

MISSIONAL ALIGNMENT

The Missional Alignment Community is to:

- Discuss the latest missional alignment concepts—stirring the team’s thinking through reading books and exploring web-related resources together.
- Discuss opportunities and solutions for missional alignment in our cultural setting.
- Discuss issues derived from district cohorts concerning missional alignment.
- Explore together missional alignment for congregations in our cultural setting.
- Focus a segment of the National Conference gathering to missional alignment—providing a district or national level speaker as requested.

The Community is made up of four active committees:

Faith & Doctrine Committee

The Faith and Doctrine Committee was reconstituted this past conference year with Kirk Marks appointed as chair. The Committee began meeting according to a regular annual schedule which will include two “plenary” meetings of the Committee each Conference year (a winter and a summer meeting) and additional and/or sub-committee meetings as needed. The Committee held its first regular plenary meeting on this schedule in December of 2018.

The Faith and Doctrine Committee is working in partnership with the Board of Examiners and ETS Center for EC Studies to offer a class entitled “The Theological Ethos of the EC Church” for those seeking credentials and ordination in the EC Church. The first offering of this class came in the fall of 2018 and a second offering was given in the spring of 2019. The Committee is also offering a seminar at National Conference 2019 “What Is Evangelical?” in keeping with the conference theme of “Who We Are.” The Committee is seeking other and new venues to hold gatherings and give presentations to deepen and broaden the contextual theological conversation throughout the denomination.

The Faith and Doctrine Committee is tracking several projects that are underway, being worked on by sub-committees or individuals to address specific needs. These include:

- A statement on civility in discourse, both public and private.
- A position paper on what is meant when we say “the Gospel” to be used by the Board of Examiners when talking with candidates seeking credentials.
- A table of definitions of basic “missional church terms” to be shared across Communities to insure uniformity of term use and clarify communication.

Heritage Committee

The renovations of the lower level of the Church Center building have been completed to house our EC archives. The funding for the physical renovation of the space in Church Center has been provided by the denomination. The next step is for the Heritage Committee to raise funds to purchase movable shelving units to hold the many documents which are a large part of the archives. It is hoped that the units will be purchased this year in order to allow us to move the archives from their temporary location on the third floor of Church Center to their permanent home in the lower level. A task force is now working to draft scripts for a series of videos to replace the old *Streams of Influence* video. These new videos will be able to be used in membership classes and other contexts. In addition, the Committee continues to work on the publication of an English translation of Karl Heinz Vogt's book *Jakob Albrecht: Ein Ziegelbrenner Wird Bischoff*.

NEXUS

From its inception, NEXUS has been committed to pursuing the E.C. Church's fifth core value of being united in the Body of Christ. At first, our emphasis was to reach out to brothers and sisters in Christ from other Christian traditions to engage in fellowship, support each other in prayer, and explore cooperative endeavors as appropriate. We've continued to do this, with this past October playing host to our fifth annual Clergy Fellowship Gathering, an event that continues to be a well received time of refreshment, prayer, and conversation with non-E.C. clergy.

The past year or so, however, has also seen NEXUS begin to devote more attention and energy to intentionally fostering unity among our E.C. brothers and sisters. The result of that attention and energy is partly seen in some of the breakout session topics for this

year's National Conference. With the current polarization of our society aggravating the fractious aspect of our Protestant heritage, we also call upon all E.C. pastors, lay leaders, and members to resist the spirit of contentiousness that works against Christ's prayer for His disciples to be one as the Father and Son are one so that the world will know who Christ is and who sent Him (John 17:20-23). Rather, may we "If it is possible, as far as it depends on [us], live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:18). And may we repent of being quarrelsome and divisive, thus hindering our witness in the world.

Finally, we note that after 7 years of co-creating and leading NEXUS, Gene Stevenson will be stepping down as chairman of this committee. Anyone who feels led to coordinate the efforts of this group should contact him or Bishop Bruce Hill. Anyone with a heart for peacemaking in Christ's church and who would like to join this, the Evangelical Congregational Church Committee for the Promotion of Christian Unity (our formal name), please also contact Gene or Bruce.

Prayer Mobilization Team

The Prayer Mobilization Team (PMT) is a team of pastors and lay leaders that have become increasingly aware that our churches can enhance the process of transforming our ministries to greater relevance by mobilizing God's people to pray together in God's Word. While preaching, teaching, worship, and outreach makes use of our individual gifts to develop disciples, prayer is common to every believer and is essential to increasing intimacy with God and with one another. It is this divine vertical and horizontal intimacy that is foundational to effective disciple making and healthy churches as the Lord heals, directs, and gives increase to the church that prays together.

God can change a person, a family, or a church through prayer, but this could require a paradigm change for some individuals and churches. We desire to assist pastors and prayer leaders in all of our churches who have a God-given vision and desire to birth a prayer movement which brings the whole congregation together in corporate prayer.

A new resource available this year is a method of congregational prayer called "**SaintsPray**" which will be presented during one of our Conference workshops on Thursday afternoon. If you miss the workshop, please let us know and we can arrange to schedule one at your church or at a district meeting. Also, Our **Spiritual Warfare Advance Team (SWAT)** members are available to come to your church to pray with you to provide additional prayer support relating to spiritual warfare issues. We are able to provide **Prayer Workshops** for individual churches, pastors, and prayer leaders tailored to your specific needs and to help motivate a renewed enthusiasm for dynamic corporate prayer using the various resources that we have available.

Finally, if you would like to learn more about the PMT and possibly become a member please visit our **display table** at Conference for more information or contact Mike Campbell at faithec-mike@comcast.net. We have monthly meetings at the E. C. Center in which we explore various ideas for mobilizing prayer, and we pray for specific individuals, churches, and our denominational leaders. Meetings can be attended in person or by teleconference.

The Prayer Mobilization Team looks forward to receiving inquiries from many of our churches during Conference and in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Bruce D. Hill