EFCA

GREAT LAKES DISTRICT

GLDCON26

2 TIMOTHY

GUARD THE GOSPEL | ENDURE HARDSHIP | PREACH THE WORD | RAISE UP LEADERS

OCTOBER 6-7, 2026 @ THE CHAPEL | ST. JOSEPH, MI

We are a family of churches helping each other flourish.

WELCOME TO THE 2026 GREAT LAKES DISTRICT CONFERENCE!

Welcome to GLDCON26, the annual gathering of pastors and ministry leaders of the EFCA's Great Lakes District. For two days we come together as a family of churches for mutual encouragement, next-step equipping, and renewed commitment to reach our neighbors and the nations with the gospel.

This year we will open the Scriptures together in 2nd Timothy. Knowing his life is nearly finished, the Apostle Paul writes to Timothy from a prison cell. In this letter, Paul exhorts us to guard the gospel, raise up leaders, endure hardship, and preach the Word. We will lean into what it means to raise up the next generation of leaders for gospel advancement and the building of Christ's church.

I am excited for our time together at GLDCON26. Our district conferences are a unique opportunity to reconnect with friends from across our district and to foster new friendships. It is time to be together as an EFCA family while being renewed and refreshed for life, ministry, and mission.

You will have opportunities to connect and learn from others in similar ministry contexts through our Affinity Groups. I hope you will consider remaining connected to other members of your Affinity Group through attending the group's events during the ministry year as well as staying connected through phone calls, text messages, and getting together for coffee or meals.

In the packet that follows, you will read ministry updates from around our district, as well as review the important information that we will discuss at the Family meeting such as the direction of the GLD, 2027 budget, affirming members of the Board and Nominating Committee, voting on proposed bylaw changes, and receiving and removing churches from membership in the EFCA.

Thanks again for being a part of our EFCA family here in the Great Lakes District and I look forward to seeing you at GLDCON26.



Brett Gleason
District Superintendent

Business Session

4 Family/Business Meeting Agenda
5 2025 Annual Conference Minutes
8 New Business – Churches for Removal and Addition
9 Financials through August 31, 2026
11 2027 Proposed Ministry Fund Budget
12 Proposed Changes to the Articles of Incorporation
13 Report of the Nominating Committee
14 Profile of Candidates for District Positions
16 A Word from our Sponsors

District Staff Reports

27 District Superintendent — Brett Gleason
28 Area Superintendent, Western Illinois — Mark Balmer
29 Area Superintendent, Ohio / N Kentucky, & Director of Coaching — Mark Burks
30 Area Superintendent, Northwest Illinois — Larry Elliott
31 Area Superintendent, Chicago Suburbs — Don Erickson
32 Area Superintendent, Eastern & Central Michigan — Bob Guilford
33 Regional Superintendent, Chicagoland, & Credentialing — Steve McCausland
34 Area Superintendent, Northern Indiana — Jordan Muck
36 Director of Hispanic Ministries — Ricardo Palmerin
39 Director of Women in Ministry — Cyndi Leamon
42 Director of Student Ministries — Nate Stenholtz
43 Pastoral Coach — Knute Larson
44 Pastoral Coach — Gerhard deBock
45 Pastoral Coach — Darrell Cloud

District Statistics

46 Vision Frame and Horizon Storyline
48 Church Multiplication
49 Ministerial Credentialing
50 Pastoral Changes
51 Ministerials
54 Report of Church History
61 GLD Staff & Board of Directors Directory
62 Conference Evaluations

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Credentialing of the Conference Delegates
4. Report the 2025 Conference Minutes were Approved at the December 2025 Board Meeting
5. Proposed Changes to Articles of Incorporation
6. New Business - Churches for Removal and Addition
7. Financials through August 31, 2026
8. Superintendent Report
9. 2027 Budget
10. Report of the Nominating Committee
11. Profile of Candidates for District Positions
12. Motion for Board to Approve the 2026 Conference Minutes.
13. Closing remarks
14. Prayer for 2027 Board
15. Adjourn

Great Lakes District Conference
October 7, 2025
Liberty Bible Church, Chesterton, IN

Welcome and introduction by GLD Board Chairman, Carlan Bounds.

Carlan remembered our former District Superintendent, Rick Thompson, who went home to be with the Lord last month. He then paid tribute to Collin Seitz, who went home to be with the Lord just days ago.

Carlan opened in prayer.

Lisa Bubar, Secretary, gave the statistics of attendees to the conference:

97	GLD Ministers
19	Lay Delegates
3	Affiliates
11	GLD Board
14	GLD Staff
24	Exhibitors (Not eligible to vote)
132	Conferees (Not eligible to vote)
25	EFCA
294	Present at the Conference
144	Voters

The 144 credentialed voters were approved by the conference, MSC.

It was reported that the 2024 conference minutes were approved by the GLD Board at their meeting last December, 2024.

District Superintendent Report – Brett Gleason

Brett has been our Superintendent for one year. He is thankful for the unity and support of the GLD Board and Staff.

Brett's 2026 Priorities:

Connect with pastors and leaders

Ministerials are like the small groups of the GLD, and Brett encouraged pastors to participate in them. We have 18 ministerials in our district. Affinity groups gather people in common ministries.

Goals:

1. Encouragement
2. Equipping-develop a learning community
3. Extending

Pastoral search systems help connect churches to pastors. Training of search committees, helping them work out financial packages, and onboarding the new pastor are some of the helps provided.

Organizational clarity

Who are we? "We are a family of churches helping each other flourish."
Brett gave examples of our churches helping and supporting other churches. This involves pathways:

1. Leader vitality - avoiding moral failures, helping pastors be living examples to follow
2. Church strengthening
3. Gospel advancement

An Evangelism Equipping grant was announced. More can be learned about how churches can receive this by going to the QR code provided.

Brett explained that the GLD is involved in a lawsuit that has been a "gut punch." It involves allegations from a situation in one of our churches from years ago.

Brett addressed the changes with TEDS, our seminary, closing. He invited conferees to attend the TEDS lunch tomorrow to learn more about future plans for TEDS.

Our district is networking with Boyce College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and he thanked Mark Burks for helping with this. Through Southern Baptist institutions, they are offering tuition discounts for entering EFCA students.

Brett's report was approved, MSC.

New Business

Churches for removal from the GLD

- BridgePoint Church, Valparaiso, IN
- Cornerstone Church, Detroit, MI
- Faith EFC, Moline, IL
- Shepherd EFC, Byron, IL

The removal of these churches was approved, MSC.

Churches joining the GLD and EFCA

- The Gathering from Maineville, OH (Mark Burks explained that they could not be with us and he received their certificate.)
- Iglesia de Fe, Indianapolis, IN
- Summit Church, Garden City, MI

Each church was approved for acceptance into the District, MSC.

Financial Reports and Budget

Bob Blahnik is thankful for Kevin Currid, a CPA, being a new Board member and Vice Treasurer.

Bob explained that in the Financial Statement, "Advancement Fund" is what we used to call "Church Planting Fund."

The total expenses for salaries is under budget because we don't have a Church Planting Director. The Board is still working on how to address this.

Financial report was approved, MSC.

A question was raised about Brett's replacement as Church Planting Director. Brett explained that our national office has increased its offering of assessing and support with church planting, which may mean we will adjust our Church Planting Director job description. The Board is working on this.

Brett also clarified that the salary budget covers 12 district employees who work part-time and 2 are full time.

The budget was approved, MSC.

MSC to take the by-law change for the second reading of Section V Article A, Point 4 -Succession off the table

A motion was approved of the 2nd reading of the GLD By-Laws change concerning withdrawal of GLD churches from membership. Section V Article A, Point 4 – Succession. MSC.

GLD By-Law Change First Reading **-** Section I, Article B, Point 2 - Withdrawal from Membership
This concerns the Board of Directors approving a church removal and informing the conference as "a matter of information" at the next conference. (Conference will no longer need to vote to remove a church)

MSC to table this motion until our next meeting. (October 2026)

Elections

Adam Fix is chairman of the Nominating Committee, but since he is also on the ballot, GLD Chairman Carlan Bounds oversaw the elections. A voice vote of the delegates was taken on the nominated candidates, and they were approved by acclamation.

A motion was MSC to allow the Board of Directors to approve the conference minutes at their next meeting in December.

Carlan thanked Liberty Bible Church for their gracious hosting of this conference. Next year's conference will be hosted the week of October 5, 2026, at The Chapel in St. Joseph, MI.

The GLD Board and Staff all gathered on the stage and Phil Bubar prayed for the year ahead and for God's blessing on each person and their role in the direction of the District.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Bubar
GLD Board Secretary

Additions

- New Life Community, Lima, OH
- Glory to God Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN

Removals

- First EFC, Chicago, IL

Great Lakes District
Statement of Financial Position
As of August 31, 2026

Assets			
Ministry Fund			
Chase Checking 6947	85,347		
CIF 2792	10,779		
			96,126
Advancement Fund			
Chase Checking 1121	148,239		
Chase Savings 1910	10,000		
Chase CD 0105 & 3332	453,798		
CIF	60,866		
			672,903
Capital Fund			
Automobiles	32,871		
			32,871
Total Assets			**801,901**
Liabilities and Fund Principal			
Ministry Fund			
Liabilities			
Short Term Liabilities	5,892		
Taxes and FSA	2,486		
Total Liabilities		8,378	
Ministry Fund Principal		87,748	
			96,126
Advancement Fund			
Liabilities			
Short Term Payable	2,107		
Taxes and FSA	5,352		
Total Liabilities		7,459	
Donor Restricted Funds			
Church Planter Support Accounts	75,491		
Lilly Foundation Grant	135,395		
Total Donor Restricted Funds		210,885	
Board Designated Funds			
Church Planting Board Designated	280,962		
HLT Board Designated	60,343		
Total Board Designated Funds		341,305	
Advancement Fund Principal		113,254	
			672,903
Capital Fund			
Liabilities		-	
Capital Fund Principal		32,871	
			32,871
Total Liabilities and Fund Principal			**801,901**

Great Lakes District Ministry Fund
Statement of Activities
Through August 31, 2026

REVENUES	Actual	Variance	YTD Budget	Budget
Church Contributions	347,902	24,568	323,333	485,000
Individual Contributions	21,150	12,817	8,333	12,500
GLD Conferences & Events	13,269	6,936	6,333	9,500
Interest and Other Income	12,615	615	12,000	18,000
TOTAL REVENUES	394,936	44,936	350,000	525,000
EXPENSES				
Compensation Expenses				
Compensation Expenses	253,070	7,454	260,524	390,786
Payroll Taxes	2,611	391	3,002	4,503
Total Compensation	255,681	7,845	263,526	395,289
Ministry Expenses				
Ministerials & Affinity Groups	3,819	4,181	8,000	12,000
Travel & Auto	20,929	404	21,333	32,000
Meals	10,459	(1,125)	9,333	14,000
GLD Conference & Events	74	9,926	10,000	15,000
Credentialing, Placement, Demographics	625	708	1,333	2,000
Total Ministry Expenses	35,906	14,094	50,000	75,000
General Expenses				
Accounting & Payroll	7,849	151	8,000	12,000
Communications	3,007	(1,340)	1,667	2,500
Telephone & Internet	1,439	2,561	4,000	6,000
Staff Development	1,414	1,252	2,667	4,000
GLD Board	297	1,703	2,000	3,000
Insurance	4,922	3,744	8,667	13,000
Legal & CPA Review	13	654	667	1,000
Banking & Donor Support	90	243	333	500
Computer & Network	2,743	1,257	4,000	6,000
Office Supplies & Postage	4,303	(303)	4,000	6,000
Total General Expenses	26,077	9,923	36,000	54,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	317,664	31,862	349,526	524,289
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	77,272	76,798	474	711
LITIGATION EXPENSES	195,731			
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(118,459)			

2027 PROPOSED MINISTRY FUND BUDGET

	2027 Budget	2026 Budget	2025 Budget
REVENUES			
Church Contributions	490,000	485,000	465,000
Individual Contributions	15,000	12,500	12,500
GLD Conferences & Events	15,000	9,500	18,000
Other Income & Interest	18,000	18,000	18,000
TOTAL REVENUES	538,000	525,000	513,500
EXPENSES			
Compensation Expenses			
Salary & Benefits	396,643	390,786	391,333
Payroll Taxes	3,896	4,503	3,311
Total Compensation	400,539	395,289	394,644
Ministry Expenses			
Ministerials & Affinity Groups	12,000	12,000	10,000
Travel & Auto	32,000	32,000	27,000
Meals	14,000	14,000	9,000
GLD Conference & Events	15,000	15,000	18,000
Credentialing, Staffing, Demographics	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total Ministry Expenses	75,000	75,000	66,000
General Expenses			
Accounting & Payroll Services	12,000	12,000	10,800
Communications	4,000	2,500	1,500
Telephone & Internet	6,000	6,000	4,500
Staff Development & Conferences	6,000	4,000	6,000
GLD Board	3,000	3,000	3,200
Insurance	14,000	13,000	9,500
Legal & CPA Review	4,000	1,000	3,800
Banking, Payroll, Donor Support	1,000	500	1,200
Computer & Network	6,000	6,000	5,000
Office Supplies & Postage	6,000	6,000	6,700
Total General Expenses	62,000	54,000	52,200
TOTAL EXPENSES	537,539	524,289	512,844
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	461	711	656

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Below will be the SECOND Reading of the changes that were brough to you at the annual conference in October 2025. **PLEASE** read these over and be prepared to vote on them.

Current language from Section I, B, 2
2. If the differences cannot be resolved, the Board of Directors shall accept the request for withdrawal and recommend to the next conference that the church in question be released from Great Lakes District Conference membership

Proposed Language for Section I, B, 2
2. If a church requests removal or has already closed, the Board of Directors is authorized to honor their request or closure and remove the church as a member of the Great Lakes District and the Evangelical Free Church of America. This action will be reported in the conference manual at the next district conference as a matter of information.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee has concluded its work and has selected the following individuals as candidates for the positions available.

For Terms Beginning January 1, 2027

Board of Directors

CHAIRMAN (Two-year term)

☐ Josh Weiland

VICE-CHAIRMAN (Two-year term)

☐ Curtis Coston

TREASURER (Two-year term)

☐ Kevin Currid

DIRECTOR (Two-year term)
Vote for 2

☐ Warren Byrd

☐ Pam McRae

Committee on Nominations

(Two-year term)
Vote for 4

☐ Carlan Bounds

☐ Jim Fair *

☐ Gary Kirst *

☐ Ryan Mustered *

Respectfully Submitted,

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE
Don Erickson
Jim Fair
Gary Kirst
Ryan Mustered

** Indicates Incumbent*

** Indicates Incumbent*

Board of Directors

CHAIRMAN (Two-year Term)

Josh Weiland has served at Wawasee Community Bible Church in Milford, Indiana, for over 20 years, including the last 16 as Lead Pastor. Josh holds a BA in Biblical Theology from Moody Bible Institute, a master's degree in Missional Leadership, and is currently completing a MA/TS at TEDS. Before attending Moody, Josh studied architecture at Iowa State University. Josh helps lead the Mid-Size Churches affinity group, which connects lead pastors serving GLD churches of 200–500 in attendance. He also consults with churches in vision and strategic planning and has taught Bible at Grace College & Theological Seminary in Winona Lake, Indiana. Josh is married to his wife Hannah, and they have a 10-year-old son, Charlie. He loves teaching God's Word, visual communications, cycling, and following the Chicago Cubs and Iowa State Cyclones.

VICE-CHAIRMAN (Two-year Term)

Curtis Coston is currently serving as Senior Pastor of Solid Word Bible Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was previously Senior Pastor, for 5 years, of Black Forest Christian Fellowship, an English speaking, international church in the Black Forest of southern Germany. Before leaving for Germany, Curtis served as Administrative Pastor at Solid Word and was one of the initial elders when the church was planted. Curtis had a previous career serving the urban church through Cru Inner City, in his native New York City, and in banking. He also served as a director on the GLD Board from 2020-2025. His passion is to build strong disciples of Jesus Christ who have a compassionate heart for the city. Curtis and his wife Lovette have been married for 31 years and have 3 adult children.

TREASURER (Two-year Term)

Kevin Currid has been a Christian since 1979. He married Gwen in 1987. Kevin and Gwen live in Palatine, IL and have two adult children. Much of Kevin's ministry involvement has been leading small groups, and broadly, in financial administration. He started his accounting practice in 1995 and focuses on small businesses and non-profits/ministries. Kevin and Gwen have been members of Village Church of Barrington (VCB) since 2011.

DIRECTORS (Two-year Term)

Warren Byrd and his wife Doreen of 42 years are members and have been involved at Wawasee Community Bible Church for over 10 years. Warren has served other various churches in multiple ways: as a teacher, small group leader, lawyer, deacon and elder (College Park Church, Indianapolis; Heartland Church, Fishers, Indiana; Harvest Bible Chapel North Indy). He has served on the Boards of Converge MidAmerica and Twin Lakes Church Camp in Indiana and was a legal advisor for CrossRoads Bible College doing a variety of legal work for various ministries. He and Doreen have mentored young couples and have provided marriage counseling and split their time between Amelia Island, Florida and Syracuse, Indiana. Warren has a bachelor's degree from Cedarville University in Ohio and a Law Degree from Notre Dame Law School. With two daughters and six grandchildren, he keeps busy with family, friends, biking and water sports.

Pam McRae was a member of First Evangelical Free Church in Rockford, IL for 20 years before she and her husband moved to St. Joseph, MI where they are currently members at The Chapel. She is a Professor at Moody Bible Institute where she has taught for 22 years in the Applied Theology and Church Ministries Department. She also serves on the Executive Team for the Prepared program and teaches two courses. In addition, Pam is on the Executive Team and was part of the founding team for Naomi's House, a ministry in the Chicagoland area that serves sexually exploited victims. She and her husband have 2 adult married daughters and six grandchildren.

Committee on Nominations

(Two-year Term)

Carlan Bounds is a member of First EFC in Moline, Illinois and has served in a number of lay ministry positions. Now serving as Elder Chair. He has served on the Executive, Stewardship and Finance Commissions of GLD, and as Vice Treasurer, Vice Chairman and Chairman of the GLD Board. Married to Bonnie, they have two grown children with 4 grandchildren. Prior to retirement, Carlan was employed with the IT / Telecommunications Division of Deere & Company (John Deere).

*Jim Fair served in vocational Christian ministries for almost 30 years, most recently serving as Director of Administration at Trinity E. Free Church in South Bend for 18 years before retiring in 2017. He also served on the GLD Board of Directors from 2008-2016 serving as assistant secretary and secretary consecutively. Jim and his wife Nancy are happily retired living in Indianapolis and have three grown daughters and 5 grandchildren. They are active members of sister church Faith Church in Indianapolis.

*Gary Kirst has served as Senior Pastor at the Galena Bible Church (Galena, IL) since graduating from TEDS in 1990. He completed his D.Min. from TEDS in 2019, doing his project on his training of pastors in expository preaching in northern Kenya. He has been actively involved in his area's ministerial group since coming to Galena. He and Linda have four adult children and six grandchildren.

*Ryan Mustered serves as Lead Pastor of Trinity EFC, a rural multisite. He and his wife Malinda have a passion to plant gospel centered campuses in underserved communities. They are blessed with four wonderful children who love the Lord. Their son Caleb is a junior in high school. Their two daughters, Hannah and Lydia, live and work in Champaign/Urbana. Their oldest son Zach and his wife Victoria are serving with Wycliffe/ JAARS in missions aviation. Malinda is a pediatric OT with a thriving ministry to children with special needs. Prior to 9 years at Trinity, Ryan served as pastor of evangelism and discipleship for 14 years and as senior scientist at an engineering firm for 9 years. His undergrad degree is from the University of Illinois, and his master's and doctoral degrees are from Trinity Seminary. Ryan is the author of *Preaching in High Definition*, with Christian Faith Publishing, on Amazon and Audible. Ryan is bilingual and enjoys introducing people to Jesus and spending time outdoors with family and friends.

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- Activating believers to become effective witnesses.
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How we can serve you

We want to help you engage your church in the Great Commandment and Great Commission. We have a suite of resources to engage all generations including Sunday morning or small group sponsorship events, workbooks for families, a small group bible study and much more.

Get Started

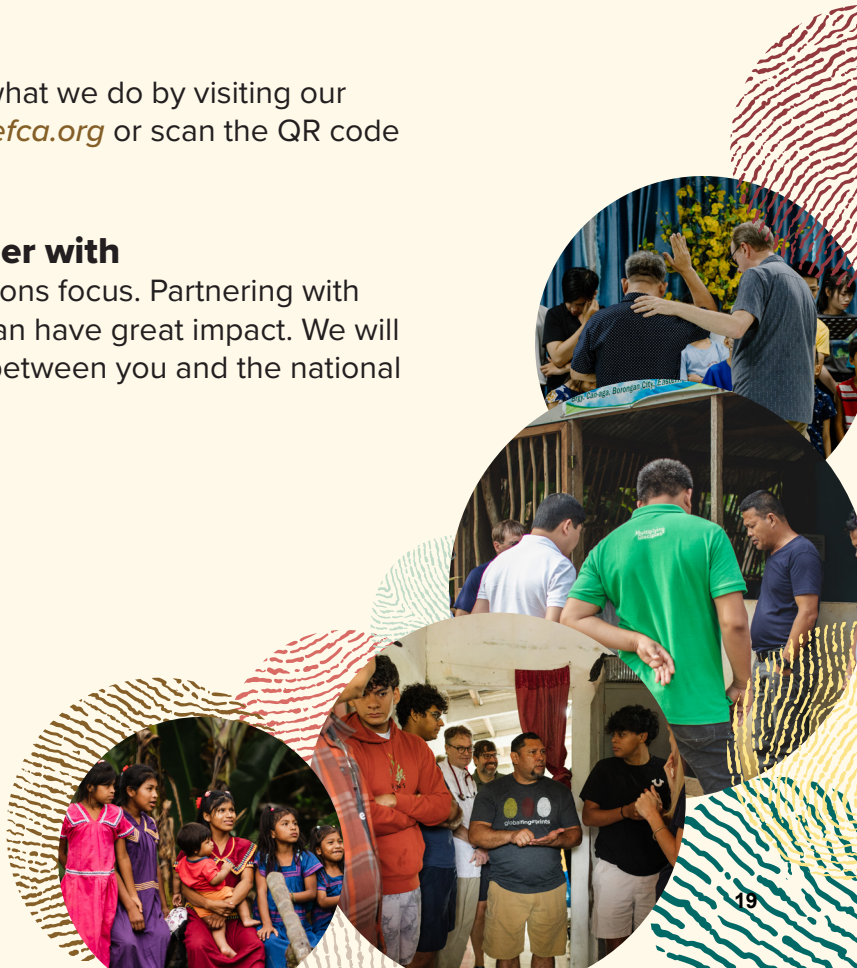
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Learn more about who we are and what we do by visiting our website, email us at *tom.pankratz@efca.org* or scan the QR code for more information.

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Many churches have a specific missions focus. Partnering with one site that aligns with that focus can have great impact. We will help facilitate a unique partnership between you and the national church that benefits both churches.

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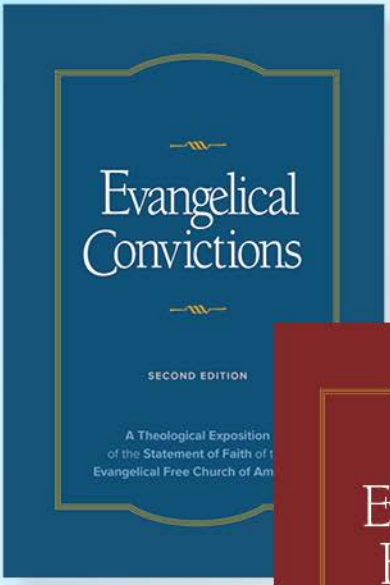
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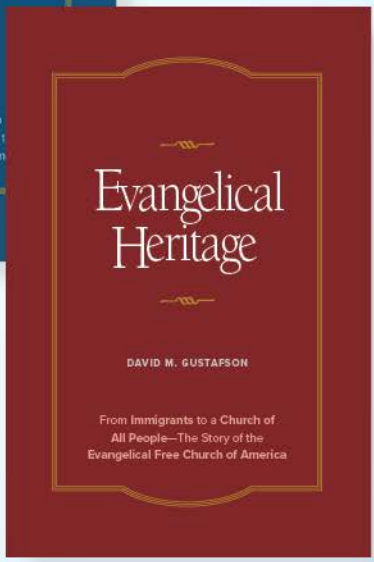

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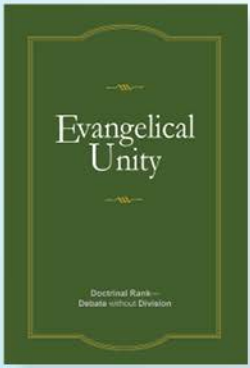
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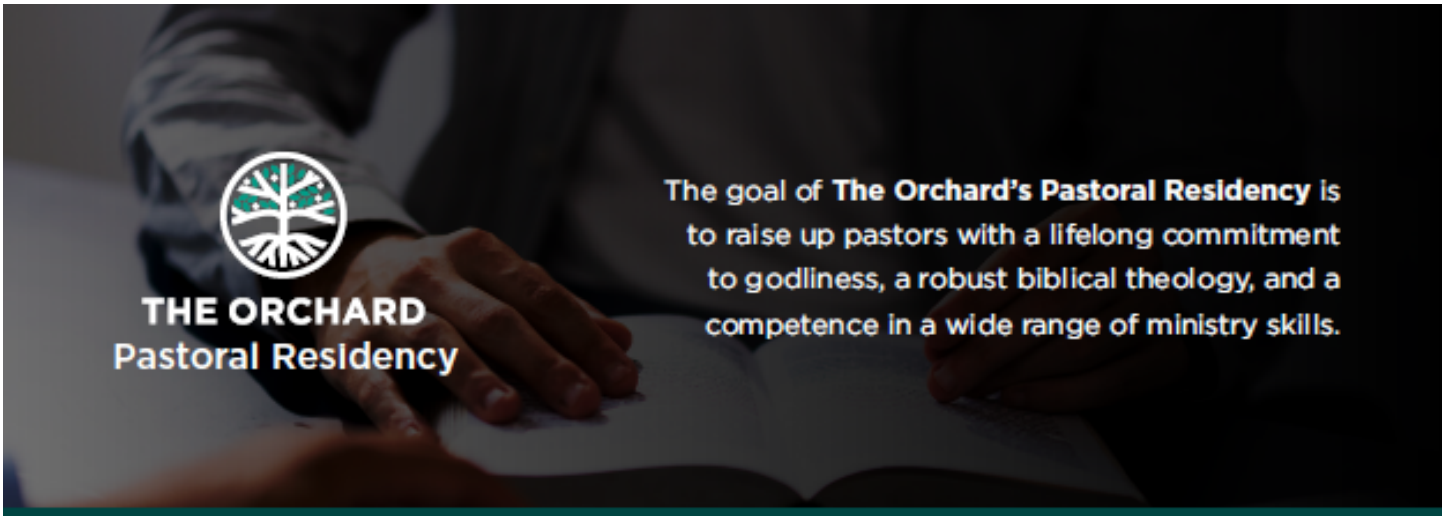
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2. Preaching preparation: Chicago Course on Preaching (CCP) through Charles Simeon Trust
3. Mentored ministry experiences at The Orchard for 20 hours per week

The program brings the seminary and the church together in a shared effort to train pastors for the glory of Christ and the good of his people.

WHAT DOES THE THREE-YEAR PASTORAL RESIDENCY INCLUDE?

- Tuition and fees for an MBS through MBTS fully covered by The Orchard
- Tuition for the CCP fully covered by The Orchard
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WHO IS THE PASTORAL RESIDENCY FOR?

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JOIN US APRIL 15, 2027

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON!

Ministry Update

I am thankful to work with wonderful board and staff teams. These two teams have collaborated over the past 18 months to clearly define who we are and where we sense the Lord is leading us together. Those conversations have been informed by our interactions with pastors and leaders from churches and our ministry partners at the national office led by President Carlton Harris.

While we are united as an EFCA movement around our EFCA Statement of Faith and our shared mission to make disciples and plant new congregations among all people, as a Great Lakes District family we are committed to being a family of churches helping each other flourish. I hope you will join us at our Family Meeting as we unpack that phrase and how it gives direction to everything we do as GLD staff.

In this past year we have welcomed Jordan Muck and Nate Stenholtz as new staff members onto our team, hosted Entrusted (a training and networking conference for women leaders) and a Preaching Workshop led by Steve Mathewson, launched a New Pastors cohort for new Lead Pastors, credentialed pastors and ministry leaders, provided $25,000 in evangelism grants, and helped churches move towards greater health and multiplication.

Moving Forward

Our ministry theme for 2026-2027 is *Connecting Leaders and Pastors to the Family*. Our ministerials and affinity groups are the small groups of district life and play an important part in you flourishing in life, ministry, and doctrine. If you are not connected yet to a ministerial or affinity group let me encourage you to get connected. For those that are connected, let me encourage you to both strengthen the relationships you have with others and invite new people into your ministerial or affinity group.

In the fall we gather together as a Great Lakes District Conference. In the winter and spring we will be hosting these equipping events:

- Preaching Workshop
- Entrusted for women ministry leaders
- Training Lab for church ministry leaders to build training that builds people in partnership with Clarity House.

Thank you for being a part of our GLD Family and I hope to see you at the upcoming GLD Conference.

It's a joy to serve with you,

Brett Gleason
GLD District Superintendent

Ministry Updates



One of the answered prayers in our area is in regard to filling pastoral vacancies. It can be very hard on churches when they go too long without a pastor. It is my great delight to inform the conference that First Free of Moline has welcomed in a new Senior Pastor, Don McLean. Don and his wife, Laura moved to Moline from Atlantic, Iowa. Don served as Senior pastor of Grace Point for many years before accepting the call to First Free. We thank God for His provision of Don and Laura.



Another answer to prayer is much more recent. Many of you might remember that during our 2024 annual conference, we welcome the Loraine church into the EFCA. Even at that time, they were operating without a full-time pastor. I am thrilled to report that just weeks ago, Scott Kaczinski accepted the call to be their new pastor. Scott and his wife, Annette, were members of the Free church of Dewitt, Iowa. Scott has served in para-church ministry. We are praising the Lord that after more than two years, Loraine church has a pastor.

The Erie church has been doing very well. They recently decided to make an addition to their sanctuary. Jonathan Eckberg has been the senior pastor there and his father, Ron has also been on staff. Last month, Jonathan and his family moved to Wauconda, Il. Jonathan has accepted the call to Life Bridge Community church. Erie Church is sad to see them go, but I am thankful that he continues to be a GLD pastor.

Leader Flourishing

Special thanks to Pastor Steve Palm. Steve leads our ministerial groups so faithfully. This group is very committed to faithfully meeting together for encouragement and prayer.

Prayer

- Please keep Homewood Church of Moline in your prayers. They are still in the process of searching for a new pastor. Pray for the Lord to provide them the pastor they need.
- Pray for Jonathan Eckberg and his family as they adjustment to a new church.
- Pray for Erie Church as they begin their pastoral search.
- Praise God with us for the new pastors in our area

MARK BURKS

Area Superintendent, Ohio & Northern Kentucky
Director of Coaching

Ministry Update

This past year we leaned into our commitment to being “a family of churches helping each other flourish” by creating environments where pastors can learn from one another, receive encouragement, and facilitate both individual and group coaching.

We piloted a New Pastor Cohort (February–October). The group met monthly over Zoom. It was a great opportunity to connect experienced pastors in new locations with pastors beginning their first lead pastorates.

The Normal Pastor Affinity Group resourced one another at the District conference, and encouraged one another through the online book study “Imperfect Pastor” highlighted by a Q&A with author Zack Eswine.

To be better equipped to serve leaders and churches through our four ministry pathways, I participated in Multiply 3.0 Church Planter Training and Clarity House Funnel Fusion Training.

Moving Forward

The coming year will focus on building sustainable structures that help us continue to flourish together.

- **Strengthen the Ohio pastor groups** by creating a rhythm of meeting less frequently but for longer periods of time, increasing the value and depth of each gathering. These gatherings serve to provide space for pastors to step away from the demands of ministry, connect and encourage one another.
- **Develop and support the GLD Coaching Team**, including Staff+ training in January 2027, to expand our capacity for coaching and mentoring.
- **Develop MinisterConnect.org** as a placement resource and to provide assistance and coaching for both churches and ministry candidates navigating the search process.
- **Participate in cross-district Multiply Training,** strengthening our ability to support church planters and multiplying congregations.
- Continue developing resources and training based on the **GLD Vision Frame and Horizon Storyline**, which provides a helpful framework for developing group training, resources, and ministry initiatives.

The goal is not simply to offer more programs, but to build a culture where pastors, leaders, and churches increasingly help one another flourish through shared wisdom, coaching, collaboration, and encouragement.

Prayer

- Pray for wisdom and discernment as we develop the GLD Coaching Team and expand our coaching capacity. Pray that God would raise up healthy, multiplying leaders who are willing to invest in others.
- Pray also for the pastors and churches in Southern and Northern Ohio, that our gatherings would become places of genuine encouragement, honest conversation, spiritual renewal, and practical help.
- Finally, pray that MinisterConnect.org and our church-strengthening efforts would serve both churches and ministry candidates well, helping the right people find the right places to serve and helping churches flourish as they seek God's direction.

Helping Each Other Flourish

A coalition of churches and the GLD have been on a 3-year journey to assist with financial stability and leadership development of Dixon Bible Fellowship. A team of transitional elders have been working with their pastor and though Cal (recent pastor) has accepted another position he helped identify 3 elder qualified men that we will formally install sometime in September. The church has shown some slow growth and is moving forward with new leadership. One of the transitional elders will continue in that capacity in these initial steps.

Park Hills Winnebago completed an extensive facility expansion to accommodate growth and a vision of future ministry. A new spacious lobby, worship center, classrooms, parking and amenities offer a warm welcome to current congregation and the community of Winnebago at large. The new facility has allowed the ministry to host the 1613 Men's Conference earlier this year and be actively involved with the Park District and Village assisting with the National Night Out providing a bouncy house and ice cream for the event. Developing these relationships and trust within the community promotes a healthy image for a gospel presence in Winnebago.

Moving Forward

We have 4 ministerials in the NWIL Area representing 29 EFCA churches who meet monthly to encourage, support and pray for one another. Solo pastors in particular wear so many "hats" that it is important they do not become isolated and discouraged. Having other men who identify with the unique stresses of ministry is critical to overall personal and church health! We generally are reading a book together, thinking through a current article, or wrestling with one of the many practical theological issues of the day.

Canton Pastor, Matt Spangler recently assumed the leadership of our Peoria ministerial. He and I were able to travel and meet with 3 of our area pastors this summer to hear of ministry highlights and encourage their work. Additionally, Matt has taken the initiative to visit 2 others in our area and encourage their presence at our ministerials.

Our Princeton EFC is currently led by Brian Lord. Princeton had the benefit of an Interim Pastor prior to calling Brian and the ministry there is flourishing. Leadership and youth ministry have been focus points and both are showing very healthy progress.

Our Sterling EFC has outgrown their facility but are having difficulty finding a facility to accommodate their current size and provide for future growth. Church is healthy but out of room seriously limiting ministry growth.

Maywood (Rockford) has recently called a pastor to their Hispanic ministry and continue to minister to this group of faithful people.

One of our associate pastors needed to renew a VISA and the Lord orchestrated that renewal in record time without any undue stress.

There are multiple reasons to be encouraged and grateful to the Lord for his favor on so many of our churches but there are still some of our churches struggling to find a pastor (Payson IL), to grow sufficiently to be able to afford a pastor and still others that faithfully minister the gospel without complaint in very small communities. The Lord Jesus watches over these saints in unique and gracious ways!

Prayer

NWIL Area has seen several major challenges to pastors and staff this year. One of our pastors lost his wife this year, another dealing with a stroke prior to a kidney transplant, another major back surgery, another with late-stage cancer. Please be in prayer for those who so selflessly serve and for my ability to encourage and comfort in these difficult life events.

Following the Apostle Paul's reminder of who we are in Christ and the inheritance that is ours in eternity, he pours out his heart in prayer for the Ephesian believers "For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe," Ephesians 1:15-19

Ministry Update

As I reflect on this past year in my role as Area Superintendent for the GLD-EFCA churches in the north and northwest suburbs of Chicago, I realize how desperately our churches need our prayers and how often I have fallen short of the model the Apostle Paul set for us. In this day and age of relativism and uncertainty, our church leaders need the spirit of wisdom and knowledge of our Lord, and the enlightened hearts that only come from the immeasurable greatness and power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May our prayers model those of the Apostle Paul and may we see God answer our prayers over this coming year.

Several of the churches under my watch have been going through significant changes over the past several months. Life Bridge Church in Wauconda, IL has been blessed over the past 15 years to thrive under the leadership of Pastor Bob Boerman. As of the end of August, Bob stepped back from his role as lead pastor and stepped into retirement. We thank Bob for his faithful service over these past years.

As Bob steps back from Life Bridge, Jonathan Eckberg is stepping into the role of lead pastor. Jonathan is an EFCA pastor who has been serving the Erie, IL EFC. We welcome Jonathan and pray for him as he transitions from western Illinois to the northwest suburbs of Chicago.

We also want to honor Dan Weyerhaeuser for his years of ministry as lead pastor of Lakeland Church, Gurnee, IL and welcome Tre Moore as the new lead pastor.

As God continues to bless the ministry of Fox Valley Church, we are excited for them as they recently launched a major expansion of their ministry facilities.

Last year we were praying for Alex Rodriguez and the future of The Outpost Church. A year ago it was looking like this church plant was going to close, but a year later the church continues to meet under Pastor Alex's leadership. Church planting is always a challenge. Keep Pastor Alex and the church in your prayers.

Earlier this year, Pastor Matt Johnson stepped back from his role as lead pastor of Cornerstone EFC, Glenview to accept the call to serve as lead pastor of First Free Church in Boone, IA. Be in prayer for Cornerstone EFC as they look for their next lead pastor.

Ministerial groups in the North and Northwest suburbs of Chicago continue to thrive. I have deeply appreciated Marcus Johnson, pastor of Lake Regions Bible Church, who has faithfully led the North Area ministerial over these many years. Several months ago, Danny Foote, lead pastor of Cornerstone Community Church, Wadsworth, IL began leading the North Area ministerial. Thank you, Marcus, for your years of ministerial leadership and thank you Danny for stepping into that role. I continue to lead the Northwest Area ministerial and thoroughly enjoy our times together.

Ministry Update

It is always encouraging to hear about new churches that are in the process of becoming part of the GLD-EFCA.

This year, we have three churches in the process of joining the GLD-EFCA:

- Pathway Church — Mancelona, Michigan
- Restoration Bible Church — Ann Arbor, Michigan
- Michigan Campus House Church — Ann Arbor, Michigan

We are thankful for each of these congregations and for their desire to partner with us in advancing the gospel. We look forward to welcoming them more fully into the GLD-EFCA family and serving alongside them in the years ahead.

It was exciting to be part of the evaluation process for four church-planting couples this year. It was a privilege to hear their stories, learn about their vision for ministry, and discern with them how God may be leading them toward planting healthy, gospel-centered churches.

As is true in any church family, several of our churches experienced seasons of difficulty and challenge this year. I was grateful for the opportunity to come alongside some of these congregations and help them navigate difficult circumstances.

I have also had the privilege of coaching several pastors in our area one-on-one. These conversations have provided opportunities to listen, encourage, ask questions, and help pastors think through the challenges and opportunities they face in ministry.

Moving Forward

Looking ahead, I am excited about helping our pastors implement the new GLD Ministry Pathways in the coming year. I believe these pathways will give us some practical ways to help our churches grow healthier and more effective in ministry.

We will also be re-emphasizing ministerial gatherings in different regions across Michigan. I am looking forward to seeing pastors have more opportunities to get together, build relationships, share what they are learning, encourage one another, and pray together. Ministry can be isolating at times, and I believe there is great value in pastors having the opportunity to walk together and support one another.

Ministry Update

The city churches of greater Chicagoland are seeking to be a family of churches helping each other flourish.

- We have about 30 churches that meet in two ministerial groups on a monthly basis. 90% of our full-time senior pastors attended one of these regional meetings this last year.
- Five pastors enjoyed a sabbatical during summer of 2026, joyfully relying on the local ministerial to help cover pulpit and music.
- Several churches have noted a general increase in attendance this last year, especially among Gen Z men.
- Evanston Bible Fellowship has brought on pastoral resident Andrew Choi, who is involved in helping support a revival among Korean-American congregations in Chicago.
- The Japanese Language Congregation at Cornerstone was disbanded this last year and most have moved to EFCA-ordained Dr. Rich McLaughlin's church in Skokie.
- Elim Evangelical moved to Oak Lawn and have remodeled a former-Lutheran building, renaming to Oasis Community Church.
- Gordy Williams transitioned from Harvard Ave EFC to CrossLife, and Harvard continues to seek their next senior pastor.
- Dr. Sai Ankem of International Community EFC unanimously passed his ordination.
- Bethel Evangelique finished a beautiful remodel and reroof of their facility.

Moving Forward

Leader Flourishing – 80% of our Chicagoland pastors have enjoyed a sabbatical in the last four years. I'll continue to push for the remaining 20% to take one this next season.

Strengthening Churches – I continue to be available to church boards and pastors for counseling, coaching, training, and general encouragement. Not all churches/pastors need this, but it is available to them. Three or four churches went through severe conflict this last year; one departed the EFCA.

Community Engagement – this next year in our ministerials we'll focus on transformational preaching and being a valued presence in our communities.

Multiplying Congregations – we continue to look for and develop potential church planters.

Prayer

Please pray the increase in attendance continues, our churches in turmoil will grow through the suffering, that the Lord sends more workers, our developing leaders progress toward planting, and that Chicagoland may experience a revival.

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

This is my first year serving as Area Superintendent of Northern Indiana, a role I assumed at the beginning of this year following the unexpected home-going of our dear brother, Collin Seitz, on September 29, 2025. For more than two decades, Collin faithfully shepherded pastors and churches throughout this region with remarkable wisdom, humility, and steadfastness. Stepping into his role has been humbling, a profound privilege, and a weighty responsibility. It has meant learning along the way, building on the relationships and rhythms he faithfully cultivated, and continually asking the LORD for the wisdom and grace to serve our family of churches with the same Christ-centered faithfulness that characterized Collin's ministry.

Ministry Update

Some Stats and Facts

- I walk alongside the two ministerial fellowships Collin formerly served: the Michiana Ministerial (South Bend/Michigan area) and The Region Ministerial (Valparaiso and surrounding area) — dozens of pastors and leaders representing numerous churches throughout the region.
- Both groups gather monthly for study, prayer, and fellowship. Our Michiana Ministerial is working through Bob Kauflin's Worship Matters, while The Region is working through Paul David Tripp's Lead.
- Every week I send a short devotional to both groups, and every Tuesday both groups answer the same question: “How can we pray for you this week?” That simple rhythm has kept our pastors across two regions praying for one another in real time — over strokes, medical diagnoses, building projects, staff transitions, grief, church highs and lows, and other personal matters.

A Short Story — To GOD Be the Glory!

“*We are a family of churches helping each other flourish*” isn't just a tagline for our ministerials. I've watched it happen in small, concrete ways this year. Last October, one of our pastors mentioned in our group chat that he'd recommended a fellow ministerial pastor's sermon to his own father. A few days later he wrote back: *“My old man listened to the sermon and he is having a heart change! He confessed to me making work an idol in his life.”* That's the kind of fruit that grows when pastors share pulpits, prayer, and encouragement across church lines rather than ministering in isolation. This is exactly what Collin spent his ministry building among us, and what I'm committed to continuing.



Michiana Ministerial Thanksgiving Gathering

Moving Forward in Prayer

- Pray for our Michiana and The Region Ministerial Gatherings through the remainder of 2026, and for wisdom to keep these fellowships accessible and sustainable for a group spread across a wide geography.
- Pray for relationships being built beyond our own districts.
- Pray for coaching and mentoring conversations, and for grace to make space for this kind of care as I settle further into the role.
- Pray for our congregations — staff needs, relational dynamics, credentialing, and the continued declaration of the Gospel and the truths of GOD's Word impressed upon people's hearts.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would renew our love for Christ, restore our joy in ministry, and equip us to serve His church and this region faithfully.

The Great Lakes District statement, “We are a family of churches helping each other flourish,” expresses what we desire for our Hispanic congregations. We are not isolated churches carrying out ministry independently, but a family united by the gospel, God’s mission, and a commitment to serve one another.

This biblical vision of the church as a family is especially important during a season marked by uncertainty and growing pastoral needs resulting from changes in immigration laws and enforcement practices. The GLD Hispanic churches are to helping one another through leadership development, church strengthening, community outreach, and church multiplication.

Current Realities

During the past year, our Hispanic pastors and leaders have ministered to families affected by increased immigration enforcement and deportations, some involving violence. They have responded to fear, family separation, loss of employment, and uncertainty about the future.

According to a national Lifeway Research study, 50% of Hispanic congregations surveyed had addressed pain and fear resulting from changes in government practices, while 27% had been discouraged by the disrespectful cultural tone toward Hispanics. In addition, 35% reported decreased in-person attendance because undocumented members were afraid to leave their homes, and 34% experienced financial challenges because some members could not work.

In response, our pastors continue to proclaim that God’s Kingdom calls us to treat every person with respect and dignity. We pray for our authorities, as instructed in 1 Timothy 2:1–2, and advocate for immigration reforms that pursue: “Accountability with compassion, order with humanity, and law with dignity.”

Our response is biblical and pastoral: respecting governing authorities and the law while compassionately supporting vulnerable families and affirming the dignity of every person created in God’s image.

Churches Helping One Another Flourish

River Oaks and Iglesia de Fe

The relationship between River Oaks Community Church in Goshen, Indiana, and Iglesia de Fe in Indianapolis illustrates how churches can help one another flourish.

Pastor Luis Montiel’s mentoring of Pastor Jean Petit was instrumental in helping Iglesia de Fe become established and grow. Jean previously served as a leader at River Oaks before responding to God’s call to serve as a church planter and pastor in Indianapolis.

GATEWAY theological and ministerial training in Spanish has played an important role in both congregations. Luis Montiel and several River Oaks leaders completed GATEWAY, followed by a second generation that included Jean Petit. After receiving additional church-planting training, Jean became the pastor of Iglesia de Fe, where another generation of leaders has now completed GATEWAY.



This process demonstrates a multiplying pattern: trained leaders help train others, mentored pastors support emerging leaders, and strengthened churches help strengthen other congregations.

GATEWAY provides foundational theological training based on the EFCA Statement of Faith and applies biblical doctrine to ministry and local church leadership. Several pastors and church planters who completed the program now serve as facilitators for leaders from other churches.

Casa de Gracia and Maywood EFC

This family spirit has also been demonstrated through the integration of Casa de Gracia into Maywood Evangelical Free Church in Rockford, Illinois.

When Casa de Gracia's planting leader relocated, we worked with him to provide pastoral continuity for the congregation. Pastor Gary K. and Maywood's leadership welcomed the group into their Spanish-language ministry. This integration increased Latino participation and opened a new stage of ministry.

Maywood EFC recently invited Pastor Claudio Moya to serve as pastor of its Hispanic ministry. This transition shows how cooperation among churches can preserve a ministry, care for its people, and create new opportunities for growth.

Moving Forward: Four Ministry Pathways

1. Leadership Development

We have established a partnership with PROMETA, an online institution offering biblical, theological, and ministerial programs in Spanish accredited through Kairos University.

Several EFCA licensed Latino pastors plan to enroll this fall in an integrated bachelor's and master's degree program designed around the circumstances and ministry needs of GLD Hispanic pastors. The online format will allow them to continue serving their congregations while advancing their theological formation.

We are also working with GATEWAY/PROMETA to offer a two-year online Ministry Formation program for Latino leaders in our GLD Hispanic congregations. The program will combine biblical and theological study, spiritual formation, practical ministry, discipleship, and leadership development.

Our goal is to establish a continuous process in which each generation of leaders supports the next.

2. Church Strengthening

Our churches are being strengthened through closer collaboration among pastors, leaders, and ministries.

Thus, Pastors have shared their pulpits with one another, strengthening relationships. Women group gathering at Cristo es la Roca in Wauconda have invited recently leaders from the Hispanic ministry in Bensenville providing opportunities for biblical teaching, prayer, fellowship and leadership development.

And summer camps involving young people from Iglesia Filadelfia and Corona de Amor have also helped build relationships among the next Latino generation and strengthen their Christian identity within the wider GLD family of churches.

3. Community Outreach

Our congregations continue developing evangelistic initiatives that address community needs.

Freddy Velazco has begun a Saturday discipleship group for Latinos men and women in English and Spanish at Our Savior Evangelical Free Church facilities in Wheeling, Illinois. The group provides opportunities for Bible study, relationship-building, evangelism, and spiritual growth.

In Indianapolis, Iglesia de Fe leads “Bread of Life” outreach groups. Church members go into the community to share the gospel and distribute groceries and meals to people experiencing homelessness and families with limited resources. This ministry combines the proclamation of the gospel with a practical demonstration of Christ’s love among Latinos and all people.

4. Church Multiplication

Several pastors participated in the training provided by StartCHURCH. The training addresses the legal, financial, administrative, and organizational requirements involved in starting a new church or reorganizing an existing ministry.

Part of our goal to identify leaders with a calling and potential for church multiplication, support them through coaching and mentoring, connect them with a sending church, and help them develop ministry plans suited to their Hispanic communities.

Upcoming Events and Initiatives

GLD Hispanic pastors and leaders will seek to participate in the EFCA Theology Conference and Preconference, scheduled for February 3–5, 2027, in Des Moines, Iowa. This gathering will provide theological training and opportunities to build relationships with Hispanic leaders from other EFCA districts.

The Hispanic Leadership Team continues to organize regular Zoom and in-person meetings focused on pastoral health, leadership development, current congregational challenges, ministry among vulnerable Latino immigrants, and opportunities to share resources.

HLT members are also providing coaching and mentoring to pastors and emerging leaders including Vladimir in Galena, Freddy Velazco in Wheeling, Jean Petit in Indianapolis, Claudio Moya in Rockford, Denis Florez in Chicago. We are also connecting with graduates and students from Wheaton College and Moody Bible Institute who are exploring ministry opportunities.

Prayer

Let’s pray that the Lord will enable every Hispanic congregation in the Great Lakes District not merely to survive today’s challenges, but to flourish in discipleship, in leadership reaching our communities, and participate actively in God’s mission.

Ministry Update

It is a privilege and joy to serve the Lord and GLD churches by equipping, encouraging, resourcing, connecting, and multiplying women leaders, supporting our mission, “We are a family of churches helping each other flourish,” and our long-term vision to “raise up sons and daughters of the EFCA to reach our neighbors and the nations with the gospel for the building of Christ’s church.”

This past year has been encouraging and fruitful as I have walked alongside pastors and women leaders through individual coaching, Zoom and in-person meetings, ministry consultation, and connections with other GLD leaders. Ministry highlights included:

- Supporting pastors in identifying and developing women leaders, navigating complex ministry situations, and strengthening disciple-making ministries.
- Assisting leaders explore/develop a “Scripture as the curriculum” approach to disciple-making ministry.
- Connecting women leaders in ministry for peer learning, collaboration, encouragement, and resource sharing.
- Leading 3 workshops at Moody’s International Called Conference on developing discipleship pathways.
- Serving as an EFCA Prepared Coach, mentoring 10 GLD women leaders bi-monthly.
- Supporting women pursuing EFCA credentialing.
- Continuing to serve on the EFCA Board of Directors.
- Developing a new GLD conference for Women Leaders called *Entrusted*.

A significant focus this year was implementing insights from the 2025 Women in Ministry survey, which led to the creation of Entrusted, a new GLD training and networking conference for women leaders.

The first Entrusted conference was held April 24, 2026, at Community Gospel Church in Bremen, Indiana, with 108 women leaders in ministry attending. The day included biblical teaching from Titus, worship led by Bethany Muck (Community Gospel), 8 workshops, and 3 affinity groups for Pastors’ Wives, Children’s Ministry, and Women in Ministry.

Entrusted provided a tangible picture of “a family of churches helping each other flourish.” More than 20 women from numerous GLD churches served through event leadership, prayer, worship, workshops, and affinity groups—selflessly sharing their experience and gifts to strengthen other leaders and churches.

Event Leadership Team: Amy McCausland (Bethel Community), Chris Haller (Trinity South Bend), Clarice Nist (Fellowship EFC), Jana Dunsbergen (The Chapel), Jessica Krallman (Community Gospel), Sarah VanderReyden (Wawasee Bible), Toni Morgan (Glory to God Christian), Kate Senyshyn (Fox Valley), and Cyndi Leamon (Trinity South Bend).

Prayer Leadership Team: Lisa Bubar (The Chapel), Tamra Barbieri (Grace Point EFC), Heather Wickham (Trinity Ludington), and Holly Guilford (Trinity Stanton).

Workshop Teachers & Affinity Group Leaders: Lovette Coston (Solid Word Bible Church), Jessica Krallman (Community Gospel), Kelly Yoder (Crossroads), Toni Morgan (Glory to God Christian), Amy McCausland (Bethel Community), Jana Dunsbergen (The Chapel), Lisa Whitaker (Liberty Bible), Mallory Dowty (Wawasee Bible), Heather Soukup (Crystal Lake), Sharon Naccarato (The Orchard Vernon Hills), Kathy deBock (Trinity Fellowship Big Rapids), and Cyndi Leamon (Trinity South Bend).

The post-conference questionnaire provided encouraging evidence of leader flourishing and spiritual impact:

- *"God was magnified and He used the material to mature me."*
- *"My session really challenged me…please pray that I practice abiding in Jesus to be more rooted and radiant. I want to radiate Christ."*
- *"It was really meaningful to be able to meet and fellowship with other [GLD] women from all over."*
- *"The conference was wonderful, let's do it again."*

These testimonies reflect our desire to see women not simply become better ministry leaders, but flourish in Christ and return to their churches encouraged and equipped to disciple others and advance the gospel.



Diana Hepsiba Montiel and her women's leadership team from River Oaks Community Church, Elkhart IN attending Entrusted 2026.

Moving Forward

Our plans for the coming year will continue to reflect our four GLD values of God Dependence, Collaborative Teamwork, Selfless Development, and Mission Mobilization.

God Dependent: Although 108 leaders attended our first Entrusted conference, we recognized that distance made participation difficult for many churches west of Chicago. After prayer, listening to leaders, and seeking the Lord's direction, Entrusted will expand to 2 locations in 2027:

- Entrusted West — March 13, 2027, Maywood Bible Church, Rockford, IL
- Entrusted East — April 24, 2027, Wawasee Bible Church, Milford, IN

Collaborative Teamwork: Both Entrusted gatherings will again use diverse teams of GLD women for event leadership, prayer, worship, complementarian biblical teaching, workshops, and affinity groups. Our desire is to increasingly facilitate ministry between churches—leaders sharing what God has entrusted to them so another leader and church can flourish.

Selfless Development: I will continue to be available to pastors and women leaders for individual coaching, mentoring, ministry consultation, leadership development, and connections with other GLD leaders. Additionally, I will continue coaching 10 women leaders through Prepared and supporting women pursuing EFCA credentialing with the goal of developing leaders who develop other leaders.

We also plan to offer 2 additional affinity-group gatherings during the year, providing women opportunities for connection approximately once each quarter through Entrusted and other district gatherings. These groups will encourage prayer, peer learning, resource sharing, collaboration, and ongoing relationships.

Mission Mobilization: Developing women leaders is not an end in itself. As children's, women's, student, discipleship, administration, communication, and other ministry leaders flourish, they develop volunteers, disciple others, strengthen ministry teams, engage families, and multiply gospel influence.

Prayer

This ministry is dependent upon the Lord, and I am deeply grateful for the prayers of our GLD family. Please pray:

- For wisdom, strength, and dependence upon Christ as I discern how to best invest my time and serve the churches and women leaders throughout our district.
- For protection, provision, and encouragement for women leaders faithfully serving Christ in many different ministries and seasons.
- For pastors and churches as they identify, develop, equip, and mobilize women within our EFCA complementarian convictions.
- For Entrusted West and Entrusted East, including the host churches, leadership teams, teachers, prayer teams, and women God desires to bring.
- For continued connections with churches and leaders across the district, particularly those not currently well connected to GLD women in ministry leadership resources.
- For multiplication and gospel fruit—that women who are equipped would invest in others, strengthening churches to engage their communities and reach their neighbors and the nations with the gospel.

Thanks be to God for His faithful shepherding and abundant provision. Thank you to Brett Gleason, the GLD Board and staff, our pastors, churches, and the many women who selflessly invest in others. It is a privilege to serve alongside you as a family of churches helping each other flourish, for the building of Christ's church and the glory of God.

I am so grateful to be serving in this position! Thank you Brett and Team for welcoming me so warmly into this family.

These past 8 months have been dedicated to trying to meet in person with as many of our student ministry leaders as I can with my 8 hours a week.

Here are some fun numbers:

- I have met with over 40 of our student ministry leaders/solo pastors so far and have about a dozen on the schedule for the remainder of the year!
- It was a great year to plan and organize a meet up at Challenge this year for the 21 Churches from our District that came. It was really encouraging to have Brett join also for some of it. This was a fantastic step to get many of our leaders connected and excited about what we are trying to do.
- Two of the young leaders that I have mentored while teaching at Moody Bible Institute have been hired at GLD churches.
- I am currently coaching two lead pastors with their student ministry process. It is a joy to help them think through job descriptions and Disciple Making convictions to build a solid foundation for their student ministries.
- There is a network of Student Ministry Leaders in Chicago that hosted me for a *Disciplemaking is Relationships* Training that was held at Harvard Avenue E Free in September of 2026.

Moving Forward

I am currently working with about 5 churches in Michigan to launch our first ever joint Winter Camp coming up in February of 2027.

I am working with Crossroads Church to host a Youth Ministry Volunteer Training event in April of 2027.

We still have 2 healthy Disciple Making Learning Communities that partner with Cadre Missionaries that we are leaning into as well as partnering with a new one led by Pastor Scott Tinman in Findlay, OH.

As I meet with Student Ministry Directors, listening to their needs I believe we will be launching some new Affinity Group Gatherings in 2027.

I am looking forward to and have been promoting 3 upcoming gatherings for our leaders. GLD Fall Conference plus Affinity Group, Momentum and Renewal as Reach Students opportunities for our leaders.

I am so excited every time I receive an email or phone call from one of our churches that is wanting some coaching in some area of Discipleship for Student Ministry. So keep them coming!

Prayer

Pray that I will serve out of the overflow of all that God is doing in me. Pray that I will be an encouragement and refreshment to those I email, talk with and meet in person. Philemon v.7

Pray also that the Lord brings leaders and synergy to some Affinity Groups that I hope to launch next year.

Thanks again for allowing me to serve this family of families.

Ministry Update

I continue to coach as called on or assigned. I go through the seven "Major Concerns" notes in monthly meetings and critique at least one sermon a month. (Most pastors have never had anyone give such feedback on sermons.)

I also meet with staff of the district.

I am pleased to be connected! This concludes my 60th year in full-time ministry of pastoring or coaching, and I have started cutting back as of January 2026.

I am grateful.

Knute Larson

Ministry Update

This past year has been a year of transition for me. After retiring from being the senior pastor of Trinity Fellowship in Big Rapids, MI, it has been a year of seeking to walk in step with the Spirit. Family needs and seeking the Lord's will about moving near one of the kids have taken a fair amount of energy. Yet I have been able to continue to minister in various ways.

The board of Baton-Ministries helped me differentiate between my "pastoral" ministry of preaching and my "equipping leaders" ministry (which falls under the Baton-Ministries umbrella). I've still been working on how my ministry with the GLD fits into those two categories.

With strong counsel to give the new lead pastor room to flourish, Kathy and I have done a lot of traveling. Including visiting some 15 different Free Churches in Michigan, along with a few "virtual" visits on Sundays that were too snowy to travel. I have preached in three different EFC churches for a total of 13 times.

I have mentored several pastors through in-person and video call connections. These coaching opportunities have included input on how to develop Spirit-led, strategic vision in their local church. Also, how to have an effective sabbatical, in addition to a number of "sudden" calls for wisdom in unexpected situations.

Having passed on the leadership of the pastors' gathering I have led for many years, I still attended and sought to be a resource to the men who attended (mostly from Michigan). In line with our value of being God dependent, I have encouraged numerous pastors to start their own prayer support team, sending out weekly prayer points.

Looking Forward

As I look forward, it seems likely that we will move towards south Michigan or northern Indiana in the next months. After settling, my hope is to seek how to offer training modules in formats that actually will work for pastors and others. This will include online and in-person versions of the equipping and encouragement. The contracted coaching and consulting will hopefully continue as well.

The training likely will center around an assessment I have worked on this winter. The Five Pillars of Long-Term Health provide a path of development for pastors and other leaders. The pillar of PRINCIPLES includes doctrinal foundations, as well as clarity in values and mission. The Gain & Sustain Focus System has worked for a number of pastors and will be made more readily available to help strengthen this pillar.

The pillar of PURPOSE is addressed as well through the "G&SF" concepts. This Includes helping leaders collaboratively architect a 3-Year Vision. This vision can strongly help strengthen the fourth pillar of PASSION. Pastors will be equipped on how to call their people to "sacrificial engagement." The fifth pillar of PROWESS fits well with the GLD's "imagines forward" priority, helping stir up courage and optimism to TRI (take responsibility and initiative) for the mission and vision of their church with bravery.

You may have noticed that I skipped the third pillar, PEACE. Without a culture of pursuing relational biblical peace, no church or ministry will be healthy in the long term. Many of us have witnessed churches with fairly strong Principles and Purpose "explode" when unresolved conflicts reach critical mass. Planned trainings include helping pastors and leaders *proactively* work toward a culture of biblical peace, instead of waiting for a crisis to raise the urgency level and forcing us to action.

Ministry Update

Knute Larson (former large church Senior Pastor) and Darrell Cloud (current large church Executive Pastor) held joint one-hour training and encouragement video calls for Senior Pastors and Executive Pastors of large churches in the GDL in April and June 2026; with 8 and 9 pastors joining, respectively.

Darrell and the Executive Staff of The Compass Church (a large, multi-site church) in the western suburbs of Chicago held a one-day training and encouragement cohort in May 2026 for Executive Pastors of large EFCA churches; with 6 XPs joining from other EFCA churches in IL, IN, MN & WI.

Looking Forward

Darrell plans to host one-hour training and encouragement video calls for Executive Pastors of large midwestern EFCA churches in Sept and Nov 2026; he has reached out to 30 Executives and 12 have RSVPed for one or both online gatherings. He will be planning further steps for 2027.

With care,

Darrell Cloud
Executive Pastor
The Compass Church
Naperville, IL

GREAT LAKES DISTRICT

VISION FRAME

Our Mission

WE ARE A FAMILY OF CHURCHES HELPING EACH OTHER FLOURISH.

Our GLD Team's Posture (Our Values)

1 GOD DEPENDENT
because God hears the prayers of his people.

2 COLLABORATIVE TEAMWORK
because we're stronger together than alone.

3 SELFLESS DEVELOPMENT
because healthy leaders develop a deep bench.

4 MISSION MOBILIZATION
because Jesus sent us on a mission to make disciples among all people.

Priorities of a Flourishing Church

1 WORSHIPS VIBRANTLY
A flourishing church is a life-giving community sustained by God's Word, responding to His Spirit with joy and expectancy.

2 IMAGINES FORWARD
A flourishing church has a clear sense of where God is leading them into the future.

3 ENGAGES LOCALLY
A flourishing church is engaged with its local community, seeking to be and bring good news to particular people, places, and problems in its context.

4 FORMS DISCIPLE-MAKERS
A flourishing church has a culture of training that helps everyday followers of Jesus become disciples who make disciples.

5 DEVELOPS LEADERS
A flourishing church intentionally raises and releases leaders through clear pathways that allow gospel ministry to sustain and expand.

6 SENDS GENEROUSLY
A flourishing church willingly gives away people and resources for the sake of gospel expansion regionally, nationally, and globally, prioritizing multiplication beyond its own growth.

The Great Lakes District is committed to these **Pathways** to help churches flourish:

1 LEADER FLOURISHING
Helping leaders flourish in life, ministry, and doctrine.

2 STRENGTHENING CHURCHES
Next-step equipping for gospel flourishing.

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Mobilizing churches to engage their communities.

4 MULTIPLYING CONGREGATIONS
Supporting the planting of new congregations.

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UPDATED 2026-06-04

GREAT LAKES DISTRICT

HORIZON STORYLINE

2030

OUR 2030 VISION

By 2030, the Great Lakes District will be a flourishing family of churches who increasingly help and partner with one another in the following ways:

- We will be **strengthening our EFCA family** by deepening relationships among leaders and churches, growing together in life, ministry, and doctrine, and pursuing greater fellowship and gospel partnership.
- We will be **raising up sons and daughters** from within our churches, identifying, equipping, and deploying the next generation of workers for vocational ministry in the global church in partnership with the expanding ministries of the EFCA.
- And we will share a growing commitment to reaching the Great Lakes region through churches partnering together in the **planting of new congregations to reach all people**.

JUNE 2028



LEADER & PASTOR NETWORKS

We will strengthen our existing 18 regional networks and 10 affinity networks and form new networks that foster encouragement, equipping through shared learning, and gospel expansion through greater collaboration for the flourishing of church leaders and pastors and the planting of new congregations.



LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS

We will assist churches in identifying, developing, and deploying leaders who know who they are in Christ, what they've been called to do, have the skills to do it, and the character to sustain them through it all.



INCREASED EFFECTIVENESS

We will have strengthened ministry systems and aligned our organizational structure that support the mission and strategy in order to measurably increase the district staff's capacity to minister to leaders, pastors, and churches.



CLEAR & HELPFUL COMMUNICATION

We will update communication systems that are useful for greater collaboration amongst GLD board and staff teams, encourage the flourishing of leaders and pastors, champion the six Priorities of a Flourishing Church, and make resources easy to access and use for local church ministry.

JUNE 2027

CONNECTING LEADERS & PASTORS TO THE FAMILY

In 2027, we will have set the table for a culture of hospitality and invitation where leaders and pastors are in greater friendship with one another, growing through next-step equipping, and are pursuing the great commission together as a family of churches helping each other flourish.

© Great Lakes District

We continue to strive for healthy GLD churches planting new churches that plant more churches.

Church Plants and Replants

Year	Plant Name	Location	Planter/Pastor	Website
2021	Glory to God Christian Church	Indianapolis, IN	Kenny Morgan	ggccunitedlove.org
2023	Trinity Bible Church	Edwardsburg, MI	Gebriell Sierra	trinityedwardsburg.org
2025	The Grove Church	Champaign, IL	Josh Loomis	thegrovechurchcu.com
2026	Michigan Campus House	Ann Arbor, MI	Jiang Wei	jbsfmchc.org/en
2026	Restoration Bible Church	Ann Arbor, MI	Alex Glasson	

New Campuses

Year	Church Name	Location	Campus Pastor	Website
2020	Grace Fellowship	Independence, KY	Jason Jahn	graceky.org
2020	The Orchard	Vernon Hills, IL	Tom Yoon	theorchardefc.org
2021	Trinity Church	Goodland, IN	James McGovern	mytrinity.tv
2021	Bluffton Community	Bluffton, OH		blufftoncommunity.com
2022	The Compass – Three Rivers	Plainfield, IL	Jake McNamara	thecompass.net
2023	The Compass	Hinsdale, IL	Ryan Worsley	thecompass.net
2024	E-Free Alpena	Alpena, MI	Toby Shaw	Miefree.org/alpena-

Certificate of Ordination

James	Renke	Village Church	Lincolnshire, IL	8/3/2025
Timothy	Higgins	North Suburban EFC	Deerfiled, IL	10/26/2025
Gary	Ridley, Jr.	Trinity Church	Ludington, MI	10/26/2025
Matthew	Spangler	EFC of Canton	Canton, IL	12/14/2025
Kevin	Cody	Trinity Fellowship EFC	Big Rapdis, MI	4/26/2026
Manikanta	Ankem	International Community EFC	Lombard, IL	5/17/2026
Cabot	Ashwill	LifeSpring CC	Spring Grove, IL	8/31/2026

Five Year Non-Renewable

Bradley	Clear	Community EFC	Niles, MI	9/6/2025
Ed	Feder	The Orchard	Vernon Hills, IL	9/6/2025
Brady	Robinson	Christ Church	Sterling, IL	10/25/2025
Joseph	Kotulski	Liberty Bible Church	LaPorte, IN	11/26/2025
Cynthia	Leamon	Trinity Church	South Bend, IN	12/15/2025
Amos	Tiwade	Village Church of Oak Park	Oak Park, IL	12/12/2025
Jason	Marshall	Fox Valley Church	West Dundee, IL	3/14/2026
William	Green	The Orchard	Arlington Heights, IL	3/25/2026
Timothy	Schieck	Our Saviour EFC	Wheeling, IL	5/18/2026
Gebriell	Sierra	Trinity Bible Church	Edwardsburg, MI	7/21/2026
Brandon	Woodard	River of Life Church	Cincinnati, OH	8/19/2026

Three-Year Renewable

Christopher	Poiner	Trinity Fellowship EFC	Big Rapids, MI	6/2/2026
Casey	Ehlers	Hope Church	Roscoe, IL	6/16/2026
Seth	Williams	Village Church of Lincolnshire	Lake Forest, IL	6/26/2026
Martin	Rizzi	The Tabernacle	Buckley, MI	7/21/2026

Rev. Steve McCausland
GLD Credentialing

Name	Position	Church
Josue Alvarado	Pastor of Care	The Orchard, Arlington Heights, IL
Joshua Awokuse	Youth Pastor	Crossway Multinational, East Lansing, MI
Chuck Babbitt	Campus Pastor	Trinity Fellowship, Newaygo, MI
Jordan Bullard	Youth Director	Trinity Fellowship, Big Rapids, MI
Chris Caldwell	Assiciate Pastor	Trinity EFC, Stanton, MI
BJ Clear	Senior Pastor	Community EFC, Niles, MI
Andrew Craig	Pastor of Worship	Hope EFC, Roscoe, IL
Jonathan Eckberg	Senior Pastor	Life Bridge Community, Wauconda, IL
Simon Faries	Interim Pastor	Calvary Bible, Bourbonnais, IL
Margaret Hettiger	Director of Children's Ministry	The Orchard, Vernon Hills, IL
Scott Kaczinski	Senior Pastor	Loraine Church, Prophetstown, IL
Greg Lawrence	Associate Pastor	The Orchard, Vernon Hills, IL
Don McLean	Senior Pastor	First Free, Moline, IL
Claudio Moya	Hispanic Ministry Director	Maywood Bible Hispanic, Rockford, IL
Michael Porter	Campus Pastor	The Orchard, Arlington Heights, IL
Mark Ruggles	Senior Pastor	Salem New Beginnings, Findlay, OH
Brandon Woodard	Senior Pastor	River of Life, Cincinnati, OH

Illinois Ministerials

IL-1 | CHICAGO

Regional Superintendent – Steve McCausland steve@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Tim Goia pastortimcf@gmail.com

- Chicago, IL — Agape Chicago
- Chicago, IL — Bethel Community
- Chicago, IL — Chicago Gospel Fellowship (Plant)
- Chicago, IL — Chicago International EFC
- Chicago, IL — Christ Our Savior
- Chicago, IL — Christian Fellowship EFC
- Chicago, IL — Good News Bible Church
- Chicago, IL — Mount Olive Church
- Chicago, IL — Rock of our Salvation
- Chicago, IL — The Brook
- Evanston, IL — Evanston Bible Fellowship
- Oak Park, IL — Village Church

IL-2 | NEAR SUBURBS OF CHICAGO

Regional Superintendent – Steve McCausland steve@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Peter LeBlanc peter@thebeaconcc.org

- Arlington Heights, IL — Chinese EFC
- Chicago, IL — Church of Chicago
- DeKalb, IL — Crossview Church
- Des Plaines, IL — Bethel Evangelical
- Des Plaines, IL — Des Plaines EFC
- Hoffman Estates, IL — The Beacon (Plant)
- Homewood, IL — South Suburban EFC
- Itasca, IL — The Orchard Itasca (Campus)
- Joliet, IL — Faith Bible
- Lombard, IL — International Community
- Lyons, IL — Lyons EFC
- Oak Lawn, IL — Oasis Community
- Villa Park, IL — Harvard Avenue EFC

IL-3 | SE ILLINOIS

Regional Superintendent – Steve McCausland steve@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Ryan Mustered ryan@mytrinity.tv

- Ashkum, IL — Trinity EFC Ashkum (Campus)
- Bourbonnais, IL — Calvary Bible
- Champaign, IL — The Grove (Plant)
- Farmer City, IL — Trinity Community Fellowship
- Goodland, IN — Trinity EFC Goodland (Campus)
- Mahomet, IL — Community EFC
- Ottawa, IL — River Valley EFC
- Peotone, IL — Christ Community
- Rensselaer, IN — Bethany EFC
- Watseka, IL — Trinity EFC

IL-4 | WEST SUBURBS OF CHICAGO

District Superintendent – Brett Gleason brett@gld-efca.org

- Bolingbrook, IL — The Compass Bolingbrook (Campus)
- Hinsdale, IL — The Compass Hinsdale (Campus)
- Naperville, IL — The Compass Church
- Naperville, IL — The Compass S Naperville (Campus)
- Plainfield, IL — The Compass Three Rivers (Campus)
- Wheaton, IL — The Compass Wheaton (Campus)

IL-5 | NORTH SUBURBS OF CHICAGO

Area Superintendent – Don Erickson derickson@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Daniel Foote daniel.w.foote@gmail.com

- Antioch, IL — CrossView EFC
- Deerfield, IL — North Suburban EFC
- Glenview, IL — Cornerstone EFC
- Glenview, IL — The Orchard North Shore (Campus)
- Gurnee, IL — Lakeland EFC
- Lake Forest, IL — Village Church of Lincolnshire
- Libertyville, IL — CrossLife EFC
- Round Lake, IL — Lake Region Bible Church
- Russell, IL — Russell Community EFC
- Vernon Hills, IL — The Orchard Vernon (Campus)
- Wadsworth, IL — Cornerstone Community
- Waukegan, IL — Christian Neighbors

IL-6 | NW SUBURBS OF CHICAGO

Area Superintendent – Don Erickson derickson@gld-efca.org

- Arlington Heights, IL — The Orchard EFC
- Barrington, IL — The Bridge Church
- Barrington, IL — The Orchard Barrington (Campus)
- Barrington, IL — Village Church of Barrington
- Cary, IL — Living Grace Community
- Crystal Lake, IL — Crystal Lake EFC
- Elgin, IL — Elgin EFC
- McHenry, IL — Faith Summit
- McHenry, IL — Outpost Bible Church (Plant)
- Spring Grove, IL — LifeSpring Community
- Wauconda, IL — Life Bridge Community
- West Dundee, IL — Fox Valley EFC
- Wheeling, IL — Our Saviour EFC

IL-7 | ROCKFORD AREA

Area Superintendent – Larry Elliott lelliott@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Gary Kniseley gary@mefc.us

- Marengo, IL — The Orchard Marengo (Campus)
- Rockford, IL — First Free
- Rockford, IL — Lao EFC
- Rockford, IL — Maywood Bible Church
- Roscoe, IL — Hope EFC

Illinois Ministerials Continued…

IL-8 | CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Area Superintendent – Larry Elliott lelliott@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Matt Spangler matt@cantonefree.com

- Bloomington, IL — Bloomington/Normal EFC
- Brimfield, IL — Brimfield EFC
- Canton, IL — Canton EFC
- Charleston, IL — Christ First Church
- Chillicothe, IL — Chillicothe Bible Church
- Metamora, IL — Faith EFC
- Payson, IL — Bluff Hall EFC
- Petersburg, IL — St. Paul's EFC
- Springfield, IL — Hope EFC
- Taylorville, IL — Taylorville EFC

IL-9 | NW ILLINOIS

Area Superintendent – Larry Elliott lelliott@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Gary Kirst gary@galenabiblechurch.org

- Chadwick, IL — Chadwick EFC
- Freeport, IL — Park Hills EFC
- Freeport, IL — Winneshiek EFC
- Galena, IL — Galena Bible Church
- Lena, IL — Lena EFC
- Orangeville, IL — Grace EFC
- Winnebago, IL — Park Hills EFC (Campus)

IL-10 | NC ILLINOIS

Area Superintendent – Larry Elliott lelliott@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Brady Robinson brobinson@christchurchsterling.org

- Ashton, IL — Ashton Bible Church
- Dixon, IL — Hope Bible Fellowship
- Mount Morris, IL — Mount Morris EFC
- Princeton, IL — Christ Community
- Sterling, IL — Christ Church

IL-11 | WESTERN ILLINOIS

Area Superintendent – Mark Balmer markb@parkviewchurch.org
Ministerial Leader – Steve Palm pastorsteve@gefc.org

- Aledo, IL — Grace EFC
- Erie, IL — Erie EFC
- Geneseo, IL — Geneseo EFC
- Moline, IL — First Free
- Moline, IL — Homewood EFC
- Osco, IL — Osco Community
- Prophetstown, IL — Loraine Church

Indiana Ministerials

IN-1 | NW INDIANA

Area Superintendent – Jordan Muck jmuck@gld-efca.org

- Chesterton, IN — Liberty Bible Church
- Dyer, IN — Village EFC
- LaPorte, IN — Liberty Bible LaPorte (Campus)
- Portage, IN — Family Bible Church
- St Joseph, MI — The Chapel EFC
- Valparaiso, IN — Liberty Bible Valpo (Campus)
- Valparaiso, IN — Washington EFC

IN-2 | MICHIANA

Area Superintendent – Jordan Muck jmuck@gld-efca.org

- Bremen, IN — Community Gospel
- Edwardsburg, MI — Trinity Bible (Plant)
- Goshen, IN — River Oaks Community
- Hamilton, IN — Lakeview Community
- Milford, IN — Wawasee Community Bible
- Niles, MI — Community EFC
- Plymouth, IN — Crossroads EFC
- South Bend, IN — Trinity Church
- Warsaw, IN — Fellowship EFC

IN-3 | INDIANAPOLIS

District Superintendent – Brett Gleason brett@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Curtis Coston jccoston@solidword.org

- Frankfort, IN — Antioch Church
- Indianapolis, IN — Faith Church
- Indianapolis, IN — Glory to God (Plant)
- Indianapolis, IN — Solid Word Bible Church

Michigan Ministerials

MI-1 | NW MICHIGAN

District Superintendent – Brett Gleason brett@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Patrick Shea patrickshea@trinityinfo.org

- Alpena, MI — EFC (Campus of Gaylord)
- Big Rapids, MI — Trinity Fellowship EFC
- Buckley, MI — The Tabernacle
- Cadillac, MI — The Tabernacle (Campus)
- Evart, MI — Crossroads Community
- Gaylord, MI — Gaylord EFC
- Grayling, MI — Grayling EFC
- Ludington, MI — Trinity EFC
- Manistee — The Tabernacle (Campus)
- Newaygo, MI — Trinity Fellowship (Campus)
- Sault Ste Marie, MI — EFC (Campus of Gaylord)
- Spring Lake, MI — Olivet EFC
- St. Ignace, MI — Straits EFC
- Vanderbilt, MI — Vanderbilt Community

MI-2 | CENTRAL & EAST MICHIGAN

Area Superintendent – Bob Guilford bguilford@gld-efca.org

- Adrian, MI — Grace Point EFC
- Adrian, MI — Ogden Church
- Ann Arbor, MI — Michigan Campus House (Plant)
- Ann Arbor, MI — Restoration Bible Church (Plant)
- Bay City, MI — Bay City EFC
- Clyde, MI — Cornerstone EFC
- East Lansing, MI — Crossway Multinational Church
- Garden City, MI — Summit Church
- Grand Rapids, MI — CrossWay Community
- Marlette, MI — Grace Bible Church
- Midland, MI — Midland EFC
- Midland, MI — Our Redeemer
- Okemos, MI — Red Cedar EFC
- Owosso, MI — Bethel EFC
- Pinckney, MI — People's EFC
- Portage, MI — Cherry Creek Community
- Riverview, MI — LivingWater Church
- Rochester Hills, MI — Doxa Church
- Rockford, MI — Grace EFC
- Scotts, MI — Country Christian EFC
- Stanton, MI — Pine Grove Church
- Stanton, MI — Trinity EFC

Ohio Ministerials

OH-1 | CINCINNATI AREA

Regional Superintendent – Mark Burks mburks@gld-efca.org

- Cincinnati, OH — Grace EFC
- Cincinnati, OH — River of Life
- Evansville, IN — Oak Hill Bible Fellowship
- Florence, KY — Grace Fellowship EFC
- Fort Thomas, KY — Grace Fellowship (Campus)
- Independence, KY — Grace Fellowship (Campus)
- Lebanon, OH — Antioch Church YMCA
- Mainville, OH — The Gathering
- Mason, OH — Hope Church
- Milford, OH — Faith EFC
- Oxford, OH — Oxford Bible Fellowship

OH-2 | NW OHIO

Regional Superintendent – Mark Burks mburks@gld-efca.org
Ministerial Leader – Blair Hayward blairh@findlayefree.com

- Bluffton, OH — Bluffton Comm (Campus of LH)
- Findlay, OH — Salem New Beginnings
- Findlay, OH — Lighthouse Comm (Campus of LH)
- Findlay, OH — Living Hope EFC
- Lima, OH — CrossPoint Community
- Lima, OH — Grace Community
- Lima, OH — New Life Community
- North Baltimore, OH — The Bridge Fellowship

Hispanic Congregations

Hispanic Ministries Dir – Ricardo Palmerin rpalmerin@gld-efca.org

- Bensenville, IL — Bensenville Bible Church
- Bolingbrook, IL — The Compass Español, Bolingbrook
- Chicago, IL — Salem EFC
- Franklin Park, IL — Filadelfia EFC
- Freeport, IL — La Iglesia Park Hills
- Goshen, IN — River Oaks Español
- Indianapolis, IN — Iglesia de Fe
- Libertyville, IL — Plenitud de Vida CrossLife
- Lyons, IL — Rio de Vida (Plant)
- Palatine, IL — Corona de Amor
- Rockford, IL — Maywood Bible Hispanic
- Villa Park, IL — Harvard Avenue Corazón de Cristo
- Watseka, IL — Trinity Familia
- Wauconda, IL — Cristo Es La Roca

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Addison Bible Church	Addison	IL	1956	2004 Withdrew
Grace EFC	Aledo	IL	1985	
CrossView Church	Antioch	IL	1958	
Chinese EFC	Arlington Heights	IL	1989	
The Orchard	Arlington Heights	IL	1953	
Ashton Bible Church	Ashton	IL	1983	
Fellowship EFC	Aurora	IL	1987	1991 Closed
The Bridge	Barrington	IL	2016	
Village Church of Barrington	Barrington	IL	1961	
The Village Church of Bartlett	Bartlett	IL	1972	2006 Withdrew
Beecher Community Church	Beecher	IL	1995	2014 Closed
First EFC of Belleville	Belleville	IL	1990	2003 Closed
BelView EFC	Belvidere	IL	2001	2004 Closed
Bensenville Bible	Bensenville	IL	1970	
Iglesia Biblica de Bensenville	Bensenville	IL	2001	2017 Merged (with Bensenville Bible)
EFC of Bloomington/Normal	Bloomington	IL	1967	
New Song Church	Bolingbrook	IL	1991	2016 Merged (with The Compass)
Calvary Bible Church	Bourbonnais	IL	1984	
Brimfield EFC	Brimfield	IL	1989	
Shepherd EFC	Byron	IL	1993	2025 Closed
EFC of Canton	Canton	IL	1946	
Bridgeway Church	Carol Stream	IL	2005	2009 Closed
Meadowdale EFC	Carpentersville	IL	1959	1963 No Record
Living Grace Community	Cary	IL	1960	
Chadwick EFC	Chadwick	IL	1987	
Community EFC	Champaign	IL	1984	2020 Closed
Christ First	Charleston	IL	2024	
Agape Chicago	Chicago	IL	2017	
Belmont Heights	Chicago	IL	1950	1979 Merged
Bethel Community Church	Chicago	IL	1950	
Bethel EFC	Chicago	IL	1941	2001 Closed
Chicago International EFC	Chicago	IL	1985	
Christ Our Savior	Chicago	IL	2006	
Christian Fellowship Church	Chicago	IL	1980	
Church of Chicago	Chicago	IL	2014	
Community EFC of Logan Square	Chicago	IL	1960	2011 Merged (with Good News, Chicago, IL)
Edgebrook EFC	Chicago	IL	1953	2012 Withdrew
First EFC	Chicago	IL	1880	2026 Withdrew
Fuente de Vida	Chicago	IL	1999	2019 Merged (with Nueva Vida, Wheeling, IL)
Good News Bible Church	Chicago	IL	1994	
Grace EFC	Chicago	IL	1952	2013 Closed
Jefferson Park EFC	Chicago	IL	1975	2007 Withdrew
La Palabra Viva Iglesia	Chicago	IL	2001	2005 Closed
Lockwood Bible Church	Chicago	IL	1961	1996 Closed
Loop EFC	Chicago	IL	1984	1987 Closed
McKinley Park EFC	Chicago	IL	1976	1981 Closed
Mount Olive Church	Chicago	IL	1999	
New Life Family Center	Chicago	IL	1999	2001 Doctrine

REPORT OF CHURCH HISTORY

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
North Austin EFC	Chicago	IL	1950	1970 Closed
Rock of Our Salvation	Chicago	IL	1985	
Salem EFC	Chicago	IL	1950	2003 Merged (with Good News, Chicago, IL)
Salem EFC	Chicago	IL	1970	
Salem EFC (Nor)	Chicago	IL	1950	1976 Transition
South Shore Bible Church	Chicago	IL	1971	1979 Withdrew
The Brook	Chicago	IL	2017	
Zion EFC	Chicago	IL	1950	1970 Closed
Chillicothe Bible Church	Chillicothe	IL	1973	
New Beginnings	Columbus	IL	1995	2022 Withdrew
Trinity EFC	Crete	IL	1987	1988 Closed
EFC of Cyrstal Lake	Crystal Lake	IL	1945	
Faith EFC	Davis	IL	1987	2002 Withdrew
Christ EFC	Decatur	IL	1993	2006 Closed
North Suburban	Deerfield	IL	1959	
Crossview Church	DeKalb	IL	1985	
Bethel Evangelical	Des Plaines	IL	2018	
EFC of Des Plaines	Des Plaines	IL	1966	
Faith Bible Church	Des Plaines	IL	1985	1999 Withdrew
Hope Bible Fellowship	Dixon	IL	2023	
EFC of Downers Grove	Downers Grove	IL	1970	1973 No Record
Christ Church	Dundee	IL	1979	1985 Closed
Watertown Baptist Church	East Moline	IL	1950	1953 No Record
Glen Hill EFC	East Peoria	IL	1990	2017 Closed
Elgin EFC	Elgin	IL	1959	
EFC Yorkfield	Elmhurst	IL	1967	1993 Closed
Erie EFC	Erie	IL	1980	
EFC of Evanston	Evanston	IL	1950	1978 Closed
Evanston Bible Fellowship	Evanston	IL	1989	
Trinity Community Fellowship	Farmer City	IL	1993	
Fox Lake Community Church	Fox Lake	IL	1983	2009 Withdrew
Filadelfia EFC	Franklin Park	IL	1991	
Trinity EFC	Franklin Park	IL	1950	1991 Closed
Freeburg Community Bible	Freeburg	IL	2006	2018 Withdrew
Park Hills EFC	Freeport	IL	1967	
Winneshiek EFC	Freeport	IL	1967	
Galena Bible Church	Galena	IL	1987	
Geneseo EFC	Geneseo	IL	1975	
Cornerstone EFC	Glenview	IL	1954	
Bethel Community	Granite City	IL	1967	2002 Closed
Lakeland EFC	Gurnee	IL	1979	
Hope Community Church	Hoffman Estates	IL	1999	2023 Closed
South Suburban EFC	Homewood	IL	1986	
Roberts Road EFC	Island Lake	IL	1985	1988 Withdrew
Living Hope Fellowship	Itasca	IL	1955	2010 Closed
EFC of Joliet	Joliet	IL	1950	1952 Closed
Faith Bible	Joliet	IL	2006	
Han Bit Church	Lake Forest	IL	2003	2004 Closed

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Village Church of Lincolnshire	Lake Forest	IL	1975	
Lake Zurich Community	Lake Zurich	IL	1956	2004 Withdrew
EFC of Lena	Lena	IL	1980	
CrossLife EFC	Libertyville	IL	1952	
International Community	Lombard	IL	2000	
Forest Hills EFC	Loves Park	IL	1941	2023 Closed
Lyons EFC	Lyons	IL	1960	
Evangelical Community Church	Macomb	IL	1983	1985 Closed
Community EFC	Mahomet	IL	1992	
EFC of McHenry	McHenry	IL	1954	1963 No Record
Faith Summit Church	McHenry	IL	1975	
Christian Assembly EFC	Melrose Park	IL	1993	2001 Withdrew
Mendota EFC	Mendota	IL	2008	2016 Closed
New Life EFC	Mendota	IL	1978	1999 Closed
Faith EFC	Metamora	IL	1991	
Hillcrest EFC	Milan	IL	1960	1968 No Record
Faith EFC	Milburn	IL	1982	1987 Closed
Faith EFC	Moline	IL	1952	2025 Withdrew
First EFC	Moline	IL	1890	
Homewood EFC	Moline	IL	1967	
EFC of Mt Morris	Mt Morris	IL	1956	
Forest River	Mt Prospect	IL	1964	1969 No Record
The Compass Church	Naperville	IL	1959	
Cornerstone Church	New Lenox	IL	2003	2006 Withdrew
EFC of New Windsor	New Windsor	IL	1950	1957 Closed
Oasis Community	Oak Lawn	IL	1884	
Circle EFC	Oak Park	IL	1967	2002 Closed
EFC of Oak Park	Oak Park	IL	1962	1970 No Record
Village Church of Oak Park	Oak Park	IL	2016	
Grace EFC	Orangeville	IL	1978	
Osco Community EFC	Osco	IL	1969	
River Valley EFC	Ottawa	IL	1992	
Corona de Amore EFC	Palatine	IL	1992	
Grace Community Church	Palatine	IL	1992	2011 Withdrew
Village Bible Church	Park Forest	IL	1993	2005 Closed
The Upper Room EFC	Paxton	IL	1996	2011 Withdrew
Bluff Hall EFC	Payson	IL	2008	
Charter Oak Bible	Peoria	IL	2001	2006 Withdrew
First EFC	Peoria	IL	1988	1997 Merged (with Glen Hill, East Peoria, IL)
The Church on Glen Hill	Peoria	IL	1990	1997 Merged (with Glen Hill, East Peoria, IL)
Christ Community	Peotone	IL	2005	
St. Paul's EFC	Petersburg	IL	2006	
Three Rivers EFC	Plainfield	IL	1996	2022 Merged (with The Compass, Naperville, IL)
Faith Fellowship	Port Byron	IL	2001	2006 Closed
Christ Community	Princeton	IL	2009	
Loraine Church	Prophetstown	IL	2024	
Chapelwood EFC	Rockford	IL	1959	1995 Withdrew
First EFC	Rockford	IL	1884	

REPORT OF CHURCH HISTORY

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Lao EFC	Rockford	IL	1990	
Maywood Bible	Rockford	IL	1955	
Trinity Fellowship	Rockford	IL	1954	2014 Closed
The Sanctuary	Romeoville	IL	2003	2019 Withdrew
Hope EFC	Roscoe	IL	1968	
Calvary EFC	Roselle	IL	1961	1970 No Record
Lake Region Bible Church	Round Lake	IL	1970	
Russell Community EFC	Russell	IL	1992	
Faith EFC	Schaumburg	IL	1979	1987 Closed
Grace Community EFC	Schiller Park	IL	1956	2016 Closed
Skokie EFC	Skokie	IL	1988	2011 Closed
EFC of South Beloit	South Beloit	IL	1968	1972 No Record
Christian Light EFC	Spring Grove	IL	1983	1986 Closed
LifeSpring Community	Spring Grove	IL	2015	
Hope EFC	Springfield	IL	1969	
Christ Church	Sterling	IL	2021	
EFC of Taylorville	Taylorville	IL	1973	
Harvard Avenue EFC	Villa Park	IL	1960	
Maranatha EFC	Villa Park	IL	2001	2009 Merged (with Harvard Ave, Villa Park, IL)
Cornerstone Community	Wadsworth	IL	2005	
Crosswinds Church	Warrenville	IL	1998	2006 Closed
Trinity EFC	Watseka	IL	1975	
Cristo Es La Roca	Wauconda	IL	2009	
Life Bridge Community	Wauconda	IL	1954	
Christian Neighbors	Waukegan	IL	2017	
Calvary EFC	West Dundee	IL	1968	1973 Closed
Fox Valley EFC	West Dundee	IL	1978	
Church of the Open Door	Wheaton	IL	1969	1978 Withdrew
Wheaton EFC	Wheaton	IL	1952	2015 Merged (with The Compass, Naperville, IL)
Esperanza Viva	Wheeling	IL	1985	2010 Closed
Our Saviour EFC	Wheeling	IL	1959	
Lighthouse Community Fellowship	Winthrop Harbor	IL	2001	2011 Closed
Grace EFC	Wonder Lake	IL	1991	2003 Withdrew
Beach Bible Church	Zion	IL	2001	2020 Closed
Harvest EFC	Bloomington	IN	1990	2002 Closed
Community Gospel	Bremen	IN	2018	
Liberty Bible Church	Chesterton	IN	1960	
New Living Bible Church	Clermont	IN	2016	2022 Withdrew
Northwest Community	Crown Point	IN	2001	2008 Merged (to form Cornerstone Comm, Hobart, IN)
Tri-Town Community Church	Dyer	IN	1989	1999 Closed
Village EFC	Dyer	IN	1967	
Oak Hill Bible Fellowship	Evansville	IN	1986	
Antioch Church	Frankfort	IN	2003	
New Life EFC	Gary	IN	1979	1980 Closed
River Oaks Community Church	Goshen	IN	1991	
Wildwood EFC of Putnam County	Greencastle	IN	1997	2014 Withdrew
Lakeview Community	Hamilton	IN	2010	
Christ Community Church	Hobart	IN	1982	2008 Merged (to form Cornerstone Comm, Hobart, IN)

REPORT OF CHURCH HISTORY

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Cornerstone Community	Hobart	IN	2008	2022 Withdrew
Grace Community	Huntingburg	IN	2001	2016 Closed
Faith Church	Indianapolis	IN	1964	
Grace Evangelical Church	Indianapolis	IN	1992	2020 Withdrew
Iglesia de Fe	Indianapolis	IN	2025	
Solid Word Bible	Indianapolis	IN	2001	
Village Life Church	Indianapolis	IN	2016	2017 Closed
Whitestone EFC	Indianapolis	IN	1986	1989 Closed
River Valley EFC	Lafayette	IN	1992	1995 Closed
First Community Church	Lebanon	IN	2003	2010 Withdrew
Pleasant Valley Christian Church	Middletown	IN	2000	2012 Withdrew
Wawasee Community Bible	Milford	IN	2010	
Munster Bible Church	Munster	IN	1950	1979 Closed
Grace Community	Noblesville	IN	1991	2016 Withdrew
Crossroads EFC	Plymouth	IN	1995	
Neighborhood EFC	Plymouth	IN	1985	1986 Closed
Family Bible Church	Portage	IN	1997	
Bethany EFC	Rensselaer	IN	1960	
City Chapel	South Bend	IN	1998	2015 Withdrew
Trinity Church	South Bend	IN	1969	
BridgePoint Church	Valparaiso	IN	2004	2025 Withdrew
Washington EFC	Valparaiso	IN	1949	
Fellowship EFC	Warsaw	IN	2023	
Oak Park EFC	Warsaw	IN	1991	2011 Withdrew
Calvary EFC	Wheatfield	IN	1975	1996 Closed
Grace Fellowship	Florence	KY	1994	
Bethel EFC	Acme	MI	1958	1960 No Record
Grace Point EFC	Adrian	MI	1985	
Ogden Community Bible	Adrian	MI	1997	
Oakwood EFC	Ann Arbor	MI	1989	2004 No Record
EFC of Bay City	Bay City	MI	1941	
Trinity Fellowship	Big Rapids	MI	1982	
The Tabernacle	Buckley	MI	2023	
Caro EFC	Caro	MI	1990	1999 Withdrew
EFC of Cass City	Cass City	MI	1983	2023 Closed
Cass EFC	Cassopolis	MI	1993	2004 Withdrew
Cornerstone EFC	Clyde	MI	1997	
Crossroads Church	Coldwater	MI	1994	2001 Closed
Cornerstone Church	Detroit	MI	2021	2025 Closed
Restore Church	Detroit	MI	2017	2024 Withdrew
Crossway Multinational	East Lansing	MI	2017	
Crossroads Community	Evart	MI	1995	
EFC of Farmington	Farmington	MI	1958	1970 Closed
Summit Church	Garden City	MI	2025	
Gaylord EFC	Gaylord	MI	1950	
CrossWay Community	Grand Rapids	MI	1965	
Grayling EFC	Grayling	MI	2014	
Harvest Christian Fellowship	Hamilton	MI	1992	2020 Closed

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Long Lake EFC	Harrison	MI	1957	1996 Closed
Village Community Church	Hartland	MI	1980	1988 Closed
Harvest EFC	Kalamazoo	MI	1985	1995 Closed
Crossroads	Livonia	MI	1994	1997 Closed
Trinity EFC	Ludington	MI	1941	
Grace Bible Church	Marlette	MI	1999	
Midland Free	Midland	MI	1985	
Our Redeemer	Midland	MI	2009	
River Valley Community Church	Newago	MI	1991	2017 Merged (with Trinity Fellowship, Big Rapids, MI)
Community EFC	Niles	MI	1984	
Red Cedar EFC	Okemos	MI	1988	
Bethel EFC	Owosso	MI	1984	
People's EFC	Pinkney	MI	1961	
Wayside Chapel	Plainwell	MI	1956	1975 Withdrew
Canton Community EFC	Plymouth	MI	1991	2004 Withdrew
Cherry Creek Community	Portage	MI	2002	
The Chapel EFC	Richland	MI	1998	1999 Withdrew
LivingWater Church	Riverview	MI	1997	
Doxa Church	Rochester Hills	MI	1980	
Grace EFC	Rockford	MI	1945	
Lakes EFC	Rockford	MI	1982	1994 Closed
Faith Bible Church	Saginaw	MI	1961	1962 No Record
Country Christian EFC	Scotts	MI	1989	
Emmanuel EFC	Spring Lake	MI	1998	2024 Withdrew
Olivet EFC	Spring Lake	MI	1950	
Tri-Cities EFC	Spring Lake	MI	1987	1990 Withdrew
Straits EFC	St. Ignace	MI	1983	
The Chapel EFC	St. Joseph	MI	1980	
Pine Grove Church	Stanton	MI	2017	
Trinity EFC	Stanton	MI	1952	
Oak Park EFC	Traverse City	MI	1991	2000 Closed
Vanderbilt Community Church	Vanderbilt	MI	1994	
Community Fellowship EFC	White Lake	MI	1993	1998 Closed
Faith EFC	Cape Girardeau	MO	1987	1997 Central District
First EFC of Franklin County	Gray Summit	MO	1989	1997 Central District
Cornerstone EFC	Kirkwood	MO	1996	1997 Central District
First EFC	Manchester	MO	1984	1997 Central District
EFC of St. Louis	St. Louis	MO	1988	1997 Central District
Calvary EFC	St. Peters	MO	1987	1997 Central District
Brookside EFC	Bowling Green	OH	2009	2024 Closed
Christ EFC	Cincinnati	OH	1991	1999 Withdrew
Grace EFC	Cincinnati	OH	1984	
New Life Community	Cincinnati	OH	1987	2006 Withdrew
River of Life	Cincinnati	OH	2008	
Trinity EFC	Cincinnati	OH	1985	1996 Closed
Bethel EFC	Cleveland	OH	1950	1966 Closed
The Chapel	Cleveland	OH	1971	1982 Withdrew
New Hope Community Church	Curtice	OH	1996	2001 Closed

CHURCH NAME	CITY	ST	JOINED	STATUS
Grace EFC	Dayton	OH	1984	1986 Closed
Faith Community Church	Dublin	OH	1984	2019 Alleghany District
Living Hope Community EFC	Englewood	OH	1993	1997 Closed
Living Hope	Findlay	OH	1987	
Salem New Beginnings	Findlay	OH	2023	
Faith Community	Hillsboro	OH	1985	2013 Closed
Antioch Church YMCA	Lebanon	OH	2001	
CrossPoint Community	Lima	OH	2016	
Grace Community EFC	Lima	OH	1993	
The Gathering	Maineville	OH	2025	
Evergreen Bible Church	Marietta	OH	1973	1976 Withdrew
First EFC	Marion	OH	1990	No Record
Hope EFC	Mason	OH	1989	
Faith EFC	Milford	OH	1980	
The Bridge Fellowship	North Baltimore	OH	2023	
Oxford Bible Fellowship	Oxford	OH	2001	
Victory Bible EFC	Pickerington	OH	1993	1998 Closed
Shepherd EFC	Sunbury	OH	1993	1998 Closed
Crossroads Church	Toledo	OH	1994	1999 Withdrew
Summit Community Church	Toledo	OH	1994	2001 Closed
Lytle Christian Fellowship	Waynesville	OH	1995	2011 Closed

2027 GLD STAFF & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

GLD Staff	Position	Email
Brett Gleason	District Superintendent	brett@gld-efca.org
Mark Balmer	Area Supt, Western Illinois	markb@parkviewchurch.org
Mark Burks	Area Supt, Ohio / N Kentucky	mburks@gld-efca.org
Larry Elliott	Area Supt, Northwest Illinois	lelliott@gld-efca.org
Don Erickson	Area Supt, Chicago Suburbs	derickson@gld-efca.org
Bob Guilford	Area Supt, Eastern & Central Michigan	bguilford@gld-efca.org
Steve McCausland	Regional Supt, Chicagoland	steve@gld-efca.org
Jordan Muck	Area Supt, Northern Indiana	jmuck@gld-efca.org
Ricardo Palmerin	Director of Hispanic Ministries	rpalmerin@gld-efca.org
Nate Stenholtz	Director of Student Ministries	nate@gld-efca.org
Cyndi Leamon	Director of Women in Ministry	cleamon@gld-efca.org
Mark Burks	Director of Coaching	mburks@gld-efca.org
Knute Larson	Pastoral Coach	knutelarson@gmail.com
Gehard deBock	Pastoral Coach	gerhard.debock@gmail.com
Darrell Cloud	Pastoral Coach	dcloud@thecompass.net
Mathew Mathai	Accounting	accounting@gld-efca.org
Steve McCausland	Credentialing	credentialing@gld-efca.org
Amanda Bruney	Assistant to the Superintendent	gld@gld-efca.org

GLD Board	Position	Email
Josh Weiland	Chairman	josh@wawaseebible.com
Curtis Coston	Vice-Chairman	jccoston@solidword.org
Lisa Bubar	Secretary	lisasbubar@gmail.com
Gary Ridley	Vice-Secretary	gary@trinityludington.org
Kevin Currid	Treasurer	currid328@comcast.net
Warren Byrd	Director	wwbyrd62@gmail.com
Kathy deBock	Director	kathy.debock@gmail.com
Adam Fix	Director	adam@osefc.org
Pam McRae	Director	pamela.macrae@moody.edu
Kenny Morgan	Director	kenny.c.morgan@gmail.com
Steve Palm	Director	pastorsteve@gefc.org
Chris Stukenberg	Director	chris.stukenberg@parkhillsefc.org
Scott Yoder	Director	syoder@crossroadsefc.com

Pending Conference Approval

Thank you

for attending the 2026 GLD Annual Conference!

Please take a moment to submit some feedback!

Conference Evaluation

https://bit.ly/GLDCON26Eval

Affinity Group Evaluation

https://bit.ly/GLDCON26Affinity