

E. C. Leader

JULY 2010

Our Vision

The Evangelical Congregational Church will be a dynamic movement of God that is led by pastors and laity who have a burning passion for God and a missionary zeal to reach the lost. We will creatively obey the Great Commission by transforming plateaued and declining churches into healthy, disciple-making churches that are committed to evangelizing the communities to which God has called them. Healthy churches will reproduce themselves by planting churches in least-reached communities. Interdependence will be the distinguishing mark of the Evangelical Congregational Church as local churches network with one another and ministries beyond the E.C. family to proclaim the Gospel to the world.



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Whose House Is It?

Summer is camp – and campmeeting – season in the E.C. Church! As I write this, Camp ECCO (OH), Rock River (IL) and Twin Pines Camp (PA) are in full swing ministering to children, young people and families. It is exciting to hear the testimonies of lives being changed! Continue to pray for our campers and staff in the final weeks of the season. Our campmeetings at Waldheim, Rosedale and Herndon are also winding down as July concludes, and each of them has impacted lives in different ways.

I have been personally challenged by the messages of Evangelist Rich Stevenson at Herndon as he focuses on “Walking With Jesus”. Zeroing in on the “50 Days of Easter”, that time between the resurrection and Pentecost., Rich has brought powerful insight to a precious time Jesus shared with his disciples.

The very familiar Walk to Emmaus passage found in Luke 24 records the story of two downcast travelers who meet the risen Christ. Confused and disheartened by Jesus' crucifixion, Cleopas and his friend were transformed as Jesus joined them on the journey and explained the scriptures about Himself to them. When the two reached their destination they invited Jesus to stay with them. As He broke bread with them, their eyes were opened to His identity. He who had been invited to be their guest became their Host!

There are valuable lessons here for all of us. In our times of pain and despair, Jesus still comes to walk along side us through the promises of His Word, His encouraging voice of comfort and peace, and the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit.

Moreover, He wants to be the host, not just a guest in our lives. In his essay, “My Heart, Christ's Home,” Robert Munger shares a similar analogy. Jesus transforms each “room” of one's heart house until the owner finally offers the deed and the entire home becomes His.

What role does Jesus have in the life of each member of the E.C. Church? Is He merely our house guest, or have we honestly made Him Lord and owner of a heart that He fully controls? I am convinced that as He hosts each thought and activity in our lives, our own hearts will burn within us as He walks and talks with us along the way. May He give us deep peace, fresh strength, and new joy for each day of the journey!

Fred Moury
Chair, National Conference



NATIONAL CONFERENCE CHAIR PRAYER LIST... ***(REV. FRED MOURY)***

- † Pray for the Episcopal Nominating Committee that was appointed by the National Ministry Team at the special NMT meeting that took place on July 6. (Names of the committee members are included in this issue of the EC Leader).
- † Pray for the special Prayer Summit that will be held at the “Castle” in Franklin, PA on September 1 and 2.
- † Continue to remember the Leibensperger family in this time of grieving and healing following Bishop Kevin’s death.
- † Pray for the Seminary as they prepare for the start of the Fall Semester which begins on August 31st. Evangelical continues to process the implications of the United Methodist University Senate decision to drop our seminary from their approved list of theological schools beginning on July 1, 2011.
- † Pray that God will grant me (the National Conference Chair) wisdom and clarity as I handle the many tasks and functions that need to be cared for during this year of Interim service.
- † Pray for our Church Center staff as we finish up moving offices around in our building and get used to the new locations.
- † Pray for the ongoing forward momentum for our Strategic Planning process.

**HAVE YOU
TALKED
TO GOD
TODAY?**



PRAYER SUMMIT TO BE HELD AT THE “CASTLE”

It has been a long time since we held a prayer summit at the “Castle” in Franklin, PA. However, with everything that we have been experiencing recently as an E.C. Church, the Supervisory team believes that this summit is absolutely critical for us. The dates will be September 1 and 2 with sessions beginning at 2:00 pm on the 1st and concluding with lunch on the 2nd.

The cost will be \$50.00 which includes lodging and three meals. The summit will feature a special prayer emphasis for our Episcopal Nominating Committee. Committee members are invited to participate in this summit as our guests at no cost. Lodging for 60 is provided at the Castle on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, a list of motel options will be provided for those interested in participating when we reach the 60 person threshold. Registration information will be available shortly.



NEWS FROM THE GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION...



1. Please pray for Randy Sizemore, Kevin Henry and his wife Nancy as they travel to Japan August 4-11. The trip will include the ordination of Rev. Ken Sudo, Tomoyuki Abe, and Jessica Abe’s license, plus the installation of Rev. Nubuo Abe (Tomoyuki’s father) as new Director of the EC Churches of Japan.
2. **REMINDER:** There will be a Mission Mobilizer Informational meeting on Saturday, August 21st at 9:00 AM at Dixon Bethel EC Church. All interested parties are welcome!
3. **REMINDER:** There will be a Mission Mobilizer training session for Susquehanna & Delaware Region representatives on Saturday, September 18th, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Church Center, Myerstown.
4. **REMINDER:** We are not having WorldFest as listed in the EC Planbook – each church or group of churches is encouraged to plan their own rallies – the GMC office can help you with this. Call us!
5. The **Fall Mission Rally & MMK Rally** will be held the same day, October 9th, at our Salem EC Church in Lenhartsville.



6. **“Thank You”** from our EC missionaries from the USA for raising the funds to send to our ECCI missionaries in training. A request came from ECCI for funds to help their missionaries with costs for training, and we presented it to our missionaries out of our USA churches. Even though some have their own financial concerns, many stepped up and gave generously to help their brothers and sisters in NE India, so they too can effectively take the gospel to those who need to hear about Jesus Christ. We all serve the same Lord, and it is a blessing to see our EC family from various parts of the world pray and care for each other.



NEWS FROM BENEFITS CORPORATION...

- The Board of Directors of the EC Benefits Corporation approved, at their July 13, 1010 meeting, to allow dependent children up to age 26 to remain on their parent’s health insurance or to rejoin the plan if they have been terminated. The definition of a dependent child has been broadened to allow non full time students, students in graduate school, married dependents (the dependent’s spouse and their dependents are not eligible), dependents not living with their parents and dependents employed full time. But, dependents that have access to health insurance from their employer are not eligible for their parent’s plan. The dependent must take their employer’s health insurance, regardless of cost or coverage limits. Dependents that are currently terminated from the plan can contact Ken Wiest for reinstatement. And, as always, please contact Ken Wiest, Compensation and Benefits Coordinator or myself with any questions, 1-800-866-7581.



- IRS Form 941, Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return, has changed substantially. Please read the instructions available at www.irs.gov. Most of the changes on the form relate to the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act which is one of the stimulus plans that is designed to incentivize employers to increasing hiring. The new 941 uses the wording "exempt" and "qualified" in various places and does not relate to pastor's salaries being exempt from Social Security and Medicare taxes or having a housing allowance. Most churches can ignore the new lines on Form 941 and please contact me, 1-800-866-7581, with any questions.
- Our health insurance renewal has been delayed for some time due to the plethora of new changes mandated by health care reform legislation that are effective on October 1, 2010. Our insurance broker, Corporate Synergies, is experiencing a wide range of increases with their other clients and has no opinion of what amount of increase we could experience.

Kevin Henry
Controller



HELP WANTED

Employee Benefits and Human Resources Coordinator serving the EC denomination from the EC Church Center in Myerstown, PA

A qualified applicant will have experience in employee benefit plan administration, knowledge of appropriate federal and state laws relating to human resources management, familiarity with commonly used HR concepts, practices and procedures, an awareness of HIPPA and the ability to keep confidential matters confidential, a high level of customer service & communications skills, answer in-bound questions from existing customers, assist with eligibility requirements, model and promote Christ like values and behaviors, demonstrate ability to effectively sequence and prioritize work, ability to independently solve problems, make decisions and deadline management.

The position is part time: 25-30 hours a week.

College degree required; 5+ years experience in Human Resources

Please submit resume and salary requirements to:

Kevin Henry, Controller
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
khenry@eccenter.com



YOUR SEMINARY ON THE MOVE – NEWS FROM EVANGELICAL



The past month has brought both joy and sorrow to the Evangelical community...

When the fiscal year ended on June 30, ETS reported Annual Fund contributions of \$427,000, or 98.2% of the \$435,000 goal. We praise God for His provision and for each faithful donor!

As June turned into July, another cause for praise was Evangelical's first display at the Creation Festival. Many alums stopped by to say hello, and lots of fruitful contacts were made with prospective students.

We also rejoiced in the addition of two new staff members. Effective July 1, Dr. Rodney H. Shearer

assumed the part-time position of director of field education and assistant professor of pastoral ministries. A former academic dean at the seminary, he returns to serve in an area essential to our continuing accreditation with ATS. Elizabeth Brunsting was named part-time administrative assistant to President Sigman and Vice-president Tornfelt.

All this joy was tempered by a June 30 letter from the University Senate of the United Methodist Church informing us that Evangelical will be removed from their list of approved seminaries, effective July 1, 2011. (See the attached letter.)



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NMT:

At the special meeting of the National Ministry Team on July 6, 2010 the following was approved...

Recommendation:

Episcopal Nominating Committee Rev. James Price, Chair



Rev. Robert Shuey, Secretary
Rev. Kenneth Kalisz
Mrs. Mary Wagner
Mr. Daryl Beam
Rev. Joel Kime – Alternate

Rev. Gordon Lewis
Rev. Carlos Kelly
Mrs. Pam Ream
Mrs. Linda Sellers
Mr. Paul Elsen – Alternate

On motion, Episcopal Nominating Committee as recommended by the NEC, was appointed.

Recommendation:

The NEC recommended that the 14th Bishop be elected to a five year term.

On motion, the term was established as a five year term.

Recommendation:

The 14th Bishop, being elected in May of 2011, would then take office September 1, 2011, having the summer months for transition. It was noted that based on the above discussion, the term would conclude at the National Conference of 2016. The Team discussed the details and some implications of following this plan.

On motion, the transition plan was approved.



Mirror Coaching By Les Cool

To date, the most significant investment in my ministry since seminary (maybe including seminary; don't tell my professors) is coaching. I have the education to do ministry. I have the skills and tools to do ministry. And I have the gifts and graces to do ministry. Or so I have been told. Coaching has enabled me to maximize the blend of education, skills and gifts for my current ministry context.

Coaching is inviting someone from outside of my ministry context, someone without a bias toward what I'm attempting to accomplish, to help me focus and to finish what I start. My coach guides me by using questions that draw out of me my best. Usually my best has nothing to do with education, skills or gifts. My best is often the focus I fail to maintain as I stand knee-deep in the "yuck" of daily ministry.

Recently, I discovered that coaching can be found as close as the next guy (or the next guy you really connect with) who also knows how to coach. Chemistry is vital to a coaching relationship (we'll save that for another article). My next guy is Nathan Fry. Nathan is also a trained coach. We have chemistry, we connect. We have a measure of coaching knowhow that improves with each session and each additional training experience. And we have partnered to enhance each other's ministry serve.

I call this connection "mirror coaching." We meet every four or five weeks and walk each other through a series of coaching/support questions we have developed that enable us to measure our success (and celebrate victories), identify our goals (we usually think in terms of the next 100 days) and determine the steps it will take to achieve our goals (action points). And we pray. Prayer is always good.

Nathan and I have become each other's mirror. We help each other see what we may be too close to see for ourselves: personal issues or weaknesses, potential hurdles and opportunities, other options, etc. We double the joy as we share victories and we lighten the load as we share our burdens. We use text messaging to stay connected between our face-to-face meetings.

So, how are you doing, pastor? Really! Are you at the top of your game? Do you need a pat on the back or perhaps a different kind of encouragement? Coaching may be just what you need. Contact Bruce Wagner, chair of the Church Health Commission, for recommendations regarding potential coaches. We have a few in-house coaches and there are hundreds of for-hire coaches out in the big bad world. Go ahead; make the call today.



Please take note: Under the circumstances of the past few months the 2010 National Conference Journal will be published a little later this year. We hope to have it ready before the end of August.

If you have not already done so... you can place your order for the 2010 Conference Journal by emailing Brenda at blong@eccenter.com or calling 1-800-866-7581.

