



## The Evangelical Covenant Church

November 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you gather for your congregational meeting, let me say how grateful I am for the partnership we share in this movement we call the Evangelical Covenant Church.

You are one of more than 850 Covenant congregations within our 11 regional conferences in the United States and Canada. Together, we are impacting millions of lives both here and around the world in some 40 additional countries. We do it by pursuing five priorities. Together, we start and strengthen churches, make and deepen disciples, develop leaders, love mercy and do justice, and serve globally.

Our partnership is designed to be three-strand strong, the intertwining of congregation – Conference – Covenant. Indeed, 3StrandStrong is an emphasis you can find more about at [covchurch.org](http://covchurch.org), as well discover more about the impact we make together.

All of this is possible only because of your partnership and God's faithfulness. As you gather today to reflect on the many ways God is using your congregation, remember that one of those ways is through your engagement with this network of Covenant churches.

Finally, a personal word. I will be retiring next summer after 10 years in this office, and 42 years altogether of Covenant ministry. The Covenant is where I came to faith as a high school student. It is the community that has continually nurtured my own growth as a follower of Christ, and that of my family. It is the Church whose dedication to God's mission has been so central to my own vocation. It is the relational center for so very many of our deepest and most cherished relationships. Thank you for the honor of serving, and thank you for helping to make the Covenant the special fellowship that it is. I am confident God will raise up gifted and godly leadership for a faithful and fruitful future for the Covenant. I will do whatever is helpful for a smooth transition as that time approaches.

Together, may we always seek to go deeper in Christ and further in mission.

In Christ,

Gary Walter  
President