

*Churches Applying for Membership*

*Based upon the recommendation of the respective conferences and regions, the Executive Board recommends to the 131st Annual Meeting that the following churches be accepted into membership in the Evangelical Covenant Church.*

<b>Church</b>	<b>Approximate Membership</b>	<b>Approximate Attendance</b>
<b><u>ECC OF CANADA</u></b>		
Avenue Community Church Toronto, Ontario	163	110
Lakeridge Community Church Ministry of ECCC Chestermere, Alberta	45	110
Holy Community Covenant Church Winnipeg, Manitoba	29	60
<b><u>ALASKA CONFERENCE</u></b>		
Chugach Covenant Church Anchorage, Alaska	<i>in progress</i>	130
<b><u>CENTRAL CONFERENCE</u></b>		
New Life Covenant Church of Palatine Palatine, Illinois	122	95
<b><u>MIDWEST CONFERENCE</u></b>		
Ascent Covenant Church Louisville, Colorado	60	850
<b><u>PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONFERENCE</u></b>		
Kaleo Covenant Church Beaverton, Oregon	50	100
<b><u>PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE</u></b>		
Grace Life LA Downtown Los Angeles, California	<i>in progress</i>	45
Comunidad Familiar Cristiana Covenant Church Redwood City, California	<i>in progress</i>	80
The River Church Community San Jose, California	150	450

## GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

New Community Covenant Church Buckhannon, West Virginia	51	250
Life Church Southfield Southfield, Michigan	40	300

## Summary:

Number of new churches	12
Cumulative approximate membership	710
Cumulative approximate attendance	2,580

## 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 will itself 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 to 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.

## ECC of Canada

## Avenue Community Church

approximate attendance: 100-110

## Toronto, Ontario

**Pastor: John Cho**

Avenue Community Church began its journey in January 2007 when Onnuri Korean United Church, a congregation that began in the 1970s to minister to the growing number of Korean immigrants coming to Toronto, laid out plans to start a new church. John Cho, Onnuri's former youth pastor, was hired as the lead pastor of Onnuri's English ministry and assigned the task of planting the church. It began with a group of about twenty-five committed members (with an average age of twenty-three) and an \$11,000 budget. They cast a vision, defined their values and beliefs, and developed a five-year plan. The congregation began searching for a denomination to serve with, and in 2011 they met the Evangelical Covenant Church. In January 2012, they decided on the name Avenue Community Church. In recognition of their roots, they choose the name "Avenue," which is a main street near Onnuri.

Lake Ridge Community Church Ministry of ECCC

approximate attendance: 110

## **Chestermere, Alberta**

**Pastor: Evan Dewald**

Lake Ridge started in 2010 with a small group of people attending Hope Community Church in Strathmore, Alberta. They had a growing vision to serve a nearby town, Chestermere. The

following year, several families sold their homes and moved, a very costly commitment, as home prices were 20 percent higher in Chestermere. They began meeting in homes and serving at public city events, something they have continued to do. The church's vision has always been to be involved in its city. Members of the congregation serve on every major board (including the city council), volunteer at public events, and support a local block party initiative by covering the cost of the food. The church's youth volunteer works with a local sports team; they started a citywide welcoming program called Mighty Neighbourly; and their annual soapbox derby is a huge hit among kids and adults alike. While the activities have been beneficial, it is the congregation's act of loving our neighbors that has opened the doorways of faith and connection and transformed more lives for Christ than anything else.

## Holy Community Covenant Church

approximate attendance: 60

## Winnipeg, Manitoba

**Pastor: Gavin Jensen**

In the early spring of 2012, the community of Faith Covenant Church in Winnipeg sensed the rich opportunity to plant a new church in the city's West End. A small group began to meet in homes for times of prayer and conversation, and adopted the name Holy Community Covenant Church, believing it captured well their sense of calling. Holy Community's local ministry has been built around the ideas of sharing the gospel as its members share their whole lives (1 Thessalonians 2:8). The church's identity is based on its commitment to truth, hospitality, growth, and generosity. It has continued to partner with Faith Covenant and is appreciative of the conference and denominational ministries (such as Covenant Kids Congo and Kernels of Hope), which has allowed the church to extend its ministry beyond its neighborhood.

## Alaska Conference

## Chugach Covenant Church

approximate attendance: 130

## Anchorage, Alaska

**Pastor: Dan Krause**

While working as a children's pastor in Anchorage, Dan Krause had a vision to plant a church in East Anchorage. Mark Merideth, the lead pastor of Community Covenant Church in Eagle River, had the same vision. Dan and Mark had a chance meeting and were surprised and excited to discover what God was orchestrating. After attending a church planter assessment, Dan and his wife, Kelli, were called to plant a Covenant church in East Anchorage. Chugach Covenant has met weekly for four years, and God is blessing this ministry in unexpected ways. Dozens of people have come to faith, several have been baptized, and even more have rededicated their lives to Christ. The church has a strong presence in the military community and has sent many families on to their new duty stations. Currently the church is ministering to a small group of women who have recently been freed from prison and are living in transitional housing.

## Central Conference

New Life Covenant Church of Palatine

approximate attendance: 95

## Palatine, Illinois

**Pastor: Joon Hwang**

New Life Covenant Church of Palatine is a multiethnic, contemporary, and spirit-filled church. Planted in partnership with the Evangelical Covenant Church on May 1, 2011, the congregation currently meets at 1200 W. Northwest Highway in Palatine, a northwestern suburb of Chicago.

### **Midwest Conference**

**Ascent Community Church  
Louisville, Colorado**

approximate attendance: 850

**Pastors: Bill Stephens and Jim Candy**

The theme of Ascent Community Church is “to know, to be known, and to make Him known.” The church wants people to know and be known by Jesus, to know and be known by others, and to do all it can to make the love of Jesus known to its community and the world. Ascent is gaining a strong reputation as a generous and welcoming presence. The police and fire chiefs are leaning on the church to help meet the needs of the community. People are coming to church for the first time, they are returning to church after decades away, they are making commitments to Jesus or recommitting their lives, and they are feeling welcome in church despite all of the baggage they carry. Leaning on the faithfulness and the provision the Lord has already shown them, the folks at Ascent Community Church want to continue to step out of the boat and fix their eyes on Jesus.

### **Pacific Northwest Conference**

**Kaleo Covenant Church**

approximate attendance: 100

**Beaverton, Oregon**

**Pastor: Troy Hoppenrath**

Kaleo Covenant Church was formed in the fall of 2010. Initially, the church worshiped together with Summit View Covenant, and the two churches eventually merged. Since then, Summit View has completed its ministry, and Kaleo retained its identity as a new church plant. Its name comes from the Greek word meaning, “to call or invited to something of significance.” Kaleo Covenant is known for its commitment to serving others, having a presence in the community, and offering authentic relationships, responsive worship, and an inviting atmosphere. The Kaleo congregation is committed to a whole-life response to the gospel that goes far beyond the Sunday morning gathering.

### **Pacific Southwest Conference**

**Grace Life LA**

approximate attendance: 45

**Downtown Los Angeles, California**

**Pastor: David Choi**

In April 2012, Grace Life LA began its first official launch as a church plant of the Pacific Southwest Conference. A year earlier, Matt and Grace Lee had met with leaders of the ECC and agreed to plant a church in downtown LA. The Covenant and the Pacific Southwest Conference provided all of the support to start the church—financial and relational. After two years, David Choi was hired as the associate pastor. He later became lead pastor when Matt stepped into the role of coaching church planters. This allowed both pastors to use their gifts to their fullest capacities. Grace Life LA currently meets in the Arts District/Little Tokyo District area in

downtown LA, and is renting space from the Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society. The church's greatest strength lies in its strong sense of community. Many who attend are walking through challenging times in their lives, but the church community has helped individuals feel loved and supported. Grace Life LA has also begun to gather interest in becoming an outward-focused church. Last year, a team of nine people went to North Korea, and it was one of the most impactful endeavors the church—and the individuals on the team—experienced. Grace Life hopes for a courageous faith to be a part of its DNA.

**Communida Familiar Cristian Covenant Church**      approximate attendance: 80  
**Redwood City, California**

**Pastor: Rolando Luna**

While serving as a wo

call to plant a church. After consulting with Peninsula Covenant Church (also in Redwood City), the Pacific Southwest Conference, and the Evangelical Covenant Church, Communida Familiar Cristian Covenant Church was launched with a core group of eight people. The congregation meets at Peninsula Covenant Church.

**The River Church Community** San Jose, California approximate attendance: 450

**Pastor: Brad Wong**

The River Church Community is a nineteen-year-old multiethnic, intergenerational congregation, whose make-up is 40 percent Caucasian, 40 percent Asian American, and 20 percent African American, Latino, Indian, or biracial. The church's aim is to be God's show-and-tell to a hurting and cynical world. Some of the effective ministries that they are committed to include: Shalom Iglesia, a Spanish-speaking church plant that was launched by Servant Partners; the Healing Path, a ministry that focuses on the healing of emotional wounds that keep individuals from experiencing the love of Christ; ministries for children and youth; and regular retreats led by licensed spiritual directors aimed at helping busy Silicon Valley folks nurture their inner life. River Church Community resonates with the Covenant's deep commitment to multiethnic ministry, a holistic gospel that overcomes personal sin as well as systemic sins, and church planting. After nineteen years of being independent, the church looks forward to the strength that comes from traveling with a like-minded tribe.

## Great Lakes Conference

**New Community Covenant Church** approximate attendance: 250  
**Buckhannon, West Virginia**

**Pastor: Justin Bowers**

New Community Church is the first Covenant church planted in West Virginia. Located in the heart of North Central West Virginia, New Community was launched in 2012 with about thirty people on a back porch. Now, the church worships with 250 in regular attendance. At the core of New Community is a vision to see people find and follow Jesus beyond Sundays. Justin Bowers and his wife, Carrie, are originally from Buckhannon. They returned in 2012 under the care and coaching of the late director of church planting for the Great Lakes Conference, Larry Sherman. Through encouragement, training, and support, Justin and Carrie launched New Community in a region of West Virginia that had not seen a new church plant in about thirty

years. New Community has launched a unified youth ministry and college ministry with two other churches in the community. Its ministry to children and families regularly sees fifty to sixty children on a Sunday morning. Appalachian Impact, a ministry providing hope for at-risk students through mentoring and summer community camps, has impacted approximately seventy students in the past three years.

**LifeChurch Southfield** approximate attendance: 300  
**Southfield, Michigan**  
**Pastor: Alan Tumpkin**

After hosting a successful radio show, Alan Tumpkin and his wife, Marcia, started a weekly Bible study. This group grew from twenty to fifty members within a year. During that time, Alan began casting a vision for a church and building core values for the group. The new church was parented by LifeChurch Canton, under the leadership of Alex Rahill, and supported by the Great Lakes Conference. The first weekly service was held in October 2011, and in less than four years, LifeChurch Southfield has grown from seventy to more than three hundred. The church's many ministries include children and youth services, and free professional counseling for members, a youth ministry with more than fifty students, a ten-piece band with five singers, and a worship team that has become a major attraction for the church. LifeChurch Southfield's vision is simple: to know Jesus, to grow in community, and to go and serve. They accomplish the vision through relevant worship, small groups, and a myriad of serving opportunities.