



## HIGHLIGHTS

God is working in local Covenant churches and ministries of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church (CCECC). We are grateful that God is moving mission forward in our conference.

**We praise God for the warmth and hospitality shown to us by the members of the host church, Batavia Covenant Church in Batavia, IL!** They opened their doors and facilities to us for this three-day event. Here are some highlights from Celebration 2024, held on May 2-4, 2024.

We had over **240 registered participants** at this in-person event. This included 105 Covenant ministers and additional guests who attended the Central Conference Ministerial Association (CCMA) Annual Meeting (May 2-3). There were also 86 delegates and additional guests who attended the CCECC Annual Meeting (May 3-4), and Harbor Point Ministries Annual Meeting (May 4).

In addition to delegates and pastors **we had several guests join us**, including those who are exploring a relationship with the ECC; the Covenant Church of Schaumburg Choir singing hymns; and the youth of the Rupantarana Covenant Church singing Nepalese worship songs.

**CCECC Treasurer Susan Kauffman**, presented the 2024-25 revised Central Conference budget, as well as the proposed 2025-26 budget. The budgets were approved by the delegates.

The CCECC has three churches **being removed from the roster of churches** of the ECC in 2024:

- **The City of Truth Covenant Church, Chicago Heights, IL, has closed.** The City of Truth CC held its final service on March 31, 2024.
- **Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC), Milwaukee, WI, has closed.** ECC, Milwaukee, WI, held its final service on November 12, 2023.
- **Arbor Covenant Church, Madison, WI, has withdrawn** from the ECC.

The members of ECC, Milwaukee, WI, made the difficult decision to become a Living Legacy church. As such, all proceeds from the sale of the church building will be used for church planting and vitality efforts in the Central Conference. Pastor Nicole McClurg led a moving time of remembrance, and celebrating the many lives impacted by the ministries of the closing churches.

There are **nine ordination candidates** from the Central Conference this year:

- **Jessica C. Boggs (OWSa)**  
Evangelical Covenant Church of Princeton, IL
- **Prajakta David-Kelley (OWSa)**  
Evangelical Covenant Church (denom.), Chicago, IL
- **Megan R. Herrold Sinchi (OWSa)**  
Interim Pastor, Chicago, IL
- **John Kim (OWSa)**  
New Life Covenant Church, Palatine, IL
- **Sung Kwak (Transfer)**  
Dodam Covenant Church, Mt. Prospect, IL
- **Andrea Spicer (OWSe)**  
Jesus People USA Covenant Church, Chicago, IL
- **Laura Tarro (OWSa)**  
Bethany Covenant Church, St. Charles, IL
- **Alexander Taylor (OWSa)**  
Evangelical Covenant Church of Princeton, IL
- **Anthony R. Thomas (OWSa)**  
Calvary Covenant Church, Chicago, IL

*OWSa—Ordination to Word and Sacrament  
OWSe—Ordination to Word and Service  
Transfer—Transfer of Ordination*

In addition, over **50 Covenant ministers in the Central Conference** were approved for ministry and bi-vocational licenses through the ECC in 2023-24.

# Central Conference Celebration 2024

## HIGHLIGHTS (con.)

The current Central Conference **church planters** are:

- **Amos Shakya**, Rupantaran Nepali Church, Batavia, IL
- **Laura Tarro**, Bethany Covenant Church, St. Charles, IL
- **Mario Torres**, Iglesia del Pacto Vida Eterna, Rockford, IL

Superintendent Danny Martinez reported on ministry in the Central Conference. It was noted that the Central Conference accountant, Steve Dawson, walked alongside many churches in the conference seeking the **Employee Retention Credit** given by the federal government. Funds returned to local churches and ministries in our conference were over four million dollars.

Superintendent Martinez also noted that Rev. Steve Burger is serving as the Central Conference **Children, Youth and Family Ministry** Coordinator. He has worked to develop two separate teams to serve as coaches and leaders in these ministry areas in our conference. He is also coordinating efforts to get as many youth as possible to attend UNITE 2024, the ECC youth event that will take place this summer.

**Central Conference Church Planting** Coach Rev. Abraham Bejarano, is meeting regularly with our church planters. He is also walking alongside churches in our conference interested in being adopted by the ECC.

Rev. Nicole McClurg serves as the Director of **Pastor and Congregational Care** for the Central Conference. She is joined by Rev. Won Kim as they walk alongside ministers in our conference, checking in and resourcing our ministers. Nicole McClurg also provides Vitality resources to our conference churches, including the phCheck.

Rev. Kevin Swanson, our Associate Superintendent, assists Central Conference churches with their **pastoral search processes**. He reported that, there were 10 lead pastors installed in 2023. Also, in 2023, we had eight pastors serving in 10 conference churches during that season between called pastors. Rev. Peter Sjoblom continues to give guidance and coaching to these interim / transitional pastors.

The following Covenanters were elected by the delegates to serve on the **Central Conference Executive Board**:

- **Rev. Ken Oliver** (Chair), first, three-year term  
Edgebrook Covenant Church, Chicago, IL
- **Karen Palmberg** (Vice Chair), second, three-year term  
Batavia Covenant Church, Batavia, IL
- **Cheryl Ek**, first, three-year term  
Membership: Covenant Church of Galesburg, IL;  
Attending: Covenant Church of Schaumburg, IL
- **Kenton Johnson**, second, three-year term  
Evangelical Covenant Church, Princeton, IL
- **Kurt Tillman** (Nominating Commission Chair),  
second, one-year vacancy appointment  
Glen Ellyn Covenant Church, Glen Ellyn, IL
- **Rev. Edgar Torres**, second, three-year term  
Attending: New Cmty—Logan Square, Chicago, IL
- **Rev. Tim White**, first, three-year term  
New Community—Logan Square, Chicago, IL

The following people were elected to serve on the **Harbor Point Ministries Board** by the delegates:

- **Peter Heintzelman**, first, three-year term  
Anchor Covenant Church, Lake Geneva, WI
- **Dawn Mueller**, second, three-year term  
Hope Covenant Church, Orland Park, IL

We also give thanks to the following **Central Conference Executive Board members, who has concluded their time of service**:

- **Rev. Tiana Coleman**, Board Vice Chair,  
serving at Missio Dei, Chicago, IL
- **Rev. Kristin Mueller**, Nominating Commission Chair,  
Evangelical Covenant Church, Lafayette, IN

## Celebration 2025

May 1-3, 2025

Location:

**Libertyville Covenant Church,  
Libertyville, IL**