



Affiliation

HOW TO JOIN CONVERGE GREAT LAKES

www.convergegreatlakes.org



CONVERGE GREAT LAKES IS A
MOVEMENT OF GOSPEL-CENTERED
CHURCHES BRINGING TRANSFORMATION
TO EVERY GREAT LAKES COMMUNITY.

A WORD FROM KEN NABI, REGIONAL PRESIDENT

Thank you for exploring and considering affiliation with Converse Great Lakes. Our affiliation process is simple but thorough as we aim to connect with like minded churches interested in gospel faithfulness, biblical fidelity, and missional outreach. It is likely that you are looking for networking relationship opportunities and resources to strengthen your existing ministry. We have much to offer and this movement of churches is a wonderful opportunity to learn, connect, and encourage.

Converse Great Lakes is a region of about 115 churches in Wisconsin and the UP of Michigan. While our association is 150+ years old, we enjoy a renewed vigor of outreach and gospel engagement both in the highly diverse urban environments and the largely rural contexts of our area. Whether your church is 50 people or 500 people, we pray you will find camaraderie and missional alignment in our family of churches.

Converse Great Lakes mission is to start and strengthen churches together regionally and globally and we believe that new congregations are needed to reach the lost in our region. Our vision is to be a theological and strategic catalyst for a gospel movement in the Great Lakes region. If this connects with your heart, we may be a good fit. This document aims to help you both assess who we are and to help you self-assess fit with our larger movement of churches.

As you explore Converse Great Lakes, know that we are one of ten regions across the US comprising over 1600 churches with many global initiatives advancing gospel movements around the world's least reached people groups. We believe we can do more together than we can apart. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions you might have.



Better Together,

KEN NABI

REGIONAL PRESIDENT

CHURCH AFFILIATION PROCESS

STEP-BY-STEP DESCRIPTION

1 BUILD THE RELATIONSHIP

Let's get to know each other:

- Attend one or more regional LEAD team meetings and Converge events.
- Invite a Converge Great Lakes representative to visit your church to meet with your leaders.
- Have a Converge Great Lakes representative preach or give a presentation about Converge during a worship service or special congregational meeting.
- Review the following Converge Great Lakes documents: Affirmation of Faith, Mission and Values, Expectations of Membership, and Benefits of Partnership included in this booklet
- Learn more about Converge Great Lakes on our website at convergegreatlakes.org

2 APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP

Apply for membership with Converge Great Lakes:

Application: To apply, please submit the following required documents by email to knabi@convergegreatlakes.org:

- Church Statement of Faith and history
- Church constitution, by-laws, and budget
- Record of congregational affiliation vote

Group Interview: Converge Great Lakes pastors from the regional LEAD team would like an opportunity to meet with the pastor and key leaders of your church. During the interview they will discuss what it means to be a member of Converge Great Lakes and answer any remaining questions that you have. The pastors at the meeting will make a formal recommendation to the Board of Converge Great Lakes that your church be welcomed as new members.

3 COMMIT TO PARTNERSHIP

Commitment from your church:

Your church will need to hold a vote according to its by-laws, whether as a congregation or leadership board, in order to join Converge Great Lakes. After the vote, your church must submit a letter to Converge Great Lakes on official letterhead stating that the church has approved by vote its intention to join in membership.

Commitment from Converge Great Lakes:

The Board of Overseers will review all documents and make a recommendation to the delegates at the Converge Great Lakes Annual Meeting in the fall. Once accepted into full inclusion as a CGL affiliated church, each church will be assigned a LEAD Team to participate with for connection, encouragement, and working together. LEAD Teams are regional gatherings of pastors who work together on mission.

NEXT STEPS

To apply, please submit the following required documents by email to knabi@convergegreatlakes.org:

- Church Statement of Faith and history
- Church constitution, by-laws, and budget
- Record of congregational affiliation vote

If you have questions, you can reach us at knabi@convergegreatlakes.org or call 608-244-5000.

OUR MISSION

STARTING AND STRENGTHENING
CHURCHES TOGETHER WORLDWIDE.

OUR VISION

TO BE A THEOLOGICAL AND
STRATEGIC CATALYST FOR A
GOSPEL MOVEMENT IN THE
GREAT LAKES REGION.

OUR VALUES

We are devoted to being one
movement that is:



SPIRITUALLY DEVOTED



MISSIONALLY DRIVEN



RELATIONALLY CONNECTED



CULTURALLY DIVERSE

MISSION, VALUES, & BELIEFS

OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit; perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of each person, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

Regeneration

We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Continued >

MISSION, VALUES, & BELIEFS (CONTINUED)

OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Church

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Christian Conduct

We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

Religious Liberty

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

Church Cooperation

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in an association of churches. Such an organization, whether it is Converge (formerly known as Baptist General Conference), or one of its regional districts, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

The Last Things

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.



STARTING

BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIP

Converge Great Lakes churches are committed to starting new congregations so that every neighborhood can have a vibrant, gospel-centered church.

The task of planting a successful church is not easy, but we believe ANY church can multiply no matter its size or stage of ministry. When you plant with Converge, you'll be able to implement proven systems that will help increase the long-term success and health of your church plant or campus, so more people will meet, know, and follow Jesus.

You'll also receive:

- Nationally renowned assessment center and proven process to identify qualified church planters
- Practical training and resources to help you launch faster
- Tested strategies contextualized to your model of ministry and target community
- Personalized coaching and leadership development
- More importantly, you'll be part of a family with other experienced church planters and mentors to support you and enthusiastic partners who want to see you succeed



“THE FIRST YEAR AT A NEW MINISTRY CAN BE LIKE A NEW MARRIAGE FILLED WITH JOY, WONDER, AND EXCITEMENT. BUT, LIKE MARRIAGE, IT HAS IT'S FAIR SHARE OF CHALLENGES. I'M GRATEFUL KEN NABI AND GARY HARRISON CAME ALONGSIDE OF US. THEIR WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE GAVE US THE GUIDANCE WE NEEDED TO GROW STRONG NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE.

DR. IVAN RAMIREZ
NEW LIFE BIBLE CHURCH



“ KNOWING THAT A PLANNED SUCCESSION PROCESS WOULD GIVE OUR CHURCH THE BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR A SMOOTH TRANSITION, WE ASKED KEN TO COACH OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM ON HOW TO MOST EFFECTIVELY 'PASS THE BATON' TO MY SUCCESSOR AND AVOID POTENTIAL LANDMINES IN THE PROCESS THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVALUABLE GUIDANCE IN THE PROCESS - WE ARE TRULY BETTER TOGETHER!



LARRY SHEAHAN
FAITH FELLOWSHIP

STRENGTHENING

BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIP

Every family goes through good times and difficult challenges. The same is true for churches. This is why it's important for Converge Great Lakes churches to know and care for each other. We are convinced that healthy churches are led by healthy leaders, and pastors thrive when they have environments to strengthen one another. For this reason, Converge Great Lakes creates resources that provide support so that ministry and personal life can thrive.

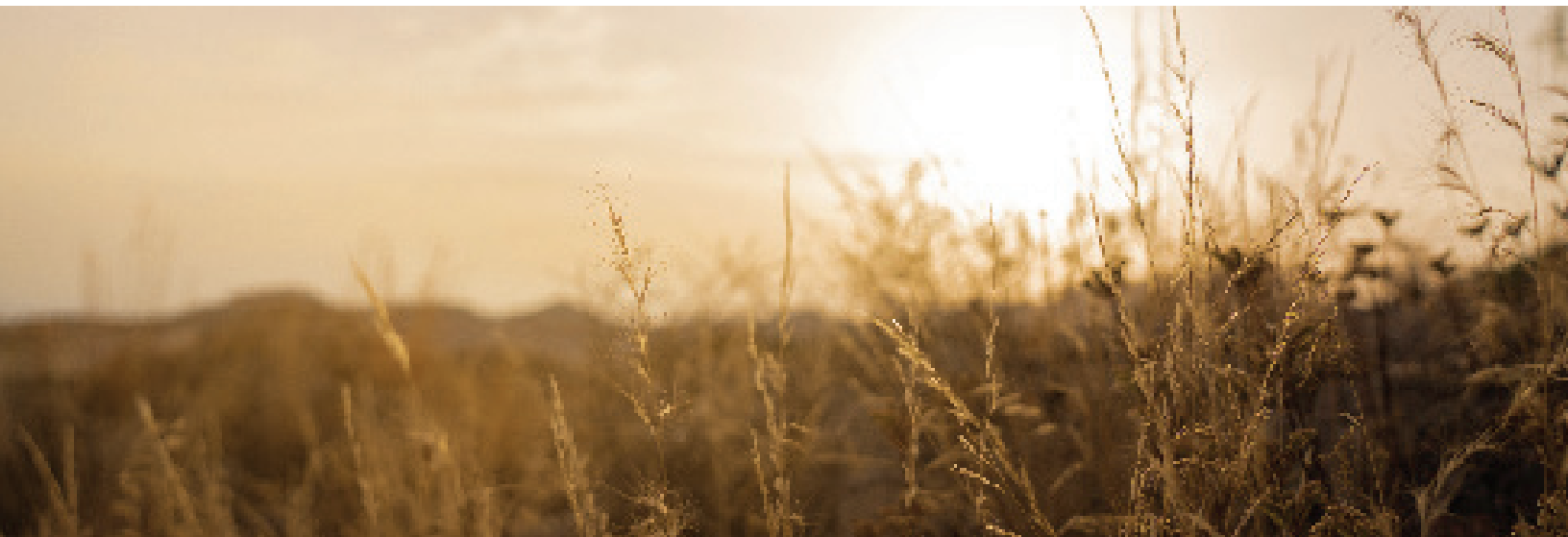
- Personal and group coaching networks
- LEAD teams for pastors to Learn, Encourage, Achieve, and Dream together
- Vision-casting materials and other leadership development tools
- Strategic ministry planning retreats
- Pastoral searches and interim pastor placement services
- Access to regional and national events and conferences
- Ministry residency and internship program
- Assistance with church revitalization, restarts, and mergers
- Sabbatical grants
- Pulpit supply and district speakers
- Capital campaign consulting and generosity training
- Assistance for conflict resolution, crisis management, and strategic planning
- Pension and retirement plans for church staff
- Loan program for new construction and building improvement

EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

God designed us to live for something bigger than ourselves and our churches. So our movement of autonomous congregations choose to work together, starting and strengthening churches and sending missionaries. Their collaboration includes participation in resourcing those efforts locally and globally.

- **Commitment to the Converge Great Lakes Affirmation of Faith, Values, and Distinctives**
Your church's affirmation of faith does not need to be the same as the Converge Great Lakes statement, but it should be consistent with Converge Great Lakes's convictions.
- **Commitment to practice believer's baptism by immersion**
- **The church's membership should be comprised of those who have followed Christ in believer's baptism by immersion**
Converge Great Lakes also recognizes churches that have an entry level membership of believers who are not immersed, but who do not serve in spiritual leadership positions until baptized.
- **Governance that includes both spiritual leadership and congregational involvement**
For example, congregational involvement in church governance could include voting to call a pastor, affirming the selection of elders, affirming an annual budget, and/or approving changes to the constitution.
- **It is recommended that your church's constitution include a statement of membership with Converge Great Lakes. It's also recommended, but not required, that Converge Great Lakes is listed as a beneficiary of assets in the case of dissolution.**
- **Active participation in the mission and vision of Converge Great Lakes through prayer, personal involvement and financial support.**
- **We strongly encourage you to connect with Converge pastors at regional LEAD team meetings and other Converge events for mutual encouragement. We urge your church to seek ways to participate in collaborative ministry endeavors and church planting efforts as the Lord leads.**

We humbly ask your church to give generously and cheerfully to Converge Great Lakes' mission to start and strengthen churches together worldwide. An ideal goal is that your church would give 2% of the church budget to Converge Great Lakes, 1% to Converge Great Lakes Church Planting, and at least 1% of your church budget to support Converge National & International Ministry opportunities.





BETTER TOGETHER

Some churches don't believe they need to be part of a movement. They are confident they can accomplish ministry without the help of others. Yet in hard times, where do you turn?

Imagine partnering with other like-minded churches, pastors, staff, and congregations - all working together to accomplish the same goal. Your goal. Our goal. God's goal: *helping people meet, know, and follow Jesus.*

What if you could take more ground for the kingdom, faster and better? Would it be worth joining the team?

More than an official welcome, you will enter into partnership with a vibrant group of missional leaders. And you will establish relationships that strengthen you personally as well as the ministry of your church. You'll be part of global ministry eager to help see Christ's Great Commission completed in this generation.

Get started at convergegreatlakes.org

MEET OUR STAFF



KEN NABI
REGIONAL PRESIDENT



GLENN HERSCHBERGER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF CHURCH PLANTING



SARAH MOTIFF
ACCOUNTANT AND
PAYROLL SPECIALIST





www.convergegreatlakes.org
(608) 244-5000
office@convergegreatlakes.org