

Report from the Presidential Nominating Committee

The Presidential Nominating Committee is pleased to announce Reverend Gary Walter as the nominee for the President of the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC).

The committee went through a thorough and deliberate search process to select a nominee to present to the 123rd Annual Meeting. The first nominating meeting convened in October 2007. The committee was established under the guidelines of the Covenant Bylaws and consisted of 27 members. As the bylaws say, “twelve persons elected by the Executive Board from its elected members so as to reflect the composition of the Executive Board as a whole; one person each elected by and from the elected members of the Board of Directors of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence, the Board of the Ordered Ministry, the Board of Pensions and Benefits, the Board of Trustees of North Park University, and the Board of Women Ministries; and the chairs of the regional conferences.” The members are:

12 Elected Members of the Executive Board

Kari Bargas—*Oklahoma*
Penny Barham—*North Carolina*
Noel Becchetti—*California*
Marc Eix—*Michigan*
Rebekah Eklund—*North Carolina*
John Gambs—*Iowa*
Darrell Griffin—*Illinois*
Alyne MacLean—*Massachusetts*
James Nelson—*Saskatchewan*
Carla Thelander—*Colorado*
Marva Watts—*Illinois*
BK Woodson—*California*

1 Person Elected from Boards

Kathie Norman – Women Ministries—*California*
Donnie Griffin – Board of Directors of Covenant Ministries of Benevolence—*California*

Brian Madvig – Board of the Ordered Ministry—*Illinois*
Stan Henderson – Board of Pensions and Benefits—*Michigan*
Mark Johnson – Board of Trustees of NPU—*Illinois*

Chairs of Regional Conferences

Canada: Kendell Arndt—*Saskatchewan*
Central: Peggy Peryam—*Illinois*
East Coast: Carolyn Larson—*New Hampshire*
Great Lakes: Dan Wolter—*Michigan*
Midsouth: Dean Anderson—*Texas*
Midwest: Cliff Jensen—*Nebraska*
North Pacific: Miguel Guerrero—*Washington*
Northwest: Dan Lillestrand—*Minnesota*
Pacific Southwest: Will Davidson—*California*
Southeast: Alan Cox—*North Carolina*

Led in the morning by President Glenn Palmberg, the 27 member committee convened with prayer and began to organize and design the search process using past nominating committee data as well as the collective wisdom of those on the committee. After the chair, vice-chair, and secretary were elected, the group discussed and established the qualifications for the candidate, set up future meetings and procedures, and explored how to solicit feedback for names of potential nominees as well as request comments concerning the personal qualities and professional qualifications desired in the next president of the denomination. Following this meeting, letters were sent to all ECC

pastors, both active and retired; the chairs of all ECC congregations; and all ECC missionaries. Following the ECC Policy for Ethnic Notification, letters were also sent to the members of the Commission on Ethnic Ministries, the chairperson or president of ethnic associations within the ECC, and the pastors of ethnic congregations on the ECC roster. In addition, requests for input were also posted on the ECC website. The feedback from these requests as well as pastoral profiles were emailed to and reviewed by all committee members prior to our second meeting.

In December, the committee convened for the second time and finalized the qualifications and qualities needed from the next president. The following selection criteria were established:

The first section, entitled Spiritual Leadership, should be considered as fundamental and prerequisite to other considerations.

Spiritual Leadership

A. Commitment to God through Jesus Christ

1. The principal requisite should be a commitment of faith to the living God through Jesus Christ.
2. This commitment should demonstrate “belief in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God, the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct.”
3. This commitment should be manifested in a theological maturity which reflects an ever-deepening experience in an understanding of God’s Word.
4. This commitment should include a demonstrated ability to inspire responsible giving.
5. This commitment should result in a demonstrated ability for effective biblical preaching.

B. Commitment to the Covenant

1. The candidate should merit the respect of Covenant pastors and laity and possess the maturity to relate and speak lovingly and openly to the diversity and freedom which characterizes the Evangelical Covenant Church.
2. The candidate should know the Covenant and appreciate our pietistic and evangelistic heritage, and be capable of leading the Covenant’s ministry and mission in the world.
3. The candidate should be alert to how Covenant people feel and demonstrate a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of our local congregations and their pastors.

C. Commitment to the Entire Church

1. The candidate should actively represent the Covenant to the entire Christian church which is the Body of Christ
2. The candidate should have the ability to cooperate with leaders of other church bodies in joint witness to the Gospel.

Visionary Leadership

- A. Demonstrated leadership, not limited to, but including, commitment to the following initiatives:
 - 1. Reach the unchurched, particularly the emerging generations.
 - 2. Press forward in ethnic ministry and diversity.
 - 3. Extend greater measures of compassion and justice to the poor and desperate.
 - 4. Attend to health of existing congregations.
 - 5. Form spiritually mature disciples who live out of obedience to Christ in the world.
 - 6. Calling and equipping women and men for all levels of church leadership.
 - 7. Pursue expanded strategic global opportunities and partnerships.

Administrative Leadership

- A. Executive and Organizational Ability
 - 1. The candidate should demonstrate wisdom to determine, accomplish and evaluate worthy goals.
 - 2. The candidate should be an effective administrator with skills in leadership, organization, and management of resources.
 - 3. The candidate should demonstrate either by experience or by propensity the ability to manage financial resources and the budgeting process.
- B. Staff Effectiveness
 - 1. The candidate should demonstrate the ability to delegate responsibility and authority.
 - 2. The candidate should enable the training of and motivation for administrators and staff including Conference Superintendents.

Personal Qualifications

The Candidate should:

- A. have a record of solid achievement, denominational cooperation and service and be widely known to the denomination.
- B. be of such health and age as to permit at least two terms of service.
- C. be approachable – able to relate to persons of all walks of life.
- D. possess maturity and integrity and be of such personal stature as to inspire respect and confidence.
- E. be informed about and able to speak and write clearly on the issues we face.
- F. have energy sufficient to manage a demanding schedule with good humor.
- G. have a supportive spouse, if married.

During the December meeting, the committee also established voting procedures for eliminating potential nominees from the process. In addition, the chairs of each of the Covenant's ethnic associations together gave a presentation to the nominating committee to help provide a broader perspective of some of the issues facing the ECC as the church continues to grow and address the needs of a diverse community.

Using the earlier established list of qualifications and qualities needed in the next president, the committee began reviewing the more than forty names on the list of potential candidates. After much deliberation and a process bathed in prayer, the list was

reduced to seven potential nominees. The list was both ethnically diverse and gender diverse.

The seven potential nominees were asked to interview in January 2008; all agreed to interview. These seven were asked to prepare written statements in response to a number of questions from the committee, provide examples of their writing ability, and provide audio examples of their preaching. All this information was received and reviewed by the members of the committee prior to the interviews in January.

The committee reconvened in January 2008. Beginning with worship and prayer, we then commenced the process of interviewing the potential nominees. Prior to each interview, the committee discussed the candidate and the information they received on the candidate. The interview began immediately after this, asking the candidate how he/she became a part of the ECC and then proceeding into a lively discussion of their papers. Questions on other topics were also asked of each candidate. After prayer with the candidate, the candidate was excused and the committee shared reflections on the candidate and the candidate's responses to the questions. Assessment was based on the earlier established list of qualifications and qualities needed from the next president. This procedure was used for all seven candidates.

After two days of interviews, the committee reconvened the following morning and began the process of deliberation, always asking in prayer for wisdom and discernment, and trusting the leadership of the Holy Spirit in the process. One comment which continued to be expressed was the wonder of the past two days of interviews as the candidates presented their vision for the ECC. As a committee, we had the sense that we would have been well-served by any of the candidates interviewed. We were also grateful that the remaining six would continue to provide important leadership within the denomination.

While difficult, rigorous and filled with tears at times, there was a real sense of exhilaration and anticipation as the day of deliberation continued. Prayer was offered at many different times. Decisions were made by a process of elimination, reducing the number by one candidate at a time. After a candidate was eliminated, the committee expressed thanks for that person and their contribution, shared grief about their elimination, and then prayed for her/him. The final vote between the last two candidates resulted in a clear choice. The committee unanimously affirmed the call of Reverend Gary Walter as nominee for President of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Each person on the committee was honored to be a part of this nomination process. Thank you for the opportunity to serve God and this church throughout this thorough, deliberate and important work. We are also incredibly grateful for your prayers, your input, and your support. We felt them throughout our time together and know that it blessed our decision-making process, our committee, and each of us individually. We submit this report, our process, and the decisions we made to the glory of God and to this body for approval.

Brian T. Madvig, Chair
Presidential Nominating Committee