



The Fifteenth National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church

Wednesday

Wednesday featured a 5K Run/Walk in support of church planting during the registration process. The conference convened in the afternoon at Hostetter Chapel with the entire conference sharing in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Bishop Hill presented a stirring message focused on Hebrews 11 and the “great cloud of witnesses” who have come before us and inspire us to finish our race well.

Following the service of Holy Communion, the National Conference reconvened at Brubaker Auditorium and cared for the parliamentary procedural items necessary to open the business sessions.

Bishop Bruce Hill delivered the Episcopal address, where he encouraged the conference to continue to live out the missional distinctive on which the Evangelical Congregational Church was founded, to reach the unreached. Copies of the Episcopal address were made available to conference del-

egates, who were encouraged to make this address available to their congregations.

Rev. Kirk Marks, National Conference Secretary, presented his report. Mrs. Debra Patterson, treasurer, presented a report of the Conference finances. Rev. Marlin Lafferty reported for the Episcopacy Committee, including the evaluation of the Bishop.

Bishop Bruce Hill led a roundtable discussion with the Executive Director and Associates. They described their work in the new denominational structure and how disciple making is being fostered in all areas of the denomination. They also discussed the resources that various Communities make available to local churches. The Conference then recognized Brenda Long for her 43 years faithful service to the E.C. Church.

The Conference approved the “Profile of an E.C. Pastor” document and Rev. Richard Nahodil presented the stationing report.

A collection was taken for the Episcopal Fund of \$975.

After dinner, the conference band led in worship. Rev. Randy Sizemore, Global Ministries Associate made a motion to grant National Conference status to the E.C. Church of Latin America. Rev. Elias Martinez, translated by Rev. Carlos Kelly, shared a message, urging the Conference to “press on.”

The evening session closed with an invitation to participate in an ice cream social.

Thursday

The morning began with praise led by the conference band and featured a message from Church Health Associate, Rev. Dr. Gary Kuehner, which focused on the conference theme of “pressing on.”

Rev. Franklin Schock presented the report for the Benefits Corporation and conducted its annual meeting. A ballot was cast for Rev. Donald Metz and Rev.

Jeffrey Schell to the Benefits Corporation Board of Trustees.

Dr. Tony Blair presented the report for Evangelical Theological Seminary.

Mr. Tom Maiello, representing StoneRidge Retirement Living, presented an update on the work of their ministry.

Reports were received from Camp ECCO and Twin Pines Camp.

Rev. Charles Campbell was elected as Stationing Elder to the Great Lakes region.

Kevin Henry, Executive Director, and Mrs. Debra Patterson, National Conference Treasurer, gave the reports of the Finance Committee, which included the following compensation items:

- The base 2018 pastoral salaries were established to be increased by the COLA percentage that will be posted on the church website once it is released.
- The 2018 Conference administrative salaries were established according to the reports.
- Items of information focused on establishing other conference salaries and wages, pension figures, honorariums, vacation schedules, and ministry leaves for 2018.

The budget for the National Conference was approved, which will assign Ministry Funds

for 2018 at 6.75% and the Twin Pines supplement at .24%.

Bishop Hill presented the changes to the Rules of Conference initiated by the Ministerial Development Community. All changes were approved.

The afternoon included the Kingdom and Community Experience. Pastors and delegates were organized into clusters of districts and moved to various areas to hear about how the new Communities function and what they offer churches.

The evening session included worship by the conference worship team. Rev. Les Cool, Kingdom Extension Associate, brought the message from John 6 about Jesus feeding the 5,000.

Friday

Rev. Pat Teaford, the Chairman of the Ministerial Development Community's Board of Examiners, presented the Credentialing Report.

The following statuses were approved:

Itinerant Ordained Elders: Andrew Carr, Wayne Houck, Jeffrey Stansbury, and Gene Stevenson; **Ordained Elder:** Robert Santucci; **Licensed Candidates:** Gary Bosler and Stewart MacDonald; **Licensed Pastor:** Cameron Smith; **Approved Pastor:** William White; **Local Pastor:** Robert Dunbar; **Local Candidate:** Andrew Brubaker; **Deacon:**

David Julian; **Certified Lay Preacher:** Paul Van Osten. **Superannuations:** Joel Copeland and Layman Kennedy. **Additional Retirement:** John Tomfelt.

The annual renewals of credentials were granted.

The conference band led in praise and worship, while Rev. Jeffrey Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, provided a message focused on community.

The Conference concluded with the Memorial Report and recognition of retirees.

The 2017 National Conference adjourned by singing together *Wonderful Grace of Jesus* followed by prayer.