

## **Growth Ministry Council Annual Report to the Annual NA Meeting of 2025**

The Growth Ministry Council (GMC) members for the 2024–2025 term were Rev. Dr. Irven A. Gammon (Chair), Sharon Brown (Scribe), Lisa VanAlst, Rev. Michael Freeman, and Rev. Dr. William “Ron” Toliver. We met monthly via Zoom on the first Thursday—because nothing says spiritual leadership like scheduled screen time and the occasional “You’re on mute.”

Our mission: to encourage and support NACCC congregations in their faithful journey—through nurturing new Congregational churches, developing meaningful worship and spiritual growth opportunities, wrangling technology so it blesses rather than bewilders, and championing children and youth ministries across our Association. We are pleased to have the resources available to support “hurting churches.”

At the start of the year, we welcomed Moderator Jodee Lord and Director of Programming Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp into our monthly gatherings. They kept us updated on the goings-on at Oak Creek and the behind-the-scenes magic of Annual Meeting planning. Somewhere between heartfelt vision casting and Zoom fatigue, we also began reevaluating our purpose statement—because apparently “Do all the things” wasn’t official enough.

Along the way, we teamed up with Rev. Krupp and Moderator Lord on some confidential projects involving protocols, risk assessments, and enough acronyms to keep us guessing. Our dialogue with the NAPF/HOPE Youth Conference Planning Task Team was lively and productive—especially when we could fund five students attending the conference. Investing in the next generation? Always a holy yes.

Shout-out time: the Advent and Lenten devotional booklets once again brought spiritual richness to our congregations. To those who wrote, edited, and stayed up too late proofreading—you are the real MVPs. And to the Devotional Task Team? You deserve a gold medal in deadline miracles.

This year we’ve also revisited past “church planting” dreams, exploring revitalization, restarts, and new plants. We created an investigative task team (it sounds more intense if you imagine them in detective trench coats) led by a Council member whose enthusiasm for this work is

positively contagious. We're also in conversations with the Vitality Ministry Council, proving we're stronger together—just like peanut butter and jelly or clergy and coffee.

To sum up, the members of this Council are passionate, faithful, and maybe a little over-caffeinated. Serving as Chair has been a blessing, and I'm excited to see how God will continue to move through this amazing team.

Yours faithfully, **Rev. Dr. Irvan A. Gammon**