



# EC LEADER

A publication of the Evangelical Congregational Church



*John 3:16-17*

**In this edition:**

**From the Desk**

page 1

**National Conference News**

page 2

**Executive Director News**

pages 3-4

**GMC News**

page 5

**KEC News**

pages 6-7

**MDC News**

page 8-9

**Twin Pines News**

page 10

**Calendars & Staff List**

pages 11-12

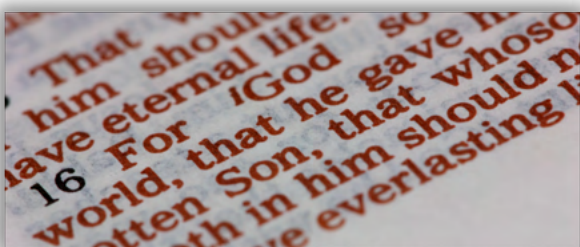
## FROM THE DESK

Bishop Randy Sizemore



Click **HERE** for Bishop's December video message.

Click **HERE** for highlights transcript.



### Speaking Schedule for 2023

Bishop Randy is now scheduling his 2023 preaching schedule.

If you would like to schedule him at your church, please contact Bishop Randy directly at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com).

# EC National Conference News - Welcome to the team!

## **Introducing our new National Conference Secretary - Rev. Brad Hatter**

Rev. Brad Hatter was nominated and approved to serve as the National Conference Secretary at the October National Ministry team meeting.

Rev. Bradley D. Hatter currently serves as the Lead Pastor of New Life (formerly Peifer's and Seibert) EC Church in Herndon and Good Shepherd EC Church in Gratz. He graduated with a Bachelors' Degree in Criminal Justice from Pennsylvania State University in 2000. In 2004, he followed the Lord's call and entered the ministry as a youth pastor and later associate pastor in the United Methodist Church. He earned his Master of Divinity from Evangelical Theological Seminary in 2012 and transferred into the EC denomination after completing seminary and was stationed at Herndon in July of 2012.

Brad and his wife, Tonya, reside in Selinsgrove with their children, Micah (9) and Ellie (6). They share their home with two dogs, Gino and Ruger. In his spare time, he enjoys being with his family, spending time outdoors hunting and fishing and is also a football coach for the Selinsgrove Area School District.



## **Wendy Beard - NC Communications Coordinator**

### ***Church Center Creates New Position of Communications Coordinator***

If the three rules of real estate are location, location, location, then the three rules of ministry have to be communication, communication, communication! Understanding the importance of navigating the ever-changing world of communication as we serve and support our local congregations in our determination to be a dynamic movement of God, we have created the position of Communications Coordinator here at Church Center.

The Communications Coordinator will work with National Conference leadership in developing and facilitating strategies to help us improve, optimize, and maintain our communications platforms and our connection with pastors, church leaders and the people in our local churches.

We are so excited to introduce Wendy Beard as the new Communications Coordinator. Her gifts and talents will help us develop and execute our communications strategy with excellence. Wendy will begin working at Church Center in January 2023.

Wendy graduated in 1994 from the University of Delaware with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry and a minor in English and spent a number of years working in the environmental laboratory and food testing industries, first as an analyst and then moving into client services and management.

Being the hands and feet of Jesus is the passion behind her service to others in the church and the community and what led her to her most recent position at Community Evangelical Church as the administrative assistant. She looks forward to continuing to serve the Lord and individuals in her new role (and a new position!) in the denomination.

Wendy and her husband, Duane Feeg, have three sons: Caleb (23), Logan (16) and Haden (13). She and Duane and their two younger sons reside in South Heidelberg Township, Berks County.

Her greatest joy outside of serving is watching her boys do what they love, but she also enjoys spending time with extended family and friends, reading and taking walks through the woods and hills around her home.

## **Bethany White - NC Administrative Assistant**

Church Center is also excited to introduce you to Bethany White who will serve as the NC Administrative Assistant beginning this month. Bethany White is wife to Micah and mom to Samuel (who is going to be one year old on December 1, 2022.)

Shortly after they got married in 2014, God led Micah and Bethany to Evangelical Seminary for Micah to pursue a degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. It was during this time Bethany discovered her administrative strengths as she worked for a local mental health agency.

Micah and Bethany have been part of the Evangelical Congregational Church since 2017 and are members of Community Evangelical Church in Sinking Spring. They also enjoy visiting Christ Community Church where Bethany's dad, Timothy Valentino, is the pastor.

Bethany has had a heart for ministry since she was an adolescent. Over the years, she and Micah have served on various worship teams, as youth mentors, and currently lead the young adult ministry at their church called JABOYP (Just a Bunch of Young People). She has a passion for discipleship and is grateful for the opportunity God has given her in the most important discipling role she has to her son Samuel.

Bethany is excited to use her administrative gifts and talents for the Kingdom. Jesus Christ's renown is the desire of her heart, and she is eager to live into that mission at EC Church Center.





# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS

KEVIN HENRY

As always, please email:

David King  
Benefits Administrator  
[dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com)

Kevin Henry  
Executive Director  
[khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com)

with any questions  
or call  
717-866-7581

+ The **Annual Treasurer's Guide** and **2023 Ministry Fund Forms** will be on the members section of the EC website shortly. Please remember *the EC Benefits service fee is \$125/yr due by March 15, 2023, and the \$100/yr disability fee is due by January 15, 2023.* The service fee offsets the cost of the annual financial audit, directors & officers insurance and other operating costs of EC Benefits Corporation that more and more often includes professional fees as employee benefits become more complex.

The **Pastoral Compensation Forms** are updated and posted on the website.

There is going to be an accelerated schedule for returning **Workers Compensation Payroll** information. We are waiting on the final details from the audit firm employed by Church Mutual, but anticipate a mid-January deadline for returning the workers compensation information. To make returning the information easier we are developing an online reporting tool for the Workers Compensation Payroll data. More information will be released shortly.

+ The **HRA plan year** ends on December 31, 2022 and all requests for reimbursement for the January 2022 - December 2022 plan year must be received by Benecon, our HRA administrator, by March 31, 2023, ninety days after the end of the plan year. This is an HRA rule regardless of the insurance carrier. Reimbursements received after March 31 will not be paid. No exceptions.

## + Highmark Freedom Blue Retiree Plan

The retiree Medicare supplemental plan, Highmark Freedom Blue, remains the same at \$255 per person per month, effective January 1, 2023, with minor changes in coverage levels.

For a husband and wife on Freedom Blue double the amounts above.

It is very important that the retiree does not fall behind on payments to Highmark Freedom Blue. If a retiree is having difficulty paying the monthly premium the Manna Fund is available for financial assistance. Please contact David King in the EC Benefits office for a Manna Fund application.

There are many Medicare Advantage plans available even, some at no cost to the participant. However, each plan will have positives and negatives in terms of participating providers and benefits provided. Please thoroughly investigate any Medicare Advantage plan before switching plans. If a retiree does not have the financial means to assume a larger portion of the Freedom Blue plan the Manna Fund is available to financially assist the retiree.

## + Manna Fund

The Manna Fund was established to assist our retired clergy and surviving spouses with financial needs. The income limits to qualify for a Manna Fund distribution were recently changed to 200% of the federal poverty level as defined by the US Department of Health and Human Services; the 2022 Manna Fund income limits are \$25,720 for a single and \$34,840 for a couple. If you are aware of any of our retired clergy or surviving spouses that could benefit from a Manna Fund distribution, please encourage them to complete an application for assistance. Manna Fund applications are mailed to retired clergy and surviving spouses in April and an application can also be received from the Benefits Administrator at EC Church Center.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS KEVIN HENRY

continued...

As always, please email:

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[dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com)

Kevin Henry  
Executive Director  
[khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com)

with any questions  
or call  
717-866-7581

## + Transfer of 403(b) Pension Plan

The EC Benefits Trustees have approved a transfer of the 403(b) Pension Plan from Empower Retirement to Nationwide. The transfer of the plan assets will most likely occur in March 2023. Nationwide will have lower plan fees than with our current plan with Empower Retirement and their technology, i.e. website features for participants and plan sponsors, is also much better than Empower Retirement. Investment options will be different, but a very similar type and mix of investments will be available.

Our relationship with Jennifer Buehler and her team will continue in the same capacity with Nationwide as it is with Empower Retirement. Jennifer will continue to be a financial planning and retirement resource for EC pastors, as well as a contact for Nationwide.

There are many decisions and behind-the-scenes tasks to complete before the assets are transferred, and participants will receive multiple communications over the next four months from Nationwide and the EC Benefits Trustees, i.e. Kevin Henry and David King. Please help yourself by staying current with the released communications.

## + A Couple of End-of-the-Year Reminders:

**Pastor Compensation Forms** should be returned to David King, Benefits Administrator by January 16, 2023.

**Annual Statistical Report** is due to the EC Church Center 100 W Park Ave, Myerstown, PA 17067 by January 25, 2023.

**W-2 forms** for employees (incl. pastors) and **1099-NEC forms** for independent contractors are due by January 31, 2023, to the recipient and to the respective government agency. The 1099-NEC is a new form, replaces the 1099-MISC in most instances for churches, payments made during 2022, to be filled by January 31, 2023.

Pastors are employees of the local church and should receive a W-2 with federal, state and local taxes withheld from every paycheck.

The rates for the **active pastor health insurance** plan will not increase on January 1, 2023 (premium due Dec. 15, 2022). The health insurance rates are:

Family	\$2,297
Employee w/child(ren)	1,741
Couple	1,844
Single	870

Please see the website, Evangelical Congregational Church – Member Login ([eccenter.com](http://eccenter.com)) for additional information.

*May you have a blessed holiday season celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!*

# GMC

Global Ministries Community of the Evangelical Congregational Church



## FROM THE DESK Rev. J. Ted Rathman

### Changes and Transitions!

By now you've read the EC National Conference News on page 2 about all the new faces that will be coming on board to the EC Church Center staff and may be wondering, *"is Dee leaving? Where's she going?"*

I'm excited to announce that Dee will begin 2023 as our full-time Deputy Director of the EC Global Ministries Community. When we embarked on the experiment to move the role of the Assistant to the Executive Director/Global Ministries Associate to a shared-ministry role back in December of 2020, we knew we would need to revisit the idea as this person sought to split his/her time between the National Conference and the GMC. We have realized the amount of work for this shared-ministry position has exceeded the ability to share the responsibility between the National Conference and the GMC any longer.



This past October, the GMC Board approved the decision to restore the Assistant to the GMA position back to its original full-time, salaried role, with Dee serving in that position. Since I am shared ministry (lead pastor of Grace EC, Schuylkill Haven and the GMC Executive Director/GMC Associate), the GMC office will benefit from a dedicated, full-time deputy director to handle the workload of maintaining a standard of excellence of care to our missionaries and churches, as well as administrative assistance to me in the Executive Director role. In addition, with the new initiatives we are seeking to begin in 2023, the amount of time needed for embarking on the use of digital mediums to connect with people, and our desire to engage the local church more intentionally, it really requires a person's undivided attention. I am overjoyed that we will have Dee giving her full energies to the work of the GMC, and I am confident her giftedness as a compassionate, insightful servant leader will benefit our work, but more importantly, the Kingdom's advancement around the globe. Dee can be reached in the GMC office at 717-866-7581 x1109, or at [ecglobal@eccenter.com](mailto:ecglobal@eccenter.com).

I am excited about the future ministry of the GMC and the passionate pursuit to be on mission with Christ to reach His world.

*Ted Rathman*

Rev. J. Ted Rathman, GMA  
Global Ministries Community Executive Director



**To know how your church can partner directly with an EC missionary, or an International EC Church, call the GMC office at 717-866-7581 x 1109; or email [ecglobal@eccenter.com](mailto:ecglobal@eccenter.com).**



Connect with us on Facebook: **Global Ministries Community**



# Kingdom Extension Community News

## FROM THE DESK

Rev. Mike Snedeker, KEC Associate

### How Well Do You Know Your Community?

*(Part 3) continued from November edition*



The last few months we have been looking at how well we know our communities. As you may recall, last month we started to discuss the concept of prayer walking. We discovered that prayer walking can help us meet the people who live in our communities. It is important to take the opportunity to get to know them, ask about their needs, and begin to look for ways to show Christ's love to them. If we are going to make a difference where God has placed us, we must seek to know the people who make up those communities and understand what their perceived needs are.

I am asked often about my vision for the future of the Kingdom Extension Community. I have had the opportunity to share a full picture of the vision God has given me for KEC with some of our districts. Much of that picture is built on the idea of multiplication. God is calling our churches to a mindset shift from "addition" to "multiplication." While addition is not bad, (adding converts, members and churches is one way to keep our churches and ministries moving forward) it is not until we adopt a multiplication mindset that we can become the movement of God that we believe he is calling us to. This starts with multiplying our impact on the communities around us.

*When we truly start to understand our neighborhoods and communities,  
we can start to see the opportunities God has for us.*

Through prayer walking and talking to our neighbors and local business owners we can learn things like food insecurity issues in our communities, poverty issues, lack of childcare options, shortage of programs for seniors, and many other things that burden the heart of the community. This is where we begin to think through our strategy to step in as the hands and feet of Jesus to show his love to people who need him.

Another way we can begin to learn about our community is by gleaning information about the area surrounding our churches. KEC is working to provide demographic information about your community through an organization called Mission Insite. Mission Insite can provide you with dozens of pages worth of valuable information about the social, economic, racial, and religious makeup of the area surrounding your church. We would love to help you understand how to utilize that information to strategize best how you can impact your community. Please contact me directly ([msnedeker@eccenter.com](mailto:msnedeker@eccenter.com)) to learn about how we can set your church up with the Mission Insite information for you community.



# Kingdom Extension Community News

## FROM THE DESK

*continued...*

When our churches can truly start to multiply their impact in the community, we can start to fulfill the Great Commission, which then allows us to multiply our disciple making efforts, which will lead us to an ability to multiply churches for the glory of God.

*Mike*



## PRAYER NEEDED

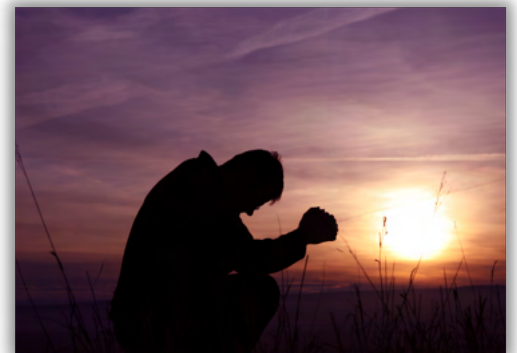
Please continue to pray this month for the following new church planting opportunities that God is raising up:

**Manuel and Luz Arias in Lexington, South Carolina** – The Arias family is starting a new EC Church. They have been meeting in another church building and are already seeing growth and people coming to Christ.

**Mike Coulson and People's EC Church in the Virtual Space** – Mike is leading a team that is exploring a Virtual Reality Church. Their church name is Echo and is impacting people around the country and around the world. In the coming months we will hear more about what this looks like and how we can pray for this adventure.

**New Church Planters** – We have four other individuals/couples that are exploring their potential call to become church planters with the EC Church. Please pray for wisdom.

**Greater Impact** – Please pray for churches across our denomination as they look to expand and even multiply their impact on their communities. Pray for wisdom for our pastors and leaders. Pray for eyes to see the needs of their communities and pray for creativity as they step into the opportunities to meet those needs with the love of Christ.





**FROM THE DESK** Rev. Matthew Hill, MDC Associate

## **Pastoral Assessment Center (PAC) News**

The Ministerial Development Community will be running the Pastoral Assessment Center (PAC) this coming January.

Typically, a call to pastoral ministry is first sensed in an individual's heart and then shared with his pastor or elder. The pastor then connects the applicant with the Ministerial Development Associate and the process begins. Along with a variety of assessments, interviews, books and articles, and discipleship-focused Zoom calls known as 'Pre-PAC huddles,' this multi-day event in January is a communal process of listening alongside the applicants to hear and affirm their call to pastoral ministry. All applicants looking for candidate status or local/license pastor credentials are required to participate in the PAC.

### **PAC Prayer List:**

- Ask the Lord to give clarity to the members of the Pastoral Assessment Center as they seek the Lord's will for each of the applicants for pastoral ministry.
- Ask the Lord to provide wisdom, strength, guidance, courage, peace, and freedom of fear for the applicants and their wives.
- Ask the Lord for safe travels and smooth PAC logistics.

### **Coaching Information:**

Galatians 6:2, *"Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ."*

Pastoral candidates entering the denomination are required to enter a coaching relationship until they reach a permanent credential. But did you know the MDC offers coaching relationships for elders and deacons? Ministry can be difficult and often isolating. Having a partner in ministry to walk with you for a season is where coaching can support you and bless you. If you are interested in a coaching relationship, please contact Matt Hill, Ministerial Development Associate, at [mhill@eccenter.com](mailto:mhill@eccenter.com).





# Ministerial Development Community News

...continued

## Institute for Church Leadership

**Rev. Dr. Joel Kime**

*The Institute for Church Leadership has a wonderful opportunity for your churches. This spring we are offering two classes that could significantly help the people in your church family engage with God's word. You heard that right: ICL classes are for everyone! We are wondering if you can please encourage your people to consider taking the classes. Perhaps your church would even subsidize the cost of the classes for those who complete them? Take a look at the summary of our spring 2023 courses, and I think you'll see how meaningful they will be to your people.*

### **Institute for Church Leadership Spring 2023 classes:**

#### **Hermeneutics, Tuesdays, February 7 – March 21, 6:30-9:15 p.m.**

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the interpretation of the Biblical text. The course will cover some of the basic skills of biblical interpretation, as well as exploring issues surrounding questions concerning what the Bible is and how it "works." The course will help equip the student to interpret, teach, and preach the Biblical text in a pastoral setting with an emphasis on moving from interpretation to appropriate application. Instructor: Tim Seiger

#### **OT Survey, Tuesdays, May 2 – June 13, 6:30-9:15 p.m.**

Course Description: In this course the student surveys Old Testament literature, history, geography, culture, theology, and structure to understand and communicate what the Old Testament reveals about God. Additional issues addressed include: Who are the important people and nations? What are the significant events, and where do they happen? How is the Old Testament put together? How does the Old Testament apply to us today? What resources are available to understand, teach, and preach the Old Testament? Instructor: Tim Valentino

We also want to let our EC family know that we have updated the ICL curriculum. Each term, starting Fall 2023, we will offer one formative course and one informative course. Formative courses are designed to help students grow in their discipleship to Jesus and in their ministry practice. Informative courses are designed to help students learn about the Bible, theology and history, which of course will help form them as disciples of Jesus. Take a look at our new course schedule. Fall 2023 will be Fall 2 on the schedule below.


<b>Term</b>	<b>Formative Course</b>	<b>Informative Course</b>
Fall 1	Intro to Ministry	Hermeneutics
Spring 1	Pastoral Leadership	OT Survey
Fall 2	Personal Spiritual Formation	NT Survey
Spring 2	Preaching	Theology 1
Fall 3	Healthy Worship & Ministry	Theology 2
Spring 3	Developing a Contextual Missional Mindset	Church History

All that to say, ICL needs you, our pastors and church leaders, to let the people in your congregation know about upcoming courses. They are all by Zoom, so very accessible. Certainly we realize that some in your congregation might find Zoom inaccessible, and therefore we ask how your church might help people connect with ICL. Perhaps you could set up a Zoom station at your church and invite anyone to come to class at your church. Students can audit classes for a reduced rate if they would prefer not to do assignments and get ICL credit towards an ICL certificate. I would be happy to talk further about ways to get your people connected to the wonderful formation and information available from our excellent ICL instructors. Just contact me at [joel.kime@evangelical.edu](mailto:joel.kime@evangelical.edu).


# WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WINTER AT...

*Twin Pines has many things scheduled for the winter. Mark your calendar now and check the website for updates.*






**WT-A: Jan 13-15**




Speaker:  
Rev. Greg  
Hench

**WT-B: Jan 27-29**




Speaker:  
Rev. Dr.  
Brett Jenkins

**WT-C: Feb 17-19\***



Speaker:  
Jay  
Trainer

**WT-D: Feb 24-26**



Speaker:  
Rev. Rob  
Valentine

To register your youth group to attend one of these life-challenging retreat weekends, go to [bit.ly/WT-2023](http://bit.ly/WT-2023). Weekends are filling up. So, register your group soon. Check the website for how to register your youth group.

\*This weekend is open to individuals to attend if there is no group from the church attending; Twin Pines provides cabin staff as supervision for these teenagers.



## Start to Plan Your Spring Retreat Now

Men's Group  
Sunday School Class  
Youth Ministry

Women's Group  
Leadership Team  
Children's Ministry

Contact the Twin Pines office and speak with the Guest Services Coordinator to book your retreat, before the dates are taken by another group.  
[retreats@twinpines.org](mailto:retreats@twinpines.org) | 570-629-2411

# **\*\*EC National Conference Calendar Alert - Stationing!\*\***

**DEADLINE FOR STATIONING REQUESTS:**

**JANUARY 1ST IS THE DEADLINE FOR BOTH CHURCHES AND PASTORS TO SUBMIT WRITTEN REQUESTS TO THE BISHOP FOR A CHANGE IN STATIONING ASSIGNMENT.**

**THIS ALSO INCLUDES THOSE PASTORS WHO ARE REQUESTING SUPERANNUATION (RETIREMENT).**

**DECEMBER 2022**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Ministry Fund to: E.C. Church Center 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	Insurance Payment to: Benefits Corporation 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	Christmas Missionary Offering to: E.C. Church Center 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067 <i>(designate: Christmas Missionary Offering)</i>		1	2	3
					<i>Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church</i>	
<b>4 SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT</b>  <i>Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension</i>  Violet	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>11 THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT</b>  Violet	12	13	14	15 Health Insurance Due	16	17
<b>18 FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT</b> <i>Christmas Missionary Offering</i>  Violet	19	20 Loan & Investment Committee Mtg.  EC Leader deadline	21	22	23 Church Center Closed	24 <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>
<b>25 CHRISTMAS DAY</b>  White	26 Church Center Closed	27 Church Center Closed	28	29	30 Church Center Closed	31 <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>



FROM ALL OF US HERE AT  
EC CHURCH CENTER

**Merry Christmas  
&  
Happy New Year!**

God's richest blessings to you!





## Overflowing Hope

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may OVERFLOW with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit."  
Romans 15:13

Evangelical Congregational Church Center  
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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



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**Rev. Mike Snedeker**  
**Rev. Matthew Hill**  
**Rev. Dr. Joel Kime**  
**Rev. Dr. Sam Yeager**

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Editor/Art Design  
NC Administrative Assistant

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### **Arriving soon to NC staff:**

Bethany White - Administrative Assistant  
Wendy Beard - Communications Coordinator

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