

“Down Time”

I was reading a magazine when I came across an article with this title: “Use Down Time This Summer to...” I need to tell you I had two thoughts in quick succession: 1. Please tell me when the “down time” begins so I don’t miss it; 2. Why can’t “down time” simply be “down time”?

At the risk of sounding old (which isn’t much of a risk since I am old, and hear myself increasingly sounding that way) I seem to remember there was a time when life slowed down, at least a little. That was true in community life and in the life of the church. There were seasons and rhythms to life and business. It could be the summer or, depending on the type of business, another time of the year. That doesn’t seem true of our culture today. In our “hurry up”, “get ‘r



done” world we are always on the move; one project completed, move quickly on to the next. I must be productive; I must prove my worth or run the risk of not being needed. No time to catch your breath or reflect on what you’ve accomplished; it’s on to the next big thing. Churches and church leaders are no different; summer is the time for Vacation Bible School, extra youth activities, short-term mission trips, community outreach events, and planning for the fall emphasis and Advent celebrations! None of those things are wrong in themselves, but they conspire to drive out any possibility of “down time.”

The title of that article I had read suggests too that even if we discover some “down time” we need to quickly fill it with other stuff. Technology and expectations (others’ and our own) have conspired to guild us into being available 24/7/365. We have given in to our culture which tells us that resting is a waste of time; why rest when I could be getting something done? But why can’t “down time” be “down time”? As people of God’s Word, do we believe it when He says we need to stop all our



busyness and “be still and know that I am God”? (Psalm 46:10) What did Jesus mean when He said “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people”? (Mark 2:27) Why did God rest on the seventh day? Was it because He was tired or was He trying to teach us something important through example? Now before I start preaching too much, let me tell you that I understand the problem because I am a fellow sufferer, a fellow sinner in
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The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Pray for the members of the many short term mission teams that are fanning out all around the world from local EC congregations. It is a life-changing experience!
2. Pray for the continued work of the Future Initiative as they begin the second phase of strategic planning for the future of our denomination.
3. Pray for the young people who have had fresh experiences with Jesus throughout EC camping ministries. Ask the Lord to bless them with spiritual growth as they connect with local congregations.
4. Ask the Lord to bless the Evangelical Seminary as they put on a push to increase enrollment at the main campus in Myerstown and the satellite campus in Harrisburg in this last month before the fall semester begins.
5. Pray for the men and women who will be ordained in August and September. Ask the Lord to fill them with His Holy Spirit as they continue in their journey of serving Him.
6. Praise the Lord for the growing number of people who are involved in discipleship ministries; diads and triads, small groups, and huddles.
7. Thank the Lord for the growing number of congregations that are attempting to engage their neighbors and communities with the Good News about Jesus.
8. Praise the Lord for the positive impact of many Vacation Bible Schools and other summertime ministries to those living around our churches.
9. Praise God for the many opportunities to engage with people who need to experience the love of Jesus. There are many hurting people in our world—but our God is able to meet each need!
10. Praise the Lord for air conditioning! (It keeps the chocolate from melting. Tip of the month: If it starts melting eat faster.)



2013 National Conference Journals

will soon be ready! Have you placed your order?? Each church is provided with the Journal on CD FREE of charge. Additional binders, indexes, contents and CDs are available.

Call Brenda at the EC Church Center (717-866-7581)

Or email blong@eccenter.com now!

**You are invited to attend the
2013 National Conference Ordination Services**



The ordination of **Rev. Lewie S. Bennett**
Grace Evangelical Congregational Church
Knox, Pennsylvania
Sunday, August 4, 3:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Matthew A. Hill**
Community Evangelical Church
Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania
Sunday, September 15, 4:30 p.m.



The ordination of **Patricia M. Strain**
Zion Evangelical Congregational Church
Myerstown, Pennsylvania
Sunday, September 29, 4:00 p.m.

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not following what God is teaching. I've used the excuse (I'm not really sure it is an excuse if it's true) that I love what I do so doing more of it isn't a burden. I've justified unused vacation and days off by saying that what I do is too important not to be done (that makes me feel better too). And I'm cheap enough to feel good about all the money I've saved by not spending it on vacations.

One of the things my coach is trying to convince me of is that I need "down time" whether I think I do or not. Perhaps I need it because I don't think I do. (Like I said, I'm still trying to figure this out.) I don't know if you experienced any "down time" yet this summer. Maybe you're a "mountains in the winter" person and not the "bake on the beach type." What I'm sloooooowly understanding is that it doesn't matter when your "down time" comes, what is important is that it does come. So block out some "down time" for yourself, for your family; take half a day, or a whole day, a week, or more. The point is we all need some "down time" to just be "down time."

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Zane".



DOWN TIME

News from Evangelical



We have great news to share! Thanks to the sacrificial commitment of so many friends, the Annual Fund for Transformational Leadership (AFTL) closed out the fiscal year with \$468,127.61 or 95.3% of our goal—and the highest ever total! We praise God for all your prayers, financial gifts, and active support for your seminary.

Yes, there's room in the ...seminary! Fall registrations are coming in, and classes for the new semester begin August 29. Check out the website at www.evangelical.edu to see course offerings for credit or audit. There's still room for you or someone you can direct to Evangelical.

September 10 is Homecoming and Fall Convocation at Evangelical. Alumni are invited to greet other grads and former/current professors at a **5:00 p.m. cookout on the campus lawn.** The event is free, but reservations must be made with Marsha Conley at 717-866-5775 or mconley@evangelical.edu by September 3. **Everyone is invited to the 7:00 p.m. Convocation, when founding pro-**



essor, Dr. James Yoder, will deliver the annual

Wittmaier-Sailer Lecture.

An ice cream social in Zinn Commons will follow the program. Mark the date and plan to celebrate Evangelical's 60 years with us!

Institute for Church Leadership (ICL) now offers synchronous online distance learning.

Formerly known as Leadership Contact, the Tuesday night courses this fall include Introduction to World Missions, taught by Rev. Randy Sizemore (more details on page 5), and The Gospels, taught by Dr. Tim Valentino. Check the website for computer requirements and registration. ICL classes are open to anyone desiring spiritual enrichment.

Faith in the Marketplace

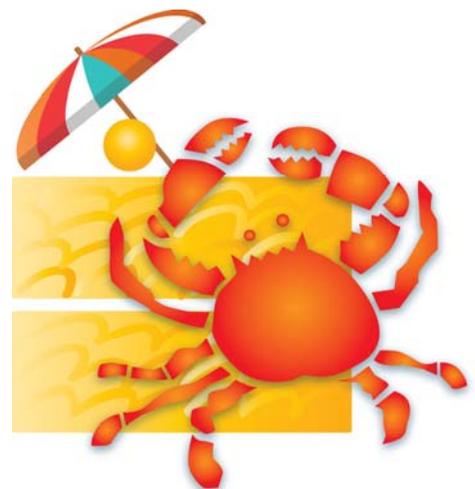
begins its ninth season September 19 with guest speaker Gil Stricklin, president and CEO of Marketplace Ministries, Plano, TX. The



quarterly breakfasts run from 7:00-8:30 a.m. and offer business leaders great opportunities for inspiration and networking. Register early on the Evangelical website.

Center for Lifelong Learning

has announced two fall seminars. **“Conundrum of Poverty: Responding to Poverty at the Church Door”** is set for September 20 in Lancaster, PA. Offered in collaboration with Water Street Ministries, the event is free, except for a \$10 fee for those desiring CEUs. More information and registration can be found at www.wsm.org **“Hope in the Darkness,”** a cooperative effort with Lebanon's Good Samaritan Health System and Philhaven, is an October 17 on-campus seminar dealing with suicide. Complete details and registration will soon be avail-



News from Global Ministries

1. MISSION TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

The Global Ministries Commission exists to equip and engage the local church in the Great Commission. Randy Sizemore is excited to invite you to join him for a seven week mission course at Evangelical Seminary's Institute for Church Leadership called "**Introduction To World Missions**", September 3-October 15, 2013. Randy has designed this non credit course to educate and equip mission leaders and mission-minded individuals in the local church. The class will involve some reading, some short written homework assignments and class discussion. This is a great opportunity for you and/or your mission leaders to explore the biblical background for missions as well as the traditional, historical and contemporary mission efforts and methods of the proclamation of the Gospel. Throughout the class Randy will place special emphasis on the role of the local church in the Great Commission. More detailed information about the institute and registration requirements are found online at www.evangelicaled./lifelonglearning (the button for Church leadership is on the left bar) or contact Ken Nafziger at 717-866-5775x2113 or knafziger@evangelical.edu.



2. 68 MONTHS OF PRAYER! MISSIONARY PRAYER PARTNERS UPDATE



PRAISE the Lord for the prayers of those in the E.C. Church! To date 37 churches are participating as Missionary Prayer Partners for 2013. This adds up to 68 months of prayer for our E.C. missionaries around the world and 68 months of prayers went up to God on behalf of all those individuals in the local churches that participate.

The schedule for 2014 of those missionaries that will be participating is now on the website. Go to www.eccenter.com and click on the "2014 Missionary Prayer Partners Calendar" in the left side Updates box on the home page. There are 13 missionaries to partner with in prayer. If you have any questions about Missionary Prayer Partners or you wish to participate you can email Carla Sizemore at csizemore@eccenter.com

3. **Jeremy and Kristen Kunkel** will be leaving missionary service at the end of this month. Jeremy will be going full time for his M.Div. at Cairn University (formerly Philadelphia Biblical University) for the next 2-3 years. They are planning on selling their home in Colorado and moving east next month. Please keep them in prayer during this transition.



News from Benefits Corporation

Health Insurance Reform Part II—Employer Mandates

The National Conference has contracted with a human resources attorney to determine our employer size in regards to the Affordable Care Acts (ACA). Under the ACA there is a huge difference in employer responsibilities between large employers and small employers. A large employer is defined as an entity having greater than fifty (50) full time equivalent employees. The primary indication from the attorney is that the E.C. Church is a small employer. This is good news. But, as the ACA is such a large and all encompassing piece of legislation that is not fully understood nor implemented, the issue is not resolved. Determining our employer size is very important. The penalties for a large employer either willfully or unintentionally not complying with the large employer mandates in the ACA are severe. As such, the Board of Trustees of EC Benefits has agreed that a second legal opinion on the size of the EC Church is necessary.

On July 2, 2013, it was announced that the large employer coverage requirement was delayed until January 1, 2015. The coverage requirement was scheduled to be effective on January 1, 2014. Under the ADA large employers, those with more than 50 full time equivalent employees, are mandated to provide minimum essential health insurance to all employees working greater than thirty (30) hours a week or 130 hours a month. The previous sentence on the large employer mandate is a simple idea in theory that is convoluted in practice. There are many nuances, particulars and additional regulations that large employers will have to navigate in implementing the mandate. We will not discuss the requirements of the large employer mandate unless it becomes necessary.

Whether the EC Church is determined to be large employer, the EC Benefits mandate on full time assigned pastors joining the active pastor health

insurance plan remains in effect, exemptions are permitted for military or spousal health benefits.

Other EC Benefits News

HRA reimbursements are much lower this year, both in volume of reimbursements paid and dollar amount of reimbursements. While I hope this is a valid trend, being conservative comes with the job and I have my doubts. The balance in the HRA is used to calculate the next year health insurance premium. Please remember to submit HRA reimbursements on a timely basis which will help the EC Benefits Corp. effectively manage the health insurance plan.

Workers Compensation

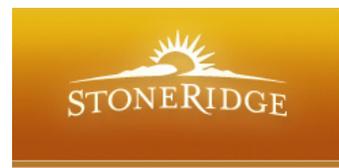
Thank you to all that have timely paid the worker's compensation invoices. For those that haven't the due date was May 15. Payment for the Disability and Benefit Corp Services fees were due January 15 and April 15 respectively, both fees are listed on the 2013 Treasurer's Guide available on www.eccenter.com.

Please contact Dave King (dking@eccenter.com) or Kevin Henry (khenry@eccenter.com) with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry
Controller



News from Stone Ridge Retirement Living



The journey from the vision of three individuals in 1924 to the present day campus of StoneRidge Retirement Living has been an interesting one. The original “home” in Herndon, PA reportedly accommodated 33 residents around 1938. When more space was needed a part of the former Albright College Campus in Myerstown, PA was purchased.

In 1960 construction of a residential complex began. The “Albright” campus continued to grow. In 1974 a 101-bed healthcare center opened and in 1975 the Warfel Care Center was opened to accommodate additional nursing and Personal Care/residential beds and 1985 the 4th floor of the Warfel Center was established as a Specialized Care Unit—the first of its kind in Lebanon County—for the treatment of dementia, Alzheimer’s disease or related disorders.

In 2000 the purchase of a continuing care community in Myerstown allowed the ministry to continue to grow even more. In 2008 the overall organization was officially named “StoneRidge Retirement Living.”

Over the years, with changes and acquisitions, StoneRidge has upheld its mission to provide quality senior care and retirement living services in central and southeastern Pennsylvania. Today, serving 350 residents in Myerstown, StoneRidge continues to grow and seek new opportunities to serve seniors in their faith-based communities. www.stoneridgeretirement.com

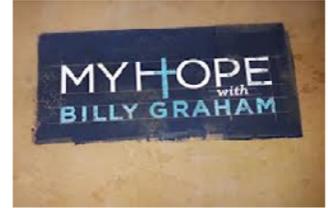


News from EC Church Center

Our accountant, Rosemarie Spiess, has announced her resignation from the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church and Evangelical Seminary. Rose has accepted a full-time accounting position with Sunoco in their Wyomissing office, starting in mid August. While it is sad to be saying goodbye, we have confidence that Rose will be successful in her new position.

REMINDERS:

- ◆ The Evangelism & Discipleship Commission recommends for your consideration a nationwide evangelistic opportunity your church may want to incorporate into your fall ministries: My Hope With Billy Graham. November 2013 is the key date for this nationwide evangelistic effort, which focuses on local mobilization of Christians across North America. The goal of this campaign is to reach people through friendly, relationship evangelism. If you'd like more information and to receive updates about this fall evangelistic effort, please go to www.MyHopeWithBillyGraham.org.



- ◆ The Church Health Commission is sponsoring a Seminar "BE STILL" on Saturday, September 21, 2013 at the Zion E.C. Church, Annville, PA. The purpose of BE STILL is to provide a discipline for the pursuit of knowing God. BE STILL simply provides a tool and a discipline for you to hear directly from God Himself.

Cost is \$15 advanced; \$20 after September 9th. Checks should be sent to Rev. Dr. Gordon R. Lewis, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067. Should you desire to register by email or phone, please contact Rev. Lewis at glewis@eccenter.com or 717-866-7581.



Position Available Accounting Specialist II

The National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church is seeking a person of integrity, skill and high personal character to serve in the business office of the denominational offices in Myerstown, PA. Job duties would consist of, but not limited to, journal entries, financial statement preparation, bank account reconciliation, tax statement preparation, accounts receivable and customer service. Other qualifications are excellent verbal and written communication skills, ability to work independently, deadline management and an attitude of grace and love towards others.

Part time exempt position at 24 hours a week, on average. College degree customary but not required. Individuals with comparable work experience and a willingness to learn will be considered. No managerial or supervisory duties are associated with this position.

Applicant shall be a professing Christian as defined by the theology of the Evangelical Congregational Church.

If interested please send a cover letter and a resume to khenry@eccenter.com or:

E.C. Church Center
Kevin Henry, Controller
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067