



7820 Fort Street
Omaha, NE 68134-2366

Phone: 402.965.3860

August 4, 2026

Connect26 is now in the books. It was an amazing gathering, and if you missed it, you should seriously consider attending Connect27! Attendance was up, spirits were high, and Salem Church in Waldheim, SK did an amazing job of hosting.

At Connect, people from across North America come together. Some are pastors, some are elders or church leaders, and some are interested laypeople – but they all share a common love for God's Word, a desire to see our communities evangelized, and a commitment to local church ministry.

This year included a truly unique experience. Due to a severe storm, the power was out in Waldheim for about 24 hours. Some from the church had trees down on their properties, most had no power, and some had no running water. And yet they stepped up their service to us – providing generators, stringing temporary lights, setting up a portable sound system, etc. The event continued to the hum of generators and with limited lighting in many areas. Hosts kept hosting, hot meals continued to be served, and the planned events continued. We offered more than once to suspend the event and help the community with clean up, but our hosts insisted that we should continue. It was inspiring to experience the generosity of these servants, and I commend our Convention Coordinator Crystal Klassen, Salem's coordinator Roger Schultz, and the whole Salem team for their amazing and sacrificial service! We're going to remember this one.

I could take this space to mention so many things but let me highlight a small change that was a big success. After many years of a "Ladies Boutique" where items were sold to benefit pastors and their wives, we decided to try something new. We set out four jigsaw puzzles in a room and guests were invited to hang out there during their free time to connect and help assemble the puzzles. But this was also a fundraiser. Four generous donors pledged a total of \$4,000 to help encourage and support pastors and their wives, and Connect guests were told that for every puzzle they completed, \$1,000 would be donated. They had no problem completing all four. In fact, we need harder puzzles next year! I am grateful for the generous donors who made this activity possible. The Commission on Pastoral Care will help determine how we will use that money.

So much more happened that is worth hearing about. We were challenged, encouraged, inspired, equipped, and we truly connected! I encourage you to check out the new issue of the Fellowship Focus online (coming this week) to learn more. And mark your calendar right now for Connect27, which will be held in **Henderson, NE on July 8-10, 2027**.

Thank you so much for supporting this Fellowship and allowing events like Connect to happen!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Stone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin Stone – President president@febministries.org

Visit us at **FellowshipForward.org**