayers and support during this critical time in the school’s history. To learn more about the Together We Rise Campaign and see the progress of the rebuild in action, visit [www.twrcampaign.com](http://www.twrcampaign.com).



## MINNEHAHA ACADEMY A NORTHWEST CONFERENCE SCHOOL

Founded by NWC pastors and lay leaders 105 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](mailto:admission@MinnehahaAcademy.net)

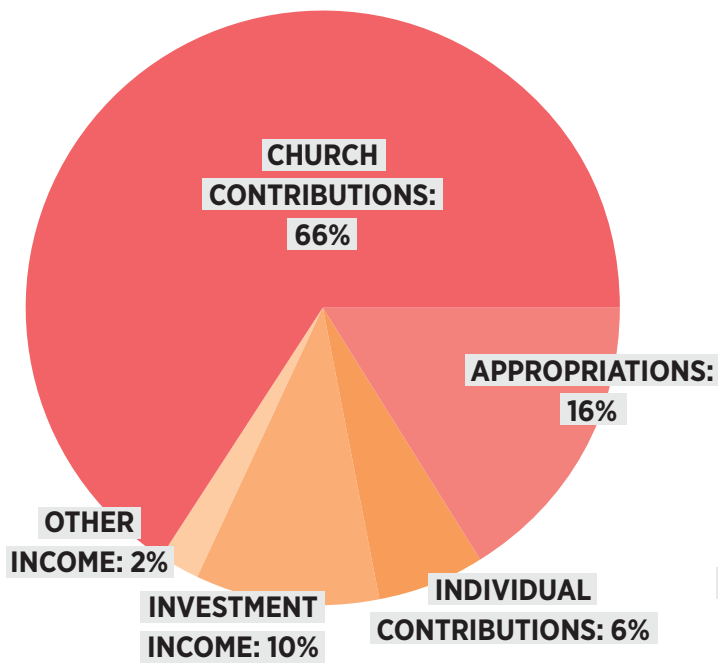
## MINNEHAHA ACADEMY BY THE NUMBERS

- ➔ **20 AP courses**
- ➔ **20 performing groups**
- ➔ **26 varsity athletic teams**
- ➔ **100% college acceptance rate**

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



2018/19 NWC BUDGET  
INCOME: \$1,356,329



Gap between income + expense (\$269,027) intentional draw on reserves

➔ 2018/19 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.

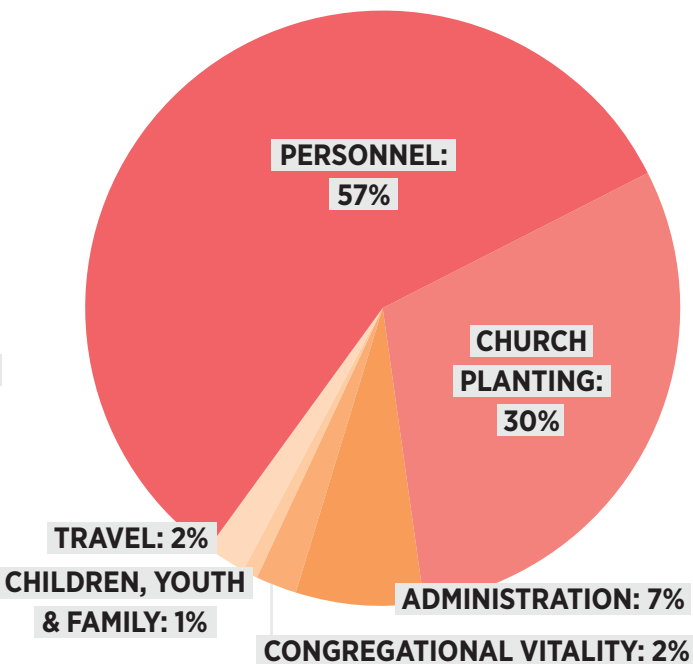
**Draw on Available Funds:** 7.1.18 NWC Cash Reserve Balances: \$192,245 designated Children, Youth & Family; \$191,580 designated Congregational Vitality; \$723,226 designated Church Planting; \$778,508

Unrestricted/Discretionary; \$1,885,558 total reserves. 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.

➔ 2018/19 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.

2018/19 NWC BUDGET  
EXPENSE: \$1,625,356



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

**Mark Hovestol**, Vice Chair  
Roseville Covenant,  
Roseville, MN

**David Brown**, Treasurer  
Brookdale Covenant,  
Brooklyn Center, MN

**Sheila Anonsen**, Secretary  
Grace Covenant, Fargo, ND

**Barb Dusek**  
Faith Covenant, Burnsville, MN

**Nichelle Kaul**  
Salem Covenant,  
New Brighton, MN

**Hollis Kim**  
Brookdale Covenant,  
Brooklyn Center, MN
- Paul Knight**  
HOPE Church,  
Grand Forks, ND

**Cindy Owen**  
Hope Covenant,  
St. Cloud, MN

**Paul Robinson**  
Grace Outreach,  
Coon Rapids, MN

**Mark R. Stromberg**  
Superintendent  
Northwest Conference


**ADVISORY**


**Donna Harris**, President  
Minnehaha Academy


**Darren Olson**, Chair  
NWC Ministerial Association


**Rachel Kleinschmidt**,  
Ministry Consultant, NWC  
Women Ministries


➔ STAFF


-  **Mark R. Stromberg**  
Superintendent


 **Jon Kramka**  
Dir. of Congregational Vitality


 **Mike Brown**  
Dir. of Church Planting


 **Kara Stromberg**  
Dir. of Children & Family Ministry


 **Ginny Olson**  
Dir. of Youth Ministry

 **Mauricio Dell'Arciprete**  
Coordinator of Latino Ministry

 **Jeff Burton**  
Dir. of Pastoral Care & Development




 **Cheryl Theilen**  
Dir. of Administration

 **Sandy Norris**  
Dir. of Finance

 **Bryan Malley**  
Dir. of Communications

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Stay connected with news, opportunities and stories from around the NWC. Subscribe to the UPDATE e-newsletter, and check our website for event details.

-  3106 47th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406
-  612.721.4893 or 1.800.756.6692
-  [northwestconference.org](http://northwestconference.org) / [info@northwestconference.org](mailto:info@northwestconference.org)

SPECIAL GIFTS GIVEN

Second Miler - 2018

- Harris Covenant Church, Harris, MN - \$1,693.20
- Lakes Place, Lino Lakes, MN - \$1,795.87
- First Covenant Church, Virginia, MN - \$2,442.87
- Genesis East Covenant Church, White Bear Lake, MN - \$1,905.60

THANK  
YOU!



## 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  
Svea Hill Community Covenant, Big Lake  
Evangelical Covenant, Biwabik  
The Door Covenant, Blaine  
Bloomington Covenant, Bloomington  
Evangelical Covenant, Braham  
Blue Oaks Covenant, Brooklyn Center  
Brookdale Covenant, Brooklyn Center  
Laotian Covenant, Brooklyn Center  
La Bendicion Covenant, Brooklyn Park  
Redeemer Covenant, Brooklyn Park  
Buffalo Covenant, Buffalo  
Faith Covenant, Burnsville  
Lakeside Covenant, Chanhassen  
Big Lake Evangelical Covenant, Cloquet  
Elim Mission, Cokato  
Evangelical Covenant, Cook  
Eden Community Covenant, Coon Rapids  
Grace Outreach, Coon Rapids  
Harvest Covenant, Crookston  
Evangelical Covenant, Dassel  
Lake Jennie Covenant, Dassel  
Dawson Covenant, Dawson  
First Covenant, Duluth  
Lakeview Covenant, Duluth  
Salem Covenant, Duluth  
Mercy Commons 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  
Iglesia Unidad, Fridley  
Riverwood Covenant, Greenfield  
Harris Covenant, Harris  
Palmyra Covenant, Hector  
Gethsemane Covenant, Hermantown  
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  
Lowry Community 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  
Destino Covenant, Minneapolis  
Epiphany Covenant, Minneapolis  
First Covenant, Minneapolis  
Lighthouse Covenant, Minneapolis  
Seeds Covenant, Minneapolis  
The Sanctuary 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 Covenant, Pennock  
Plymouth Covenant, Plymouth  
Karmel Evangelical Covenant, Princeton  
First Covenant, Red Wing  
Genesis Covenant, Robbinsdale  
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  
Awaken Covenant, St. Paul  
Catalyst Covenant, St. Paul  
First Covenant, St. Paul  
Last City, 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  
Genesis East Covenant, White Bear Lake  
First Covenant, Willmar  
Winthrop Evangelical Covenant, Winthrop  
Crossroads, Woodbury/Cottage Grove/  
Eagan/Hastings  
First Covenant, Worthington  
Linwood Covenant, Wyoming

## NORTH DAKOTA

Tiien Covenant, Drayton  
Grace Covenant, Fargo  
Hope Covenant, Grand Forks

## SOUTH DAKOTA

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

## WISCONSIN

Prairie Lake Covenant, Chetek  
United Covenant, Clear Lake  
Renew Covenant, Eau Claire  
Bethel Covenant, Ellsworth  
Zion Covenant, Ellsworth  
Calvary Evangelical Covenant, Grantsburg  
Midcurrent Covenant, Hudson  
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