

# E.C. Leader

These are exciting times to be a part of the Evangelical Congregational Church! This past March the National Ministry Team (NMT) voted to have the Bishop appoint a Task Force to wrestle with the question “what should the denomination fund by mandate?” and comprehensively review all financial structures of the National Conference of the EC Church. In my Episcopal Report to National Conference I noted that while the action of the NMT deals primarily with financial structures, this review will need to be part of a complete study and new strategic plan that addresses how we “do denomination” in the future. That work will be known as the **Futures Initiative**.

I am pleased to report to you that the formation of this task force is now underway. Rev. Les Cool has agreed to serve with me as the co-chair of the **Futures Initiative**. Les currently serves as Senior Pastor of Grace E.C. Church, Akron, PA and as our denomination’s Church Planting Associate. Prior to moving back to Pennsylvania Les and his wife, Carol, led a church plant in Newark, Delaware. Les has brought creative and sensitive leadership to church planting and I

look forward to working with him in leading the **Futures Initiative**.



Six work groups; each studying a different aspect of our denominational life: Affiliates, Congregation-Denomination Relations,

Denominational Structure, Ecclesiology, Finance, and Global Ministries will be tasked with studying their area of focus and presenting a written report with specific recommendations to the **Futures Initiative** Core Group. The Core Group will then make a final recommendation incorporating the work of the various teams to the National Ministry Team and ultimately to the National Conference for implementation. The **Futures Initiative** Team will work with a goal to make a preliminary report to the National Ministry Team at their

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October 2012 meeting and then hopefully to present more definitive recommendations at the March 2013 NMT meeting and at the National Conference 2013.

Obviously, we will need to make some changes as we move forward. We will need to say “good-bye” to some things and “hello” to some new things to reflect not just what we’re doing right now but where we want to be as a denomination in the years to come. We must stand firmly on God’s Word. That is our foundation, our center. We need to obey God and we need to remain loyal to our core values; but we need to be willing to discover new ways to “do denomination” and be willing to change as the Lord leads.

I trust you will support and surround this **Futures Initiative** effort constantly in prayer. This work cannot and will not be done in our own strength. We will depend on the leading and directing of the Holy Spirit in this process. I believe God is getting ready to do a new thing in the Evangelical Congregational Church. As I said, it’s an exciting time in our church to see what God is doing to build His Kingdom!

In Christ’s service,

Rev. Bruce D. Hill  
Bishop

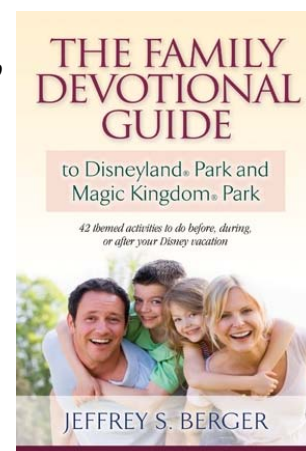


**We are very happy to announce:** Rev. Jeff Berger, Youth Pastor of Mohn’s Hill EC Church near Reading, PA had just authored a new book, *The Family Devotional Guide to Disneyland Park and Magic Kingdom Park*, published by Evergreen Press. It is designed to help families make the most of their Disney vacation by connecting more with each other and with God’s Word before, during, or after their visit to California’s Disneyland Park or Florida’s Magic Kingdom Park.

Lee Cockerell, the former Executive Vice President of Walt Disney World, calls it, “An interesting and fun way to communicate Christian values. I’m sure this will be a family favorite.”

More information about the book and additional endorsements can be found at <http://christian-publishing.net/portfolio/the-family-devotional-guide-to-disney/>

Signed copies are available by contacting Jeff at [jeff@mohnhill.org](mailto:jeff@mohnhill.org). The book is also available on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), on [www.christianbook.com](http://www.christianbook.com), and in select retail locations. An e-book version for Kindle will be released shortly.



## The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Join me in supporting the Futures Initiatives Team in prayer as they begin their work.
2. Pray for campers who made decisions for Christ and grew in their faith as they head back to school and all the distractions they face.
3. Ask the Lord to fill his church with passion as we worship and serve him.
4. Remember our missionaries who are returning home on furlough—that they reacclimate to life in the USA, find some time for rest, and reconnect with their donors (and develop more support).
5. Pray for the final enrollment push at Evangelical Theological Seminary for the fall. Ask the Lord to bless them with reaching and exceeding their goals.
6. Praise God for the pastors and lay people who willingly serve on the various commissions and committees of our denomination. (Your help and service are appreciated.)
7. Praise the Lord for opportunities to take some vacation time to enjoy family and friends.
8. Thank the Lord for safe travel as I visited the churches and pastors in Illinois, July 7-16. (A flight out and back with over 1,000 miles put on the rental car in between.)
9. Praise God for the opportunities I have to visit and speak at E.C. churches and meet new friends. (Remember, if you'd like me to come to your church in 2013, just send me an invitation and we'll try to make it work.)
10. Praise the Lord for the good reports we're receiving from new assignments of pastors and churches made at this year's National Conference.



### 2012 National Conference Journals

The Journals will be ready for distribution by August 15th.

If you have not already ordered your Journal please contact the Church Center Office

[blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com)  
or 717-866-7581.



## News from Global Ministries



### Available Speaking Dates:

Randy is available to present the work of the GMC for your worship service, Sunday school or at any day/time/venue that would be beneficial. Carla is also willing and happy to present the work of missions to children in Sunday school and/or junior church when Randy visits. The following Sundays are available in 2012.

August 26

October 7

December 2, 9, 16

We are now scheduling for 2013, please contact Randy or the GMC office [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or 717-866-7584.

### GMC WESTERN PA/OHIO TOUR

GMC Director Randy Sizemore and Carla will be traveling to the EC Churches in Western PA and Ohio September 8-17, 2012 to present the work of the GMC in a variety of settings. We will be presenting the work of your international EC churches in worship services, Sunday schools, mid-week meetings, with missionary committees and individuals. If you are in this neck of the woods and would like to be on the schedule, contact Randy at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or 717-866-7584.

### YOU CAN HELP THE NEW PRINCIPAL OF EVANGELICAL COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY

Rev. Lalrosiem Songate, former General Director (Bishop) of the EC Church of India was elected the next Principal of our Evangelical College of Theology in North East India. However, he is required to earn a Doctoral Degree within the next 2 years to ensure the accreditation of ECT. We praise God that he has been offered a tuition scholarship at Concordia (Fort Wayne, IN) but he still is in need of further support for tuition, housing and living expenses. The GMC considers this a strategic investment in the future of ECT, the EC Church of India and a very gifted leader who will continue to provide excellent leadership for ECT and the EC Church of India. We are setting up a special fund to help Rev. Songate achieve this necessary goal. If you and or your church would like to help with this need please make checks payable to GMC and mark them "Songate education". If you want more information, please contact Randy at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or 717-866-7584.



### VBS PROJECT

The VBS Project for this year is to raise funds to build a security fence around the women's dormitory at Evangelical College of Theology in Churachandpur, Northeast India. The current fence is a rickety wooden affair that doesn't even keep animals out. Our goal is \$10,000.

### GMC FALL FAMILY MISSION RALLY: October 12, 13, 2012

The Fall Rally will be held at the Boyertown Trinity EC Church and will begin on Friday with a luncheon for the pastors and mission leaders. Saturday's Rally will include programs for the adults and children that will run concurrently. We have a great group of missionaries on home assignment this year who will be sharing their ministries with us. Our special guest for both days will be Rev. Elias Martinez, the Director of the EC Church of Mexico. Mark the dates and watch for more reservation information coming soon!

The Global Ministries Commission will be hosting a **missionary retreat** for all US based/home assignment EC missionaries in conjunction with the regular meeting of the Commission on October 2-4, 2012 at Twin Pines. During this retreat we will reconnect with and receive updates from our missionaries, enjoy times of fellowship, do some strategic planning and be lead in worship by Bishop Bruce Hill.



## News from Benefits/Compensation

**Health Insurance Rates.** When the EC Benefits Corporation Board of Trustees receives health insurance renewal rates, we will review it and release the information to churches as soon as possible.

**Deductible & Coinsurance Claims.** Please remember to submit all of your deductible and coinsurance claims to PrimePay on a timely basis. PrimePay will track all of your covered out of pocket healthcare expenses, including the first \$500 that is the responsibility of the pastor. Timely submission of claims helps EC Benefits monitor and assess the cost efficiency of the health insurance plan. Also, covered deductible and coinsurance claims must be incurred by September 30, 2012 and submitted to PrimePay for reimbursement ninety days from the end of the plan year which is December 29, 2012.

**New to Prime Pay.** On [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com), under Benefits Corporation, then Capital BlueCross is a form "PrimePay Direct Deposit Authorization Form" in WORD and PDF format. If you would like to have your reimbursement checks direct deposited into your bank account instead of waiting for a check to be mailed, complete one of the forms and send to David King, Benefits Ad-

ministrator, for processing. We are being told that PrimePay will be processing direct deposit payments everyday at 3:00 p.m. The payments should be received in your bank account within 24 to 48 hours, depending on individual bank processing requirements.

**Pastoral Compensation Forms.** The 2013 Pastoral Compensation Forms are available on the website. Refer to the compensation committee report from National Conference for pastoral salary recommendations. Remember that the local conference should approve a pastor's housing allowance or parsonage furnishings allowance prior to December 31, 2012.

Please contact David King, [dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com) or myself [khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com) or 1-800-866-7581 with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry  
Controller

## News from Evangelical Seminary



**FINAL APPROVAL** in a year long process of visits and evaluations came the end of June when the Middle States Commission on Higher Education extended Evangelical's accreditation for another ten years!



**MACL GETS UNDERWAY...** The Master of Arts in Christian Leadership is developing its first cohort of students to begin the new hybrid course format (online and several weekends on campus) this fall. The two year program is for church staffers (not senior pastors), spiritual direction advisors, Christian leaders in businesses, and workers in both for-profit and non-profit sectors desiring to develop their skills within a solid Christian context. A generous friend of the seminary is offering \$2000 scholarships to the first 10 MACL students who register for this fall's cohort. Complete information is available at [www.evangelical.edu](http://www.evangelical.edu) or by calling Dean of Admissions Tom Maiello at 800-432-5775. Spread the word to those you know who could benefit from this opportunity.



**RIBBON-CUTTING** for Evangelical's new Harrisburg MDiv program is set for Monday, August 27, at 3:00 at Messiah College's Harrisburg Institute, 28 Dewberry Street. Orientation for the first cohort of students follows, and classes get underway September 10.



**FALL REGISTRATION...** There's still time to sign up for a wide variety of courses in the fall semester, for credit or by audit. You don't have to be a potential pastor to benefit from the teaching of Evangelical's outstanding professors. Again, check the website for a complete list of what's available.



**INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP** is the new name for Leadership Contact, but the mission remains the same: to offer credit-free classes for lay pastors or Christian leaders interested in deepening their knowledge and skills. The four year program meets on Tuesday evenings and offers 16 courses on a rotating basis. This fall's classes are New Testament Survey, taught by Rev. Jason Dickinson, and The Healthy Church, taught by Rev. Jeff Byerly. Go to the Lifelong Learning link on the Evangelical website for information and registration.



**THANK YOU!!** Many of you contributed, either individually or through your church, to this year's Annual Fund for Transformational Leadership, and we thank God for a total of \$450,770 (95.3%) toward our goal of \$473,200. Evangelical's dear friends have again honored God and blessed the seminary with faithful stewardship, and we are deeply grateful.



**BISHOP TODD HUNTER** will highlight the Leadership Forum on Tuesday, September 18. Check the Lifelong Learning link on the website to learn how uniquely qualified Hunter is to deal with spiritual formation for leaders. This annual event is sponsored by the Center for Lifelong Learning, in cooperation with Evangelical's Alumni Council. Informative brochures will soon be mailed, and registration may also be done online.



**STEVE GREEN**, gifted singer and songwriter, will keynote the Friends of Evangelical Banquet on Friday, October 19, at Lancaster's Calvary Church. Mark your calendars now and watch for registration options by mail and on the website.



## “LIGHT THE FIRE AGAIN”

### The E.C. National Prayer Summit

FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AND AWAKENING



Will you join us this October 8, 9, 10 in Emlenton, PA at the Whitehall Camp and Conference Center for this Summit? The cost for six meals and two nights lodging is only \$77/person in motel-like rooms or \$61/person for a dormitory room. You can Google “Whitehall, Emlenton, PA” and see their brochure with pictures of the lodging and sylvan setting. It should be beautiful in October. We have also reserved the Missionary Cottage Auditorium for our meetings. Sign up today and think about who you would like to take along. **Make your reservations with the E.C. Church Center and mark your check “E.C. Prayer Summit.”**

We, the PMT, have been hearing the call, “Return to me and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Hosts,” Malachi 3:7. If we are to be all that we can be in Christ Jesus, we need to come along side what He is doing! Please join us in seeking Him!

Pastors, would you consider preaching a message or a series of messages starting in September on the necessity and hope of Christ centered revival. Then bring your people to the Summit. Sermon resources and promotional materials can be found at [www.ONECRY.com](http://www.ONECRY.com).

For the King and For the Restoration,  
The Prayer Mobilization Team

### FROM THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE TREASURER:

As Evangelical Congregational churches, we work together to accomplish more than any single congregation could do on its own. One aspect of our connectedness is the submission of forms which help us see trends, set goals, and aid in long range planning. This includes pastor’s annual reports, quarterly reports and Church Treasurer’s monthly Ministry Fund forms.

Ministry Fund forms, along with your monthly Ministry Fund payment, should be sent to E.C. Church Center, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067 by the 10th of the following month. Recently we have had a string of incorrect forms that can cause an incorrect payment requiring checks to be returned to the church and reissued. If you or your treasurer have trouble understanding the form please call E.C. Church Center (717-866-7581) and speak to Kevin Henry, our Controller.

Churches that are under severe financial stress and are unable to pay the required Ministry Fund amount can make a partial payment rather than skipping the payment completely or not sending the report form in at all. Please submit the Ministry Fund form with a partial payment or even with no payment. The Ministry Fund forms assist leadership in monitoring the health of our denomination. Per the rules of conference, payments of Ministry Funds are required of member churches and the preceding statements neither reverse nor contradict the rules of National Conference.