

## E.C. National News

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Spring 2011

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### Register for Conference

The Ninth Session of the National Conference of the E.C. Church will be held Wednesday through Friday, May 25 to 27 at Messiah College, Grantham, PA. The theme is "Focused on Jesus, our Refuge and Firm Foundation".

Guest speaker will be H.B. London from Focus on the Family. He will also have a special session with the women's group.

The opening session will begin at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday. An important item on the agenda is the election of our 14<sup>th</sup> Bishop. Nominees are Rev. Bruce Hill, Sinking Spring Community; Dr. Kenneth Miller, Evangelical Theological Seminary; Rev. Ramon Mendez, Reading First and Vida Nueva; and Rev. Jeffrey Byerly, Reedsville Bethesda.

To register go to [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com). For assistance, contact [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com) or call 1-800-866-7581. Registrations must be in by April 15<sup>th</sup>.



### ECCO's Got Talent

Camp ECCO, Carrollton, OH is planning an "ECCO's Got Talent" night for Saturday, April 9 at Wedgewood Park Church in Youngstown. A 5:00 p.m. lasagna dinner will start the evening. A "variety show" and silent auction will be included. Contact [nettiewells@gmail.com](mailto:nettiewells@gmail.com).



### Prayer Time Announced

A concert of prayer will take place at Grace Church, Knox, PA at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 1. After a time of worship, participants will pray for the nominees to the office of Bishop as well as the election process.

### ETS Selects New President

On February 3, the Board of Trustees of Evangelical Theological Seminary, Myerstown unanimously approved Dr. Anthony Blair to be the school's next President. Their decision followed the recommendation of a search committee to the executive committee of the Board, who then presented Dr. Blair for approval. He will begin serving on July 1.



Dr. Blair is an ETS graduate. He has been an academic dean and faculty member at Eastern University. He is ordained by the United Brethren in Christ and currently co-pastors the non-denominational Hosanna Church in Lititz. He is an adjunct professor and consultant for on-line studies at ETS.

William Worley, Chair of the Board comments, "Tony possesses the vision, passion, and pastoral heart to lead Evangelical into the future."

Current President, Dr. Michael Sigman, will return to pastoral ministry.



### When does a church need an interim pastor?

After Rev. John Ward retired from Emmanuel E.C. Church, Cedarville, IL last summer, concluding a long pastorate, it was decided that an interim pastor could be helpful. Pastor Mark Sterk and wife, Nancy, came from Spokane, WA to begin ministry on September 1.

Mark is a Transitional Interim Pastor (TIP) with New Church Specialties (NCS). Emmanuel is his second assignment, the first being in Idaho.

He is retired from career in law enforcement, including serving as a county sheriff. He also spent four years in Washington's House of

Representatives. He and Nancy were directors of a Nazarene camp and conference center. Their District Superintendent asked them to take NCS training to be able to serve the Nazarene Northwest District.

Mark and Nancy are very much a team. One of their ministries is facilitating marriage retreats with the program, "Understanding the love of your life."



Mark explains that an interim is appropriate when a pastor has left after a long, positive ministry. The church can have difficulty adjusting to a new pastor, and statistics show that he is not likely to stay long. An interim can help pave the way, increasing the probability of another success.

An interim is also helpful when a pastor has left under difficult circumstances or a church is not united. One of the TIP's major goals is to help the congregation recognize its differences and begin pulling in the same direction. He can be part of the healing process when a church has had a split on an exodus of people, causing a pastor to leave "under a shadow of failure". The TIP's goal is "to move the congregation from anxiety to anticipation." Then the next pastor can focus on ministry and vision casting rather than have to deal with the past.

An assessment by an NCS consultant is the first step in the process. It helps "identify where the church is now and what it must do to start growing again." The assessment looks at the worship service, spirituality and prayer, relationships, ministries, structures, small groups, evangelism, and empowering leadership.

Next, a transition team is pulled together and trained in "the art of change." They prioritize the issues that came out of the assessment, identifying the three most critical. The TIP begins work on those areas.

Mark comments, "It's very exciting to watch a church quit wanting to grow and start to implement strategies to actually begin to grow." He is pleased with Emmanuel's willingness to follow the team's recommendations.

The Sterks' work in Cedarville will conclude on June 19. They will return to Spokane to spend time with family, then wait for God's leading to a new assignment.

Meanwhile, Emmanuel is preparing to welcome their new pastor.

## Twin Pines Plans Events

Twin Pines Camp, Stroudsburg, PA will have its annual Summer Celebration on Saturday, June 5 from 10:00 to 4:00. The day will include the Motorcycle Fun Ride and annual fishing tournament.

The camp's first mother and daughter retreat will take place May 6 & 7.

"Christ is our Hope" is the theme for the annual Ladies Only Retreat, May 10 through 12. For more information go to [www.twinpines.org](http://www.twinpines.org).



## Camp Team Places in "Stupor Bowl"

On February 5, a team representing Rock River Bible Camp, Dixon, IL won the fourth place trophy in the Dixon Public Schools Foundation Stupor Bowl.



Team members were Jason Anderson, Jon Wadsworth, Chris Padgett and Rob Bates all from Bethel Church, and Gary Brown, Great Lakes Conference Minister. The annual fundraiser, held at Reagan Middle School, involved a day of rigorous quizzing.



## Changes Coming to Illinois

Our Highland Park, IL congregation held their last service on December 26. This followed a decision to join the efforts of Christ Church in nearby Lake Forest to become Christ Church Highland Park. Renovations to the building are currently underway.

Rev. Dirk Pogue, who has served the church since 1995, continues as part of the new staff. He is bi-vocational, also teaching school.

Dirk's son, Devin, has been employed as worship leader in Lake Forest, and will be Director of Worship in Highland Park. He is a student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Our Rock Falls church held their last service on January 30. They voted to close, with hope of a restart. Dennis



Buss was pastor.

On February 6, the congregation of Chicago Kimball Avenue began meeting in a former Evangelical Free Church on Diversey Avenue. Their own building is currently unusable, and they have been gathering in their neighborhood's Inner City Impact. They are thankful for unlimited use of the building and adequate street parking. Pastors are Bruce Ray and Michael Langer.



## Family News



### Remembering loved ones...

**William Snodgrass,**

former missionary and member of Countryside Church, Clarks Mills, PA, passed away last fall. He is survived by wife, Marge; son, Stephen; and daughter, Cherise.

**Anna Hoffer,** wife of Rev. Kenneth Hoffer of Mount Culmen church, East Earl, PA, passed away on February 6. She is also survived by a son, Craig.

**Gladys Wise,** wife of the late Rev. Russell Wise, passed away on February 13. She was a member of Grace Church, Akron, PA. She assisted her husband with the administration of the Canyon Falls, Kentucky Christian Center and the ECC Retirement Village. She is survived by three stepchildren, Roberta, Elizabeth, and Russell.

**Walter Wanner,** Lay Delegate for many years from Ebenezer Church, Brownstown, PA, passed away on February 18. Daughter, Janet Hague, is Lay Delegate from Hatfield, Emmanuel. Other children include Judy, Jean, and David

**Rev. Donald Howells,** a member of Christ Church, Allentown, PA, passed away on February 20. He pastored twelve of our PA churches. He is survived by children Timothy, Donald, Christopher, Cathy, Lisa, and Becky.

**Helen Theobald** of Calvary Church, Hooppole, IL passed away on February 23. She was President and Area Representative for the Western Branch of the Missionary Fellowship. She also served

several years as Lay Delegate. She is survived by daughter, Barbara, and son, Max.

We apologize for omitting Christie as a daughter of **Alberta Wittleder Whitlatch** who served for many years as Lay Delegate from Kimball Avenue Church, Chicago, IL.

### Welcome, Baby

**Pastor Stephen and Lauren Holubec** of Grace Church, Akron, PA have a new son, **Ryan Andrew,** born January 31. Stephen is pastor of Christian Education.



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