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From the Bishop

How do you feel about interruptions? You know, you have your schedule planned, you know what you need to do and then something happens to change it all. I guess I'm thinking about that right now because I'm trying to finish my sermons for camp meetings and the guy came to replace the windshield on my pick-up truck. This is the second vehicle windshield we've had to replace — both broken while Gloria was driving — but I'll not go there! Anyway, I was writing a sermon when I had to stop and go outside and talk with the windshield repair man.

There are all kinds of interruptions that break into our lives and schedules. Sometimes they come at a good time, when we need a break, but it seems more often than not, they don't seem to pick a convenient time to interrupt us. Yet ministry means being available to God and to the people we serve. And their schedules don't always match ours.

Matthew tells us that one day Jesus was walking down the road from Jericho to Jerusalem; heading toward the Palm Sunday parade, the last Sup-

per, betrayal, and a crucifixion. It must have been a time of great stress for Jesus. He was walking to the completion of God's mission for him. In the middle

of that, two blind men start yelling at him saying, "Lord, have mercy on us!" Matthew tells us that the crowds around Jesus didn't take very kindly to their interruption and yelled at the men to be quiet. The men just shouted louder "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!" Jesus stopped and called to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" They asked to be able to see, and Jesus healed them; "Instantly, they could see! Then they followed him." (Matthew 20:29-33) I am struck by the fact that with everything swirling around in Jesus' heart and mind, surrounded by a crowd, he still heard the men and stopped. If we want to be used by God, if you want to serve God, we must be willing to be interrupted. In fact, when I read the accounts of Jesus' life it seems like most of Jesus' ministry and most of



Jesus' miracles were interruptions; he's teaching people and suddenly pieces of ceiling are raining down and a guy is being lowered through the roof.

Maybe you're having a quiet day as you read this. Everything is going according to plan. Or maybe it's taken you a couple of tries just to read this short article because you keep getting interrupted. I'm not going to claim that every interruption is good, or is a God-thing, but I do believe that if I am going to serve God I need to be sensitive to the needs of the people around me; even if their needs don't come at the best times. I could write more, but I gotta' go, somebody wants to talk with me...

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Bishop" or similar, written in a cursive style.

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Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

1. Pray for our Associates and Communities as they begin their ministries: Church Health—Gary Kuehner, Global Ministries—Randy Sizemore, Kingdom Extension—Les Cool, Ministerial Development—Jeff Byerly.
2. Ask the Lord to continue to touch the lives of the young people who have come to know him as their Savior through our various Vacation Bible School and camping ministries as local congregations follow-up and disciple them.
3. Pray for the Lord to clearly lead in the stationing work that continues after National Conference is completed. Pray for the leaders of the congregations who are still awaiting new pastors.
4. Pray for Evangelical Seminary as they talk with potential new students and as they continue conversations regarding a future relationship with Huntington University.
5. Pray for the new Conference Network Team as they hold their first official meeting on August 3. Pray that we get off to a good start as we continue to seek the Lord's direction for our conversations.
6. Thank the Lord for the safety the Lord continues to bless Gloria and I with as we travel around the Conference, visiting churches, enjoying God's family and preaching.
7. Praise the Lord for the good reports we're receiving from new assignments of pastors and churches made at this year's National Conference.
8. Praise God for the people who are planning and working on new ministries and programs which will impact the lives of many people with the Good News about Jesus this coming fall season.
9. Praise the Lord for Gloria and I having the ability to get away on vacation earlier this summer—we all need a break from time to time.
10. Praise God for the many people, pastors and laity, who express their appreciation for my leadership as Bishop and assure me of their ongoing prayers on my behalf. I count on those prayers!

A New Book for Times Like This

Leith Anderson, President of the National Association of Evangelicals, and Galen Cary, NAE Vice President of Government Relations have written a book *"Faith in the Voting Booth: Practical Wisdom for Voting Well."*

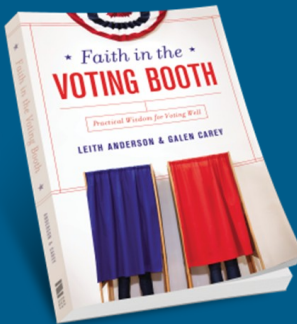
They note that voters today too often default to one side of the political spectrum or the other. Candidates avoid

discussing issues, and election outcomes are influenced by slogans and television ads.

In *"Faith in the Voting Booth,"* Leith Anderson and Galen Carey show how better informed, faith-directed voting is both possible and desperately needed in our country today. Biblical wisdom is relevant to today's complex political issues, and each voting

decision should be thoughtfully and prayerfully approached. *"Faith in the Voting Booth"* does not tell you how to vote but, instead, provides general principles to guide evangelicals in 2016 and for years to come.

You can buy the book on the National Association of Evangelical' website www.nae.net/voting-booth, and on Amazon.



State Finds StoneRidge Towne Centre Deficiency Free



Towne Centre's leadership team (from left) Valerie Sweatlock, Jacqueline Willman, Joe Bononno, Kristine Tait, Kori Bingaman, Katrina Wagner, Stacey Berard, Pamela Meyer, Nancy Plummer and Elaine Kirkwood

Everyone at StoneRidge Towne Centre*, in Myerstown, is celebrating. The reason for the celebration is that they recently passed an important state survey with flying colors.

Each year the PA Department of Health conducts the Medicare and Medicaid State Licensure Survey of every nursing facility in the state. A team of four surveyors arrived at StoneRidge Towne Centre on June 10 and spent several days reviewing and assessing, well, just

about everything. The team examined dietary, activities programming, behavioral programs, pharmacy services. Clinical operations and the overall level of care at the facility. One June 10, the surveyors met with Kori Bingaman, Towne Centre's executive director, to discuss their findings. They told Kori that the overall care at Towne Centre is very good, and no deficiencies were found. They commended Kori stating that the facility has a warm homelike, family-feel. Kori explained that staff are

often told by residents and family members that they are pleased with the intimate and caring atmosphere. This recent state visit certainly confirmed what they had been

hearing all along. Congratulations to Towne Centre on their deficiency-free survey!

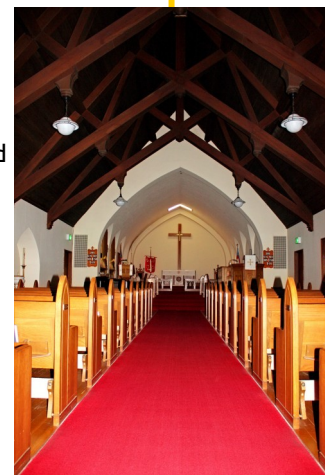
*StoneRidge Towne Centre is one of four retirement communities comprising StoneRidge Retirement Living. Locations include StoneRidge Towne Centre and StoneRidge Poplar Run both in Myerstown, Church of God Home in Carlisle and Schoolyard Square in Pine Grove. For more information about options available for you or a loved one, please call 717-866-3553.

Group Property & Liability Insurance Program

Earlier this spring the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church entered into a partnership with the Church Mutual Insurance Co. to offer EC Churches discounts on property and liability insurance as well as the possibility of a group dividend rebate. A few churches reported receiving

lower insurance costs from Church Mutual Insurance Co. since the partnership was announced. If your church is interested in receiving a comprehensive insurance review by a Church Mutual representative please contact Mike Ricci, 215-828-1327 or mricci@churchmutual.com. EC

Churches in all states are eligible to participate in the premium discounts and dividend rebate program.



News from Evangelical



Alumni Day in the Museum—August 10, 2016

Evangelical Alumni and their guest are invited to a special “Alumni Day in the Museum” at the David A. Dorsey Museum of Biblical Archaeology on

Wednesday, August 10, from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. The museum will be open for you to drop in during that time period. Tours at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. For more details and to RSVP for a free lunch, please visit <http://dorsey-moba.org> or contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu

Saint Mural and Mission Aviation Promotions Fair—August 20-21, 2016

311 Airport Dr #7, Smoketown, PA 17576

Evangelical Seminary was given a large mural painted by Lawrence Saint, father of Nate Saint who was martyred in 1956 as he reached out to the Waodani (Auca) people of Ecuador. At the Smoketown Mission Aviation Fair on August 20, Evangelical Seminary will return the mural to Jaime Saint, Lawrence’s great-grandson. Come enjoy the day and experience the impact of aviation and technology on mission work around the globe. More details at www.mission-aviation.org or contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu



Leadership Forum—September 13, 2016

Join us as four international church leaders share, “What we wish we had known when we started.” These valuable insights helped them to be more effective as pastors and leaders. Each registrant that attends will receive a free copy of the book, *Straight Talk to Leaders*, co-authored by our four speakers, courtesy of House to House Publications. For more details and to register, please visit www.evangelical.edu/leadership-forum For questions, contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu



Lester Zimmerman



Larry Kreider



Sam Smucker



Barry Wissler

Faith in the Marketplace

On Thursday, September 22, 7:00-8:30 am, Stephan Van Der Ploog, Founder and Chief Accountability Officer of Candoris Technologies will be our Faith in the Marketplace speaker in Zinn Commons. Invite business leaders in your network to join others in the local business community as they share ways to live their faith in the context of the workplace. Register online at www.evangelical.edu/fim-vanderploog. This event sponsored by New Covenant Christian School. If you have questions, contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu



Stephan Van Der Ploog

Save the Date

Well known author, Scot McKnight will be speaking in Christ Hall on Thursday, December 1, 2016. The event will be co-sponsored by Evangelical Seminary and Society of Religious and Theological Abstracts. Watch for details to follow.



Pastoral Leadership, taught by Jason Dickinson, and **Pastoral Care and Counseling**, taught by John Wallace, are the classes offered this fall in the Institute for Church Leadership. The classes begin September 6 and November 1 respectively. Anyone can benefit from these opportunities for spiritual enrichment and leadership development. You can get more information and register at www.evangelical.edu/icl or contact Ken Nafziger at knafziger@evangelical.edu

Deep Gratitude

The Administration, Faculty, Staff, Board of Trustees, and Students of Evangelical Seminary wish to express our deep gratitude to all those who offered prayer and financial support during the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Your generosity makes it possible for us to prepare and educate servant leaders for transformational ministry! Students are only charged half of what it actually costs Evangelical to educate them, and even then many are forced to borrow money in order to answer God's call

on their lives. Your gifts help cover the difference between the actual cost and what they are billed. Again, thank you for your generosity!

Following is a list of the Evangelical Congregational Churches that have sent gifts to Evangelical in fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016). If your church is listed, thank you! If your church is not listed, please consider adding a line item in your church budget to benefit and bless your Seminary with a gift this year.

Supporting E.C. Churches—2015-2016

Evangelical Congregational Church, Myerstown, PA
 Zion E.C. Church, Myerstown, PA
 Zion E.C. Church, Annville, PA
 Grace Community Church, Willow Street, PA
 Community Evangelical Church, Sinking Spring, PA
 Bethany E.C. Church, Ashland, PA
 Grace E.C. Church, Kutztown, PA
 Zion E.C. Church, Mohnton, PA
 Trinity E.C. Church, Lititz, PA
 St. John's E.C. Church (Steelstown), Annville, PA
 Grace E.C. Church, Lancaster, PA
 Mohn's Memorial E.C. Church, Reading, PA
 Trinity E.C. Church, Boyertown, PA
 Zion E.C. Sunday School, Mohnton, PA
 Trinity E.C. Church, Harrisburg, PA
 Zion E.C. Church (Bridgeville), Narvon, PA
 Hope Community E.C. Church, Fogelsville, PA
 Emmanuel E.C. Church, Bethlehem, PA
 Trinity E.C. Church, Alpha SS Class, Lititz, PA
 E.C. Global Ministries, Myerstown, PA
 New Life of Shillington, Shillington, PA
 Grace E.C. Church, Akron, PA

You are invited to attend the 2016 National Conference Ordination Services

The Ordinations are scheduled as follows:

Rev. Dennis W. Snyder

Bethany Christian Fellowship E.C. Church
 Cressona, PA
 Sunday, September 11, 4:00 pm

Rev. William E. Stoffel

Lawn E.C. Church
 Lawn, PA
 Sunday, September 18, 4:00 pm

Rev. John T. Rathman

Grace E.C. Church
 Schuylkill Haven, PA
 Sunday, September 25, 4:00 pm

Rev. Douglas W. O'Brien

Rexmont E.C. Church
 Rexmont, PA
 Sunday, October 2, 4:00 pm

News from Benefits

The EC Benefits Trustees received the **preliminary 2017 health insurance increase** and the increase was much higher than anticipated. However, our insurance broker is soliciting rates from other insurance carriers and I cannot speculate on what the final rate increase will be. On the positive side the healthy cushion in the HRA is allowing us some flexibility in the plan design and rates. The intent of the Benefits Trustees is to pass along as low of a rate increase as possible to the churches and use some of the cushion in the HRA to absorb the remainder of the increase. It is hoped, not promised, that the rate increase to the churches will be in the low single digits. When the renewal rate is received and reviewed by the EC Benefits Corporation Board of Trustees, information to the churches will be released as soon as possible.

To assist in receiving the lowest renewal rate possible and have some leverage with other insurers the current enrollees on the Capital Blue Cross active pastors health insurance plan must complete medical underwriting with Highmark Blue Shield. Medical underwriting is simply completing a form that will list all enrollees and their dependents current and ongoing medical conditions and prescriptions. Highmark Blue Shield will use this information to assess the health risk of the group and base a premium quote to the current enrollees on the Capital Blue Cross active pastors plan. Retired pastors on the Highmark Freedom Blue plan will not be completing medical underwriting.

Multiple notices have been sent reminding health plan participants about the availability of the **Healthcare Reimbursement Account (HRA)**. Reimbursement



for covered health care expenses above the annual limit of \$500, excluding co-pays, is available through the HRA. And the HRA will reimburse for out of pocket prescription drug cost above \$1,800/year and therapy co-pay visits (occupational, physical, speech and respiratory therapy) above \$1,800/year. Instructions and forms for HRA reimbursements are available on the website or call Dave King or Kevin Henry at the Church Center and we will walk you through the process.

The **2017 Pastoral Compensation Forms** will be available when the Social Security Administration releases the annual Social Security COLA increase. Normally the COLA increase is released in early October. Most internet bloggers are predicting a COLA increase at 0% for 2017, the second straight without an increase. Please refer to the Compensation Committee report from the National Conference for other pastoral salary and benefit information and recommendations. Remember local churches should approve a pastor's 2017 housing allowance or parsonage furnishings allowance prior to December 31, 2016.

Please contact Dave King, dking@eccenter.com or myself, khenry@eccenter.com or 1-800-866-7581 with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry
Executive Director



News from Twin Pines

Winter Thaw Youth Weekends 2017

February 10-12, 2017 or February 17-19, 2017

Attention Youth Leaders—mark your calendars! Twin Pines will once again be hosting Winter Thaw Youth Weekends in February. We will have two weekends for you to choose from in 2017! Bring your youth group and we will do the rest. This is a great opportunity for you to build relationships with your youth while we handle the programming. New for this year, we are taking advance reservations so you don't miss out on space. Let us know how much space you want to reserve and send us a \$25.00 reservation fee and you will be good to go! Contact the camp for more information—Phone (570)629-2411 or email re-treats@twinpines.org.



23rd Annual Golf Classic

September 16-17, 2016

Golfers unite in the Poconos for two days in September! This is our annual golf fundraiser to help support the ministry of Twin Pines. Spend two days golfing at the Glen Brook Golf Club while staying at Twin Pines. There are hundreds of dollars' worth of prizes too! See the brochure and registration form on our website at www.twinpines.org. Contact the camp for more information—(570)629-2411 or email re-treats@twinpines.org

Fall Fix-Up

September 13-15, 2016

Join us for our fall work retreat as we “fix-up” the camp and prepare for the colder months. There are many different projects for our helpers with many different talents.



There is no cost for this special retreat. Enjoy two nights in Aspen and an awesome picnic while fellowshiping with great friends! Let us know you are coming at (570)629-2411 or email linda@twinpines.org



Fall Foliage 5K & Family Festival

Saturday, October 1, 2016

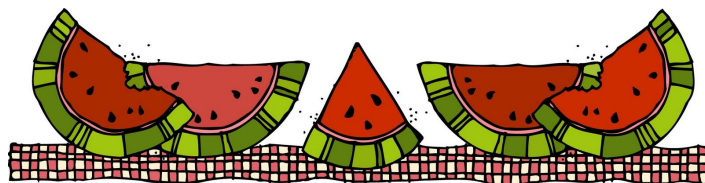
Join us for our annual 5K run through camp and Fall Family Festival. This is a great day of fun, friends, and running! There will be plenty of activities for

families at the Festival. It also serves as a fundraiser to support the ministry of Twin Pines! Contact the camp office for more information! (570)629-2411 or email info@twinpines.org

Celebration Banquet

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Mark your calendars to join us for our annual Celebration Banquet, starting at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, October 18th at Good 'n' Plenty Restaurant in Smoketown, PA.

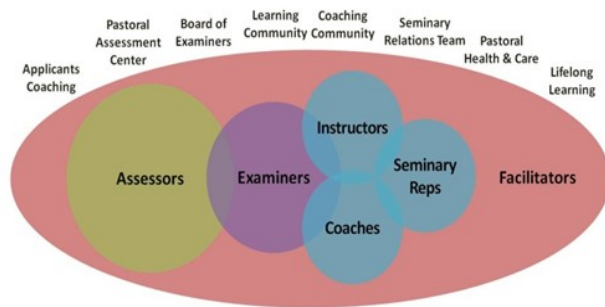


News from Ministerial Development Community

The Ministerial Development Community (MDC) has been called to the unique task of discipling our ministerial leadership. If done well, our DNA focused on disciple-making and missionality will not only be discussed among us, but will arise from among our pastors, deacons, and preachers, and permeate the lives of our congregational bodies throughout the National Conference. This is not a tweak to do the same old stuff under new headings, but rather the opportunity to allow God to move his church toward this new reality!

Bishop Bruce Hill and I have prayed about these positions, the process, the changes, the communications, the framework, and especially for those whom the MDC will be serving. We've selected individuals to compose an executive team based on their passion, knowledge, and excellence in specific areas that reveal a heart for discipleship and missionality. Through many conversations with individual team members and in groups, I believe that we are properly aligned to see fruit for the kingdom, and moving in the same direction together.

THE MDC Subgroups



Along with Bishop Hill and myself, the following individuals compose the Ministerial Development Executive Team:

- Al Giles—Applicants Coach
- Kirk Marks—Pastoral Assessment Center Director
- Pat Teaford—Board of Examiners Chairman
- Charles Walker—Coaching Community Chairman
- Bill Worley—Seminary Relations Chairman
- Gary Brown—Pastoral Care Chairman
- Jim Ehrman—Lifelong Learning Facilitator
- Gene Stevenson—Secretary

Please pray for the above members, as they begin their assigned work—selecting and training teams, groups, and communities that will network together to accomplish the many functions within the overall MDC process. We are still adding assessors, examiners, coaches, representatives, instructors, pastoral health and care individuals, and facilitators to the community. It will be the efforts and results of these people that will make this community a success! It's definitely a community thing!

Blessings,
 Jeff Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate

ORDER your 2016 National Conference Journal today!

Call 1-800-866-7581 or email blong@eccenter.com



**Evangelical Congregational
Church**

100 West Park Avenue

Myerstown, PA

717-866-7581

www.eccenter.com

eccenter@eccenter.com

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“For there is **one** body and **one** Spirit, just as you have all been called to **one** glorious hope for the future.

There is **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, and **one** God and Father, who is over all and in all and living through all!”

EPHESIANS 4: 4-6

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

2016 Small-Town Pastor’s Conference
ORDINARY PASTOR, EXTRAORDINARY GOD

October 3-5

Calvary Church, Lancaster, PA

“A conference tailored to pastors and wives in town and country settings.”

The 2016 Small-Town Pastors; Conference sponsored by RHMA (Rural Home Missionary Association) will be held in Lancaster, PA Monday, October 3 thru Wednesday, October 5th. This year’s conference titled ORDINARY PASTOR, EXTRAORDINARY GOD, will feature plenary addresses by Timothy Laniak, Academic Dean and Professor of Old Testament at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, and Thomas White, President, Cedarville University. In addition to challenging addresses, inspiring worship, and fellowship with fellow pastors, fifteen workshops will be offered.

- Disciple-making with Students in a Small-Town Church
- The 24-Hour Pastor’s Wife
- Situational Leadership
- The Influential Small-Town Church
- Why Big and Small Churches Have Lost Their Cutting Edge in Evangelism and How We Can Regain It
- Turning Pew Potatoes into Passionate Participators
- Problem or Privilege: Navigating the Challenges of Ministry Life with Grace
- In It for the Long Haul
- Pastoral Graces
- Step by Step—How to Build a Culture of Evangelism Within Your Town and Country Church
- The Pursuit of Holiness: Why It Especially Matters in Town and Country Ministry
- The Errors of Higher Education Coming to a Small Town Near You...Soon
- A Thriving Disciple: Sustaining Your Own Spiritual Vitality (For women)
- Being a Good Shepherd in a Town and Country Church
- The Biblical Importance of Children’s Ministry in a Town and Country Church

Mark the dates on your calendar. Registration is now open. Check out the RHMA website at RHMA.ORG for a full brochure and registration information. Feel free to give me a call if you have any questions.

Jim Price

610-451-5908 (Cell)

AUGUST 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Conference Net-work Team Mtg.	4	5 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Day of Prayer for Church Planting	Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg. 1st Appointment Orientation	Episcopacy Comm. Mtg.			Church Center Closed	Church Center Closed
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due			Finance Comm. Mtg.	Church Center Closed	Church Center Closed
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Info for September EC Leader due				Twin Pines Board Mtg.	Church Center Closed
28	29	30	31			
		StoneRidge Board Mtg.				

Ministry Funds to:

E.C. Church
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Insurance/Pension Payments to:

Benefits Corporation
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Manna Fund Payments to:

Benefits Corporation
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

SEPTEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4 Day of Prayer for Church Planting	5 Labor Day Church Center Closed	6 ETS Fall Convocation	7	8 Benefits Corp. Mtg.	9 Church Center Closed	10 2 Day of Prayer for the EC Church
11 Dennis Snyder Ordination	12 Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	13	14	15 Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due Estimate Tax Pay- ment due	16	17
18 William Stoffel Ordination	19 Info for October the EC Leader due	20	21	22 ETS Faith in the Marketplace	23	24
25 John "Ted" Rath- man Ordination	26	27	28	29	30	

Ministry Funds to:

E.C. Church
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Medical/Insurance/Pension Payments to:

Benefits Corporation
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067