

Converge Worldwide Board Report
Heartland District Annual Meeting 2018

I am so grateful that we are a part of something bigger as the churches of the Heartland. Our district provides a way for us to be better together throughout our communities. Not only that we are a part of something bigger around the world through Converge Worldwide. When the board met together in the fall of 2017 our primary focus was strategy for 'closing the back door which involves strengthening our churches. I know that this is at the heart of each pastor within our district and I want you to know that our conference wants to resource and encourage us in this area as well. Here is the list of initiatives our conference hopes to see movement in with each of our churches: Spiritual formation, Biblical visioning, strategic thinking, leader mentoring, reaching out, and supportive networks. If you would like more information about what our conference is hoping to do in any of these initiatives please let me know and I can forward the expanded notes from the meeting.

At our meeting in April of 2018 we spent time considering 7 systems for establishing Converge Ministries. Whenever God leads us to some initiative the following priorities must be considered: Spiritual Dynamics (healthy leaders), recruitment, assessment, training, coaching, resourcing, and mutual accountability/relationship. As our conference and districts consider church planting and residency programs in existing churches all of these considerations will be visited. Health in these ministries means I am strong enough to do what I have been purposed for. Any leader in these roles needs to know how healthy they are. They need to be ready to get going.

After two years of praying, meeting, searching, interviewing and screening candidates, Converge is pleased to announce that God has provided a very qualified leader to take the position of vice president of Biblical Diversity. Candidates for this position went through numerous levels of testing, including personality, marriage, doctrine, competency and chemistry. Our final candidate and his wife also spent a day with Jerry Dahl from Strategic Team Makers Outside, had dinner with the president and his wife and had two days of candidating at the national office, including meetings with local pastors, the Orlando staff team, the Executive Ministry team and the DEMs. Other than for the presidency, we have not screened any group of candidates for a national position on our team this thoroughly. Dr. Harold Lewis and his wife Janet will join the Converge Staff Team effective September 24. Dr. Lewis has a vast history of ministry, including local church and denominational work. His national assignments included church planting, multi-cultural and justice ministries, church health and coordinating with Native American, Micronesian, Hispanic, Korean, Haitian and African-American leaders.

It has been my privilege to serve as the Heartland District Representative to the board of overseers for these past four years. I want to welcome Mark Dixon from Sun Prairie into the role going forward. I know he will do a great job as a conduit between our district and the Converge Worldwide Staff and Board.

In Christ,

Pastor Ben Payne
Northridge Baptist Church