Two locations, 1,575 kilometers apart.
Over 100 delegates from over 30 ministries.
An AGM to remember...
Summary of the 108th Annual General Meeting of the ECCC:

- The AGM affirmed the ECC resolution on domestic violence.
- The AGM approved the 2012 budget. Some highlights:
  - Funding for church planting and a director of church planting at 20% of full time.
  - $7,000 for a new initiative called Adventures in Leadership.
  - $210,000 budgeted as operating support from churches to the ECCC.
  - Julia Stein, Director of Ministry Support will work 20% time for the CBC transition board as the charity is transitioned to a foundation.
- Two new members of the Leadership Board were added:
  - Audra Reinhardt, Strathmore, AB
  - Colin McClure, Nelson, BC
- Nine first time ministry licenses were affirmed:
  - John Cho, Avenue Community Church, Toronto, ON
  - Gerald Froese, Sanctuary Community Church, Edmonton, AB
  - Ileana Garcia - Soto, Green Timbers Covenant Church, Surrey, BC
  - Andy Gilkinson, Minnedosa Covenant Church, Minnedosa, MB
  - Tom Greentree, Erickson Covenant Church, Erickson, BC
  - Jeff Gooderham, Faith Covenant Church, Breton, AB
  - Sally Carlson- Larson, Norquay Covenant Church, Norquay, SK
  - Chris Wiens, Nelson Covenant Church, Nelson, BC
  - Sam Williams, Avenue Community Covenant Church, Toronto, ON
- Ordination to Specialized Ministry was affirmed for Julia Stein, ECCC
- Commissioning was affirmed for Snowy Noble, Corrections Chaplain
- We heard from Dave Olson (Exec. Minister of Church Growth and Evangelism, ECC) and Robert Owens (Superintendent, South East Conference) on being a Healthy and Missional church.
- There were stories of God’s work in discipleship, church vitality, and church planting.
- Churches are starting this year in Toronto and Winnipeg
- Church vitality seminars have taken place in 6 churches.
- There are many opportunities in the ECCC to engage in discipleship.
- This was the first year we did a split meeting, but the reports are encouraging:
  - Over 100 delegates were voting at this AGM. That is a 20% increase from previous meetings.
  - Delegates and participants in Rainy River expressed appreciation for fellowship and connectivity.
  - In Edmonton, Sanctuary Covenant Church hosted the delegates and participants well with their hospitality.
  - The technology was choppy that connected the two sites, but as a first try we learned a lot on how to make this work better in the future.
  - The ECCC was the first ECC conference to ever try a satellite AGM location.
- Our global initiatives are thriving and growing in Ecuador, Haiti, Palestine and Congo
- In particular we learned that the ECCC will be able to partner with the greater ECC in sponsoring children with World Vision in Congo this year. This is an unprecedented partnership for World Vision, the Evangelical Covenant Church and now the ECCC.

All are invited to attend the 109th Annual General Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada next year in Melfort, Saskatchewan, May 2-5, 2013.
What people are saying about the 108th Annual General Meeting:

The men’s breakfast gathering was an excellent idea. I attended and enjoyed the fellowship. As men we all agreed that this should be continued and expanded. It provides another opportunity to build relationships.
-Robert Breitweiser, Stathmore, AB
Attended in Edmonton

I was impressed and encouraged at the bold steps the Covenant is taking in tackling the hard issues of life in our world and communities. Instead of being overwhelmed by the problems and doing nothing, we are looking them straight in the eye and are trying our best to help as we see the need is. We appear to be united in our vision and focus. God continues to do amazing things!
Laura Nelson, Erickson, BC
Attended in Edmonton

The men’s breakfast gathering was an excellent idea. I attended and enjoyed the fellowship. As men we all agreed that this should be continued and expanded. It provides another opportunity to build relationships.
-Robert Breitweiser, Stathmore, AB
Attended in Edmonton

The worship services in Rainy River were a great blessing. We had a tremendous worship team.
-Anonymous
Attended in Rainy River

The relational and increased participation benefits in my opinion are huge by doing multisite. We need to do what it takes technologically to make this work. Thank you all for getting us to try this and I think it was and will be a great thing.
-Dan Larson, Norquay, SK
Attended in Rainy River
As I reflect back on the 108th Annual Conference of the ECCC I have been struck by four clear themes: community, innovation, faithfulness and momentum.

Community: We say that the Covenant is a connectional church and that relationship matters. The annual family reunion we call the Annual Conference and AGM are clear indicators that this part of our DNA is absolutely in tact. Probably the one factor most difficult for people with the two-location experiment was that certain connections physically could not happen due to the physical separation.

Innovation: When a group is small they need to leverage what they have through innovation. As one of the smallest missional regions in the Evangelical Covenant Family (also the largest geographic region) we have needed to face the rising cost of gathering alongside the absolute necessity to gather. The two-site experiment was far from perfect but it holds great promise for the future as we continue to see our distance expanded with new congregations in central and eastern Canada through the movement of God.

Faithful Service: So many folks do so much to make an Annual Conference work. Host congregations (Edmonton and Rainy River) give life to the gathering through their hospitality. Julia Stein does an incredible amount of logistical work before the meeting and then with the help of Hanne Johnson juggles all kinds of balls during the time of the meeting. Staff reports given by Gerald Froese and Julia Stein craft a picture for the delegates. Key volunteer work exemplified by Ray Baloun and Kernels of Hope, the Leadership Board and the Church Planting Task Force show us that ministry is going forward in exciting ways.

Momentum: While there are always challenges, not the least of which would be adequate financial resources, there is a clear sense that the Lord seems to be establishing the work of our hands. The commitment of the Leadership Board to pursue the missional agenda of planting churches and strengthening existing churches is evidenced by the activity of the Spirit in existing and new congregations. I hope that having been at the meeting, or having heard about the meeting will encourage each reader to look around and see what the Spirit of God is doing in your local context; but don’t just observe the activity join the activity!

Gary Walter, ECC President, likes to remind us that being a part of the Covenant means that we are “in it together”. Reflecting back on the May meeting gives me hope that we are taking good strides toward this goal. Thanks for the part you have in our ongoing commitment to pursue our Kingdom priorities and purposes.

In it together!
Church Planting News!
From Steve Waldshmidt and the Church Planting Task Force

What a great weekend we had in Edmonton and Rainy River. It’s always good to come together and reflect on what God has been doing in the Covenant over the past year as well as look forward in anticipation to what God is going to do in the coming year.

One of the most encouraging things for us from the weekend is the great conversation surrounding the topic of church planting. The ECC leadership team have done a great job at conveying the importance of planting churches within the Canadian Conference. It is very apparent that we (as a collective body) are moving forward in one mission—to plant one church annually and facilitate one prayerful adoption of an existing church. That is so encouraging.

The stories that were told during the AGM surrounding church planting were simply amazing. It’s so great to see how God has captured each persons heart as they shared their own story and passion for planting churches in Canada, and to have fun telling those stories.

We would encourage each of you to continue the conversation about growing healthy, missional churches—both new plants and ‘old growth.’ Let us join Jesus in holy experiments that embody his beautiful kingdom in tangible ways for the sake of those not yet aware of his reign. And let us remember that healthy, growing communities reproduce.

Here are some ways you can be praying for our community as we expand God’s Kingdom through church planting:

- for Holy Covenant Community (Winnipeg) as a core group continues to meet. They go to the ECC church plant training in Colorado in June
- for Lake Ridge Community Church as it continues to develop, grow, serve, evangelize and expand God’s Kingdom in Chestermere
- for Avenue Community Church (Toronto) as they develop momentum and move towards a new home in the fall and a "grand opening"
- for connections, networking, and the emergence of our next church plants
- for financial resources to be loosened in our existing churches and for people to continue to feel included in this shared journey of church planting for communication and efforts to spread the good news of starting 20 churches in the next 10 years!

God is at work in church planting. Praise be to God!

How to get informed about Church Planting in the ECC.
Visit our new Facebook page and 'like' us to join the conversation: www.facebook.com/CanadaCovenantChurchPlanting

Sign up for the ECCC weekly e-mail. You will get updates on existing churches and their prayer needs, plus updates on church planting news! Go to www.canadacovenantchurch.com/prayer to sign up.
Kors Pater, Rainy River Covenant Church
Rainy River, ON—Delegate

What an amazing and wonderful opportunity the congregation in Rainy River had in hosting the satellite location for the 108th Annual Conference to which we praise and thank God for this occasion to bless others within our great fellowship of churches. Looking back and reflecting on the few event filled days in early May and carefully weeding through the little glitches and challenges that come with a multi-site Annual Meeting, it’s amazing to see God’s hand at work in the midst of His people. Although many could have felt they missed out on fellowshipping with a larger group of people in Edmonton at the main location, it was marvelous to see how the group in Rainy River jelled and perhaps in some way may have enjoyed a deeper fellowship. As great and in many regards pretty cool and exciting it was to participate in the Annual Meeting via WebEx, the highlight most definitely over the few days, aside from the amazing food, in Rainy River was experiencing God’s presence during the evening worship services. Special thanks to Gavin and the crew from Winnipeg for leading the folks here through songs of worship, for Pastor Ken Johnson and Mark Mast for sharing community focus ministries and of course Don Holmertz and Doug Stapleton for bringing God’s message to us. From listening to the speakers and conversations with other people, God revealed Himself powerfully in encouraging the brothers and sisters who were here during the conference and it is going to be awesome and exciting to see how God is going to continue His great work in individual lives, local churches and the conference as a whole.

Amy Wegner, Hope Community Covenant Church
Strathmore, AB—Delegate

Every time I think about you, I thank God for you. This is not a flippant or religious remark. When I attend an ECC AGM I am reminded of the blessing it is to be part of the ministry of our conference and of the greater ECC. The Covenant lives with integrity and faithfulness to the Scripture, not strong-fisted legalism, but the law as lived out by Jesus. Years ago I heard the ECC’s intention to develop leadership, plant and revitalize churches, continue a strong tradition of global missions, and actively administer compassion, justice and mercy. At the AGM this year, I was impressed by the truth of that commitment to these priorities. I witnessed initiatives happening at both the grassroots level and at a higher, organizational level. Many stories impacted me, calling me to a higher level of surrender and intentionality to participate in the work God has for me:
• A middle-aged man recognized the Living God at two funerals Pastor Evan Dewald led. He has now found love in the new body of Lakeridge Community Church in Chestermere, and is searching and questioning the Story of God for the first time. He is examining what that might mean for his life.

• A young woman described how something called to her while she still lived a life of drugs, abuse, and murder. Pastor Snowy Noble, through his prison ministry, came along side her to give name to this Spirit that had come to set her free.

• Pastor Gerald Froese’s shared about his role of strengthening church bodies to maturity and unity in Christ for relevance in their communities.

• AVA’s (Advocacy for Victims of Abuse) showed courageous commitment to bring mercy and justice into the pervasive and dangerous darkness of domestic violence.

• Uniting with organizations outside the Covenant was demonstrated. This helps us to globally feed, educate, free and protect the poor and oppressed more effectively for the sake of God’s Kingdom.

In the midst of projects, budgets, love and sorrow shared, we always rejoice and laugh with ease when we are together. I am inspired, humbled and grateful for who we are in Christ, and who we are as the Evangelical Covenant Church.

David Wright, Emmanuel Covenant Church
Surrey, BC—Delegate

This was my second opportunity to attend an ECCC Conference/AGM and first time participating in a men's fellowship group with the host church. The topic of discussion was Missions and was a blessing to me as we at Emmanuel prepare to leave for Haiti at the end of May. I have always appreciated the perspective of other men and in this case how the mission work had so impacted everyone in that room that has been involved in such a ministry. There was a complete openness and truly a feeling of "family" even though we were from many different parts of Canada. Thoughts and ideas were presented that I know will help me as I move forward in my walk with Christ.

I was incredibly blessed with all the worship services and the power of God's word. I appreciated hearing so often of
the need to be both "Healthy and Missional" as a church body as this is the journey that many of the Covenant churches are on.

In summary, what I heard from the beginning and what was very evident to me was the need to be Healthy and Missional not only as an individual but as a collection of church members, not looking inward but stepping out into my community and beyond, to bring God's word to the lost.

Emma Brinson, Sanctuary Community Covenant Church
Edmonton, AB—Delegate

The 2012 AGM in Edmonton was really uplifting and empowering for me. Reflecting back on the time when Jeff Anderson first asked the Leadership Team of Sanctuary to host the 2012 AGM we thought it would not be possible as we were too small, but then we thought, “Why not? God has been so good to us, opening so many doors and windows in our journey of growing a healthy missional church in north-east Edmonton. He will give us the resources to host our Annual Conference in Edmonton!” At the time we did not know the theme of the AGM would be “Healthy and Missional”.

The theme “Healthy and Missional” was woven beautifully through the powerful and very meaningful messages given in the evening services by Jeff Anderson, Dave Olson and Robert Owens and through the stories shared at different times during the AGM. Listening to the stories Saturday morning gave me “goose bumps” as I realized how the Spirit of God is so much alive and doing great things in our churches across Canada! The stories were inspirational, uplifting and empowering – praise God for His faithfulness.

How wonderful it was to be connected with the folks in Rainy River! It is amazing how technology allowed us to link Eastern and Western Canada together in unity and harmony. During the evening services the Worship Team inspired us to lift our voices in worship and praise to our awesome God. Thanks for choosing such beautiful songs to sing!

Friday morning something new happened at Sanctuary... a men’s gathering. From what I heard it was well received and will become an integral part of future AGMs. The Seminars held Saturday afternoon were great. Dave Olson’s session was an inspiration to me. The composition of the leadership in a church is critical for the development of a healthy missional church. It is important to have a balance of people in leadership who bring spirituality, chemistry and strategy to it.

Many thanks to all those who made the 2012 AGM a success! Thanks for coming to Edmonton!
A word on discipleship…  
Julia Stein, Director of Ministry Support

Whenever I type missional into my computer the red squiggly line appears indicating I have misspelled the word. I constantly double check to make sure I have it right because my spelling is atrocious. (In case you are wondering—I remarkably didn’t need spell check to get atrocious right.) It seems the word “missional” hasn’t made it’s way into my spell checker, but it certainly has made an impact on the Church.

There are several blogs, articles, and books on what it is to be missional. These can be useful tools in understanding what it is to be a missional church. However, I think we have the best picture of what it means to be missional in God. We just celebrated Pentecost. The day we remember that God the Holy Spirit came to live with us to be our Comforter. The disciples receive the Holy Spirit on Pentecost in Jerusalem because Jesus had said he would send the Comforter (John 14). The One who was sent by the Father promises to send the Spirit. God is MISSIONAL!

For us to live like Christ, we must also send ourselves into the world. To do what? To make disciples of Jesus Christ. Missional is more than missionary. Missional might mean teaching Sunday school classes, volunteering at a soup kitchen, praying with your children, or helping a friend move. Missional definitely means making disciples (the Great Commission), loving your neighbour (the second greatest commandment), and loving God with all you’ve got (the greatest commandment).

May we be missional people.

October 19-21, 2012  
Canmore, Alberta

Mission Statement:  
To provide an opportunity for adults of the Covenant Church and friends, to connect and experience Christian community through worship, fellowship, study, and encouragement related to our journey with Christ.

Our Speaker this year is Dick Lucco from Covenant Offices in Chicago.

The Theme:  
Journeying with Jesus: Knowing, Growing, and Going

Knowing Him: Is Jesus an image on a stained glass window or an intimate friend?

Growing in Him: What practices do we need in our lives to grow closer to Jesus?

Going with Him: How do we bring Jesus into our world?
In Haiti:
- Eben-Ezer Clinic has treated over 4,000 patients.
- There is daily clinic care for about 120 people.
- The facility has been expanded to accommodate overnight patients.
- Janelle Peterson has been serving as an ECCC missionary in Haiti for two years.
- Groups regularly go to the clinic on mission trips from ECCC churches.

In Ecuador:
- **Sumaco** is a small village in an ecological reserve of 250 people.
- Whole village moved there after a devastating mudslide and earthquake killed many in the old location.
- Andy and Jenel Pluim led a trip earlier this year and plan to do another in 2013.
- There is an increasing relationship with the people of Ecuador and the ECCC.
In Congo:
- This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Covenant Church in Congo.
- The Democratic Republic of Congo covers 2,344,858 square kilometers of land in the centre of Africa, making it the 12th largest country in the world. Population is 67.7 million. It is also ranked as the poorest nation on earth.
- The ECC and World Vision have teamed up to establish 10,000 new child sponsorships in Congo. World Vision Canada and the ECCC are taking part in this initiative as well. More information will be coming to churches in the coming months.

In Palestine:
- The ECCC is committed to sponsoring 100 children in the area of Jenin through World Vision.
- Women Ministries and the ECCC have partnered with Dina Katanacho at Galilee Bible College in Nazareth to help educate Arab Christians.
- Every other year the ECCC takes a group to Israel/Palestine to learn about the ongoing struggle for reconciliation.

Would you like to learn more about these initiatives?
Please call our office or send us a note on our website through the “contact us” tab.

- Trips to Haiti are planned on an ongoing basis by various churches.
- In January/February 2013 another group will go to Ecuador.
- Another trip to Israel is planned for May 9-19, 2013

If you would like to support these initiatives financially, you may give online at: canadacovenantchurch.org/support
The Story of the *Ugly Sweater*

by: Ray “the Grain Guy” Baloun

I like shopping for bargains. I also like helping people in need and I seem able to do that often through different methods.

One day while I was in Walmart I saw a sale on sweaters. There was one with a reduced price of $2.00. It was my size. A brand new sweater that fits me for $2. I was in! When I returned to work at the grain elevator I showed my treasure to some of the staff. They felt it was no bargain because it was not attractive. The word *ugly* was mentioned. Greg suggested it would be fine to wear at a remote cabin where there would be no other people. Each time someone criticized it I would reply, “It cost $2!”

About two weeks later I actually was packing to go to a cottage. I thought of the remote remark and packed my sweater. After the weekend was over I went straight to work from the cabin. It was a hot summer day in our office that often has over active air conditioning. It was cold! So... I put on my sweater. The teasing began in earnest. That Monday morning was the day one of our farmers, Larry Fast came in for some weed spray. He came to the door with an amused look and
had several comments about my sweater. He even thought maybe it was making him dizzy. My $2
defence didn’t slow him down. He suggested I take it off and even talked of burning it! The chari-
table part of my mind kicked in! I knew Larry was a supporter of the Canadian Food Grains Bank
(CFGB). That is the organization for which we developed Kernels of Hope. I said to Larry, “If you
donate $100 (I almost said $50) to the CFGB, I will take the sweater off and never wear it again.”
Without hesitation he pulled a $100 bill out of his wallet and put it on the counter in front of the
whole staff! I took off the sweater and suggested there were smoking regulations on site but we
could go across the highway and burn it if he wanted. He said just to never wear it again. The deal
was done! I explained to everyone that because the money would go to CFGB and then those
funds are matched by CIDA of the federal government the $100 turns into $500 for people in
desperate need in places like Africa.

Greg had been the most critical staff person on day one of the sweater so the staff soon came up
with the idea to get pledges for Greg to wear the sweater for one full day at work. He accepted the
challenge and about $240 came in! (with matching math that is $1,200!) Larry then asked me to
speak about the CFGB at his church. I like talking about the program and the good it does and I
also like surprising people! On Sunday morning at their church I pulled the ugly sweater out of a
bag and challenged the congregation to gather pledges for Larry to wear the sweater he despised
so much for one full Sunday. I said with him being a farmer and a biker that he probably was no
fashion ikon either. They had some fun with the idea and within a month they came up with
$1,125! Incredible! Their pastor was also involved with wearing an ugly shirt for the same day.
The value of the sweater had increased to $7,300.

The ECCC AGM was held in Sarnia in 2011 and this seemed like a good opportunity for the
sweater to go to Ontario. Glenn Peterson who is the chair of the ECCC and the pastor of the host
church in Sarnia was challenged to wear it for a full Sunday. People liked the idea and about an-
other $650 was raised for people in need.

In April of this year I found myself as the emcee of the local Minnedosa Grain Growing Group
fund raiser. They give me a lot of free reign when I emcee for them so I brought the sweater
( Which I have never worn since that day at the office ) Laura Rance had just returned from a
CFGB trip to Ethiopia. She is editor of the Manitoba Cooperator. It’s a great agricultural paper
with a wide distribution. Laura had arranged a story on Kernels of Hope last year and since I
knew she was the guest speaker I decided to challenge her to wear it at work for one day if we
could gather at least $200 from the people at the banquet that night. She was in! The sweater
challenge brought in $1,320 that night! ($6600 if you count the matching funds.)

The total value of the $2 sweater is now over $17,000 monetarily but in awareness of the CFGB ,
the fun had along the way, and the amount of help it has actually been to people in need is worth
much more. If your family was being helped by the proceeds of the ugly sweater you would say
the value is priceless.

Want to see the Ugly Sweater for yourself?

Want your pastor to preach in it one Sunday?

We can make that happen. Let us know and we will put you in touch with Ray.

Find out more about Kernels of Hope at Ray’s blog:
www.kernelsofhope.blogspot.ca
SHE HAS A NAME
by Andrew Kooman

The 2012 Canadian Tour

"A heart-wrenching hit... powerful drama tackles human trafficking & sex slavery. FOUR STARS!" --Louis Hobson, Calgary Sun

May 23 - October 6

Lethbridge: May 23 - 27
Calgary: June 6 - 10
Winnipeg Fringe: July 18 - 25
Montreal Fringe: June 14 - 24
Halifax: July 3 - 7
Vancouver: Aug 24 - Sept 3
London: July 12 - 13
Kelowna: September 18 - 21
Edmonton: September 25 - 30
Red Deer: October 2 - 6

Haunted by anguished voices, a lawyer poses as a john to build a legal case against a brothel trafficking girls into Bangkok. Can Jason win the trust of a young prostitute known only as Number 18 and convince her to risk her life to testify for the sake of justice?

burnt thicket theatre
raise their voice

shehasaname.net