

# GLOBAL MINISTRIES

## **Facilitating Mission Workers:**

With the addition of Beth Grimm, the retirement of John & Carolyn Miller and the transition of Jim Ehrman from our credentialed roster of missionaries, we currently have 24 active missionary units (couples or singles) serving in 8 different countries working in partnership with 14 different agencies with two candidates developing support partners and pursuing commissioning. Even though our missionaries are “out of sight and out of mind” for many attending our churches, we are mindful and thankful for the contributions these men and women give daily to the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ!

## **Empowering International Churches:**

### **Japan:**

The Good News of Jesus Christ is shared, received, planted, nurtured, understood and applied in the context of community. The EC Church of Japan understands this and has been creatively creating opportunities where Japanese men, women, boys and girls can encounter Jesus within community. Our two youngest congregations, Fuchinobe Community Church and Grace Garden Church are using English classes, cell groups, international gatherings, organizational seminars, child care and family festivals to introduce people to Jesus and his Good News. Since our last report, there have been at least three individuals who have been baptized as a public declaration of their faith in Jesus Christ and their commitment to follow him.

The GMC is thankful that we can continue to financially support these two young works at their current level for the next two years. We are intentionally facilitating relationships between our Japan Conference and local congregations here in the USA such as Grace Community of Willow Street and Community Evangelical in Sinking Spring, PA.

These two congregations are committed not only to supporting the work financially but they also maintain regular contact with our Japanese pastors and visit the work in Japan on a regular basis.

God is moving in Japan! The Japan Congress on Evangelism was held in September 2016 with about 2000 people attending, including our EC pastors. Yoriyoshi shares that even though the Franklin Graham Festival in Tokyo has ended, local churches continue to work together for the evangelism of children and youth. On November 3, 2016 they hosted a Children & Youth Festival at an amusement park in Tokyo with more than 2,000 children, youth and parents attending.

### **India:**

*“Many of those attending learned for the first time the necessity of the five “solas”: Scripture alone, Grace alone, Faith alone, Jesus Christ alone and for the glory of God alone. Their eyes were opened to the essentials of the Evangelical doctrine. Most of them received new insights, new visions and a new understanding of the missionary life and were encouraged to accomplish the Lord’s purpose for their lives.”*

This is how General Director Kaitikap Vaiphei described the most recent ECCI Missionary Training held December 15-18, 2016 in Arunachal Pradesh, North East India. The GMC partners with the EC Church of India to offer regional training opportunities like these for their missionaries and pastors. This particular training event had 37 participants and was offered in the Assamese, Hindi, Nepali and English languages. Along with plenary sessions, the workshop topics included:

- A Missionary In The Field
- The Life & Commitment Of A Missionary
- Conflict Management
- Personal Evangelism
- Missional Church
- Foundations Of Evangelical Doctrines

Along with these regional training venues, the GMC also helps the EC Church of India support their Evangelical College of Theology which trains men and women for pastoral and mission ministry. Recently they held a one day Youth Music Festival with choirs and groups from several local congregations attending. Rev. Lalrosiem Songate has completed his doctoral studies at Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He was officially installed as the principal of Evangelical College of Theology in North East India on April 3, 2017. Once again, by partnering with

local EC congregations here in the USA, we were also able to secure the funding of a lap top computer and projector for a missionary in the remote area of Assam to show the Jesus Film and other media during VBS and community programs.

### **Nepal:**

The country of Nepal continues on the front line of the struggle between the light of the Gospel and the darkness of disbelief. The persecution has seemed to settle down somewhat in the last few months but it can always flare up again. We praise God for what great things He is doing through our brothers and sisters in Nepal. It has been a busy quarter which included a VBS program of 4 local churches reaching 75 children with 10 professions of faith! ECCN also continues to train the leadership of this young conference. Their most recent Leadership Seminar included Old & New Testament survey courses, classes on local church administration and workshops on performing child dedications, funerals and Holy Communion.

The October Youth Conference attracted over 200 youth, many of whom responded to the challenge of reading the Bible 30 minutes each day and a commitment not to marry outside of the Christian Faith. There is a growing problem with Christians marrying Hindus. Two new congregations have been established and in 2016 ECCN recorded 189 new converts and 194 baptisms! The major construction work on the Mercy Home/ECCN Office building is completed. They recently painted the exterior and will continue to finish the interior as funding becomes available. The GMC will host an international delegation to Nepal's Annual Conference November 8-12, 2017 where we will dedicate this new building to God's service.

### **Mexico:**

As I have been reporting for the last year, the EC Church of Mexico is on mission to become a National Conference. Becoming a National Conference (being self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating) is not an end in itself, it is actually a beginning- a commencement if you will. Now that the local congregations have organized, strategized and identified their unique role in the global Church of Jesus Christ, they can begin to reach their communities, cities, states, country and world together! In their application/documentation submitted to the GMC for National Conference status, they list their primary purpose as fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ both inside and outside of their beloved country of Mexico. In my last report I noted the various ways they are reaching into their communities with the Good News of Jesus including youth camps, marriage ministries, men and women's ministries, small groups and of course the IGLEKids program that was the recipient of our GMC VBS project offering in 2016.

Along with these local programs, the EC Church of Mexico once again sent a mission team to Veracruz in southern Mexico to minister to the marginal indigenous population there. Taking food, clothing and shoe boxes full of items for the children, they have open doors to share the gospel in both word and deed to many forgotten people.

Our plan is to have a delegation from the EC Church of Mexico at our 2017 National Conference sessions to officially grant them National Conference status and then the GMC will host a small delegation to Mexico July 27-31, 2017 to celebrate this achievement with them at a gathering of their conference members.

### **El Retiro Children's Home:**

We continue to help El Retiro Children's Home transition as our official partnership with them will come to an end in January 2018. The children utilizing ERJ have been relocated to other service providers. We have encouraged directors Carlos & Martha to take a short sabbatical following the relocation of the children while the Board of Directors of ERJ continues working on future ministry options for the facility.

### **Liberia:**

Since his election and installation, Rev. Abraham Powell, the newly elected Bishop of the EC Church of Liberia (ECCOL) continues to connect and interact with the four districts comprising the ECCOL to prioritize their extensive needs. In the mean time, local and district wide ministry continues. Their annual Youth Camp in August was attended by 114 youth from three of the four districts. The Gospel is being shared in word and also in various other hands-on ways. If you are a Facebook friend of Abraham, you have seen the photos of him taking food and clothing to needy villages in the name of Jesus. Below is an excerpt from his post edited by me.

*Liberia is getting more challenging economically then ever before. You will not believe that children in the rural and semi urban areas don't even have clothes to wear. Their parents will struggle and purchase one suit for them and that will be kept for only occasion like church service or visit of an important guest to the town. We traveled to Gbii District, Nimba County which is approximately 200 miles away from Monrovia.*

*There are over 300 children here in Tiah Town with no opportunity to go to school, no clothes to wear and no access to any sort of health care. The EC Church of Liberia has 8 local churches in this district alone. We cannot preach the Gospel of Jesus without addressing some of these needs.*

The GMC is committed to helping ECCOL share the Good News of Jesus Christ in both word and deed. We continue to discuss ways to help ECCOL meet needs and develop ministries that can be as sustainable, successful and as self-sufficient as possible. Last July we found out that Henry Dennis, one of the ECCOL leaders was in the U.S. on a short visit and we were able to quickly secure donations of laptops, a projector and a few other items to send back with him for ECCOL. Thank you EC Church for your rapid response and generosity! We praise God that we were able to send funds in 2016 that enabled them to purchase motorcycles for the more remote district pastors who are often forced to walk many hours in order to minister to their congregations. We have also selected the Biblical literacy program as the VBS project for 2017 with a goal of raising \$10,000 to help Liberians learn to read their Basa translation Bibles. Pastor Rick Sergi, chair of the GMC Liberia Committee is helping me recruit some other people to join us on the committee to help steward the work in Liberia.

### **Engaging the Church in the Great Commission:**

The GMC invites the EC Church to be actively engaged in the global aspects of the Great Commission. We continue to educate and communicate the world of EC missions to our members through publications like the monthly *Global Prayer Guide* and the semi-annual *Window On The World* magazine. In October we hosted a Pastors' lunch and Mission brunches in Pennsylvania and Ohio and one in Illinois in November. Through these venues we were able to connect with almost 100 people representing 30 churches. Carla Sizemore continues to facilitate the Missionary Prayer Partner program for our local churches and Kathy Friedlund oversees the Mission Minded Kids program. Tim King is available to help churches with short-term mission trips and of course Pat Strain and I are always available to assist local churches and mission committees in any way we can. We are doing our best to give local congregations multiple opportunities to be involved in the great things God is doing in the global EC Church.

The Chaplaincy Committee, under the leadership of Rev. Robert Brown is now a part of the Global Ministries Community. Below is their report.

### **Annual Report of the Chaplaincy Committee to National Conference**

Robert Brown, E.C. Chaplain Endorser, Chairman

#### **Full-time Chaplains:**

**Army MAJ Josh Metz** is finishing a year of advanced schooling in ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. In September of this year Josh, Andrea and daughters Katelynn and Adara will be assigned to the Aviation Center of Excellence at Ft. Rucker, AL.

**Air Force MAJ Karl Noel Blancaflor** has finished his tour of duty at Barksdale Air Force Base in LA, and has completed Air Command and Staff College by distance learning, and is being assigned to the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language School in Monterey, CA with Julie and children Kate, Megan and DJ.

**Juliana Leshner** continues to serve as Chief of Chaplain Services at South Texas Veterans Health Care System in San Antonio, TX. She has been very busy serving the greater VA community along with her duties in San Antonio. She was a presenter for a convocation for all VA Chiefs of Chaplains and received a national award from the Under Secretary of Health for Excellence in Chaplain Leadership and Management.

**Joel Copeland** completes 5 years of service as Chief of Chaplain Service at the Lebanon VA Health Center this month to retire after a total of 20 years as a chaplain with the Veterans Administration, having previously served at Coatesville, PA VA Center. Joel and his wife Brenda will continue to reside in Myerstown.

**Dana Logan** is the chaplain at StoneRidge Retirement Center in Myerstown where he has served for 17 years. He also provides leadership to two part-time chaplains at StoneRidge Town Centre and one full-time chaplain at the Church of God Home in Carlisle. He and his wife Maureen live in Myerstown.

**The Mission Statement of the Chaplaincy Committee of the E.C. Church** was revised

February 7, 2017 by action of the Chaplaincy Committee to broaden the purview of the Committee to include part-time chaplains as well as full-time chaplains in ministry. Our desire is to have annual reports from all E.C. Chaplains. It is the desire of the Committee to include some part-time chaplains on the Chaplaincy Committee this coming year.

**MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE  
OF THE EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
(Revised February 7, 2017)**

*Chaplains are called by Christ to extend the ministry of the church to persons in institutional and specialized settings such as the military, Veterans Administration, prisons, health care, police and fire departments. The Chaplaincy Committee coordinates that ministry for the Evangelical Congregational Church.*

*The mission of the Evangelical Congregational Chaplaincy Committee includes the following:*

- promote and develop chaplaincy ministry in our churches*
- help individuals assess their potential for chaplaincy*
- endorse chaplains for ministry*
- provide professional support and development*
- provide pastoral support and supervision*
- represent the denomination on professional chaplaincy boards and organizations*

*Chaplains don't build or plant churches, but they make Christ's presence real in the lives of people in institutions. Our denomination is blessed to have chaplains in leadership positions in institutions and professional chaplain organizations.*

**The Chaplaincy Manual of the E.C. Church** is completed thanks to our Endorser and the Chaplaincy Committee and various military recruiters and veteran chaplains who contributed to the handbook. It is a comprehensive manual addressing the various types of chaplaincy, full and part-time, the requirements for those forms of chaplaincy, training that is available and the duties that are expected for each. This manual will serve the Chaplaincy Committee and the Endorser, denominational leaders, and those interested in becoming chaplains.

**The GMC Going Forward:**

The GMC is using 2016-2017 to evaluate the changes in our structure that will be needed to allow us to best serve the National Conference of the EC Church, now and for the next decade or so. A task force, chaired by Rev. Ted Rathman, is studying the future role, responsibilities and staffing of the Global Ministries Community. Areas the task force was asked to study and bring recommendations on at the March 2017 meeting include:

1. The role of the GMC in missionary recruitment, credentialing and missionary care,
2. The role of the GMC in administrating and empowering international conferences,
3. The role of the GMC in engaging the local church in the Great Commission.

We count it a privilege to serve the global EC Church and covet your prayers as we seek God's continued direction for this new chapter in the life of the EC Church and the GMC. I want to make sure to express my appreciation to my wife Carla, Dixon Bethel EC Church, Deputy Director Pat Strain and the staff at Church Center for their ongoing support and encouragement.

Submitted by,

**Randy Sizemore**