



Evangelical
Congregational
Church

The CIT News is published by the CIT Team of the Evangelical Congregational Church so the members of National Conference can know about our progress in discovering the Lord's leading.

Covenant Implementation Team

News

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A Brand New E-newsletter!

Welcome to the first edition of the *Covenant Implementation Team News*! The CIT Team feels it's important for the members of National Conference to know about the progress we're making so you will be receiving this newsletter often as we share our progress in discovering where the Lord is leading our denomination in order to fulfill our mutual commitment to...

1. Move to a regional shared ministry and leadership model;
2. Reevaluate our denominational relationships with affiliate ministries;
3. Substantially reduce denominational operating expenses;
4. Significantly reduce ministry fund asking from local churches.



Change—And What Doesn't

Change seems to swirl all around us. Sometimes we feel like

we're walking in a snow storm, the winds of change blow, the snow swirls, and we feel like our view of where we are and where we're going is obscured. While we may *feel* that way the reality is that we know who we are and where we are.

We are the Evangelical Congregational Church! We are "Evangelical" – people of the Good News. As Paul wrote in Acts 20:24, "My life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus – the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God." We're "Congregational," because that's where the action is. We intentionally empower congregations to use their unique gifts and graces in their local setting to reach their communities with the Gospel.

We celebrate a rich history that has formed who we are. The growth of our denomination was directly related to the evangelistic fervor of our preachers and lay members. We stress an ever-deepening devotion to the Lord nurtured by a life of discipleship: being cleansed from sin; loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength; and loving our neighbor as ourselves. And we are a church that is committed to empowering the laity for ministry.

Our leaders, pastors and

Change—And What Doesn't (continued)

laity remain committed to our denomination's core values: a passion for Christ, compassion for the lost, servant leadership, healthy ministries, and unity in the body of Christ.

The foundation of it all is that we are able to rejoice in knowing that this entire effort is supported by prayer. People all across the Conference are joining with the members of the CIT Team in praying for the Lord's clear direction;

thank you!

We are exactly where the Lord wants us; spread out in villages and cities sur-

rounded by people who are lost and hurting.

While the Covenant Implementation Team navigates this pathway to the future and wind and snow swirl all around, we know that ulti-



mately the Lord is leading. Paul clearly speaks to this feeling when he was inspired to write "We live by faith, not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7) We are his people, this is his church, so we do not walk alone – the Lord is leading!



The Domino Effect

"The transition from full-time positions has revealed to the team a chain reaction for several other decisions."

I'm sure that you've seen the amazing displays that are demonstrated from domino chain reactions. It certainly is one of the most tense and tedious hobbies in which to engage. One wrong move, and the whole chain collapses ... and you must start over. One could only imagine the frustration of replacing a domino at a critical point in the entire display, and possibly setting off a chain reaction.

When the Covenant Implementation Team took on the task of addressing the four items from the Future Initiatives report (see footnote), we were daringly tasked with repositioning a centrally located domino within the chain. The Conference Minister position has been

woven into the fabric of nearly every component of denominational life. Therefore, the transition from full-time positions has revealed to the team a chain reaction for several other decisions that must sequentially followed—and although challenging, they are certainly not insurmountable.

As the team provides solutions for each challenge, we are seeing the need to address connected areas involving supervision, stationing, credentialing, and resourcing. As various solutions are being considered, we are being sensitive to not burden the denomination by creating more positions to fill. Instead, the team is thinking creatively about how best to create more connection and better responsiveness.

As these dominoes have fallen, we have been

pleased to see solutions emerge in some areas where progressive weaknesses have been occurring. In other words, we believe that these solutions are providing correction in some areas where our ability to deliver assistance has seemed to be lacking.

Our expectation is that these corrections will enable us to do far greater and better things than we previously were able to accomplish; it will simply be arranged in a new structure and delivered in new ways.

Our team desires to serve our churches, pastors and leaders, our denomination with the best avenues for ministry in each of your contexts. Please pray for us as we continue to evaluate the many areas of denominational life involved in our search for solutions.