

Churches Applying for Membership

Based upon the recommendation of the respective conferences, the Executive Board recommends to the 134th Annual Meeting that the following churches be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Church	Approximate Membership	Approximate Attendance
<u>Pacific Northwest Conference</u>		
Iglesia Esperanza Viva Kent, WA	62	130
Communitas Evangelical Covenant Church Spokane, WA	60	165
<u>Pacific Southwest Conference</u>		
Iglesia Cristiana Shalom-Elohim Petaluma, CA	201	142
Navegando Con Jesús Iglesia Del Pacto Torrance, CA	57	80
Iglesia La Jornada Baypoint, CA	81	135
<u>Central Conference</u>		
New Abbey Covenant Church Gurnee, IL	65	40
Peacemakers Korean Covenant Church Schaumburg, IL	17	15
<u>Midsouth Conference</u>		
The Vine Covenant Church Austin, TX	106	210
<u>The Great Lakes Conference</u>		
Life Church Livonia Livonia, MI	230	230

Agenda Item 8.

East Coast Conference

House of Praise and Worship Hartford, CT	120	150
---	-----	-----

Summary:

Number of new churches:	12
Cumulative approximate membership:	1,159
Cumulative approximate attendance:	1,452

Report on Churches Joining the Covenant

The mission of the Covenant is stronger, richer, and more diverse because of the 12 churches joining this year. Each of these churches brings with them a ministry that will enrich the kingdom contribution of the whole Covenant denomination, and each church will be enriched by its connection with the Covenant. Following is a synopsis of each congregation. Each story testifies to both the handiwork of God in raising up a ministry and the faithfulness of committed people in carrying out that ministry. What is less visible is the role that every Covenanter has had in these stories. Through making possible the elements of a pastoral assessment process, financial support, training, and strategic services, every Covenanter has a place in these stories.

Pacific Northwest Conference

**Iglesia Esperanza Viva
Kent, WA**

Average Attendance: 130

Pastor: Rev. Esau Del Arca

In 2014, a Spanish-speaking ministry within a local church in King County stepped out in faith to plant Iglesia Esperanza Viva (Living Hope Church). This initial step took place without affiliation with a denomination. After outgrowing their initial meeting space, the search began for a more accessible meeting place for the young, but growing church. That was when the leadership connected with a staff member at Kent Covenant Church and initiated the process of partnering to use the facilities for weekly services. Through this partnership, Iglesia Esperanza Viva became acquainted with the Evangelical Covenant Church. After becoming familiar with the Covenant and their vision and support for diverse ministries, the church began the process of becoming part of the ECC. Iglesia Esperanza Viva continues to hold services at Kent Covenant's facilities to date.

**Communitas Evangelical Covenant Church
Spokane, WA**

Average Attendance: 165

Pastor: Rev. Asher Ernst

In their words: "In the Fall of 2011, Communitas was started as an evening "church within a church" at a historic PCUSA church in downtown Spokane. From the beginning of the church within a church experiment, we had a long-term goal of planting. After five years as an evening service of First Presbyterian Church, Communitas planted in early 2017 with about 45 adults and 20 kids. When we planted, we were looking for a denominational fit that embraced both a desire for rigorous discipleship and biblical justice in a relational oriented setting. We seemed to

find a perfect fit when we met the Covenant. We were initially introduced to the ECC by Immanuel in Spokane right away. As we were transitioning to a plant, they introduced us to the PacNW staff who were gracious to offer us coaching in planting, which we badly needed. Fast forward: we now meet at Central Lutheran Church in downtown Spokane in the mornings, have roughly doubled in size in the last year to around 120 adults and 45 kids, and have a strong ministry toward refugees. This includes an afterschool homework club for English Language Learners and a partnership with World Relief.”

Pacific Southwest Conference

**Iglesia Cristiana Shalom-Elohim
Petaluma, CA**

Average Attendance: 142

Pastor: Edwin Guzman

In their words: “Iglesia Cristiana SE was established with two families in February, 2013 as a non-denominational church at our pastor's house. The church was incorporated under the state of California on April 3, 2013, and we obtained our 501 (c)(3) status on May 21, 2015. When the church was established, our pastor, Edwin Guzman, had over 7 years of experience serving as a pastor. He had served as an associate pastor for a Baptist church while also serving as an interim pastor at 2 other churches. By the grace of God, our church grew rapidly; within 1 year, we had to move twice due to space constraints. We are in our 6th year of ministry, and we are once again facing space constraints as we have outgrown our current location.”

**Navegando Con Jesús Iglesia Del Pacto
Torrance, CA**

Average Attendance: 80

Pastor: Margarita Monsalve

Navegando Con Jesús Iglesia Del Pacto launched as a Covenant church plant in partnership with the Covenant and PSWC in 2011. The church exists to reach the lost in the city of Torrance. Navegando takes a holistic approach to restoring the individual by introducing him or her to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and providing job skill training.

**La Jornada Covenant Church
Concord, CA**

Average Attendance: 140

Pastor: Jorge and Marlen Ramos

La Jornada Covenant Church launched as a Covenant church plant in partnership with the Covenant and PSWC in 2014 under the leadership of Pastor Fil and Juana Nesta. In 2018, Jorge Ramos was called to be the Pastor. La Jornada is a contemporary bilingual church, serving the Concord community. It is a growing, missional church that launched out of Nueva Esperanza Covenant Church, Antioch.

Central Conference

**New Abbey Covenant Church
Gurnee, IL**

Average Attendance: 40

Pastor: EJ Ravago

While serving as an associate pastor at a Baptist church, Pastor EJ Ravago felt the call and need to plant a church in the town where he'd grown up. After two years of praying and planning,

Agenda Item 8.

New Abbey launched its first service in 2016. The church gathers at the local American Legion, which is located between Waukegan and Gurnee, towns that have stark differences. The location of the church is important. A significant part of New Abbey's vision and existence is to navigate all the complexities that shape and divide these communities: race, socio-economic factors, tradition, and perceptions continue to foster barriers. New Abbey hopes to provide a context where true diversity and reconciliation can happen. Their mission is to embody the biblical meaning of the Church. They seek to be a community that believes and is transformed by the gospel, loves God and all people, and pursues justice for the neighborhood and the world. This is their calling.

Peacemakers Covenant Church Schaumburg, IL

Average attendance: 15

Pastor: Rev. Choi, Min Ho

Peacemakers Korean Covenant Church is a community of Korean immigrant Christians whose primary language is Korean. Church membership consists mainly of first-generation Korean immigrants from the 1970's, second-generation Korean immigrants from the 2000's, and third-generation Korean-Americans born in the US. On September 9, 2015, three families gathered together to establish the church, calling Rev. Min Ho Choi of the ECC as its senior pastor. In April of 2016, this church merged with Gyu Ja Shee church of the ECC. Peacemakers Korean Covenant Church confesses salvation through faith in Christ alone and aims to bear the fruits of salvation by becoming peacemakers. At present, this church has been in partnership with the Covenant Church of Schaumburg since April of 2018, sharing the same church building.

Midwest Conference

The Vine Covenant Church

Average Attendance: 210

Austin, TX

Pastor: Mark Charbonneau

With only 14% of the Austin community connected to a local congregation, The Vine was initiated to invite people to join us in following Jesus through significant friendship, sacred experiences, and generous compassion. The Vine Covenant Church was founded by two pastors, Mark Charbonneau and Ted Thulin, with an incredible launch team in May of 2016. Over the past three years, The Vine has grown from that original group of 25 to over 200 people attending church each week. Through this community, new people are beginning to follow Jesus; even more are reconstructing a life with Jesus and the church.

Great Lakes Conference

Life Church Livonia

Average Attendance: 230

Livonia, MI

Pastor: Brian Nanninga

Life Church Livonia is located in an urban community outside of Detroit. Brian and his wife, Jaime, felt lead to move to Livonia in 2014 to partner with the Lord in reviving the city. At that time, Brian entered a network of churches planted by the ECC (Life Church Network) to begin Life Church Livonia. We are dedicated to the theology and background of the ECC and desire to fully participate through membership. Life Church Livonia currently meets at a local middle school. Our attendance is growing, as is our ability to reach the community. Life Church Livonia

Agenda Item 8.

continues to see multiple commitments to Christ on a monthly basis. The Lord has richly blessed Life Church Livonia with a continuing ability to reach the lost with the gospel.

East Coast Conference

House of Praise and Worship

Average Attendance: 150

Hartford, CT

Pastor: Joel Cruz Sr.

The House of Praise and Worship was born from the restlessness of our Bishop, Joel Cruz Sr., when he felt in his heart the need to unite the family and to help them see the great potential they all had in their different ministries. On January 6, 2002, the church was born with the name "House of Praise and Worship." What a better way to serve the Lord than with praise and worship that comes from the bottom of our heart! House of Praise and Worship began their first service in the house of Bro. Miguel & Sis. Hilda (Tatita) Cruz, located in Hartford, CT. After only one week of congregating, they had to look for a bigger place because they'd outgrown the current space. A few months later, House of Praise and Worship had to look for a new place again. House of Praise and Worship congregated in various locations like Mountford Street in Hartford, CT. In November of 2004, we moved to Ledyard Street in Hartford. That is where we praised the name of the Lord for years. Now, we are gathering at Richard J. Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts in Hartford, CT. House of Praise and Worship is praying and looking for a place that we can permanently call the "House of Praise and Worship."