

## Findlay Office Update—Transformational Ministries

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Today I thought I'd take a moment to give you a bit of an update on what's going on in Findlay. While we are fairly used to transition here in the General Conference office, one of the more unique aspects of my being named executive director this spring was the simple fact that I came from within the General Conference office as I had served as the director of Transformational Ministries for the past nine years. Many have asked over the past several months, "What will happen with your old job in the General Conference office?" Some have wondered if I'd try to do both roles (no, I'm not that crazy), or if the position would be phased out (it won't, it's a pretty vital piece of our work), or when a new director might be named.

We will be beginning the search for a new director of Transformational Ministries in the very near future with the goal of having someone in place no later than the end of this year. I thought a little background might be helpful. When I came on board in February of 2006, I was hired as the director of youth and family ministry. A couple years later, we created another area focused on leadership and I gave oversight to both youth and family ministry and leadership. Somewhere around 2012 the Ad Council began exploring how to restructure the General Conference departments to provide for the best efficiency and effectiveness. As a result of this effort, what was formerly known as church renewal (which had been merged with church planting for a number of years) was added to my responsibilities. Rolling three departments (youth & family ministry, leadership, and church renewal) necessitated a new department name and some refocusing.

Lots of possible names were explored but we finally chose the name of Transformational Ministries. When you think about the central role transformation plays in God's story and his Gospel, this captured the essence of the work we are trying to accomplish. As we worked through what this new department would actually do, three large themes emerged – mission, discipleship and leadership development. We help congregations understand and embrace God's mission, help congregations become effective at making disciples, and help develop leaders who serve well and finish well. We want to see congregations transformed by a renewed commitment to God's mission, lives transformed through the power of the Gospel through intentional disciple-making, and leaders transformed through intentional investment and development.

So that's how we came to have a department called Transformational Ministries. In the coming weeks we will be announcing the search for a new director of Transformational Ministries and I'd ask you to be in prayer for us as we look for the person who will give leadership to this important role in the years to come. We're going to be looking for a person who not only understands the theology and practical implications of God's mission, but who also embodies that mission with a lived experience. This person will need to demonstrate an understanding of disciple-making models with a proven track record of personal discipleship. This individual will also need to have the character and competency of a Christ-centered leader who is able to help others embrace God's agenda by seeking His kingdom and His righteousness. Finally, we're looking for a person who has a strong grasp and understanding of our changing culture, emerging generations, and the unique challenges facing the church as we pursue God's mission to transform the world. If you have questions about this position or even want to recommend someone for the role, feel free to drop me a note at [lance@cggc.org](mailto:lance@cggc.org).

Christ's Peace,  
**Lance**

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## Winebrenner Theological Seminary Selects New President

The Board of Trustees of Winebrenner Theological Seminary is excited to announce the selection of the Seminary's next president, the **Rev. Dr. Brent C. Sleasman**. Dr. Sleasman will begin his service on December 1, following the retirement of Winebrenner's current president, Dr. David E. Draper.

Dr. Sleasman is originally from Fayette County in southwestern Pennsylvania and currently serves as an Associate Professor in the School of Communication and the Arts at Gannon University in Erie, PA. Additional duties include serving as Basic Course Director and Director of Gannon's MA in Health Communication. Prior to beginning at Gannon in 2008, he taught at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Sleasman has also taught courses at Owens Community College in Findlay, The University of Findlay, Winebrenner Theological Seminary, as well as numerous other colleges and universities.



Dr. Sleasman is editor of an upcoming volume exploring Albert Camus's philosophy of communication, author of *Albert Camus's Philosophy of Communication: Making Sense in an Age of Absurdity* and contributing author to *Critical Insights: Albert Camus, Albert Camus's The Stranger: Critical Essays*, and the *Journal of the Albert Camus Society*. Other publications have appeared in *The Electronic Church in the Digital Age: Cultural Impacts of Evangelical Mass Media* as well as the *Sage Encyclopedia of Identity* and the *Social History of American Families*. He serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Communication and Religion*.

Dr. Sleasman earned his undergraduate degree in Speech at The University of Findlay and a Master of Divinity from Winebrenner Theological Seminary. He earned a Ph.D. in Rhetoric from Duquesne University in 2007. He is ordained in the Allegheny Region of the Churches of God, General Conference and has served in several pastoral roles.

Dr. Sleasman writes, "I am humbled to assist Winebrenner Theological Seminary in creating a Christ-centered environment where faculty engage in high quality teaching, thought-provoking scholarship, and local and international service. My goal is to lead an institution where graduates are equipped to serve God locally and globally in His ministry of reconciliation."

Pastor Ed Rosenberry, Search Committee Chairperson, adds, "I welcome Dr. Sleasman as the next president of Winebrenner Seminary. After a diligent search process it's exciting to see how the Lord led through it all. We had an excellent field of candidates from which Dr. Sleasman emerged as the committee's choice based on input and prayer from the entire Winebrenner community (students, faculty, staff, trustees, etc.) as well as the Church and University. Dr. Sleasman's enthusiasm for Winebrenner Seminary and his experience in Academia and the Church will, I believe, serve the Seminary well as it prepares servant leaders to fulfill Christ's mission in the world."

Dr. David Draper adds his congratulations, noting that "Dr. Sleasman brings great academic credentials, expertise, and pastoral experience which will fit well for leading in fulfillment of WTS' mission ...by preparing servant leaders of the Lord Jesus Christ for effective ministry in the Church and the world."

Dr. Sleasman is married to his wife, Julie and they have three children, Zoe (9), Dahelson (6), and Ellie (4). He will be formally installed as president at a special service to be held at a later date.