



## From the desk of Bishop Bruce Hill

I have a small sign in my office which simply says, "Messy Church." I got it while I was attending one of the Fresh Expression US National Gatherings. The sign is the logo for Messy Church. The tag line for the global Messy Church movement is, "Church, but not as you know it." At Messy Church, all ages meet together to learn about Christ through games, crafts and activities, music, and storytelling from the Bible. Their website describes it as, "A way of being church for all-ages to join in experiencing fun and faith formative activities. Found throughout the globe. Based on the values of all-ages together, celebration, creativity, hospitality, and centering ourselves in Christ."

I display the logo in my office not so much for the organization, but because it reminds me that the church is messy. I had a Ministry Council president who, when we were dealing with any sort of sticky situation in our congregation, would simply say, "people are messy." And that is true! The church is messy because we are messy people. As Paul wrote in Romans 3:23, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." We see that, and have experienced that in our own hearts, in our relationships with others, and in our relationship with God. The good news is Paul then continues, "Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins." Praise the Lord for his mercy, grace, and love!

*continued on page 2*



## This issue:

### From the desk...

PAGES 01-02

### Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

PAGE 03

### National Conference News

PAGE 04

### Executive Director News

PAGE 05

### KEC NEWS

PAGES 06 - 07

### GMC NEWS

PAGES 08-09

### Operation Christmas Child

PAGE 10

### Calendars & Staff List

PAGES 11-13



# From the desk....

*continued from page 1*

So how do we react when we deal with messy people? We all love mercy when we're on the receiving end; but according to Micah 6:8, I am to love to show mercy; to look for opportunities to extend mercy. Yes, we are messy, but God has chosen to offer us forgiveness in Christ. Our culture says you should get exactly what you deserve; but in contrast to that, the follower of Jesus is to offer mercy and grace.

As Jesus instructed us to pray, "Father ...forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us."

Will people disappoint us? Yes. Will people make a mess of relationships? Yes. People are messy and that carries over into the church. But we are people of mercy, grace, and love. May that be our experience when we mess up and when we deal with the messes of others.

In Christ's service,

Rev. Bruce D. Hill  
Bishop



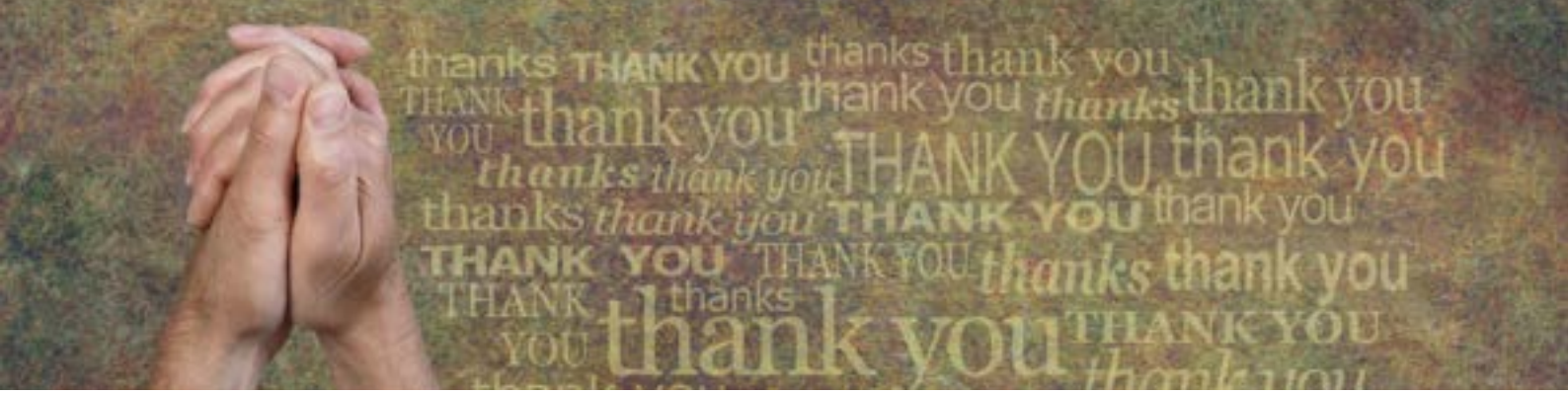
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## *Now Scheduling Preaching Dates*

It's not quite a "farewell tour," but Bishop Bruce is planning his preaching / speaking calendar for the fall of 2021 through the spring of 2022. If you need to invite him in order to spare him of having to invite himself, now is the time to contact Church Center! No church is too big or too small for him to schedule a Sunday, but it is first-come-first-serve. So, as you plan your congregation's service schedule, see when it would be good to have the bishop come preach. It's easiest to pick a month and then a couple of possible dates. Then email your possible date(s) to Jodi Earhart, Assistant to the Bishop, [jearhart@eccenter.com](mailto:jearhart@eccenter.com), and she will work with him in developing his schedule.

*"Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins."*  
- Romans 3:24





## The Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

- 1 PRAY FOR THE WORK OF THE STATIONING COMMITTEE THAT CONTINUES EVEN AFTER NATIONAL CONFERENCE.
- 2 ASK THE LORD TO BLESS OUR CHURCHES AS WE ENTER THE "NEXT NORMAL" FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC.
- 3 PRAY FOR RANDY SIZEMORE AND BETHEL EC CHURCH, DIXON, IL, AS THEY BEGIN THIS YEAR OF TRANSITION.
- 4 ASK THE LORD TO BRING HEALING TO OUR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES WHO CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF COVID-19. 1 JOHN 2:3,5
- 5 PRAY FOR OUR PASTORAL FAMILIES AND THEIR CONGREGATIONS WHO HAVE BEEN IMPACTED RECENTLY WITH SIGNIFICANT ILLNESSES AND DEATH.
- 6 PRAISE GOD THAT ALL OUR SUMMER CAMPING MINISTRIES (ECCO, ROCK RIVER, AND TWIN PINES) WILL BE OPEN FOR MINISTRY THIS SUMMER.
- 7 THANK AND PRAISE THE LORD FOR A SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL CONFERENCE AT MESSIAH UNIVERSITY.
- 8 PRAISE THE LORD FOR OUR WHOLE FAMILY VACATION IN AUGUST.
- 9 THANK GOD FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES THIS SUMMER.
- 10 IF YOU'RE LIKE GLORIA, PRAISE THE LORD FOR HOT WEATHER. OR PRAISE THE LORD FOR AIR CONDITIONING!



# NATIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

## New Bishop Elected



On the opening day of our 2021 National Conference, Rev. Randy Sizemore was elected to be our denomination's next Bishop. His term will begin on May 25, 2022: the opening day of our next Conference.

Randy and his wife, Carla, currently live in Dixon, Illinois, where he serves as the Pastor of Bethel EC Church. Prior to that, Randy served as our denomination's Global Ministries Director (2008-2018); and a pastor: Williams Valley / Gratz (2002-2008); Sinking Spring Community (1996-2002); and Herndon / Mandata (1992-1996).

Randy and Carla are parents of two adult children, Caleb and Leah.

Please be in prayer for Randy and Carla and the congregation of Bethel EC Church as they begin this year of transition.

## 2021 National Journal



The 2021 National Journal is in production and will be completed by late August/early September. Order forms are available on the EC Center website: [eccenter.com](http://eccenter.com); click on Post Conference Information.



## EC Center July/August

Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Friday - Sunday Closed**

**KAIROS**



[openlibrary.org](http://openlibrary.org)

Evangelical Seminary gave away its physical library...and now you can access it from wherever you are, at no cost!

70,000 physical books that comprised the Rostad Library were donated to the Internet Archives Open Library ([openlibrary.org](http://openlibrary.org)), where they are in a multi-year process of being digitized and then made available online for borrowing purposes...by anyone!

Another, larger seminary library is doing the same thing, so within the next year or two there should be an abundance of books related to theology, Bible study, ministry, spirituality, and church history, available to you without having to drive to Myerstown.

To sign up, go to [openlibrary.org](http://openlibrary.org), and then "sign up" for your free membership.

*Dr. Tony Blair*

President, Evangelical Seminary

# News from Executive Director

## Due Dates

April 15

Benefit Corporation Administrative Fee

*If you have not already done so,  
please mail to EC Center.*

**Kevin Henry**

Executive Director

khenry@eccenter.com

717-866-7581

**David King**

Benefits Administrator

dking@eccenter.com

717-866-7581

## Health Insurance

With the switch to CIGNA and Missio Benefits, our health insurance year has changed to July 1 to June 30 from October 1 to September 30, thus we are quickly approaching a new health insurance year beginning on July 1, 2021. **We are not moving** the health insurance from CIGNA or Missio Benefits on July 1 and **Bennecon will continue** to be the HRA plan administrator.

There will be some minimal changes for participants in the new plan year. The most notable change, albeit with minimal financial impact, is an increase in the plan deductible by \$250 to \$1,250 annual deductible for single coverage and a \$500 increase to \$2,500 annual deductible for couple and family coverage. In comparison, the deductibles for the United Healthcare HMO plan were \$3,500 for single coverage and \$7,000 for couple and family coverage. **The HRA out of pocket limit of \$500 per year, for covered medical expenses excluding co-pays, is not changing.** However, all deductibles, co-insurance and HRA reimbursements are resetting on July 1 with the new plan year.

There will also be some changes to the pharmacy benefit. There are multiple refinements to the pharmacy benefit that cannot be listed or explained adequately in this article. Health plan members should have received documentation on the changes in the health insurance pharmacy benefit from CIGNA.

*HRA Benefit* - The HRA out-of-pocket maximums will reset on July 1, 2021. This means that you will be responsible for the first \$500 for covered medical expenses, excluding co-pays, \$1,800 in pharmacy costs, and \$1,800 in outpatient therapy costs beginning on July 1.

All HRA claims incurred before July 1, 2021 must be submitted 90 days after the end of the plan year or by September 28, 2021.

## Workers Compensation

Thank you to all that have timely paid the Workers Compensation invoices. Payment for the Disability and Benefit Corp Services fee were due January 15 and April 15, respectively. Both fees are listed on the 2021 Treasurer's Guide available on [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com).

Please contact Dave King, [dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com) or myself, [khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com) or call 717-866-7581 with any questions or problems.

## HEALTH INSURAN

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Noncustodial Parent

Full Name (First, Middle, Last, Suffix)

Address (Street)

Phone

# Kingdom Extension Community News

So . . . you're starting to think "there IS light at the end of the tunnel."  
And you're pretty sure it's not a fast-moving train bearing down on you.  
People have started to come out of hiding. You're starting to think, "maybe we'll be okay."

Maybe you could improve on "maybe."

Planning and preparing for what you do next could be a good investment.

Consider the following options.

The KEC would like to help you imagine and create new connectional ministries,  
get out of your building, and begin to build relationships in your neighborhood.



**Fresh Expressions** is an international movement of missionary disciples cultivating new kinds of church alongside existing congregations to more effectively engage our growing post-Christian society.

A Fresh Expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of those who are not yet part of any church. Fresh expressions are contextual Christian churches formed among those who are not yet members of any church. They are not steppingstones to church. They're not church lite. They are church.

Check out Fresh Expressions by visiting their website: [freshexpressionsus.org](http://freshexpressionsus.org). The site is filled with ideas, stories, and resources.

Currently, they are promoting a new book (a free download), [How to Start a New Kind of Church](#), by Luke Edwards.

Read about the book . . . "Church doesn't work the way it used to. There was a time where the central role of the Church in American life could be taken for granted. But those forms of church are quickly losing traction in our culture. It's time for something fresh. In this totally free e-book, Luke Edwards will introduce you to Fresh Expressions: a method for starting, growing and multiplying new forms of Church."

## **The Art of Neighboring: Connecting with our Local Communities**

This hands-on workshop is designed to help you explore how to identify points of intersection between the DNA of your church and that of the surrounding community. With these insights, participants will examine ways to build missional "bridges" between church and community.

The aim of the interactive sessions will be for each church represented to generate action steps to build relationships and ministries with your neighbors.

Three teaching sessions (Who are we? Who are they? What bridges can be created between us?) are followed by hands-on workshops (church teams actually processing the material that was shared).

The final session is designed to leave each church team with solid plans and action steps toward missional connections with their communities.



**Let's talk about how one of these workshops might fit the needs of your church family and when a workshop would fit your schedule. Rev. Les Cool; 717-951-8433 or [revlescool@gmail.com](mailto:revlescool@gmail.com).**



# Kingdom Extension Community News

## Small Talk and Witness!

Small talk! When was the last time small talk led to a more significant conversation? With a stranger? Smooth? Awkward? When was the last time a conversation included Jesus?

As Christians, we get to talk about Jesus. Sharing Jesus usually starts with a conversation and a relationship and trust. Consider developing new conversational skills. This 2- or 3-hour workshop is a conversation about conversations.

There is an art to making space for conversations. Discover resources, develop ideas, and practice the art of moving from "hello" to something deeper; even gospel focused. Deciding to be prepared usually guarantees that will happen. Resources and ideas will address starting conversations, redirecting conversations, and leaving space for future conversations



## Coaching Toward a New Tomorrow

Great ideas sometimes need coaching support in order for you to hit the target. Coaching keeps you on task, enables you to play at the top of your game. Coaching enables you to achieve more. Let's talk!

The Kingdom Extension Community (KEC) would like to partner with you (pastor) or your leadership team or congregation to make sure your next great idea becomes your next ministry success.

The KEC would like to help pay for up to six months of coaching attached to training and a new ministry that is missional or Kingdom focused.

That is, we would like to pay for coaching designed to help you make use of new learning that moves you and your church family out of the building to develop a ministry not attached to what happens in your sanctuary.

What might that look like? A church plant. A dinner church. A fresh expression of church. This is about creating a ministry that didn't exist for people previously not reached. Interested?



## Preparing New Leaders and Developing Your Team

Most days, you just need somebody to do that thing or to serve in that role. Why? The job must get done. Or at least, that's the theory. But the reality is that the right person in the right role for the right reason will not only get the job done; they will also thrive. That means they will continue to serve long after the job is done.

How do you know who is best for which role?

You start with helping your leaders, potential and existing, identify their spiritual gifts and personality. Add gift development, and they are ready to deploy into long-term ministry roles.

A Leadership Grip or Grip-Birkman workshop would provide insights on building a better church leadership team, as well as help you equip your congregation for powerful ministries. And maybe save someone from burnout!



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021 Nepal

This year's missions emphasis is on Nepal, and the purchase of the parcel of land, directly next to the ECCN (Evangelical Congregational Church Nepal) Headquarters. A leadership training center will be built on this land to assist the ECCN in training up the next leaders in God's Kingdom and the EC Church in Nepal. Resources to use for your Missions Moments during VBS are available on the GMC website: [gmc.eccenter.com](http://gmc.eccenter.com); click on "resources."



Property to be purchased.



New Christians in Nepal! Praise the Lord!



EC Headquarters Nepal



Bethany EC Church, Sanulapur, Nepal



Facilitating Mission Workers  
Empowering National Churches  
Engaging the Local Church

Rev. Ted Rathman  
*GMC Associate*

Denise Jaramillo  
*GMC Administrative Assistant*

ecglobal@eccenter.com  
717-866-7581

**GMC.ECCENTER.COM**



## God's Faithfulness



**Cassie Wells**  
*Disciple Makers*  
*Allentown, PA*



**Gloria Smethers**  
*African Inland Mission*  
*Retirement Center*  
*Minneola, FL*



**Dave & Emily Hershey**  
*Christian Student Fellowship of PA*  
*PSU - Berks*

We celebrate God's faithfulness to our missionaries around the world and our international churches who continue to see the Lord's moving; even in the midst of turbulent times from a global pandemic. Their love for Jesus is infectious, and their service to people all over the world is impactful. We are grateful for their obedience to the calling on their lives and the partnership we share in support of their ministries.



**Beth Grimm**  
*Wycliffe, Educational Specialist*  
*Lancaster, PA*



**Ivy Limbert**  
*Black Forest Academy*  
*Germany*



**Dan & Melinda Moury**  
*Wycliffe*  
*USA Headquarters*  
*Orlando, FL*







# SHOEBOX GIFTS GO EVEN WHERE THERE IS NO ROAD

God's Word is being proclaimed in some of the world's most remote and hard-to-reach places through Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse.



To learn more, visit [SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/ENDSOFTHEEARTH](https://SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/ENDSOFTHEEARTH)



Operation Christmas Child® is a project of Samaritan's Purse®,  
Franklin Graham, President | 1-800-353-5949 | [samaritanaspurse.org](https://samaritanaspurse.org)  
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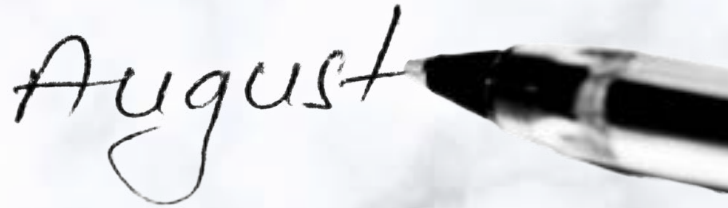


# July

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY                | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY |
|---|--|---------|-----------|-------------------------|--|----------|
| Ministry Fund to:<br>E.C. Church<br>100 W. Park Ave,<br>Myerstown, PA 17067 | Insurance Payment to:<br>Benefits Corporation<br>100 W. Park Ave,<br>Myerstown, PA 17067 |         |           | 1                       | 2 Church Center Closed<br><br><i>Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church</i> | 3        |
| 4  INDEPENDENCE DAY<br><i>Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension</i><br>Green  | 5 Church Center Closed   | 6       | 7         | 8                       | 9 Church Center Closed   | 10       |
| 11  | 12   | 13      | 14        | 15 Health Insurance Due | 16 Church Center Closed  | 17       |
| Camp ECCO Intermediate Camp   |  |         |           |                         |  |          |
| Green   |  |         |           |                         | Herndon Camp Meeting   |          |
| 18  | 19   | 20      | 21        | 22                      | 23 Church Center Closed  | 24       |
| Camp ECCO Junior Camp   |  |         |           |                         |  |          |
| Herndon Camp Meeting  |  |         |           |                         |  |          |
| Green   |  |         |           |                         |  |          |
| 25  | 26   | 27      | 28        | 29                      | 30 Church Center Closed  | 31       |
| Green   | Herndon Camp Meeting   |         |           |                         |  |          |

★ Church Center will be closed July 5 in observance of Independence Day, and on Fridays in July. ★

# August



| SUNDAY   | MONDAY | TUESDAY                     | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY                   |
|--|--------|-----------------------------|-----------|---|---|----------------------------|
| 1<br><i>Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension</i><br>Green | 2      | 3                           | 4         | 5   | 6<br>Church Center Closed<br>Camp ECCO Pee Wee Camp<br><i>Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church</i> | 7<br>Twin Pines Staff Sing |
| 8<br>ECCO Pee Wee Camp<br>Green                          | 9      | 10                          | 11        | 12  | 13<br>Church Center Closed<br>Health Insurance Due  | 14                         |
| 15<br>Green  | 16     | 17                          | 18        | 19  | 20<br>Church Center Closed<br>EC Leader Deadline  | 21                         |
| 22<br><i>Twin Pines Offering (Voluntary)</i><br>Green    | 23     | 24<br>StoneRidge Board Mtg. | 25        | 26  | 27<br>Church Center Closed  | 28                         |
| 29<br>Green  | 30     | 31                          |           | Ministry Fund to:<br>E.C. Church<br>100 W. Park Ave,<br>Myerstown, PA 17067 | Insurance Payment to:<br>Benefits Corporation<br>100 W. Park Ave,<br>Myerstown, PA 17067        |                            |

☆ Church Center will be closed Fridays in August. ☆





## EC Center Staff and Associates

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- Rev. Jeffrey Byerly - Ministerial Development: [jgbyerly@bethesdaec.org](mailto:jgbyerly@bethesdaec.org)
- Rev. Leslie Cool - Kingdom Extension: [revlescool@gmail.com](mailto:revlescool@gmail.com)



## Know Him Better Love Him More

"We can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments...Those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him."  
1 John 2:3,5



### Contributors

- Bishop Bruce Hill
- Kevin Henry
- Rev. Les Cool
- Rev. Ted Rathman
- Faye Martin

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Editor/Art Design