**November 2, 2018**

**TO: GLP Council, Pastors, and Clerks**

**FROM: GLP Moderator Dr. Jerry Kasberg**

**TOPICS: October 5-6, 2018, GLP Meeting**

 **GLP Elections**

 **ECO/GLP Participation – ENCOURAGE, CONNECT, and OPPORTUNITIES**

 **ECO NEWS**

 **Prayer Needs and Advent Prayer Focus**

 **Council and Pastors Phone Call**

**October 5-6, 2018, GLP Meeting**

Thank you for your strong support of the October GLP Meeting in Grand Rapids, MI. There were 12 out of our 14 GLP churches in attendance. Over 60 GLP Pastors and Covenant Partners were present. Twenty-six of those were Commissioners and 35 were Attendees. Most church teams split up to cover the different breakout sessions. The information presented provided a great deal of positive conversation and fostered concrete ideas and discussion on the drive home.

I want to publicly thank the **Hosts and Host Chair Pastor Mike Baynai** from Good Shepherd PC in Grand Rapids, MI. Their meeting organization and warm welcomes brightened our days! In addition, thanks to **Pastor Dave Wallis** and the team from The Church of the Straits in Mackinaw City, MI, for the goodie bags for the drive home. All who volunteered to help, and to attend, as well as those who represented Calvin Theological Seminary, are much appreciated!

**GLP 2019 Elections**

At the GLP Business Meeting the slate for the **GLP 2019 Council** was approved. Council Officers and Team Chairs are:

 **Officers**

 **Moderator Pastor Jack McClelland, Fredericksburg, OH**

 **Vice-Moderator Pastor Rick Gillespie-Mobley, New Life At Calvary, OH**

 **Treasurer Erika Schuch, Fredericksburg, OH**

 **Clerk, Jeff Styer, Fredericksburg, OH**

**Team Chairs**

 **Nominating Chair – Vacant**

 **Ministry Partnership Team Chair – Elder Jackie Kershaw, New California, OH**

 **Pastoral Ministry Ordination Team Chair – Pastor Rob Howard, Marion First, OH**

 **Church Planting Team Chair – Pastor Mike Baynai, Good Shepherd, MI**

Also selected were **Elder Janet Dumford of College Hill, OH**, to lead the Missional Affinity Groups (MAGs) and **Elder Mark Klusmeier of College Hill, OH,** to lead the Permanent Judicial Council.

It is our goal to have a **pastor and an elder from each GLP church** serve in some leadership capacity or as a team member. Each GLP church has the **Opportunity and the Responsibility** to become involved at the presbytery level.

**ECO/GLP Participation – ENCOURAGE, CONNECT, and OPPORTUNITIES**

As you are planning your time and financial budgets for 2019, please plan on attending the **ECO National Gathering on January 29-31, 2019.**  It is up to each of us to both learn about and to share what is new in ECO and what the **OPPORTUNITIES** are that ECO offers for the ECO churches and Covenant Partners. Attendance also provides a personal and spiritual “lift” to worship and **ENCOURAGE** and **CONNECT** with fellow believers.

There will be a **GLP Gathering at the January National Gathering** led by the new 2019 Moderator Pastor Jack McClelland. The GLP Council is working to plan the **March Retreat for Council, Pastors, and one Elder per church**. Also, there will be an **April GLP Meeting**. If you have ideas for programming please send them to Clerk Margaret Trent.

**ECO NEWS**

Communication is crucial. Please go online at **http://eco-pres.org** and print off the **October 2018 ECO NEWS**, if you have not done so. It contains up-to-date information on the “Flourishing Next Step.” The latest resources and opportunities that will help your congregation flourish in the coming year include:

 **ECO Leadership Series Coach Training Church Transformation Cohort**

**ECO National Gathering** information is also included along with details about a new resource: **ECO Global Engagement: Best Practices for Mission Teams.** In addition, there is an update on opportunities for providing practical help and clean up after storm damage. And, there is a welcome for two new ECO Churches. **Each month we are provided with a myriad of interesting information from ECO.**

**Prayer Needs and Advent Prayer Focus**

**Power of Prayer:** Please continue to focus on the **power of prayer throughout the week.** There are so very many areas that need our attention and our prayers. **We all need to pray that we in ECO stay true to the Scriptures and that our GLP churches remain at the forefront of scriptural study and scriptural-based decision-making**. Elders, please pray for and support the clergy as you partner with them in ministry. Also, do not forget that our country needs our prayers now more than ever. As we move forward, remember **we are Covenant Partners who are committed to stand with each other as we study, pray, and live out our faith.** Listen to the urging of the Holy Spirit. **Stretch your faith** and take the time to reach out to those in our communities, and throughout the world, who are desperate to hear the Word. **Prayer changes things!**

**Bethel’s Advent GLP Prayer Focus:** At Bethel PC we plan to take the **four Sundays of Advent** to pray for three or four GLP churches each week: **December 2** (Carlisle Community, The Church of the Straits, and College Hill PC); **December 9** (First PC Greenfield , First PC Marion, and First PC Grand Rapids); **December 16** (Forest Lawn PC, Fredericksburg PC, Good Shepherd PC, New California PC) **December 23** (New Life At Calvary, Northside Fellowship, Ripley First PC, and Bethel PC). **I invite you to pray along with us, for these churches during Advent, using whatever schedule you prefer. We will ask for specific congregation needs at our November 14 Phone Call (see below).**

**GLP’s Advent Prayer Focus:** I am suggesting that **we designate Monday, December 3, 2018, as the GLP Advent Sustained Prayer Day. On that first Monday of Advent, it would be great if** our 14 GLP churches could set apart **8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.** for Covenant Partners and Pastors to sign up to **pray at church, or at home, for 60 minutes so that we would have 14 hours of uninterrupted sustained prayer in our presbytery.**  Perhaps we could have a **Prayer Chair in each of our 14 churches who would organize this prayer focus**. Each hour could have suggestions for ten-minute blocks to focus on prayers for situations/health needs of the Covenant Partners; prayers of thanksgiving and rejoicing; prayers for community needs; prayers for state and national needs; disaster relief efforts; prayer for each of our church’s Advent and Christmas Outreach and prayers for worldwide needs. **Please let Clerk Margaret Trent at** **Margaretvltrent@gmail.com** **know if your church would like to participate in the 14 Hours of Prayer and who will head up the effort.**

**Pray for GLP Leaders:** Those of you who attended the October GLP Meeting may remember that Pastor Mike Baynai provided a card listing the members of the present Council; names of our pastors and clerks; and other GLP leaders. All of these leaders need your prayers and support. **Please consider adding the new GLP leaders listed on page 1 of this letter to your church prayer lists.**

**Expect God to do Great Things**: In January we could share what God did in answer to our Advent prayers. Perhaps these testimonies could be shared on the new GLP website that we learned about at the October GLP Meeting. Check out [www.glp-eco.org](http://www.glp-eco.org)

**Council and Pastors Phone Call**

As was shared previously, there is a **Phone Call scheduled for Council and Pastors on November 14, 2018, at 10:00 a.m.** Please hold this time to **Encourage and Connect** with fellow GLP Leaders and share **Opportunities** for **joint programs and projects in 2019**. **Are you having a summer camp, student/family retreat, confirmation retreat, mission trip, leadership retreat, outstanding speaker, teacher-training class, or other opportunity to share resources and work with other covenant partners?** You will have the opportunity to briefly share the dates, times, locations, goals for these events/activities. Call-in information will be shared prior to November 14.

**PLEASE COPY AND SHARE THIS OPEN LETTER WITH YOUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP.**