

Evangelical Congregational Church E.C. National News

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WINTER-SPRING 2017



"I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us." PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14

Fifteenth Conference to meet

The Fifteenth Annual Session of the National Conference will meet Wednesday through Friday, May 24 to 26 at Messiah College, Grantham, PA. "Press On", based on Philippians 3:13-14, has been selected as the theme.

The verses read: "I focus on this one thing: forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus is calling us."

According to Bishop Bruce Hill, National Conference is making a transition from "less business to more fellowship, worship, celebration, and resourcing."

The Conference will be preceded by the Wednesday morning 5K Rev Run, Walk, Ride, which benefits Kingdom Extension (church planting). The gathering for worship and communion will be at 1:00 p.m., and Bishop Hill's Episcopal Address will follow at 2:30. New this year on Thursday afternoon will be a brand new learning time "Kingdom & Community Experience".

To register, go to the E.C. website (www.eccenter.com); contact blong@eccenter.com; or call 1-800-866-7581.



A Call to Prayer

Public Law 105-225 reads: *The President shall issue each year a proclamation designating the first Thursday in May as a National Day of States may turn to God in prayer and meditation at churches, in groups, and as individuals.*



This year, the day of prayer is on Thursday, May 4. Theme is "For Your Great Name's Sake: Hear Us...Heal Us!" based on Daniel 9:19.

Anne Graham Lotz is the chairperson of the National Day of Prayer Task Force. Promotional materials are available at www.nationaldayofprayer.net or 1-866-688-8843.



Rev. Morgan is installed at Fern Trinity

On November 6, **Rev. Shawn Morgan** was installed as a new pastor at Fern Trinity E.C. Church, Kossuth, PA. He follows Rev. Mark Micklos, who retired after serving Trinity for 20 years.

Shawn, wife Jennifer, and three sons were living nearby and came from the Church of God tradition. Young adults Austin and Noah join their parents in Morgan Family Ministries, a music outreach. Two-year-old Zane completes the family.

Lay Delegate, Dale Kaber, conducted the service. Allegheny District Field Director, Rev. Gary Brown, brought the message and led the vows and laying on of hands.

The Church Has Left the Building

On Sunday, October 9, four Schuylkill County, PA churches left their buildings to do service projects in the southern parts of their county. Participating congregations were Ashland Bethany and Cressona Bethany Christian Fellowship, pastured by Dennis Snyder; Schuylkill Haven Grace, pastured by Ted Rathman; and Reedsville Bethesda, pastured by Jeff Byerly and Mark Brooks.

Additional churches were consulted to help locate areas of need. A display at a food bank brought in around 25 additional sites to be checked out. Areas of need were divided into east, west, north, and central. The pastors visited the sites, evaluating need and taking pictures. Along with Schuylkill District Field Director, Jim Price, they determined what could actually be done.

Next step was to select appropriately-skilled project leaders, who visited and evaluated work sites, introducing themselves to residents. Volunteers were recruited, with over 250 responding. These were placed on multi-church teams, according to their skills.



The churches united to contribute around \$2,500 to the overall project. A grant from Lowe's allowed for materials to be purchased at cost. Local supply stores, caterers, and others also sold their products at cost.

Some of the churches' seniors gave time to visit half a dozen nursing homes, and other volunteers provided prayer support. Over 30 worksites benefitted, and fall clean-up was done at a Boy Scout Reserve.

Pastor Byerly reports, "We tackled some really big projects like replacing soffits on two-story buildings, doors, stairways, and floors; coating and painting porches and decks; and repairing sidewalks. It really is a phenomenal undertaking!"



The day concluded with a celebration at the Scout Reserve. Still more volunteers prepared an evening meal, with home residents invited. Praise and testimonies completed the event.

Jeff adds, "We literally transformed homes and properties. The people are grateful and now look

for us each year. Increasingly, we are seeing and hearing about relationships that are kindled. There are prolonged conversations between workers and residents at grocery stores. We are invited to make return visits to help the elderly and simply check in with them."

Jeff describes the impact on participating churches as "knowing better the needs around us, more willingness to reach out to a neighbor, and a strong trust relationship among the congregations, with outreach groups meeting quarterly."

Some recipients of help are visiting the churches. "Some do come," says Jeff, "but not with their hands out. Nor do we see them as a solution to our financial woes. They are people God is inviting into His family."



ECCO's got mystery



ECCO's Got Mystery, a fundraiser for Camp ECCO, Carrollton, Ohio, will be held at Wedgewood Park Church, Youngstown at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, April 1. The evening will include a dinner, some "whodunit theater," a bake sale, and basket

auctions. If planning to attend, contact Andrew.dave.carr@gmail.com, or call 1-330-799-1114. Cost of the meal is \$5.00.



Seminary announces bike adventure

On April 29, cyclists will begin the 639-mile Great Cycling Adventure from Huntington, Indiana to Myerstown. Riders hope to raise \$100,000 to aid the working together of Evangelical Seminary and Huntington University, a United Brethren in Christ institution.



Evangelical hopes to become the seminary of choice for Huntington U. The schools have had ties for many years, with a number of United Brethren pastors studying at Evangelical. Three semi-

nary presidents have been graduates of both Huntington and Evangelical.

Cyclists, Kevin Henry, Vice-president for Finance and Operation, and Mark Draper, Director of Pense Learning Center and Assistant Professor of Historical Theology, will represent Evangelical. The ride is to conclude on May 12.

To make a Pedal Pledge, go to www.evangelical.edu/bike or call 1-717-866-5775, ext. 2130 by April 15. Donations should be received by June 30.



Spring retreats announced

Women of the Allegheny and Buckeye

Districts will have their spring retreat Friday through Sunday, March 24-26 at Life Ministries "The Castle" near Franklin, PA. "Taking God on our Journey," is the theme, with last year's speaker, Sandi Phillips, returning. Registration with \$110 should be sent to Karen Howell, 4143-B Greenville-Sandy Lake Road, Clarks Mills, PA 16114 or call 1-724-253-2483.

Twin Pines Camp, Stroudsburg, PA will have its **Mountain Men Retreat** Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22. Speakers include Bishop Bruce Hill, Rev. Gary Kuehner, Rev. Wayne Houck, Rev. Nathan Kennedy, and Geoffrey Clow. Worship will be led by Andy Whittemore. Men may also expect "food, fire, and weapon-throwing."

The camp will host a **craft weekend** March 31 to April 2. Participants will bring their own crafts and enjoy Bible study and fellowship.

The **For Ladies Only Retreat** will take place Tuesday through Thursday, May 16 to 18. Cost is \$154 for Aspen Lodge and \$132 for standard rooms.

In addition, a **children's retreat** will be held Friday through Saturday, April 28 to 30. A special feature will be the Sunshine Praise Puppets. Cost is \$110 per person.

For more information about Twin Pines retreats, go to www.twinpines.org, e-mail retreats@twinpines.org, or call 1-570-629-2411.



Small-town pastors are invited to conference

"Celebrating the Impact" is the theme for the Rural Home Mission Association's Small-town Pastors' Conference, Monday through Wednesday, April 24 to 26 at Grace Church in Morton, Illinois. This year's event will include RHMA's 75th anniversary banquet.



Dr. Irwin Lutzer, Pastor Emeritus of Moody Church, Chicago, will be one of the featured speakers. A number of workshops and men's and women's activities will be included.

Cost is \$150 per couple and \$110 for individuals. Register before April 10 at www.rhma.org. For more information, call 1-866-263-2350.



FAMILY NEWS

Welcome Baby

Pastor Nathan and Katie Kennedy, Jim Thorpe, PA Ebenezer, have a new daughter, **Chloe Joy**, born on December 15. She has a brother, Paul, and two sisters, Lydia and Hannah.



100th Birthday

Stephen Holubec, a resident of StoneRidge Poplar Run in Myerstown, will celebrate his 100th birthday on March 17. Stephen was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Phoenixville. He was a salesman for a meat packing company and a supervisor for the Jones Motor Company. He served in the Army Air Force during World War II, stationed in Ghana.

He was married to the former Emma Heisler, who passed away in 2005. He has two sons, three grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Rev. Stephen Holubec, pastor at Akron, PA Grace is a grandson.



Anniversary

David and Celia Dick, missionaries with One Mission Society in Greenwood, Indiana, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on September 3. They have two sons, Ryan and Daniel.



Ordinations

Rev. Dennis Snyder, pastor at Ashland PA Bethany and Cressona PA Bethany Christian Fellowship, was ordained in Cressona on September 11. He was joined by wife, Jennifer. Rev. Al Giles brought the message. Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly conducted the laying on of hands.



Schuylkill District Field Director, Jim Price brought the call to worship and the benediction. Rev. Bryan Dever offered prayer. Musicians were Christine Schaeffer, Carolyn Schneider, Geri Stanko, and Dennis' daughters, Danielle and Connor.

Rev. William Stoffel, pastor at the Lawn PA EC Church, was ordained in his church on September 18. He was accompanied by wife, Carol. The message was brought by Rev. Frederick Moury. Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly conducted the laying on of hands. Scriptures were read by board chairman, Kirk Shertzer, and Sunday School superintendent, Michael Spittle. Rev. Gordon Lewis, Capital/Lebanon Field Director, brought the call to worship and benediction. Musicians were Donna Spittle, Elaine Engle, and Barbara Shertzer.

Rev. Douglas O'Brien, pastor at the Rexmont, PA EC Church, was ordained in his church on October 2. He was accompanied by wife, Christine. Rev. Gordon Lewis, Capital/Lebanon Field Director, presided over the service and assisted in serving communion. Bishop Bruce Hill brought the message. He and Rev. Jeff Byerly conducted the laying on of hands. Douglas O'Brien, Jr. read Scripture. Brenda Copeland, Howard Lee, and Josh and Sara Ober provided music.

Rev. John T. (Ted) Rathman, pastor at Schuylkill Haven, PA Grace, was ordained in his church on September 25. Ted's wife is Jessica. The message was brought by Rev. Matthew Hill. Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly conducted the laying on of hands. Rev. Kirk Marks "reminded the church of its mission," and Ted's father, Ken Rathman, led in prayer. Niece, Taylor, and her daughter, Lily, sang "Dream For You."

(Rev. Byerly participated in each ordination as Ministerial Development Associate.)

Remembering loved ones....

Retired pastor, **Rev. David Roof**, 80, of Dillsburg, PA passed away on November 18. He was a chaplain's assistant in the United State Marine Corps. David was a graduate of Messiah College and Evangelical Seminary. He served eight Pennsylvania churches, beginning in Myerstown. He was also a District Superintendent in the Eastern Conference. He is survived by wife, Shirley; daughters, Kim and Deb; and son, David (EC missionary in Brazil).

Virginia Heil, 97, wife of the late Rev. David Heil, passed away on November 23. She came from Reading, PA. She was a resident of the Mennonite Home in Lancaster and a member of Lancaster Grace Church. Virginia graduated from Albright College and was a home economics teacher. She shared her musical talents with the churches her husband served. She is survived by sons, Paul and John.

Retired Army chaplain, **Rev. David Myers**, 78, passed away in Villa Rica, Georgia on December 24. He was a member of the Lebanon, PA Bunker Hill Church. He served our East Weissport and Hamburg churches. David's career as a chaplain took him to Korea and Germany, as well as several locations in the States. During retirement, he and his wife did extensive short-term mission work. He is survived by wife, Barbara; daughters, Kim and Karen; and son, Craig.



Priscilla Mock, 89, mother of Pat Wolfe, receptionist at Church Center, passed away on December 28. She was a resident of StoneRidge Towne Center in Myerstown. Priscilla was employed by Benner's Associates and Valley View Dairy Store, both of Schaefferstown. She was a member of Millcreek Lutheran Church in Newmanstown. She was preceded in death by husband, Aaron. In addition to Pat, she is survived by sons, David and Dennis; and daughter, Debra.

Margaret Maurer, 96, wife of the late Dr. Kenneth Maurer of Evangelical Seminary, passed away on January 21. She was a resident of StoneRidge Towne Center. Margaret worked with her husband for nine years as a secretary at the seminary, after the couple had served four churches.

She was a member of St. John's EC Church in Allentown. She is survived by son, Allen. She was preceded in death by son, Daniel, a Lay Delegate from Ashland.

Dr. James Yoder, 95, of Myerstown passed away on March 5. He taught at Evangelical Seminary for 36 years and pastored nine EC churches. His home church was Allentown Bethany. Jim was a graduate of Muhlenberg College and Princeton Seminary. He was preceded in death by wife, Jane. He is survived by daughter, Jean, and sons, Rev. James Yoder, Jr. and Jonathan. A memorial service will be held at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, March 18 in Dech Memorial Chapel of Evangelical Seminary.

Donald Zettlemoyer, 79, Lay Delegate for Berlinsville, PA Trinity, passed away on March 6. He was a resident of Kunkletown and a United States Army Veteran. Donald worked as an independent insurance agent for 40 years. He is survived by wife, Alena; sons, Patrick and Alan; and daughter, Karen.

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Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Psalm 85:11 ESV
