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Organization of Conf. /Standing Rules & Roll	Wednesday Afternoon
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StoneRidge Retirement Living	Thursday Morning
Treasurer’s Report	Wednesday Afternoon
Twin Pines	Thursday Morning
Twin Pines Board Election	Thursday Morning
Voting Rights/Conference Boundary	Wednesday Afternoon

National Conference Election Results

Stationing Elder

Great Lakes Region
Rev. Charles Campbell

Benefits Corporation

Ministerial
Rev. Don Metz
Rev. Jeffrey Schell

Twin Pines Board

Lay
Cynthia Razer

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**The Minutes of the
Fifteenth National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church
2017
Campus of Messiah College
Grantham, PA**

**First Day – Wednesday, May 24th, 2017
Morning Session**

- Opening The sessions of the fifteenth National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church convened at Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, May 24th, 2017.
- Workshop A training event for first time lay delegates was held prior to the opening of the Conference session.
- Rev Run The “Bishop Kevin Memorial 5K Rev Run/Walk” event sponsored by the Healthy Pastors Team & the Kingdom Extension Community was held to financially support church planting and promote physical activity among our pastors and lay delegates.

**First Day – Wednesday, May 24th, 2017
1:00 P.M.
Communion**

The Conference gathering was begun with a service of Holy Communion led by Bishop Bruce D. Hill in the Messiah College’s Hostetter Chapel.

**First Day – Wednesday, May 24th, 2017
Afternoon Session 2:30 P.M.**

- Opening Rev. Bruce D. Hill, fourteenth Bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church, called the business sessions of the fifteenth session of the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church to order at 2:30 PM in the Eisenhower Center of Messiah College. He opened the session with prayer.
- Discipline Rev. Jeffrey G. Byerly, First Assistant Secretary, read from the *Discipline*.
- Voting Rights Bishop Hill explained the voting rights to the delegates of the National Conference.
- Standing Rules **On motion**, the Standing Business Rules as found in the Conference Journal and in the report packet were adopted.
- Conference Roll The Secretary reported changes to the distributed Conference roll list. **On motion**, the Conference roll was adopted.
- Conference Boundary **On motion**, the Conference Boundary, in keeping with section D of the Standing Rules, was established.
- Correspondence Rev. Kirk R. Marks, National Conference Secretary, reported that one item of correspondence was received in the form of a letter from Bishop Emeritus Michael W. Sigman addressed to the members and friends of the National Conference. The letter was read.

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Episcopal Address Conference Vice Chairman, Rev. Gary Brown, assumed the chair and Bishop Hill presented his Episcopal Address. On motion, the address was adopted with appreciation.

Women's Program Bishop Hill announced the women's program for this Conference session and dismissed the participants.

The Conference session stood at recess for ten minutes.

NC Secretary Rev. Kirk R. Marks, National Conference Secretary, presented his report. He noted that some versions of his report as distributed required correction in the reporting of the minutes of the March 16, 2017 NMT session. At that session, Rev. Sizemore reported that he will not be pursuing an additional term as Global Ministries Associate when his current term expires in June of 2018. Some versions of the report omitted the word "not" which significantly changed the meaning. All official versions have been corrected.

On motion, the report was corrected and adopted.

Treasurer's Report Mrs. Debra Patterson, National Conference Treasurer, presented the treasurer's report and the narrative portion of the Finance Committee report. **On motion**, these reports were adopted.

Episcopacy Committee Rev. Marlin Lafferty, chair of the Episcopacy Committee, presented the Episcopacy Committee's report, which included the results of the Bishop's evaluation. **On motion**, the report was adopted.

Episcopal Fund An offering was taken for the Episcopal Fund. Bishop Hill announced that the offering amounted to \$975.

Roundtable Discussion Bishop Hill vacated the chair and Conference Vice Chairman, Rev. Gary Brown, assumed the chair. Bishop Hill then led a roundtable discussion with the Executive Director and Associates, which helped describe the workings of the new structure. The group discussed how disciple making is being fostered in all areas of the denomination. The group also discussed the resources that the various communities make available to local churches.

CNT
Recommendations The Conference Network Team members each have submitted written reports to the Conference and those written reports as distributed included two recommendations for action:

1. Rev. Jeffrey Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, presented the "Profile of an EC Pastor" document included in his written report. **On motion**, the document was adopted by the Conference and will be included in the appendix section of the journal.

2. Rev. Randy Sizemore, Global Ministries Associate, provided some background on our EC Missions Conference in Mexico. He then presented the motion from GMC that this National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church, USA, grant National Conference status to the Evangelical Congregational Church of Latin America with all the rights and privileges outlined for National Conferences in the *Discipline*. **On motion**, the item was tabled.

Recognition The Conference recognized Brenda Long for 43 years of faithful service to the EC Church in various capacities in the EC Church Center offices. Brenda will be

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transitioning to part-time work in the coming year.

Stationing Committee Rev. Richard Nahodil presented the stationing report. **On motion**, the report was adopted. Printed copies were made available to the delegates.

On motion, the session was adjourned.

First Day – Wednesday, May 24th, 2017 Evening Session 7:00 P.M.

Worship The Conference celebrated a service of worship with the leaders from the EC Church of Mexico.

Rev. Randy Sizemore, Global Ministries Associate made the following statement:

Since 1977, with the influence of EC missionary, Mae Royer and other key leaders, the mission conference that we affectionately call the EC Church of Mexico has been preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ, baptizing and equipping believers, planting local congregations and ministering to the homes, families and communities in Northern Mexico with unconditional love, unending sacrifice and an unstoppable resolve, inviting their fellow countrymen to come follow Jesus. Overcoming numerous obstacles including poverty, violence, crime, persecution, corruption, a lack of education and resources, the leadership and members of this conference have faithfully continued to build up the Church both spiritually and physically.

Under the current leadership of Rev. Elias Martinez, and his wife Myrna, the Evangelical Congregational Church of Mexico was the first international conference to respond to my challenge of cross-pollinating the Global EC Church, not only donating funds to Liberia and Nepal but Elias traveled with me to these countries to help me help them in their struggles to become self-governing, self-supporting National conferences. Elias and his leadership have been sending their own missionary teams to the indigenous forgotten people in southern Mexico and actively reaching beyond their current borders with the Gospel. By the way, their official name is the Evangelical Church of Latin America because, as they have stated in their documentation, they believe God has called them to evangelize the Spanish speaking people in all of Latin America, not just Mexico.

In 2009 Elias was appointed the Director of the conference and challenged with the task of leading them to National Conference status by 2016. He and his leadership team which includes Juan Zuniga, accepted my challenge, embraced my coaching, and exceeded my expectations! I don't have the time to tell you how they have literally restructured, reformed and revived the pastors, pastors' families, congregations and spirit of their conference.

They submitted the required documentation to the Global Ministries Community and the National Ministry Team, proving their ability to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating and have also submitted their constitution detailing a culturally appropriate structure to advance the mission of the Evangelical Congregational Church of Latin America.

On motion, the GMC recommendation was taken from the table. **On motion**, the item was approved and the Evangelical Congregational Church of Latin America was established as a national conference. Bishop Hill presented the leadership of the EC Church of Latin America with a plaque acknowledging their new status. An award for exemplary leadership was presented to Rev. Elias and Myrna Martinez.

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Message Rev. Elias Martinez brought a message of encouragement and partnership.

On motion, the Conference session was adjourned. An ice cream social followed in celebration of the new Latin American Conference and in recognition of Brenda Long's retirement.

Second Day – Thursday, May 25th, 2017 Morning Session 8:30 A.M.

Worship The Conference worship team led the Conference in opening worship.

Recognition Rev. Elias Martinez presented Rev. Randy Sizemore with a plaque recognizing his leadership and support of the churches in Mexico.

Message Rev. Dr. Gary Kuehner, Church Health Associate, brought the message from Philippians 3:13-14.

Discipline The secretary read from the *Discipline*.

EC Benefits Corporation **On motion**, the Conference adjourned to reconvene as a meeting of the EC Benefits Corporation.

On motion, the Conference reconvened.

Ballot Announced Bishop Hill announced that during the meeting of the EC Benefits Corporation, Rev. Don Metz and Rev. Jeffrey Schell were re-elected as ministerial representatives to the Benefits Corporation Board of Trustees.

Stationing Elder Election A ballot was taken among the ministerial and lay delegates of the Great Lakes Region for Stationing Elder.

ETS Dr. Anthony Blair, president of the Evangelical Theological Seminary, presented his report. He showed a video depicting chaplaincy candidates and described the growing "Four Chaplains" program at ETS. **On motion**, the report was approved.

Ballot Announced Bishop Hill announced the results of the ballot that was taken for Great Lakes Region stationing elder. Rev. Charles Campbell was elected.

StoneRidge Retirement Living Mr. Tom Maiello, Director of Public Relations and Communication for StoneRidge Retirement Living, presented this report. **On motion**, the report was approved.

Camp ECCO Rev. Scott Carr, Camp ECCO Board chairman, presented the report for Camp ECCO and introduced Annette Carr who works for Camp ECCO to promote and publicize the camp's work, who gave a verbal report. **On motion**, the report was adopted.

Twin Pines Mr. Shawn Fetterhoff, Executive Director of Twin Pines, presented this report. He also gave some verbal highlights and described new events and relationships Twin Pines has developed. **On motion**, the report was adopted.

On motion, the Secretary was instructed to cast the ballot for Cynthia Razer for the Twin Pines Board.

The Conference session stood at recess for ten minutes.

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Budget Mrs. Debra Patterson, National Conference Treasurer, and Mr. Kevin Henry, National Conference Executive Director, presented the National Conference budget for 2018. **On motion**, the budget was adopted.

Compensation Mrs. Debra Patterson, National Conference Treasurer, and Mr. Kevin Henry, National Conference Executive Director, presented the compensation recommendations from the Budget Committee.

On motion, item #1 was adopted.
On motion, item #3 was adopted.
On motion, item #4 was adopted.
On motion, item #5 was adopted.

Mrs. Patterson corrected the recommendation on item #6 to make the Secretary's recommended compensation \$700.
On motion, item #6 as corrected was adopted.

Motion, and second, to adopt item #7.
Motion, and second, to amend the working of the item to replace "per year" with "per month" at two places in the item. The motion to amend was withdrawn.
Motion, and second, to amend the item to strike the last sentence of the item. The amendment was adopted by a vote of 76 for and 62 against.
Item #7, as amended, was adopted.

On motion, the Finance Committee's report as a whole was adopted.

Rule Changes Rev. Jeffrey Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, presented rule changes to the 800 section of the rules that are recommended by the Ministerial Development Community. The Bishop asked for questions about the proposed changes by section. **On motion**, the rule changes were adopted.

The Conference stood at recess for lunch.

Second Day – Thursday, May 25th, 2017 Afternoon Session 1:30 P.M.

Kingdom and Community Experience The Conference reconvened and Bishop Hill gave an overview and instructions for delegates to participate in the Kingdom and Community Experience. The experience unfolded with district groups moving from site to site meeting, with representatives of each community. The groups debriefed their GROWTH sheets in the large group setting.

Second Day – Thursday, May 25th, 2017 Evening Session 6:30 P.M.

Worship The Conference session resumed with worship led by the Conference worship team. Rev. Les Cool, Kingdom Extension Associate, brought the message for this service from John 6 about Jesus feeding the five-thousand.

Third Day – Friday, May 26th, 2017 Morning Session 8:30 A.M.

Opening Bishop Hill called the session to order and the secretary read from the *Discipline*.

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Credentials	Rev. N. Patrick Teaford, Chairman of the Ministerial Development Community's Board of Examiners presented the Board's report.
Disciplinary Questions	The following individuals answered the disciplinary questions: Gary Bosler, Andrew Brubaker, Robert Dunbar, Steward MacDonald, Robert Santucci, Paul VanOsten, and William White. Bishop Hill led the Conference in prayer for these candidates.
Executive Session	On motion , the Conference moved into executive session. The Conference reconvened into open session.
Credentials	Rev. Teaford resumed the Board of Examiner's report: We recommend that David Julian be ordained as a Deacon. A ballot was taken for this item. We recommend that L. Donald Knier be transferred to a Local Elder. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Andrew Brubaker be received as a Local Candidate. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Robert Dunbar be received as a Local Pastor. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Todd Wolfe be transferred from a Licensed Pastor to a Local Pastor at his request. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Paul VanOsten be received as a Certified Lay Preacher. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Joel Copeland and Layman Kennedy be transferred to the Superannuated classification. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that John Tornfelt be classified as Retired-Not in the Itinerancy. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Jeffrey Martin be transferred to the Supernumerary classification at his own request. On motion , the item was approved. We recommend that Brian Park and Gregory Stefan be transferred to the Supernumerary classification by action of the Board of Examiners. On motion , the item was approved. The following information items were reported from the Board of Examiners: William White was granted Approved Pastor status by official action of the Board of Examiners. We have granted annual renewals for the following credentialed individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deacon/Deaconess – Ronald Bachman, John Baker, Lisa Custer, John Haub, Marisel Mieses, Timothy Reigle, and Leroy Walbert• Licensed Candidate – Philip Bartelt, Michael Coulson, James Danielson, and Joshua Nemeth• Lay Preacher Certification – Robert Fritz, Jeffrey Miller,

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Donald Romberger, Andrew Sekellick, Kerry Watson and Ronald West

Rolando Diaz, Richard Graham, Mark Meister and Joshua Reinders have been removed from our ministerial rolls, each at his own request.

On motion, the report of the Ministerial Development Community was adopted as a whole.

Ballot Announced Bishop Hill announced the results of the balloting that was taken during the executive session. Andrew Carr, Wayne Houck, Jeff Stansbury, and Gene Stevenson were approved for ordination. Robert Santucci received the required number of votes to transfer his ordination to us.

Ballot Announced Bishop Hill announced the result of the balloting that was taken for Itinerant Deacon: David Julian was approved as an Itinerant Deacon.

Ordination Services A list of the times, dates and locations of the four Ordination Services scheduled for this fall was distributed.

The Conference session stood at recess for 15 minutes.

Memorial Secretary Rev. Adam Roberts, National Conference Memorial Secretary, presented this report. **On motion**, the report was adopted.

Retirement Recognition Bishop Hill announced the list of retirees. Those retiree couples who were recognized were Joel and Brenda Copeland and Layman and Cindy Kennedy. Bishop Hill made the retiree presentations and Rev. Dr. Fred Moury led the Conference in prayer for these retirees.

Milestone Recognitions Bishop Hill recognized Rev. Wilmer Martin and Rev. Gary Luckenbill for achieving 50 years of service with EC credentials. Rev. Joel Copeland led the Conference in prayer of thanksgiving for these years of service.

Ordinands Bishop Hill called forward and recognized those who received new pastoral credentials at this Conference. Rev. Andrew Carr led the Conference in prayer for them.

Andrew Fund An offering was taken for the Andrew Fund and the Conference worship team led the singing of *Holy, Holy, Holy*. The offering amounted to \$1,086.

Closing Challenge Bishop Hill challenged the members of the Conference and the Evangelical Congregational Church to **press on** in pursuing and living out our mission.

Adjournment The Conference session was concluded with the singing of *Wonderful Grace of Jesus* and a closing prayer by Bishop Hill.

Conference Digest Bishop Hill announced that the National Conference Digest has been prepared and it was distributed. It will also be posted on the website and has been distributed by e-mail.

2018 Conference National Conference for 2018 is scheduled for May 30-June 1, 2018 at the campus of Messiah College.

Conference Roll On motion, the National Conference Secretary was authorized to update the Conference Ministerial Rolls.

Committee On motion, the Bishop and Associates were authorized to appoint committees

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Appointments for the 2017-2018 Conference year.

Minutes On motion, the Secretary was authorized to affix signatures to the minutes.

On motion, the fifteenth National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church was adjourned. Bishop Hill led the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kirk R. Marks, National Conference Secretary