

**Who We Are**

"... you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light."

1 PETER 2:9

**Wednesday**

Wednesday featured a 5K Run/Walk in support of Kingdom Extension 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 offered a challenging and inspiring message encouraging the conference to reflect on our identity as followers of Jesus.

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, urging the conference to remember who we are as followers of Jesus and as the Evangelical Congregational Church in the midst of a changing world and challenging seasons for ministry

## The Seventeenth National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church

and mission. Copies of the Episcopal address were made available to conference delegates, 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.

A collection was taken for the Episcopal Fund of \$1,059.40.

The Conference took action on the dissolution of the Tallmadge, OH and Winnebago, IL churches.

The Executive Director and Associates each shared "one big thing" happening in their respective areas of ministry, including resources that the various Communities make available to local churches.

The report of the Stationing Committee was presented to the conference.

After dinner, the worship team from Grace Community

Church, Willow Street, PA led in worship. Rev. Dr. Gary Kuehner, Church Health Associate, presented a message on being "a chosen people".

The evening session closed with an invitation cake, ice cream, and fellowship.

**Thursday**

The morning began with worship and featured devotions from Global Ministries Associate, Rev. Ted Rathman, offering a challenge to live as the "royal priesthood" we are as the Church.

Rev. Franklin Schock presented the report for the Benefits Corporation and conducted its annual meeting. A ballot was cast for David Boose Jr. and William Worley to the Benefits Corporation Board of Trustees.

Dr. Tony Blair, President of Evangelical Theological Seminary, presented its report, noting that the Seminary has its highest enrollment ever.

Rev. Dana Logan and Chelsea Wirth, representing Stone Ridge Retirement Living, pre-

sented an update on the work of their ministry.

A report was heard from Twin Pines Camp, sharing the many opportunities for churches to partner with their ministry.

Kevin Henry, Executive Director, and Mrs. Debra Patterson, National Conference Treasurer, gave the reports of the Finance Committee.

The budget for the National Conference was approved, which will assign Ministry Funds for 2020 at 5.60 %. The Twin Pines supplement was phased out.

The Finance Committee report included the following compensation items:

- The base 2020 pastoral salaries were established to be increased by the COLA percentage that will be posted on the church website once it is released.
- The 2020 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 2020.

Bishop Hill shared the report of the Evaluation of E.C. Denominational Structure. It was adopted.

The conference approved all proposed changes to the Rules of Conference.

The afternoon included workshops led by various members of the E.C. family.

The evening session included worship by the conference worship team. Rev. Les Cool, Kingdom Extension Associate, brought the message on being “a holy nation.”

### Friday

Rev. Jeff Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, presented the Credentialing Report.

The following statuses were approved:

***Itinerancy:*** George Custer, Michael Knapp, Rick Reilly, Timothy Sanger, Robert Santucci, Cameron Smith, and J. Paul Weitzel. ***Ordained Elder:*** Timothy Valentino; ***Licensed Pastor:*** Vincent Jones; ***Ordained Deaconess-Discipleship:*** Marisel Mieses; ***Licensed Deacon (with specialization of Christian Educator/PCAP):*** Barry Heckman; ***Local Pastor:*** John Baker, Janor Bestwick, Richard Kuhn, Russell Warner; ***Local Candidate:*** Timothy Ream; ***Superannuations:*** Gary Brown, Charles Campbell, David Dennis, Robert Mavis, Richard Osberg Jr., David Swift, Sterling Trimmer Jr.; ***Supernumerary:*** Jeffrey Stansbury; ***Itinerant Ordained Elder – Active:*** Nicholas Lakatos (from Supernumerary).

The annual renewals of credentials were granted.

The following were removed from our ministerial roles:

Philip Bartelt, Stephen Cramer, Lisa Custer, Robert Fritz, Michael Hollinger, John R. Martinez, Juan Carlos Morales, and Leroy Walbert Jr.

The conference band led in worship and Rev. Jeffrey Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, provided a message focused on being “God’s own possession.”

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

The 2019 National Conference adjourned by singing together *Wonderful Grace of Jesus* followed by prayer.