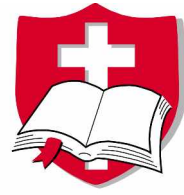


March 2006

E.C. Leader



Evangelical
Congregational
Church

Thursday Night at National Conference

As a Church, we need to be deeply concerned for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces. In the spring of 2005, too late for implementation at the 2005 National Conference sessions, I determined that we would highlight ministry to the armed forces at a National Conference event. We need a better understanding of this incredible missionary opportunity evangelical chaplains have as they minister to men and women in uniform. We also need to be more diligent in informing our congregations about and raising up prayer for this ministry. Praise the Lord that the U.S. Army Chief of Chaplains, Major General David Hicks, has consented to serve as the preacher. He is a graduate of the former United Wesleyan College in Allentown and is familiar to a number of ECers.

During the course of this service, pending Conference Relations Committee recommendation and National Conference approval, Josh Metz will be ordained. Josh is a U.S. Army Chaplain Candidate who will be deployed this summer. Due to the timing of his assignment, he requested ordination at the site of National Conference. His CRC leadership approved his request.

-- Bishop Sigman

Why Planned Giving?

PLANNED GIVING OFFICE: Through periodic editorials we want to explore some of the specific methods one can use in planned giving. Please feel free to copy and use this editorial as a bulletin insert or handout to your congregation, and, most importantly, use it yourself. Thank you.

Dr. John Ragsdale

Planned Giving Officer of the Evangelical Congregational Church

Many evangelical Christians tithe 10% of their earnings to the Lord's work. That is GOOD! We express our thanks and praise to the Lord, who has given us new life. But an area of stewardship we often overlook is the disposition of our assets. The Lord asked the rich man, "To whom will these things belong, when you die?" This is the area that planned giving addresses.

If we do not have a will, the state in which we live has a plan for our assets, and both the Federal and State governments have a taxation plan for ones estate. Many estates are exempt from initial taxation by the I.R.S. when they pass to the spouse. However, in all cases, the Lord's work is completely omitted. Even if we have a will, it is important to review it to ensure that it says what we want it to say. We all have changes that come into our lives. Our original will, which provided for the care of our children, may need to consider the grandchildren instead. The real estate we once owned may have been sold and the proceeds invested in a different way. This is all a part of planning.

But there are other important plans we can make to express the life commitments we have made. Our children may share the same commitments and loyalties, but many do not. Our estate plan should express those loyalties. The role of planned giving is to provide the information you need to express your desire in your estate plan. We will always counsel you to have legal and accounting expertise to ensure accuracy and legality in everything you do.



This issue includes:

[Thursday Night at National Conference](#)

[Why Planned Giving?](#)

[Twin Pines](#)

[The Bishop's Travels](#)

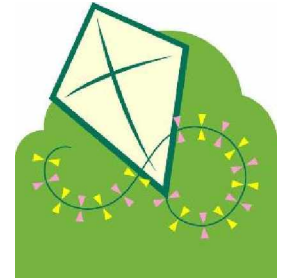
[Leadership Notes](#)

[National Conference Registration](#)

Twin Pines

1) April 25-27 are the dates for the Twin Pines Ladies Only Retreat. There is still time to register. Send \$25.00 deposit with your name, address, phone number, roommate request, and type of room you want to have - this year there are two choices: Aspen Lodge Room for \$150.00 per person or a Standard Room for \$130.00 per person. Hey guys, why not give a gift certificate to your wife, mother, sister, aunt, or friend! Call us for details. 570-629-2411

2) June 10th is Summer Celebration here at Twin Pines! Put that date on your calendar and plan to join us for a great day of fun and fellowship. We will be dedicating the New Aspen Lodge, there will be fun things to do, good food to eat and great Christian fellowship! More details will follow later! Pastor's we need your help to publicize this event in your church. Why not bring a bus load from your church this year!!!



Welcome Spring!

3) Summer camp is coming!!! We have two camps that are almost filled already! All campers who register before April 1st will receive a FREE T-SHIRT! Please don't let lack of funding keep you from coming to camp - call us about our camper scholarship program! If you need more summer brochures, please let us know and we will gladly see that you get them. The summer brochure and registration form are also on our website: www.twinpines.org Don't miss out this summer! We have camps for ALL ages!!!! EVEN ADULTS! We'd like to see our Seasoned Saints camp grow this summer. This is our first week of camp and it is specifically for ADULTS! You don't have to be of retirement age to come to this camp. It's a wonderful time of Bible Studies, relaxation, fellowship as prayer partners with the summer staff and culminates on Friday night with the commissioning of our Summer Staff. Come be a part of this great week! We know that there are ADULTS in YOUR church! We'd like them to come to camp this summer! They have the option of staying in the NEW Aspen Lodge or the other Standard camp rooms.

4) Another way to spend time at Twin Pines is to participate in our Summer Volunteer program. If you are an adult and want to give a week of service to the Lord, look no farther than your own camp! Give Jim Shields a call at the camp or email him at: jim@twinpines.org to find out how you can fit into the program. You do have to be able to perform physical work, but you don't need any specific skills. However, if you have a particular skill, it is helpful to know that when you call or email. Volunteers help in the kitchen to help prepare and clean up for meals, they help sometimes on maintenance by painting or cleaning up outdoors, some times we even have folks that help with specialized programming. Contact Jim as soon as possible to find out more about this wonderful way to help YOUR ministry.

5) WE WANT YOU! That's right...we want you to come to Twin Pines for a Retreat. We sent out a letter to each church outlining how you can book a retreat and receive discounts. Call Pam for more details. We want to encourage "more ministry" to happen and the best way for that to happen is to join together and make it happen. So, call and mention the "more ministry" discounts and find out how YOUR CHURCH can save \$.

6) Last but not least, pray for Twin Pines. Our retreat numbers have increased this year which is a real praise. The more people come here, the more God can speak to the hearts. Praise the Lord with us - this past weekend one of the guest groups shared with us that 7 young men and ladies accepted the LORD!!!! Pray for them as they grow in their walk with Jesus. Pray for the Summer Staff who are in the process of being hired and preparing themselves to come to camp for 9 weeks to share the love of Jesus with each and every camper.

The Bishop's Travels

March	19-22	Spiritual Life services for the Harrisburg EC churches
	20	Leadership Commission
	23	National Ministry Team
	25	Discipling Others Seminar, Myerstown
	26	Pine Grove, St. Paul's
	31-Apr. 3	Visit to Illinois District
April	2	Chicago, Kimball Avenue
	4	E.C. Benefits Corporation Board
	5	EST Executive Committee
	6	Teach Pastoral Leadership class at EST
	9	Annville, Zion
	14-17	Family Time



Leadership Notes

After months of internal conflict in the Annville, Zion Church, a special meeting of the Ministry Council was held on February 27th, in which the council and the Pastoral Relations Committee in an overwhelming vote by secret ballot requested a change of pastors. Sentiments expressed in a follow-up letter that was mailed to the congregation on March 1, regarding this matter, identified that this motion was necessitated by the overall concerns for church health.

At the conclusion of the special Ministry Council meeting, PRC and Ministry Council members then met with Bishop Sigman and Conference Ministers Fred Moury and Gerald Baum, each of whom had attended the meeting. A plan was discussed regarding the next steps in the transition process along with a church leadership recommendation that the pastoral service of Rev. Philip Guistwite conclude on March 19. All parties agreed to this plan of action and Phil did conclude his ministry service at Annville on the 19th.

This has been a difficult time for everyone involved and members and friends in the congregation have been torn and tested deeply. We ask that all will continue to pray for the Guistwites as well as the healing process that Zion Church now embarks upon. Phil is currently employed part time as a Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marriage and Family Psychotherapist for Pennsylvania Counseling Services, Inc. of Lebanon. Pulpit supply coverage has been secured for Zion Church through April and work is in progress toward securing an Interim Pastor. Thank you for your concern and prayers as we work toward healing and wholeness for our brothers and sisters at Zion Church.



2006 National Conference Registration

The National Conference Registration information and forms were mailed out and are available on the denominational website (www.eccenter.com). These are in both PDF and WORD formats.

If using the **WORD** format you can complete the form and submit it online. *PLEASE NOTE that your registration will not be finalized though until we receive payment.*

If you have any question regarding registration, please contact Brenda at blong@eccenter.com or 1-800-866-7581.