

Dear Friends,

Without a doubt, 2020 was an unforgettable year, and for good reason. The chaos, confusion and suffering caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have been monumental, and we grieve the loss of life and the economic hardship that affected millions across the world. Yet, in the midst of it all, God's presence and power continued to be made known, including through the witness and work of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). So it is with humility and a sense of wonder that we look back on a year that, despite all of its unprecedented difficulties, yielded much fruit for the kingdom of God.

We are delighted to share with you a glimpse of the impact that your generous financial support has made possible. Because of you, the NAE was able to embark on a new era of leadership, make important progress in critical areas, forge new alliances, speak prophetically on behalf of biblical values, and continue to expand our gospel witness on behalf of, and through, the dynamic community of individuals, schools, denominations, churches and nonprofits with whom we partner. Thank you!



Keep reading for highlights from 2020 that you made possible!

Connecting and Representing

As an interdenominational and nonpartisan entity, the NAE is uniquely positioned to make a broad impact for the gospel in ways that are not possible for any single church, institution or denomination. This is a critical factor in fulfilling our mission to honor God by connecting and representing evangelical Christians.

We **connect** in order to build unity and generate the creative exchange of resources and ideas within the wider evangelical community.

As a broad and diverse network, we **represent** the concerns and values of evangelical Christians in order to amplify our collective gospel witness, believing wholeheartedly that God is in the business of “reconciling all things to himself” (Colossians 1:20).

The NAE's influence can be seen in the breadth, depth and diversity of our membership:

More than 70 schools and nonprofits

40 denominations representing more than 45,000 churches.

Altogether, the NAE represents millions of people, making us the largest organized body of evangelicals in the country.

Executing Successful Leadership Transitions

2020 was momentous for the NAE, with the inauguration of **Walter Kim** as president, and **John Jenkins** and **Jo Anne Lyon** as board chair and vice chair, respectively. Together, we are delighted to serve in these roles, because we believe in the mission of the NAE, and we are convinced that the need for the NAE's leadership within evangelicalism and on behalf of the common good is as great as it has ever been. **We are especially inspired to give our very best to these roles when we think of you and your strong support for the NAE.**



From left to right: John Jenkins, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Glenarden and NAE board chair; Walter Kim, NAE president; and Jo Anne Lyon, general superintendent emerita and ambassador of The Wesleyan Church and NAE Vice Chair. Photo credit: JeffreyGrounds Photography.

As we embark on our shared leadership journey, we are immensely grateful for the strong and steady leadership that **Leith Anderson** provided as NAE president over

the past 13 years. As a result of Leith's courage and faithfulness, we are stronger as an organization and bolstered by a foundation of trust bestowed upon us by evangelical leaders and communities. We celebrate God's grace to the NAE through Leith's leadership, and are excited to build upon his legacy for increased gospel impact for years to come.

Equipping Leaders During COVID

Every year the NAE hosts a retreat for the executive leaders of our member denominations to encourage and support them, and to deepen the unity of the Body of Christ. We have intentionally sought to create a safe space for leaders to be vulnerable with one another and to develop relationships of trust and accountability between themselves. This forms the basis for ongoing collaboration, particularly in response to crises.

With the outbreak of the COVID pandemic in March 2020, the **NAE organized and hosted virtual gatherings for denominational leaders during the months of March and May.** The purpose of these gatherings was to facilitate creative thinking and problem-solving in light of the pandemic and the challenges it posed for churches in their worship and ministry. **However, it was the pre-existing relationships that many of these leaders had with one another, and the trust that had grown between them that made it possible for a significant amount of synergy to occur.** And the seeds of those relationships lay in their shared experience of the annual executives retreat.

The NAE was at the forefront of developing resources and facilitating access for Christian communities across the country to be equipped for this unprecedented crisis. Initiatives deployed for this purpose include:

- New websites created to address felt needs: [NAEcarepackage.com](https://www.naefcarepackage.com) and [ReopeningTheChurch.com](https://www.ReopeningTheChurch.com); and
- Partnering with Wheaton College's Humanitarian Disaster Institute (HDI) in a multifaceted effort to equip churches and Christian leaders navigate the complexity of the COVID-19 crisis. Together we launched a weekly webinar and town hall series on March 13 — the same day that the U.S. national emergency was declared. We also co-hosted the COVID-19 Online Church Summit in late March.

Your investment in the NAE’s mission enabled us to respond swiftly and decisively to this crisis. The impact of these resources has been profound, and the resilience of Christian communities has shone brightly.

Strengthening Churches

In addition to the resources produced to help churches navigate the COVID crisis, another exciting area of impact for the NAE in 2020 was the **Bless Your Pastor** initiative. The purpose of this effort is to mobilize local churches with creative ideas and financial resources to appreciate, encourage and bless their pastors in practical and meaningful ways. This is a “hands on” program that facilitates active involvement from congregations.

We celebrate the explosive growth of this initiative last year, because we know how challenging pastoral ministry can be, especially in times of crisis. **Bless Your Pastor** is an example of God’s people using God’s resources to respond in a timely manner to a critical need “at such a time as this.” Thank you!

Resourcing and Educating Evangelicals for Thoughtful Action

Central to our witness is a commitment to an integration of faith and the mind in ways that guide faithful action in the world. 2020 was a year of unprecedented challenges to how we think about and live out Christian identity in an increasingly complex world. **Your support was crucial in the work to resource and educate evangelicals, including:**

- Articles in Evangelicals magazine about engaging others across deep differences, mental and emotional health in the church, and the impact of the coronavirus on churches;
- Video and multiple articles and statements on the need for racial justice;
- “A Call to Civic Responsibility” statement co-authored with World Relief, published by The Washington Post, and signed by **2,800 evangelical leaders**;
- Today’s Conversation monthly podcast with NAE President Walter Kim and a diverse array of Christian leaders and scholars. **Last year, each podcast had over 900 unique page views and nearly 800 downloads**;
- Featured contribution to the book “Arise Together: How the Body of Christ is Funding Hope through the Pandemic”;
- Launch of the new website EvangelicalChaplains.com to attract new chaplains and endorsers as part of the NAE’s Evangelical Chaplains Commission;
- Various resource pages on NAE.net that speak to current issues of the day (**Our website averaged 32,500 unique views per month.**); and
- NAE Connection monthly email to 17,000+ recipients (**over a 20% increase from the start of the year**).

Bless Your Pastor Impact

More than **1,900 churches** participated in the program — a 10-fold increase from 180 in 2019!

Churches collected **more than \$1.2 million** in special offerings for their pastors.

Thousands of acts of kindness and generosity were performed on behalf of pastors and their families by the members of their congregations.



Preparing the Next Generation

Since 1956, the NAE has been gathering college students every year from across the country for a week of learning, interaction and inspiration through the Christian Student Leadership Conference (CSLC). The purpose of the CSLC is to expose young adults to influencers and lawmakers from both parties and to explore ways in which God is calling them to be engaged in public life as Christian citizens.

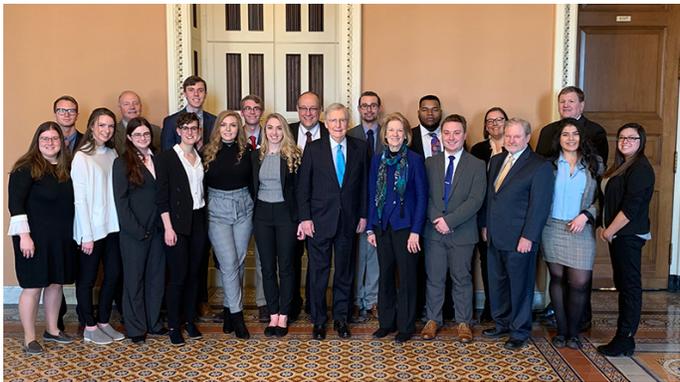
2020 CSLC

83 participants

10 institutions

26 speakers & panelists

Since its inception, and thanks to faithful supporters like you, **more than 5,000 young people** have been impacted by CSLC.



A group of students from a past Christian Student Leadership Conference meet with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell.

“The conference deepened my calling to be a public servant and the desire to elevate the voices of young believers to lead the next generation.”

Jessica Trowell, 2020 CSLC alumna

Uniting for Global Impact

Advancing the gospel around the world has always been central to the NAE’s mission. Your generous giving enables the following:

- Participation in the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), as one of 130 national alliances. The WEA plays a vital role in uniting, resourcing and mobilizing evangelicals on a global scale. **Especially critical for the WEA last year was the search process for a new secretary general, and the NAE played a significant role in this process with our representative serving on the search committee.** We are grateful to God for the successful conclusion of the search, resulting in the installation of Thomas Schirmacher early in 2021. The WEA touches millions of people worldwide, and because of your support, the NAE is able to participate in that broad impact for the gospel.
- Pursuing holistic impact through the work of the NAE’s relief and humanitarian arm, World Relief. Working in dozens of countries around the world, World Relief is an extension of the NAE’s gospel commitment, as it fights to overcome, poverty, violence and injustice as the hands and feet of Jesus, bringing his light to the darkest corners of the world. As World Relief continues to expand its reach both within the United States and around the world, the gospel is experienced more clearly as an integrated and transformational message of hope. The NAE president and one of our vice presidents sit on the World Relief Board of Directors.

Transforming Social and Political Engagement

The NAE exists to represent evangelical concerns to civic and government leaders with a thoughtful and winsome voice that articulates how the gospel should transform every aspect of our world. It is this underlying conviction that motivates the NAE's work in public policy. **Our allegiance to Christ and a robust commitment to the outworking of the gospel in every arena leads us to engage in the public square as an *Influence for Good*, seeking the common good, to the glory of God.** Your faithful support in 2020 was crucial in helping us accomplish the following:

- Co-sponsored with University of Notre Dame a **webinar on the New START nuclear weapons treaty extension**, at which NAE President Walter Kim was a speaker;
- Hosted a **high-level briefing on U.S.-Iran relations** with senior diplomats and scholars;
- Provided resources and relationships for the Church in addressing matters of **racial justice and reconciliation**;
- Played an **active role in securing a rules change to the Paycheck Protection Program** (the government assistance provided to business and organizations in the wake of the COVID pandemic).
- Successfully advocated for an above-the-line tax deduction for charitable contributions made by taxpayers who are not itemizing the deductions on their 2020 tax returns;
- Successfully **defended federal funding for the poor**, both at home and abroad from repeated proposed cuts;
- Articulated a **strong pro-immigrant and pro-refugee position** in numerous statements and letters, strengthening the evangelical voice while challenging the narrative that evangelicals are xenophobic; and
- Wrote, edited and joined several amicus briefs to the Supreme Court on **religious freedom matters**. There is some indication that our briefs helped the Court frame issues in the direction we advocated.

Thank you for partnering with us in this important work. You have an important role in making all of this possible, and we are so grateful! Let us continue to press on, in unity, so that 2021 will be a year in which our shared gospel witness will be said to have shone more brightly, helping our leaders and their communities navigate the complexity of these times with biblical clarity.

Yours in the gospel,



Walter Kim
President



John K. Jenkins, Sr.
Board Chair



Jo Anne Lyon
Board Vice Chair

P.S. Stay tuned for the NAE's new website coming later this year!