

## 2015 ERC Sessions: Part 2--Vol. 9, No. 18--May 1, 2015

### Tuesday Afternoon (April 21)



Caleb and Christina Acosta

The Acostas opened the afternoon session with a meditation focused upon "Seeing with the Eyes of Jesus." After their devotions, the conference voted to welcome the following churches as new congregations in the region.

As Full Members: (Meeting the organizational order as set forth in the ERC constitution)

- Blessed Assurance Church of Christ in Bristol, PA (George Tobey, teaching elder)
- New Creation Christian Church in Charlotte, NC (Ken Robinson, teaching elder)

As Associate Members: (Still working on a constitution, by-laws, and membership commitment)

- Grace Fellowship Church in Columbia, SC (Reginald Byrden, planter)
- Joshua Ministries in Charlotte, NC (Lawrence Grandberry, planter)
- Freedom Worship Center in Charlotte, NC (Randall Hall-Walker, planter)
- Christian Heritage Church in Pineville, NC (Clive Joe, planter)
- New Life Community Outreach Ministry in Ahoskie, NC (Stevie Lawrence, planter)
- Winston-Salem, NC (Ezra Davis, planter)
- Roanoke Rapids, NC

ERC Director Kevin Richardson reviewed the updated strategic plan, noting the changes made since its first inception in 2005. The foundational items like the mission statement and core values remain unchanged, but certain parts require adjustment to strengthen operations and facilitate the action plans necessary to address needs in evangelism, spiritual growth, ministry effectiveness, leadership, and communication areas. The conference affirmed the plan as revised unanimously.



ERC Director Kevin Richardson

After a fifteen minute break the conference gathered for workshops focused this time on preaching, discipleship, worship, and missions. In the following business session the conference received reports from several commissions and the Church of God Home, Inc. Kevin Richardson closed the afternoon with a message focused on the conference theme, "Simply Jesus!" He focused on Acts 9:17ff. The mission today is the same as Saul/Paul's of old: to preach Jesus showing that he is both Lord and savior. We often preach it, but how well do we show it by our lives and deeds? Are we willing to pay the price necessary to proclaim and demonstrate Jesus as both Lord and Christ? (See 2 Corinthians 11:16ff)

## Tuesday Evening



The ERC ordination candidates (pictured above and below)



Tuesday evening the Conference ordained 14 persons and issued licenses to 25 others. This was one of the largest groups of men and women ever to receive credentials. I've included their names at the end of this eNews. Linda played the piano for the service and Stephanie DiFrancesco and her daughter offered special music accompanied on the guitar by Travis Jarrett. I had the honor of bringing the message on "The Bride of Christ" from The Song of Songs 2:1-13, Ephesians 5:22-33, and Matthew 25:1-13.

Speaking to all present as members of the Bride, I stressed the importance of loving Jesus above all, to love him as he has loved each one of us. Then from the New Testament passages, I spoke directly to those being ordained and licensed as groomsmen and bridesmaids, charging them with caring for Christ's Bride and watching for his coming. The Church is his beloved and not our possession to use or abuse for our own purposes. Should she suffer under our care there will be consequences when he returns.



Tom Myers, Ken Robinson, and Gilbert Thurston after the ordination service



Reginald Byrden

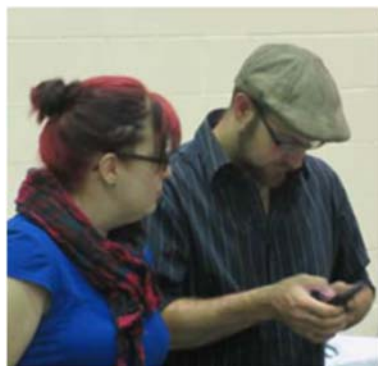


Ed Rosenberry with newly ordained Latino pastors (l to r) Ed, Jeanette Perez, Ricardo Perez, Jose Aquino, Ana Aquino, and Eva Lezama

After the message each ordinand pledged their fealty to Christ and the Bride and were set apart by the Conference for a lifetime of ministry within the CGGC. A reception in the DGC lodge for those ordained and their families followed the service and concluded the evening session (pictured below).



### Wednesday Morning (April 22)



Becky and Travis Jarrett at ERC sessions

Judd Spencer, using the story of the rich ruler (Luke 18:18ff), began the day with devotions, encouraging each would-be Jesus follower to determine what they must surrender to the Lord and then to do so. Then Charlie Yost, one of our four CGGC active-duty military chaplains, shared the importance of serving as such in the US armed services and asked the churches to considering directly ministering to all servicemen and women in their churches and their communities. Tom Lucas, retired chaplain, also spoke to the importance of church support and the need for additional chaplains. Additional reports were received from Women's Ministries and Senior Life Fellowship.

After the organizational reports, Dave Williams took time to review the 2014 ministry stats. He pointed out that the numbers do not reflect the stated core values or mission of the Conference. Based on Galatians 6:4 he challenged each church to be the best church they can be! In the past ten years 70



churches grew; half of them by 10% or more; however, 73 churches declined by 10% or more; and 9 churches closed. Dave remarked that this trend is not good and if it continues many more churches will close. He said, "It's time to get serious about our mission and our core values and turn the tide!" He challenged every church to engage their community and reach people for Christ.



Jim Moss, Jr. prays for newly affiliated congregations represented by Ken Robinson and Reginald Byrden with Kevin Richardson (l to r)



Kevin Richardson prays for Randall Hall-Walker (left) of the Freedom Worship Center



Brenda Cooker (left) and Barb Harris

Mark Hosler closed the morning session and the 15th annual conference with a challenge to be found faithful. He shared a photo of five retired ministerial couples (pictured below right) and quoted Hebrews 10:25 to point out the importance of being the Church together. He said, "The conference theme has been 'Simply Jesus,' but during the sessions a corollary has emerged that is equally essential. We must give and receive encouragement to and from each other. Hanging out with Jesus and one another strengthens the body of Christ, and they often happen simultaneously." So, don't be absent or you may miss Jesus. (John 20:24)

After a short break, the conference officially received congregations in process of affiliating with the region. P. Robinson and the New Creation Christian Church, Regir and the Grace Fellowship Church were welcomed first, and so was Randall Hall-Walker and the Freedom Worship Center. At the direction of Jim Moss, Jr., broke out groups to pray for one another and the various ministries re



Prayer group (l to r) Nancy Boyer, George Yerger, Caleb Acosta, Calina Acosta, and Isaac Acosta

Kevin Richardson took time to recognize Barb Harris and Brenda Cooker as the administrative support team for the conference. What followed next was totally unexpected, at least by me. He invited me forward and presented me with a pack of cards from across the region in appreciation for the service given and me to the ERC and the General Conference. I want to thank you to the ERC and the entire CGGC. We are so blessed and serve among God's people!



Couples left to right: Bob and Donna Crosby, Earl and Donna Sleasman, Stan and JoAnn Darrah, Al Rockey (Nina not pictured--she took the photograph), Dick and Anna Molgaard

After the presentation Mark Hosler invited those elected to various offices in the Conference to come forward for their official installation. He reminded them and the Conference that the Lord, through his people, has called them. He led them through a series of vows, concluding with prayer.



Checking out the chicken

After a prayer for the churches and the ministry of the conference, Mark thanked all those who made the sessions possible, made a few announcements, and entertained a motion to adjourn. He invited his father, Fred Hosler, to come and offer the closing prayer for the conference and the noon meal: BBQ chicken! According to Ken Robinson, chicken is the secret of successful ministry. To understand that last comment, well, you just had to be there.

ONe Mission together,  
Ed  
*Soli Deo Gloria!*

### **Those Credentialed on Tuesday Evening**

**Ordained:** Ana & Jose Aquino, Tracy Conner, Victor Glover, Charles Jenkins, Martin Kiggins, Eva Lezama, Barb Maurice, Glen Osborn, Jeanette & Ricardo Perez, Rachel Neely-Sleasman, Judd Spencer, and Scott Sweigart

**Annual License:** Dennis Bailey, Chris Clugh, John Cook, Brandon Goodling, Kelly Hall, Catherine Kimmel, Ed Maxwell, Jeff Parthemore, Carol Sites, Jason Smith, George Tobey, Dean White, and Dustin White

**Transitional License:** Reginald Byrden, Ezra Davis, Lawrence Grandberry, Clive Joe, Antoine Lassiter, Stevie Lawrence (Sr.), Ken Robinson, and Jim Rogers

**Provisional License:** Randall Hall-Walker, Carl Miner, Vicki Robinson, and Jory Tobias

## Pine River Church Seeking a Pastor



The Pine River Church of God is currently seeking a Part-Time Pastor who is a strong Biblical preacher with an emphasis on reaching those who need a relationship with God. Our church is located in central Michigan, 3 miles from the village of Vestaburg, which has approximately 2000 residents. Our church has been newly remodeled and currently has an average worship attendance of 40-45 on Sunday mornings which includes 10-12 children and youth. Our church is welcoming with

very friendly people. We are looking for a pastor who reflects that same welcoming, friendly attitude and is serious about Biblical truth.

You may learn more about our church by visiting our Facebook page; PineRiver ChurchofGod. You may also check out the website <http://pineriverchurchofgodmi.webstarts.com>. If you are interested in this ministry opportunity or have questions, please send a resume or express your interest by **May 15, 2015**. Send your email to the church email address: [prcgmi@gmail.com](mailto:prcgmi@gmail.com) or Pine River Church of God, P.O Box 326, Vestaburg, Mi 48891. You may also contact Great Lakes Conference Director Earl Mills, [glcdirector@cggc.org](mailto:glcdirector@cggc.org).