



**VENTURE**  
CHURCH NETWORK MIDWEST



**THE CENTRAL CONNECTION**  
March 2021

*"We are an organization of churches that is committed to the mission of Christ to multiply disciple-making churches through evangelism, leadership training, and connection with other like-minded churches."*

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

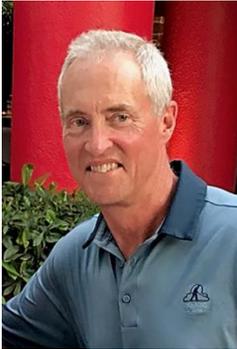
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## FROM THE DIRECTOR:

### The Equality Act: Just So You Know...

*"Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all." – Colossians 3:9-11.*

"Most of you have heard of the *Equality Act* passed by the House of Representatives last year and presented in the House dated February 18, 2021. The goal is to "prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, and for other purposes".



"What this is supposed to mean is that people cannot be fired from a job, denied service or skipped over for something like an apartment lease because of these stated issues above. On the other hand, there is grave concern that this proposal will deeply infringe on Faith-based and religious organizations. . ."

[Read More](#)

*Pastor Brad Little, Regional Executive Director  
Venture Church Network Midwest (CBNC)*





## **A Special Message From Our President.**

Throughout Scripture and history we see that when there was a time of uncertainty and fear, God often moved in amazing ways, demonstrating his power, transforming people and nations, taking the ordinary to accomplish the extraordinary. And in those moments, people celebrated what God did...and then they forgot...especially when the next crisis came. I've seen that happen in my own life. Perhaps you can relate.

Our association, the Conservative Baptists, has a long rich history of advancing the gospel, of multiplying churches and teaching God's Word. There are many churches, people and leaders all over the country who have been part of this tradition and legacy...a heritage and history that are very meaningful to us. But we acknowledge that our influence, reach and capacity are not what they once were. Some have even wondered if we even exist beyond the bones of our historical heritage.

We are in the midst of sweeping cultural challenges and a global pandemic. Yet we believe God is on the move and is calling us to respond with something new. Something bold. Something courageous that speaks fresh and anew into our family of churches and beyond.

This past year has been a clear reminder that people are hurting and lost. People are afraid. People need hope. And the Church has been given the message and the means, and yes, the responsibility, to provide that Hope for our broken and lost world. This past year has also reminded us that no leader...no church can (or was meant to) do this alone. We believe churches and leaders, networked together, was modeled in the early church and is the intention of the Holy Spirit who gifts his Church so we will help one another.

That's why we believe that God is calling us as a network of churches into a bold path. While we are secured in our doctrinal heritage, we are committed to stepping into new ways to link our arms together to serve, not our national organization, but the local Church and Christ's calling for it in the world. We want to curate the strengths from within our network in a way that comes alongside churches and leaders, helping them to take the bold next steps their Lord is calling for them to take.

With that in mind I am pleased to announce that we have changed our name to something that more reflects this calling on us. We will now be known as Venture Church Network.

*David Whitaker, President  
Venture Church Network*

**Read the Official Announcement**



**Tuesday, March 23, 9:00am (CST)**  
with an alternative repeat session  
**Wednesday, March 24, 3:00pm (CST)**

**MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!**

**The Purpose of ENGAGE** is to address gospel and missional critical issues and challenge our thinking related to pastoral ministry, leadership and the purpose of our churches.

**The Goal of ENGAGE** is to continue to become gospel-centered, grace driven, biblically anchored churches passionately committed to fulfill the mission of Christ.

**WATCH FOR YOUR ZOOM INVITE**

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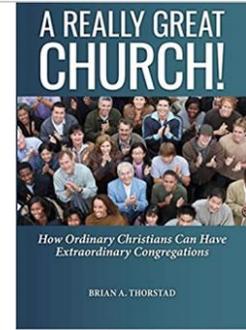
## **Is Your Church A Really Great Church?**

"Working under Brad Little our VCNMidwest Director has been good for me. Brad challenges us to see the big picture and to inspire us to our calling. My position as Networking Director fits me fairly well. I enjoy being a cheerleader for pastors and I also look for "what works" types of things. My articles, as a rule, deal with how to stir up evangelism, being a peacemaker and similar topics.



"This month I would like to point out a book that tripped my trigger. *A Really Great Church!*, by Brian Thorstad has hit a cord with me." [Read More](#)

*Pastor Eldon Carlson*  
*VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director*



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## *Henry C. Spicer Scholarship*

**Deadline April 1st . . . APPLY TODAY!**



*Do you know a high school senior graduating this spring? You can help by passing on this valuable information.*

Again this year Venture Church Network Midwest (CBNC) will be awarding the Henry C. Spicer Scholarship to a graduating high school senior planning to further their education this fall. Previous scholarships have ranged from \$300 to \$1,000.

The scholarship from the Henry C. Spicer Scholarship Fund is available to all qualifying high school seniors. To qualify, an applicant must be a 2021 high school graduate planning to attend college this fall. The applicant must be a committed Christian and a regular attender of a VCN Midwest (CBNC) affiliated church.

**Applications are due by April 1, 2021.**

**Application Available [HERE!](#)**

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**Venture Church Network (CBAmerica) Chaplaincy**

## Promoting Daddy: Chaplain's Family Organizes God-Honoring Celebration



"In Romans 12:15, Paul wrote: *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep."*

"2020 was a uniquely challenging year, for all of us, including our VCN chaplains, so when good things happen, we need to rejoice.

"February 10, 2021 was such a day! One of our military chaplains was being promoted. In accordance with post regulations, chaplain Daniel & Sasha Moen wisely requested use of Ft. Carson's large Soldier's Memorial Chapel for a "worship service" in place of a traditional unit-level "promotion ceremony." Army guidelines for religious services allowed for a bigger audience socially distanced in this larger indoor facility. So, in typical fashion, the whole Moen Family went to work."

[Read More](#) -by Andy Meverden, Associate Endorser



Rev. Randy L. Brandt  
Chaplain, Colonel, USA Ret.  
Director of Chaplaincy,  
Venture Church Network  
[CBAmerica.org](http://CBAmerica.org)  
[chapbrandt@cbamerica.org](mailto:chapbrandt@cbamerica.org)  
Cell: 913-904-8746 (Mtn)

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## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT. . .

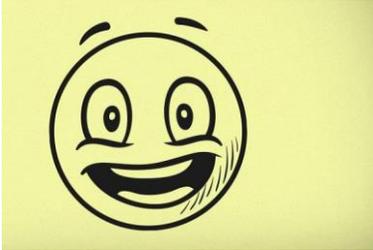
### **What Changes with a Move from a Church of 50 to a Church of 150**

"All churches have leadership challenges, regardless of size. Small churches are not easier to lead than large churches. Large churches are not



easier to grow than small churches. But they are different. When pastors move from one size church to another, they have to adapt."

[Read More](#) -by Sam Rainer, Churchanswers.com



### **How An Unspoken Justin Bieber Joke Taught Me To Treat Everyone As An Image-Bearer**

"Do unto others..." doesn't have any loopholes ([Matthew 7:12](#))."

[Read More](#) -by Karl Vaters, Churchleaders.com



### **9 Things Great Leaders Do**

"The book of Acts describes the amazing story of Jesus' work through the Holy Spirit in the early church. With an explosive start, problems were certain to surface. However, they lead the church well and model for us 9 things great leaders do."

[Read More](#) -by Charles Stone, Sermoncentral.com

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## **Venture Church Network Midwest/CBNC CLUSTER GROUPS**

### **Central Illinois**

To Be Decided

Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC)

Networking Director

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

### **Chicagoland**

Wednesday, March 17, 2pm

Meeting at Cityview Community Church,  
Elmhurst, IL with Regional Director, Brad  
Little Attending

Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)



**Iowa**

Tuesday, March 16, Noon

Meeting at Calvary Baptist Church, Cedar Rapids, IA

*Jay Jentink, Calvary Baptist Church, Cedar Rapids, IA*

319-396-3233 [office@calvarycr.org](mailto:office@calvarycr.org)

**Northern Minnesota/North Dakota**

To Be Decided

*Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director*

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

**Central Minnesota**

Monday, March 15, 10am

Meeting at River of Life Church

*Steve Schoenwald*

*River of Life Church, Hastings, MN*

651-437-3965 [sdschoenwald@gmail.com](mailto:sdschoenwald@gmail.com)

**Southern Minnesota**

Monday, March 15, 11am

Meeting at First Baptist Church, Jackson, MN with Regional Director, Brad Little

Attending

*Walt Moser, First Baptist Church, Luverne, MN*

605-254-3092 [PastorWalt.Moser@gmail.com](mailto:PastorWalt.Moser@gmail.com)

*Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director*

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

**Michigan**

Friday, March 19, 12:30pm (Eastern time)

Meeting at First Baptist Church, Plainwell, MI with Regional Director, Brad Little

Attending

*Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director*

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

**Wisconsin**

Tuesday, March 9, Noon

Meeting at Denny's restaurant in Mauston, WI

*Eldon Carlson, VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director*

715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

*Wade Duroe, Crossroads Church, Chippewa Falls, WI*

715-723-1054 [wljc12@hotmail.com](mailto:wljc12@hotmail.com)

**Youth Leaders/Pastors**

Thursday, March 11, 10am  
Virtual Meeting - Zoom  
Eldon Carlson, VCNM Networking Director  
715-559-1979 [ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)

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## NEED DIRECTION, NEED A RESOURCE???

Check out some of the services of Venture Church Network Midwest/CBNC here.

Other items can be found by visiting our [website](#)  
or contacting Brad Little, Regional Executive Director.



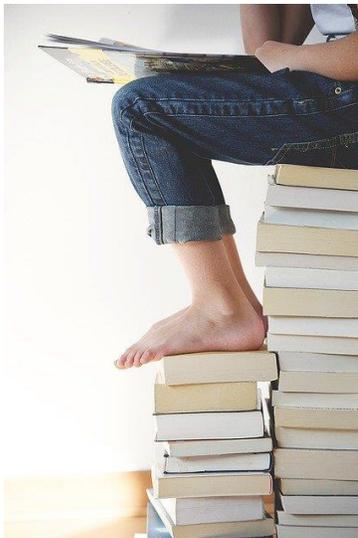
[Free Demographic Report](#)



[Background Check Resources](#)



[Natural Church Development Church Assessment Tool](#)



[Henry C. Spicer Scholarship Awards](#)



[Listing of All VCN Midwest \(CBNC\) Churches](#)



[Compensation Guidelines for Pastors & Staff](#)

# TAX



501c3 Tax Exempt Status  
for Associated Churches

Interim Pastor Services  
Through IPM

Retirement Information



## **Venture Church Network Midwest (CB North Central)**

**PO Box 490441, Blaine, MN 55449**

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VCN Midwest (CBNC)  
Regional Executive Director**

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763-350-4263

**Eldon Carlson  
VCN Midwest (CBNC) Networking Director**

[ecarlson@bloomer.net](mailto:ecarlson@bloomer.net)  
715-559-1979

**Wendy Jonasen  
Administrative Assistant**

[wendyj@vcnmidwest.org](mailto:wendyj@vcnmidwest.org)  
763-205-9330

Administrative Office Hours:  
Tues. thru Fri. 8am - 1pm

**Stay Connected**  
[www.vcnmidwest.org](http://www.vcnmidwest.org)

