



## From our Executive Director, Clancy Cruise

OK let's admit it, California is cool! It's cool to be able to come out here to connect and celebrate our love for God and our rebirth in Jesus Christ with our brothers and sisters in the west. Special thanks to the Auburn Grace church family for their hospitality and months of preparation for our arrival.

We are family! Let's remember that each of us joined this family for our own special reasons. For me, it was in Grace Seminary when I witnessed the deeply biblical approach to relationships, church life and evangelism. I'm thankful for our fellowship for living out biblical convictions regarding loving one another, challenging one another, and doing mission as a family. This week is an opportunity to renew our minds in that respect. Why did YOU join this family? What makes this family YOUR family? I hope you will take the time to truly give thanks for this unique family we all enjoy. Be intentional and make new friends while connecting with old friends! Maybe there is someone you've always wanted to talk to you and get to know better. It's on you! Do it! Say hi and introduce yourself to someone new and start a conversation.

I want to say thank you for allowing me the privilege of traveling around the country multiple times and getting to know our pastors and churches. We have a lot to offer as a Fellowship. The big challenge is; in a world more desperate than ever and darkened by sin and death will we work together to offer what we have to a watching world? I believe that the efforts we have put forth to clarify our mission and vision have been worth it. There are still several difficult steps to take as we figure out how to express ourselves biblically, culturally, practically, and socially! Will we cave into the ways of the world and a weak hermeneutic influenced by a culture turned away from God, or will we stay biblical, loving and Christlike? Strong in our commitment to biblical truth, biblical mission and biblical relationships? I believe we will work together and stay strong in the Word and strong in love.

The theme of our Focus Retreats has been Forward.

I believe we can move forward because of our great God, his powerful Word, our clear identity in Christ, and our identity as a fellowship now made clear through very strong written statements. More strong statements are coming, and I ask for your patience and your participation. I know that you will be proud of the work that we do together as we work together and stick together. We are all learning a new dance together and sometimes we step on each other's toes but in the end, we will know who our true partners are and who we can go forward with. Forward! Let's look in that direction and push that way together.

Thank you for taking the time and expense to travel out here to the great state of California. Thank you to our brothers and sisters who have made us feel so welcome. Don't miss what God has for you here.

Open your eyes, open your heart, open your mouth in positive, redemptive conversations but also open your hands and receive a great week from the Lord. I'm excited to get started.

It's great to see you all!

Clancy

### Reports...

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#### On separate pages:

- **Ballots**
- **Budget for 2020**

# Agenda

**Thursday, July 25 at 1:00 p.m.**

- 1) Membership Committee Report and action to seat delegates
- 2) Fellowship Council Elections and Ratifications (paper ballot)
- 3) Assistant Director Ratification (paper ballot)
- 4) Ratifications of Treasurer and Secretary and appointments (paper ballot)
- 5) Recommendations of new member churches:
  - a) Grace Church - Lancaster, PA
  - b) Grace Church - Bellefontaine, OH
  - c) Imagio Dei Communities - Telford, PA
  - d) Gospel Community Church - Troy, OH
- 6) Recommendations to dismiss churches
- 7) Recommendation for delegates to Charis Alliance gathering in 2020.
- 8) New Resolutions
- 9) Manual of Procedure amendment – local church ordination
- 10) Recommendation for Delegates to Charis Alliance gathering in 2020
- 11) The 2020 Budget
- 12) Executive Director's Address – Phil Sparling
- 13) Election Results

*(note: This is a preliminary agenda. The Fellowship Council meets one day in advance of Access2019 and may have additional recommendations.)*

# Statistical Report for 2018

Presented to the 2019 Conference  
(includes statistical reports received through July 1, 2019)

# of Churches in the FGBC (7/1/19)  
# reporting statistics  
Attendance  
Small Group  
Recorded Conversions  
Baptisms  
Total Members

2018	
Avg	Total
	230
	177
218	43,451
92	15,123
15	2,070
9	1,601
127	23,447

2017	2016	2015
234	238	238
174	118	194
42,574	43,331	42,204
14,749	14,910	13,727
2,440	2,548	2,408
1,962	1,803	1,571
22,946	22,444	22,519

## Churches added since last report (3)

Three Creeks Church – Gahanna, Ohio  
Grace Fellowship Church – Brunswick, Ohio  
Legacy Church – Kendallville, Indiana

## New church applications - not yet members (4)

Grace Church - Lancaster, PA  
Grace Church - Bellefontaine, OH  
Imagio Dei Communities - Telford, OH  
Gospel Community Church - Troy, OH

## Churches deleted since last report (6)

Closed AB, Medicine Hat, Grasslands Church  
Withdrew CA, Tracy, Grace Brethren Church Of Tracy  
Withdrew CT, Wethersfield, CenterPoint Community Church  
Withdrew IN, Fort Wayne, Grace Brethren Church  
Closed OH, Ashland, Woodside Church  
Withdrew VA, Roanoke, Washington Heights Grace Brethren

## Churches that were adopted since last report (1)

Adopted KY, Clayhole, Clayhole Grace Brethren Church

# FGBC MEMBER CHURCH LIST

(as of July 1, 2019)

Listed by: State, City, Church Name, 2018Avg. Worship Attendance/Membership

AB,Medicine Hat,Grasslands Church: 27/36	IN,Columbia City,Community of Hope Grace Brethren Church: 151/48
AK,Anchorage,Dimond Grace Fellowship: 11/13	IN,Elkhart,Fuente de Vida Grace Bilingual Church: 73/15
AK,Eagle River,Eagle River Grace: 149/NA	IN,Goshen,Grace Community Church: 2326/469
AK,Kenai,Kenai Grace Brethren Church: *	IN,Howe,Brighton Chapel Brethren Church: 282/NA
AK,Soldotna,Peninsula Grace Church: 315/64	IN,Kendallville,Legacy Church: 118/200
AK,Sterling,Sterling Grace Community Church: 17/	IN,Kokomo,Indian Heights Grace Brethren Church: *
AZ,Peoria,ValleyLife Grace Brethren Church: 40/60	IN,Leesburg,Leesburg Grace Brethren Church: 98/51
AZ,Tonalea,Native New Life Ministries: *	IN,Osceola,Grace Brethren Church: 259/88
BC,Surrey,Community of Hope: 80/43	IN,Union City,DayStar Grace Brethren Church: 26/26
CA,Auburn,Auburn Grace Community Church: 650/375	IN,Warsaw,Community Grace Brethren Church: 188/152
CA,Bellflower,Bellflower Brethren Church: 225/91	IN,Winona Lake,Winona Lake Grace Brethren Church: 854/721
CA,Canyon Lake,New Hope Community Church: *	KS,Portis,Grace Brethren Church of Portis: 57/47
CA,Cherry Valley,Grace Fellowship: 50/50	KY,Hyden,Victory Mountain Grace Brethren Chapel: *
CA,Chico,Living Hope Fellowship: 100/81	KY,Jackson,Happy Church: 90/
CA,Lakewood,Iglesia Cristiana De la Comunidad: 40/25	MA,Essex,North Shore Bible Church: 88/62
CA,Long Beach,Community Grace Brethren Church: 40/44	MD,Clinton,Clinton Grace Brethren Church: 260/216
CA,Long Beach,Grace Brethren Church of Long Beach: 328/244	MD,Easton,Mid-Shore Community Church: 20/25
CA,Long Beach,Grace Cambodia Church: *	MD,Frederick,Grace Community Church: 453/238
CA,Long Beach,Los Altos Grace Church: 150/143	MD,Hagerstown,Calvary Grace Brethren Church: 49/27
CA,Modesto,La Loma Grace Brethren Church: 75/50	MD,Hagerstown,Cornerstone Community Church: 116/76
CA,Norwalk,Grace Brethren Church of Norwalk: 73/73	MD,Hagerstown,Maranatha Brethren Church: 141/140
CA,Orange,Grace Church of Orange: 403/204	MD,Hagerstown,Valley Grace Brethren Church: 218/100
CA,Rialto,Sunrise Mission: *	MD,Lanham,Grace Brethren Church: 60/48
CA,Ripon,Ripon Grace Brethren Church: 164/176	MD,Leonardtown,The Point of Grace Church: *
CA,San Diego,Grace Brethren Church: 36/34	MD,McHenry,Grace Brethren Church: 8/5
CA,Santa Ana,Maranatha Grace Brethren Church: 33/33	MD,Mechanicsville,Grace Chapel Ministries of Southern MD: 205/178
CA,Seal Beach,Grace Community Church of Seal Beach: 348/340	MD,Owings,Grace Brethren Church: 431/430
CA,Simi Valley,Grace Church of Simi Valley: 359/237	MD,Point Rocks,Grace Fellowship Church: 108/
CA,South Pasadena,Grace Brethren Church of S. Pasadena: 92/37	MD,Waldorf,Grace Church Waldorf: 325/360
CA,Whittier,Community Grace Brethren Church: 11/5	MI,Chelsea,Main Street Church: *
CA,Whittier,Grace Brethren Church of Whittier: 55/25	MI,Detroit,St. Antoine Bible Church: 15/15
CA,Yucca Valley,Grace Community Church: 32/15	MI,Lake Odessa,Grace Brethren Church: 24/34
CO,Colorado Springs,Grace Brethren Church: *	MI,Menominee,Menominee Grace Brethren Church: *
DC,Washington,About My Father's Business: 70/70	MN,St. Paul,Twin Cities Church: 130/200
FL,Brooksville,Grace Brethren Church: 55/40	NJ,Hope,Grace Community Church: 40/35
FL,Deerfield,Family Christian Community Center: *	NM,Taos,Grace Brethren Church of Taos: *
FL,Fort Lauderdale,New Calvary Evangelical Church, Inc: *	NY,New York,New Generation Community Church: N/a/13
FL,Fort Myers,Friendship Grace Brethren Church: 23/20	OH,Akron,Grace Church of Greater Akron - Bath Campus: 5511/669
FL,Fort Myers,Villas Grace: 60/	OH,Ashland,Ashland Village Community Church: 6/6
FL,Lauderdale Lakes,Eglise Evangelique de la Paix: 20/30	OH,Ashland,Eastgate Bible Church: 15/
FL,Melbourne,Grace Brethren Church - Suntree: 135/70	OH,Ashland,Grace Church: 951/701
FL,Miami,Mispa Missionary Community Church: /	OH,Ashland,Grace Ranch: 15/20
FL,Ormond Beach,Grace Community Church: 64/26	OH,Ashland,Southview Grace Brethren Church: 198/179
FL,Pinellas Park,Grace Brethren Church of Pinellas Park: 82/85	OH,Blacklick,East Side Grace Brethren Church: 570/350
FL,Port Richey,Gulfview Grace Brethren Church: 182/113	OH,Bowling Green,Grace Church of Bowling Green: 25/16
FL,Sebring,Grace Church of Sebring: 257/152	OH,Brookville,Brookville Grace Brethren Church: 85/72
FL,Tampa,Iglesia Comunal Cristiana: 140/-	OH,Canton,Grace Brethren Church: 135/112
FL,Valrico,Iglesia Comunal La Esperanza: 60/37	OH,Centerville,Centerville Grace: 257/-
HI,Mililani,Waipio Grace Brethren Church: 100/?	OH,Clayton,Grace Bible Church: 40/40
HI,Waipahu,Grace Fellowship Hawaii: 370/165	OH,Columbus,Capital City Grace Church: *
IA,Cedar Rapids,CR Grace Church: 18/20	OH,Covington,Friendship Grace Brethren Church: 45/70
IA,Dallas Center,Dallas Center Grace Brethren Church: 20/23	OH,Danville,Grace Church: *
IA,Garwin,Carlton Brethren Church: 25/35	OH,Dayton,Basore Road Grace Brethren Church: 62/52
IA,North English,Pleasant Grove Grace Brethren Church: 12/13	OH,Dayton,Calvary Grace Brethren Church of Dayton: 20/13
IA,Waterloo,Grace Fellowship Church: 119/122	OH,Dayton,First Grace Brethren Church: *
IN,Berne,Bethel Brethren Church: 50/84	OH,Dayton,North Riverdale Grace Brethren Church: *

OH,Delaware,Delaware Grace: 363/275  
 OH,Dublin,Encounter Church: 120/NA  
 OH,Dublin,Grupo Amor Cristiano: \*  
 OH,Dublin,Northwest Chapel Grace Brethren Church: 489/122  
 OH,Fremont,Grace Community Church of Fremont: 1894/1809  
 OH,Gahanna,Three Creeks Church: \*  
 OH,Greenville,Greenville Grace Brethren Church: 300/190  
 OH,Grove City,Grace Chapel: \*  
 OH,Grove City,Southwest Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 OH,Hilliard,Movement Church: 233/70  
 OH,Homerville,Grace Brethren Church of Homerville: 110/99  
 OH,Huber Heights,Grace Community Church: 170/151  
 OH,Jacksontown,Grace Brethren Church of Jacksontown: 8/4  
 OH,Kettering,Calvary Grace Brethren Church: 28/30  
 OH,Killbuck,Layland Church: 6/10  
 OH,Lexington,Fox Hollow Bible Church: \*  
 OH,Lexington,Grace Brethren Church: 100/69  
 OH,London,London Grace: \*  
 OH,Macedonia,Western Reserve Grace Church: 466/263  
 OH,Mansfield,Grace Village Church: 10/10  
 OH,Mansfield,Woodville Grace Brethren Church: 100/104  
 OH,Marion,Marion Grace: 62/44  
 OH,Marysville,Marysville Grace Brethren Church: 919/271  
 OH,Maumee,Maumee Valley Church: 80/  
 OH,Middlebranch,Grace Brethren Church: 159/78  
 OH,Millersburg,Grace Brethren Church of Millersburg: 32/31  
 OH,Minerva,Grace Chapel: 370/250  
 OH,Mt. Sterling,Sterling Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 OH,Mt. Vernon,Grace Community Church: \*  
 OH,Pataskala,Pataskala Grace Church: 100/98  
 OH,Pickerington,Grace Fellowship - Pickerington Campus: 3485/894  
 OH,Plain City,Darby Grace Brethren Church: 65/  
 OH,Powell,Grace Church: 851/305  
 OH,Reynoldsburg,White Stone: \*  
 OH,Rittman,Grace Brethren Church: 98/104  
 OH,Tipp City,The Bridge: 14/14  
 OH,Toledo,Toledo Grace Brethren Church: 18/30  
 OH,Twinsburg,LifeSprings: 13/  
 OH,West Alexandria,Grace Brethren Community Church: 21/98  
 OH,West Milton,Community Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 OH,Westerville,Grace Polaris Church: 1285/965  
 OH,Wooster,Grace Church: 1995/1660  
 ON,Mississauga,Renew Church - Mayfield West: 413/213  
 PA,Altoona,First Grace Brethren Church: 36/63  
 PA,Armagh,Valley Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 PA,Avis,Grace Fellowship: \*  
 PA,Bethlehem,Lehigh Valley Grace Brethren Church: 79/88  
 PA,Blain,Grace Brethren Church of Sherman's Valley: 16/16  
 PA,Chambersburg,Grace Brethren Church: 60/38  
 PA,Coatesville,Encuentro Latino: \*  
 PA,Conemaugh,Conemaugh Grace Brethren Church: 38/32  
 PA,Dillsburg,Hope Grace Brethren Church: 186/118  
 PA,Duncansville,Grace Fellowship Church: 38/  
 PA,Elizabethtown,Grace Brethren Church: 100/102  
 PA,Ephrata,Grace Church: 85/54  
 PA,Everett,Community Grace Brethren Church: 195/192  
 PA,Everett,Everett Grace Brethren Church: 55/71  
 PA,Greencastle,Community Grace: 35/65  
 PA,Hollidaysburg,Vicksburg Grace Brethren Church: 47/NA  
 PA,Hopewell,Hopewell Grace Brethren Church: 64/45  
 PA,Johnstown,Davidsville Community Church: \*  
 PA,Johnstown,Johnstown Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 PA,Johnstown,Liberty Grace: 176/44  
 PA,Johnstown,Pike Grace Brethren Church: 134/103  
 PA,Johnstown,Singer Hill Grace Brethren Church: 84/98  
 PA,Kittanning,Grace Brethren Church of W. Kittanning: 81/77  
 PA,Lancaster,Grace Church at Willow Valley: 290/177  
 PA,Lititz,Grace Church - Lititz Campus: 373/295  
 PA,Loganville,Community Cornerstone Church: 45/14  
 PA,Manheim,Manheim Grace Brethren Church: 102/77  
 PA,Martinsburg,Martinsburg Grace Brethren Church: 524/336  
 PA,Meyersdale,Meyersdale Grace Brethren Church: 164/170  
 PA,Meyersdale,Summit Mills Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 PA,Myerstown,New Beginnings Charis Fellowship Church: 100/81  
 PA,New Holland,Grace Family Church: 158/95  
 PA,Palmyra,Palmyra Grace Church: 131/80  
 PA,Parkesburg,Gateway Grace Community Church - Parkesburg Campus: 691/306  
 PA,Philadelphia,Crossroads Community Church of Philadelphia - Holmesburg: 98/NA  
 PA,Philadelphia,Grace Community Bible Church: 80/60  
 PA,Pottstown,Still Waters Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 PA,Red Hill,Hope Valley Community Church: \*  
 PA,Reedsville,Kish Valley Grace Brethren Church: 212/158  
 PA,Saxton,Living Hope Grace Brethren Church: 37/  
 PA,Telford,Penn Valley Church Network: 392/  
 PA,Tremont,Echo Valley Grace Brethren Church: 75/75  
 PA,Uniontown,Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 PA,Waynesboro,Waynesboro Grace: 100/56  
 PA,Wrightsville,Susquehanna Grace Community Church: 137/55  
 PA,York,YGBC: 134/75  
 SC,Aiken,Grace Church: 155/176  
 SC,Anderson,Grace Fellowship Church: 37/42  
 TN,Johnson City,Fountain of Life Bible Church: \*  
 TX,Longview,Grace Brethren Church: 43/17  
 TX,McAllen,McAllen Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 VA,Alexandria,Grace Brethren Church: 40/48  
 VA,Buena Vista,First Brethren Church: \*  
 VA,Covington,Grace Brethren Church: 32/37  
 VA,Norfolk,Awaken Church: \*  
 VA,Radford,Fairlawn Grace Brethren Church: 42/73  
 VA,Richmond,Community of Grace Church: 65/45  
 VA,Riner,Riner Grace Brethren Church: 25/32  
 VA,Roanoke,Citylight Church: 50/44  
 VA,Roanoke,Clearbrook Grace Brethren Church: 22/30  
 VA,Roanoke,Hope Bible Church: \*  
 VA,Winchester,Blue Ridge Grace Brethren Church: 64/  
 VA,Winchester,Winchester Grace Brethren Church: \*  
 WA,Goldendale,Community Grace Brethren Church: 119/47  
 WA,Grandview,Iglesia Vida Nueva: \*  
 WA,Harrah,Harrah Grace Brethren Church: 20/  
 WA,Kent,Grace Fellowship of Kent: 58/  
 WA,Mabton,Iglesia De Los Hermanos: \*  
 WA,Mabton,Mabton Grace Brethren Church: 76/51  
 WA,Sunnyside,Grace Brethren Church: 139/114  
 WA,Toppenish,Grace Brethren Church: 52/360  
 WA,Yakima,Iglesia De Los Hermanos en Yakima: 50/38  
 WV,Grafton,First Grace Brethren Church: 44/68  
 WV,Martinsburg,Rosemont Grace Brethren Church: 75/43  
 WV,Parkersburg,Grace Brethren Church: \*  
**Count = 230**  
 (\* = statistical report and/or fellowship fee not returned in time for this report)

# Charis Fellowship Statement of Financial Position

31-Oct-18

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 453,794
Accounts Receivable - net of allowance	5,683
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 459,477</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	\$ 755
Accrued Payroll Expense	1,976
Deferred Revenue	2,961
Pension Liability, current portion	
Pension Liability, long-term portion	
Escrow Funds	3,029
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 8,721</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
Unrestricted	\$ 444,869
Temporarily Restricted	5,887
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<u><u>\$ 459,477</u></u>

## Statement of Activities

Year ending October 31, 2018

<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	
<b>Revenues</b>	
Membership Fees	\$ 214,820
Conference Income	71,115
Eagle Commission	160,305
Contributions	108,837
Focus Retreats	35,733
Handbook Income	3,700
Other Income	8,313
Net Assets Released from Use Restriction	14,113
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 616,936</u>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Program Services	
Conference	\$ 114,842
Focus Retreats	78,955
Eagle Commission	79,739
Supporting Services	
Fellowship Council	88,147
General Administration	137,260
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 498,943</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted net assets	\$ 117,993
Increase (Decrease) in Temporarily Restricted net assets	5,887
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>326,876</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u><u>\$ 450,756</u></u>

**Notes:**

Payroll expenses are allocated to Conference, Focus Retreat and General Admin exp. Categories.

Reviewed by Himes and Krull, LLC

Report #4

## **2019 Report of the Social Concerns Committee of the Charis Fellowship**

***“Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)***

The Social Concerns Committee was established by the Annual Conference of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches in 1985. It was the successor committee to the Sanctity of Life Committee. Its new title reflected the goal of addressing more societal issues than simply “right to life” issues.

The primary task of the Social Concerns Committee, as expressed in the Manual of Procedure, is to prepare resolutions to present to the annual business meeting (gathering of delegates) of the Fellowship.

In addition, the committee is available to churches and pastors and other individuals within our Fellowship to discuss social concerns issues that arise in various states and localities. We invite members of the Charis Fellowship to use us as a resource at any time and on any relevant subject.

The committee has also sent regular electronic communications to Charis Fellowship churches and leaders on a variety of social concerns matters.

A personal note: It has been my great privilege to serve on this committee and to be its chairman since 1985. I have decided the time has come for me to step away from these roles and for the committee to move forward under new leadership. I deeply appreciate all the support I have had over the years from the Fellowship in general, and specifically from the Fellowship Council, the various Executive Directors I have served under, and especially from fellow committee members. It is a ministry I have been honored to have and its work has been my deep passion.

***Please support this committee whole-heartedly in the years to come.***

For the Social Concerns Committee,  
Donald Shoemaker, Chairman

Committee Members: Mark Abel, Mark Combs, Scott Henry, Mike Jentes, Kathryn MacMillan, Rich Schnieders, John Teevan (special thanks to former committee member Jesús Muñoz)

**Resolutions Proposed to the 2019 Business Session of  
the Charis Fellowship  
Prepared by the Charis Fellowship Social Concerns Committee**

*Resolutions are approved by the delegates annually to express the convictions of the Charis Fellowship on certain contemporary social issues. They are non-binding and are intended to be advisory and of teaching value. Churches are encouraged to adopt them as statements of local church conviction. Resolutions are for one year and often address issues of importance but of limited duration. Resolutions do not address doctrinal issues but focus on societal developments that intersect with Christian doctrine.*

**Human Life—Its Dignity and Duties**

**Whereas** God is the creator of the heavens and the earth and all it contains (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1); and

**Whereas** God created humanity as his highest creation, making humanity alone in his image and after his likeness (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 8); and

**Whereas** God created man as male and female, both as bearers of his image (Genesis 1:27); and

**Whereas** the woman was made from the man, she alone being equal to him yet different from him, to complete the duality of human existence and make marital union possible (Genesis 2:18-23); and

**Whereas** God appointed mankind as stewards over creation (Genesis 1:26, 28; Psalm 8:6-8); and

**Whereas** God chose Israel, the object of his love and protection, to be his special people and a blessing to the whole world (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:7-8; Amos 3:1-2; Zechariah 2:7; Romans 9:4-5; 11:28-29); and

**Whereas** human sinfulness deeply afflicts our relationship to God and to one another (including how men and women, parents and children, rich and poor, strong and weak, and people of differing races relate to each other) and also afflicts our understanding of ourselves (who we are as human beings), tempting us to define ourselves in subjective humanistic ways rather than according to our creator's design (Genesis 3:16; 6:5; 8:21; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-18);

**We therefore affirm several ethical implications of these biblical truths:**

1. All human life (including the unborn, those with mental and physical infirmities and those who are terminally ill) is precious and worthy of our protection and care.
2. The loss of any human life by the actions of another is tragic. Nonetheless, taking human life is justifiable in narrow circumstances such as self-defense or defense of others

(whether exercised by an individual or by the magistrate). Yet even this is tragic, for God himself takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11).

3. Abortion as practiced in the United States and many other countries is abhorrent to God and an assault on human dignity. Its practice is to be opposed legally and morally and ministries of care for the mother and child must be developed and offered. Of special concern is new legislation that allows abortion up to the moment of birth. Adoption is always an honorable alternative to abortion. Men and women must avoid sexual sin and both must take responsibility for its consequences.

4. Assisted suicide is an illegitimate response to human suffering toward the end of life. Instead, ministries of care, support and pain management are to be offered to the dying. Assisted suicide for those suffering a terminal illness will easily be rationalized to justify suicide for other reasons and to justify taking human life without consent.

5. The Word of God justifies capital punishment as a proper judgment against those who commit premeditated murder. Rather than being a violation of our creation in the image of God, capital punishment is actually based on this truth (Genesis 9:6). However, the actual practice of capital punishment must be by legitimate authorities and must rest on equity and sufficient evidence and always be seriously judged by biblical standards.

6. To serve human needs we must declare and practice "the true fast" of Isaiah 58—do not exploit workers, do not engage in quarreling and malicious talk, loose the chains of injustice, set the oppressed free, feed the hungry, shelter the poor, clothe the naked, service the needy, defend the defenseless.

7. We call for opposition to all forms of human trafficking, especially sexual exploitation, and abuse against immigrants. Families should be kept intact as much as possible.

8. Support and justice must be extended toward all who are abused or sexually assaulted, especially in situations of



subjugation or fear. Protections and an atmosphere supporting honest disclosures are vital. Sexual assault under the guise of religious or secular positions is especially offensive to God and should be to us.

9. Christians must never forget the historical sufferings of the Jewish people and must express alarm at increases in anti-Semitism in our own day and nation. We must be bold in expressing our love for the Jewish people and our repentance for wrongs in the past. We must stand up and be counted and call for actions against anti-Semitism.

10. Marriage is foremost an establishment by God, not an institution of man. Marriage is a union between a man and a woman, sealed in the covenant sign of sexual union. Sexual relationships are appropriate within marriage only. Marriage is God's plan for birthing and raising children in a loving, supportive home. God intends that marriage be a life-long covenant not "put asunder" by man.

11. People may choose to live honorably before God in singleness, as exemplified by many biblical personalities including Jesus and the Apostle Paul. This choice may lead to greater undistracted service to God. It may also open avenues of temptation that must be resisted.

12. "Gender identity" needs to be understood by fair analysis of data and by listening to those who do not identify themselves by conventional male/female categories. However, our ultimate directives come not from social constructions but from biblical understandings. God created human beings as either male or female. Departures from this understanding, whether due to dysfunction or choice, are not the plan of God. Our society must be careful not to coerce people and institutions (including churches) that do not support current expansion of gender identity rights. Boys and girls (and their parents) have a right to privacy and safety and to fair instruction on this subject that is not agenda driven.

13. Human governments are established by God for promotion of justice and punishment of evil and for the peace and safety of their citizens. Governments exist to further the wellbeing of all, not to accumulate power and wealth into the hands of the rulers and the privileged at the expense of subjects. Governments should enhance human flourishing and liberty, not repress these in any way. Governments must protect freedom of religion. Christians should pray for all who are in authority and be open to participate in government through voting, influence and service as much as is ethically possible.

14. America's prisons are often places of bureaucracy and neglect that assault the human dignity of prisoners while

failing to truly reform them. Prison reform must include fitting punishment that makes victims whole, plus training that enable willing prisoners to return to society and live constructive lives. Those who have paid their debt to society should have a process to accrue citizen rights once again, including the right to vote.

15. Civility in speech and good conduct toward others who are in God's likeness are our duties. Our communications with one another must be consistent with loving our neighbor as ourselves. Civility must begin at the highest levels of government—the president and the Congress in America—and continue to all other levels. Civility must avoid the *ad hominem* attacks on opponents that have become so much a part of today's charged political climate. Civil communication must characterize all "social media" and Christians especially must not communicate with gossipy, malicious, or oppressive words in their use of social media.

16. Humanity must understand "dominion over creation" not as ownership but as stewardship. We must also recognize God is infinite and creation is finite. To consume creation's resources as if they are infinite is a form of idolatry. We are free to use and enjoy creation, not to misuse it or deny future generations its enjoyment. In our quest to be good stewards of creation, we must always and only worship God the Creator and never deify or worship creation in any way.

17. Since God created the entire human race, his "Common Grace" flows to all people. Common Grace is seen in the benevolence of creation, a basic sense of right and wrong given to all, institutions such as family and good government, wholesome human achievements and enjoyments, and in other positive features of human existence. Christians are able to work with non-believers to expand the benefits of common grace.

### **Governmental Responsibility**

Governments must operate with a strong sense of integrity and faithfulness to the laws of the nation. They must honor their commitments to their citizens by fulfilling their basic duties, controlling entitlements and spending, and avoiding immense deficits that will burden future generations.

We warn our government against yielding to the passion for an ever-broader expansion of rights that are popular at the moment but are not wise or good for the long-range health of the nation.

## **Religious Freedom**

We strongly support religious liberty in America and around the world as we look with alarm at the deterioration of this freedom, especially as it is repressed in countries like China but even incrementally in the United States. We support:

- Genuine freedom of religion for all, not to be reduced to “freedom of worship.”
- The free *exercise* of religion, not to be reduced to the right to believe as you choose.
- Freedom of religion for all religious organizations, not merely “houses of worship.” This includes the right to employ people who adhere to the doctrines and morals of the church or religious organization.
- Freedom for people to live out their religious convictions in public and in their workplaces and not be harassed and penalized by adverse governmental action.

## **Immigration Reform**

America has been a land of immigrants since before the nation was founded. Between the extremes of nativism and open borders, most citizens have open arms toward immigrants but also see the rule of law and secure borders as essential for a safe and civil society. Today our nation and our churches are increasingly populated by people from a multitude of cultures and lands, and many of these people are undocumented.

How can our Charis Fellowship respond?

1. We call on our churches to give prayer, thought, discussion, and action toward addressing the problem of the undocumented immigrant in a God-honoring way.
2. We recognize the divisive and controversial nature of this debate, and we encourage dialogue in the churches that is respectful, open-minded, and solution focused.
3. We further call on our churches to be the “reconciling presence of Christ” in the midst of a broken system that creates rancor, resentment, racism, selfishness, fear, exploitation, danger, and disregard for the law.
4. We call on our society and elected leaders to rise above political posturing and rancor to work toward a solution on immigration that is compassionate and realistic—a solution that accomplishes the government’s responsibility to protect its citizens and guests, while at the same time provides relief to the oppressed.

5. We recognize that meaningful solutions to this problem are not easily reached and must come through a determined will to achieve them. We deplore the present situation when our Federal Government is unable to resolve key immigration issues year after year.

6. We also recognize that the United States cannot accommodate everyone who desires to come to this country. Correcting the situations that force many to flee their home countries is one way to reduce the number attempting to gain entry into the United States.

7. We also call on the Federal Government to be wise in its use of Foreign Aid to aid in reforming situations in those foreign countries.

## **The Social Concerns Committee**

Donald Shoemaker, Chairman  
Mark Abel  
Mark Combs  
Scott Henry  
Mike Jentes  
Kathryn MacMillan  
Jesus Muños  
Richard Schnieders  
John Teevan



## Eagle Commission

Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches dba Charis Fellowship

P.O. Box 814, Winona Lake, IN 46590-0814

Phone: (574) 267-5162 // Email: [info@eaglecommission.org](mailto:info@eaglecommission.org) // Web: [eaglecommission.org](http://eaglecommission.org)

It's been a very busy year since Access2018 in Fremont, OH. Personally, I've logged over 21,000 miles of travel to Focus Retreats, local churches, ministerial meetings and visits to our chaplains. I've been encouraged to learn of the tremendous love, appreciation and interest in the ministry of our chaplains and their families and their appreciation across our Fellowship.

### Key events this year include:

- Reassignments. Army Chaplain Jim Murray (Grace Church, Aiken, SC) to U.S. Soldier Support Institute, Ft Jackson, SC; Army Chaplain Carl (Deanna) Phillips from Germany to Fort Belvoir, MD; Army Chaplain David (Whitney) Mvondo from Germany to Fort Benning, GA; Chaplain Charles (Ada) Pridgen from Fort Stewart, GA to Fort Eustis, VA; Chaplain Jonas (Lisa) Winbolt intrapost move from an Engineer Battalion to Field Artillery.
- Deployments. Army Chaplain Charles ("Chuck") Pridgen (Community GBC, Warsaw, IN) returned in late April from a 9-month deployment, primarily in Kuwait; Army Chaplain Cameron Michael (Grace Community Church, Fremont, OH) and Army Reserve Chaplain Jeremy Pfeister (Grace Church of Greater Akron, Norton, OH) both deployed in June 2019 to the Middle East.
- Promotions. Army Chaplains Billy Graham (Warsaw Community GBC, Warsaw) promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and Carl Phillips (Brighton Chapel Brethren Church, Howe, IN) was selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel. Navy Chaplain Justin Hayes (Winona Lake Grace, Winona Lake, IN) was selected for promotion to Lieutenant Commander.
- New Endorsements. Army Reserve Chaplain Candidates Tim Clay (Community of Hope, Columbia City, IN) and Isaac Anderson (Grace Fellowship – Upper Arlington campus, OH).
- Gains. Army Reserve Chaplain Candidate Dan Rosenberg (Community GBC, Warsaw, IN) to the Air Force Reserve as Chaplain.
- Losses to military retirement. Army Chaplain James Schaefer (retirement); Army Chaplain Richard Hurst (Grace Brethren Church, Colorado Springs, CO) and Army Reserve Chaplain John Arnoldbik (formerly of Grace Community Church, Seal Beach, CA).
- Pending loss (change of endorsement). Air Force Reserve Chaplain J.P. Prado (Grace Community Church, Seal Beach, CA).

The Eagle Commission was blessed with solid giving in 2018. Donations increased 40% over the previous year. Still the Eagle Commission remains dependent of a generous subsidy from GBIF to meet its expenses. Since summer 2017, we have intentionally been linking costs to a strategic goal and vision to increase awareness across our Fellowship. I believe that as a Fellowship, we have a God-given opportunity to send our best young pastors and commission them as Christ's ambassadors to the almost 2 MILLION men and women who wear our nation's uniform. If we send them, we also have the responsibility to maintain connections and prayer teams for them and their families.

Finally, I ask for your prayers and regular intercession for our chaplains. We continue to have our chaplains deployed almost continually since 2003. As a Fellowship, we must sustain them as they fulfill the divine calling and always in the Lord's protection. Both they and their families face challenges that are unique compared to local church ministry. I also strongly urge all supporters and pastors to pray fervently for new men from our fellowship who will serve as chaplains. The military will accession chaplains --- we can decide if we want to be part of God's Great Commission and those who love Jesus and will boldly proclaim the Gospel.

On mission! By grace!

Mark Penfold, DMin.  
Chaplain (Colonel), U.S. Army, retired  
Endorsing Agent

**CHARIS FELLOWSHIP  
RETIREMENT INVESTMENT PLAN  
PO BOX 634  
WINONA LAKE, IN 46590  
574-267-5163**

**Retirement Planning Committee**

As of **June 30, 2019**, the total combined asset value of the Fellowship Retirement Investment Plan was **\$18,810,565**. Currently, we have **367** participants in the plan.

Thirty-four investment options are available to plan participants along with the Roth program. Quarterly, individual reports are sent on a timely basis.

Account information is available on-line via a secure website at [www.oneamerica.com](http://www.oneamerica.com). We have met with One America representatives to review our plan and discuss ways to improve our cooperative services.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Kenneth A. Seyfert, Chairman

Committee Members:

Mr. Tom Avey

Mr. Ryan Howell

Mr. James W. Johnson

Administrative Assistant:

Mrs. Sue Lehman

[slehman@charisfellowship.us](mailto:slehman@charisfellowship.us)

**Highlights from the January 2019  
Charis Fellowship Council Meeting  
Seal Beach, California**

Overview: Meetings began Wednesday evening January 30 with dinner and a season of prayer. Thursday, January 31 was for reports from our National Ministries and from the various commissions of the council. Friday concluded those reports and the council acted on recommendations.

The Executive Director (Clancy Cruise) reflected on his three-year term. The Executive Director elect (Phil Sparling) shared his vision (in writing) for the Charis Fellowship. This vision will also be shared during the business meeting at Access2019.

Each Executive Director of a national ministry that was present (or a representative) gave a short update on their ministry and met in small groups with council members to talk about opportunities and challenges.

The Fellowship Council talked about the current position statements. Three position statements received the required (2/3rds) vote for approval.

The council talked about a transition plan to replace the Charis Fellowship coordinator by May 2021.

A MOTION PREVAILED to appoint Adam Johnson to finish out Scott Avey's term (Region C ending 2020)

A MOTION PREVAILED to affirm the process outlined in the Mosaic document and authorize the membership team to implement it.

# Assistant Director Biographical Data



Tim Hodge is the lead pastor of Grace Family Church in New Holland, Pennsylvania. Tim is married to Heidi and is father to three boys (14, 12, and 5) and one girl (8). Born and raised “Down Under” in the city of Adelaide, South Australia, Tim worked as a mechanical engineering tradesman for General Motors for 6 years before pursuing ministry training. After graduating from Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary, he served on staff at Lehigh Valley Grace Brethren before moving to New Holland where he has been serving for 15 years. He has concluded his terms on both the Fellowship Council and the Inspire Board, along with serving on the leadership team for the Northern Atlantic District.

## Fellowship Council Nominee Biographical Data

### Region A

Manuel Espinosa is Pastor of Iglesia Cristiana de la Comunidad in Lakewood, California. He was born in Mexico



and came to the United States in 1983 at the age of 24. Manuel came to know the Lord that very same year at the church that he now pastors. God saved Manuel from a life of alcohol and drug addiction, immediately after conversion he started preaching in the streets and to friends at the painting company where he worked. Manuel has had the privilege of working with prisoners in Terminal Island Federal Institution in the city of San Pedro California for the past ten years. Manuel and his wife Raquel and have four children. They met at a Baptist church in Wilmington California where Rachel came to know the Lord. Together they have been serving God at Iglesia Cristiana de la Comunidad for almost 20 years.

### Region B



Steve Miller has been the lead pastor at Maumee Valley church since 1992, located in the Toledo area. Steve is a third generation pastor in our Fellowship. He graduated from Dallas seminary. He has been married to his wife Jan for 44 years. And they have three grown children. He is also chaplain for

Springfield Township Fire department. And he has been involved with the leadership of the Northwest Ohio District since its inception.



Dave Holmes came on staff at Centerville Grace in March of 2007 and transitioned to the role as Lead Pastor in 2009. He has a Bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies from Grace College and a Master of Divinity from Grace Theological Seminary. He is married to his college sweetheart and they have four

sons. Dave is a co-founder of the Dayton Disciple Makers Network (DDMN) and is passionate in his pursuits of both servant-leadership and disciple-making.

### Region C



Devin Livingston came to Community of Grace in November 2016 from Calvert County Maryland where he served our sister Charis Fellowship Church. He completed his M.Div. from George W. Truett seminary at Baylor University in 2008 and has been in ministry for over 10 years in the Maryland and Virginia area. His wife Katherine is a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP) and works for a private practice in the Richmond area. They love the Richmond area and are excited to see the amazing things God will do.



Desir Nonhomee is the Junior and Missions Pastor at Mispa Missionary Community Church in North Miami, Florida. He is originally from Tortuga, Haiti. Desir has been very active in Florida District and planting churches in the Haitian community in South Florida. He is also the church planter for a new church in Brooksville, Florida. Desir and Gina have three daughters.

### Why only one name from Region A?

Districts have the privilege of nominating names to the Fellowship Council. This year, only the Southern California– Arizona district nominated (Manual Espinosa). The Charis Fellowship nominating committee can add names but they felt that there was sufficient representation from other districts in region A.