

HAPPY
Valentine's
DAY

FEBRUARY 2020

EC LEADER

Inside this issue

- > Bishop's Prayer & Praise 2
- > National Conference 2020 3
- > News from the Executive Director ... 4
- > EC Benefits 5
- > Global Ministries Community 8
- > Kingdom Extension Community 10
- > FREE MONEY! Come and get it!..... 12
- > Twin Pines Camp..... 13

Who We Are

“...you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light”.

1 Peter 2:9

From the Bishop

Since this is the February issue of the EC LEADER, I suppose you've figured out that we are already one month into a new year and a new decade. So how are you doing with your resolutions? The start of a new year is when we decide we're going to do something about fill in the blank. Even Christians get into the act when we decide that this year I'm going to spend time reading the Bible every day. Ministries put out daily Bible reading guides. Perhaps you committed to reading through the entire Bible this year. Did you know you can buy a “chronological” Bible so, in the words of one publisher, you can “explore God's Word in historical order.”

The Table Coalition, formerly known as Mission America Coalition, exists to catalyze partnership within the American Church so that more people know Jesus. The Coalition has declared 2020 to be the Year of the Bible, to encourage more Bible engagement in 2020. You can find more information at YearOfTheBible.com. The first step is to take and post a selfie with your Bible. Obviously, that is a very preliminary step; the next step is more important – engage in the Bible. Read it. Meditate on it. Let the Holy Spirit use it to transform your life and witness.

One of the things I am most grateful for as Bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church is the importance we place on the Word of God. During my sabbatical this past summer Gloria and I took the opportunity to visit a number of non-EC churches and participate in worship services which might be very different from our usual experience. Obviously, there were strengths and weaknesses in each service; but Gloria and I gained an appreciation for who were are as the Evangelical Congregational Church and our denomination's and our pastors' commitment to preaching the Word.

Our upcoming National Conference 2020 will include consideration of proposed amendments to the *Discipline* and Rules of Conference. Obviously, rules are helpful to maintain an orderly life and work of a denomination; but we clearly state “The Bible itself, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit, is our standard of Christian life and practice.” Every member of an EC congregation should be able to positively answer the question: “Are you willing to seek to live by the teachings of the Bible as the Spirit guides you?”

I don't know if this was the year you decided to get serious about spending time engaging with the Bible. I don't know, one month into the New Year, where you are in your Bible reading plan. But I trust you are in God's Word and that God's Word is in you. I pray that will be a hallmark of who we are until Jesus comes.

In Christ's Service,

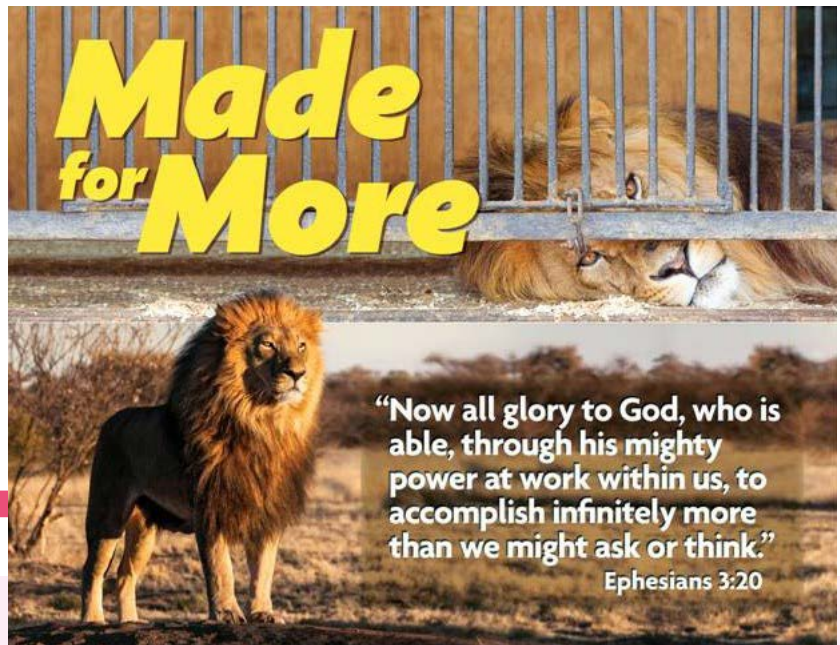


Rev. Bruce D. Hill
Bishop

Bishop's Top 10 Prayer & Praise

1. Continue to join me in prayer for the work of our Episcopal Nominating Committee.
2. Ask the Lord to lead the Amendments Committee as they prepare possible amendments to our denomination's Discipline.
3. Be in prayer for Global Ministries Associate Ted Rathman and Pastor Rick Sergi (Emmanuel EC, Bethlehem, PA) as they travel to Africa to visit the EC Church of Liberia (January 28-February 9).
4. Pray for our camping ministries as they seek staff and prepare programs for the upcoming summer camping season.
5. Ask the Lord to bless the growing relationship between Evangelical Seminary and Sioux Falls Seminary.
6. Pray for the Lord's leading in the planning for National Conference 2020 (May 27-29).
7. Praise God for the clear sense of his presence during our recent Pastoral Assessment Center.
8. During this Valentine's month, thank the Lord for his great love lavished on us.
9. Praise the Lord for our Associates who continue to connect pastors and local leaders to resources and encourage greater effectiveness in ministry and mission.
10. Thank the Lord for a mild start to the winter - it makes my travel to visit and preach in various churches around the Conference much easier and safer. I like snow - but not on Sunday morning!





National Conference 2020

Our denomination's National Conference will once again meet at Messiah College, Grantham, PA. May 27 – 29 will be full days as pastors and lay delegates gather for worship, educational opportunities, and lots of business.

Since Bishop Hill has chosen not to serve another term as Bishop, the members of Conference will gather on Wednesday, May 27 to elect the next Bishop to lead our denomination. The new Bishop's term will not begin until July 1, 2021 so there can be a smooth transition in our national leadership as well as in the congregation the Bishop-elect will be leaving.

This will also be the National Conference at which we will be considering a number of amendments to our denomination's book of *Discipline*. The Amendments Committee has been carefully looking at our *Discipline* and we will work through their proposals. 2020 is the first step in a two year process to amend the *Discipline* so amendments will also be considered for a final vote in 2021.

National Conference will once again give pastors and lay delegates the chance to attend workshops on Thursday afternoon. A list of the various workshops will be a part of the online registration process which will be launched in early March. These workshops will provide an opportunity for our local leaders to discover fresh opportunities and new perspectives in ministry both in the local church and the community.

We will once again be encouraging our pastors and lay delegates to attend one of the pre-conference meetings in preparation for National Conference. A complete schedule of pre-conference meetings will be published online and in the March issue of the EC LEADER.

News from the Executive Director

The most prevalent insurance claim for any church insurance provider in terms of volume of claims and amount of damages paid is a sexual misconduct claim. In response Church Mutual Insurance Company has revamped their sexual abuse and prevention web pages, <https://www.churchmutual.com/169/Sexual-Abuse-Prevention>, and has partnered with a national leader in the prevention of sexual misconduct in the church, Ministry Safe, <https://www.churchmutual.com/index.cfm?ldp=/ministrysaf>. If you are a customer of Church Mutual, your church is eligible for a 50% discount on a Ministry Safe membership (\$125/yr after discount) and a 20% discount on their eLearning courses and materials. Ministry Safe can provide sample policies, safe practice guidelines and training materials.

Ministry Safe is not the only provider of sexual abuse prevention materials. If your church currently utilizes the services of another firm and you are satisfied with their materials and services there is no reason to change. Ministry Safe is being presented as a cost effective option for churches to tighten up their sexual abuse and prevention policies and practices. It is strongly recommended that all EC churches have access to current and pertinent sexual abuse and prevention materials and create a culture of safety in their church.



EC Benefits

The deadline to distribute W-2s to employees, including pastors, is January 31, 2020 with the employer filing deadline also January 31, 2020 if filed electronically or on paper. Social Security Administration's Business Services Online (BSO), www.ssa.gov/bso, is an easy convenient method for producing the employee and employer copies of the W-2 on white paper, no forms, and for filing the W-2s electronically with SSA. We encourage all church treasurers that produce their W-2s in-house to use the SSA BSO services.

Due Dates: Disability Payment \$100.00 were due Jan. 15
Annual Statistical Reports were due Jan. 25
Workers Compensation Insurance Information due 30 days after receipt of the request for payroll information. **To be in compliance with a new PA Dept. of Workers Compensation regulation all churches must include their official church name and tax id number on the workers comp request for payroll information form.**

Please remember that the EC Benefits administrative fee of \$125 is due from churches on April 15, 2020, **retirees are not subject to the fee.** The 2020 disability premiums were due January 15, 2020. Please remit them as soon as possible. The due dates for the administrative fee and disability premium are listed in the Treasurer's Guide available on the EC Center website.

Pastor's Compensation forms were due on January 15, 2020. If you have not done so please return your compensation forms to Dave King as soon as possible. We will be contacting churches in early February that have not submitted 2020 compensation forms and requesting compliance.

Please begin using the 2020 Ministry Fund forms for January offerings. With the discontinuation of affiliate funding beginning in Jan 1, 2020 there is no need for separate ministry fund forms for the Eastern and Western regions. One ministry fund form will be used for all EC churches in all regions and all districts. Offerings collected in December 2019 should be remitted on the 2019 Ministry Fund forms.

The Annual Reports and fourth quarter Ministerial Update forms were both due by January 25, 2020. Reports can be emailed to office@eccenter.com or mailed to the EC Church Center, 100 W Park Ave., Myerstown, PA 17067.

The 2020 Business Mileage Reimbursement decreased to \$.575/mile on January 1, 2020.

Year-end giving statements to donors must include a phrase similar to or contain the words "no goods or services were exchange for these contributions or consisted entirely of a religious nature". The IRS has resources available, www.irs.gov, to assist with charitable contributions; Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations and Publication 526 Charitable Contributions.

Please contact Dave King or Kevin Henry with any questions.

Kevin Henry
Executive Director
khenry@eccenter.com

Dave King
Benefits Administrator
dking@eccenter.com

Live your best life

How to conquer teen depression and suicide



Workshop for teens and those who love them

Stewardship University

Calvary Church
1051 Landis Valley Road
Lancaster

Saturday, March 7, 2020

Note: If you are in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) or text HOME to 741741. Both work 24/7.

Dr. Latina Shell of Diversity Works, LLC will offer practical tips and strategies in how to overcome the adversities of teen depression and suicidal ideation, as well as providing interventions and solutions on how to live your best life or how to reach out to the teens in your life.

For more information call Lynette Morales 717-653-6662. To register, visit StewardshipUniversity.com.



Everence®

2191555

Save the date!

Stewardship University 2020



Saturday
March 7, 2020
Calvary Church

Registration begins
at 8 a.m.

You can count on

- Workshops that offer practical, relevant, useful information.
- A biblical, Christ-centered, Anabaptist focus for the event.

For more information,
contact:

Lynette Morales
Church Relations Representative
lynette.morales@everence.com
717-653-6662

You can also register online at
StewardshipUniversity.com
starting Thursday, Dec. 5.



Keynote event

Being the Body of Christ – Hank Johnson, Senior Pastor of Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church, which has a vision to be a thriving, diverse urban church sharing Christ's love and serving the needs of our local and global communities.

More than 30 workshops focusing on holistic stewardship, including:

- **Missions in your own back yard** – Christopher Lautsbaugh, Global and Local Outreach Pastor of Worship Center, and Michael Gilchrist, Pastor of Community Impact at Calvary Church.
- **Combating human trafficking** – Ling Dinse, Assistant Professor at Lancaster Bible College.
- **Living simply as Millennials** – Nate and Kate Grieser of The Shalom Project.
- **55 and counting: an opportunity to begin planning for retirement** – Gerald and Marlene Kauffman, retired Marriage and Family Counselors.
- **Elevate your nutrition** – Janelle Glick, Wellness Dietitian.
- **Kingdom entrepreneurship** – Karl Diffenderfer, Business Coach.
- **Seeking God's guidance with ADHD/Autism** – Dayona Ellis, Behavior Specialist Consultant.
- **Make Medicare an easy step** – Bill Parson, Everence Financial Representative.
- **"I'm never helping again!" Overcoming burnout and disappointment** – Nate Hoffer Chief Executive Officer of Good Samaritan.



Global Ministries Community

- > Be in prayer for **Rev. Ted Rathman** and **Rev. Rick Sergi** as they finish their week+ long trip to Liberia to be present for the annual conference of the EC Church of Liberia. Pray for safety, health, and an uneventful trip home. Also that they won't get stuck somewhere at an airport on the way home due to bad weather!
- > Please continue to keep **Janice Stoltzfus** in prayer as she recovers from the effects of the chemo and immunotherapy treatments for her breast cancer. She is doing well, but still tires easily.
- > **A note from Joe Toy.** *I want to express my thanks to you for your sacrificial giving to our Christmas stocking project for 2019. Approximately seven hundred stockings were placed into our hands by thirteen E.C. churches. Also, many hats, gloves, socks and scarves were contributed and have been passed out to our friends in Camden. About 120 children and parents were blessed to hear the gospel at both locations. A big thanks goes out to our friends from Faith EC Church in Lancaster for making the trip to Philly to assist us. It was a blessing to have Pastor Dave Long and some people come from the Lenhartsville EC Church to assist us. They also contributed a number of blessing bags, which will be given out to our homeless friends in Camden. Thanks for being a part of our support team. In closing, I want you to know that this will be the last year for our Christmas stocking project. Thanks for making this project such a big success in spreading the gospel to needy communities in Philly over the years. Continue to keep us in your prayers as we spread the gospel in the Philly area and beyond. God Bless. Joseph Toy, Jr.*
- > Also keep **Joe Toy** in prayer as he finishes up ministry at the Super Bowl in Miami (January 29-February 3) and heads down to New Orleans for Mardi Gras (February 18-27.) At Mardi Gras in particular, there is always a threat of violence due to the excessive drinking that goes on.
- > **Kurt G.** was hospitalized in mid-December with a case of acute pneumonia. He responded well to the medications, but due to his heart issues, there are ongoing concerns. Please keep Kurt and Nancy in prayer as both have had serious health issues this past year.



- > **Dr. Juliana Lesher**, currently serving as the National Director of Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy, has notified us of yet another move. In order to be closer to her office, Juliana moved in January. Her new address is: 2101 16th St. NW, Apt. #103, Washington, D.C., 20009. She notes that this is her 32nd move. That's a lot of packing and unpacking!
- > Please keep **Yoriyoshi and Emiko Abe** in prayer as they anticipate the birth of their second daughter in early March. Pray that all will go well and both mother and baby will be healthy. Their oldest daughter Kanae is anxious to be a big sister! The Abes are church planters in the Ebina City area outside of Tokyo, Japan.

Many of our **missionaries and international workers** seem to be struggling with health issues. Please pray for healing and for the Holy Spirit to protect them against any spiritual attacks, especially while they are physically weak.



Kingdom Extension Community

Item #1

Fresh Expressions National Gathering 2020

Wednesday, April 1, 2020, 9:00 AM - Friday, April 3, 2020, 12:30 PM

Heritage Fellowship Church

2501 Fox Mill Road; Reston, VA 20191

Cost: \$149/person

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fresh-expressions-national-gathering-2020-tickets-67103346917>

Description

This is a moment of hopeful opportunity for the Church in America. Perhaps you feel the pain of a dwindling congregation or denomination. Perhaps this makes you concerned for the future. But we have evidence that God is at work future-fitting the church. We see the unfolding of Present Future Church that is breathing life and hope into existing congregations and the neighborhoods and networks around them.

This gathering will reconnect you with hope for the Church

- > Hope for facing tomorrow's difficulties with 2,000 years of missionary experience
- > Hope from practitioners who have blended new and inherited forms of Church

Three days of immersive learning, expert advice and missional inspiration, including:

- > Introductory training for people who are new to fresh expressions
- > Advanced, strategic training for those who have already begun to pioneer new expressions of Church
- > Immersive experiences that model what a fresh expression can look like
- > Peer-level meetups to learn from others who have similar needs...
- > *And much more!*

Join us and catch the vision for a church that is filled with hope and anticipation as we journey into the mission landscape where God's Spirit beckons us.



Item#2 Lancaster County Pastors...

Compelled By Love . . . 2020 The Proven Path to Greater Kingdom Impact

Join the conversation with over 100 pastors and church leaders from across Lancaster County. To experience the greatest benefit bring your entire pastoral team and plan next steps to put your ideas into action.

Leading the Conversation... Peter Greer, HOPE International

Thursday, March 19; 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
The Ware Center . . . 42 N. Prince Street, Lancaster, PA 17603

More info at: <https://wsm.org/compelled-by-love/>

Register: (\$25 per person, and group rates) before February 28

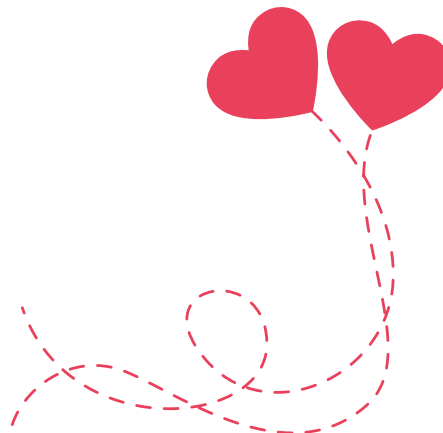


The Proven Path to Greater Kingdom Impact

Thursday March 19

The Ware Center • 8am-4pm
42 N Prince Street Lancaster, PA 17603

Registration Deadline — March 9



FREE MONEY! Come and get it!

The December 31, 2019 deadline to register for the NAE Pastoral Financial Health and Church Generosity training has been eliminated. You may register at, <https://naefinancialhealth.org/ecc/>. Scroll down the page to the green “Apply Now” button under the Financial Grant heading.

The Evangelical Congregational Church is honored to be selected to participate in the National Association of Evangelicals Pastoral Financial Health initiative funded by the Lilly Endowment. Any EC credentialed and stationed pastor is eligible for up to a \$2,500 grant by completing personal financial training or church generosity training. We have up to \$100,000 to give away!

There are three paths to FREE MONEY; God is Your Provider Personal Finances - \$2,500 if completed by July 31, 2020; Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University - \$2,500 if all nine sessions are completed and Church Generosity training - \$1,000. Smaller grants are also available.

Rules & Regulations

1. FREE MONEY is only available for lead, senior or solo pastors, sorry NAE rule.
2. Must be a credentialed and stationed EC Pastor to be eligible.
3. There are deadlines. Read the application carefully.
4. An online Learning Management System (LMS) is being used. The LMS will track your participation and completion.
5. It's not really Free Money. Grants totalling \$600 or more are taxable income with the pastor receiving a 1099-MISC at the end of the year.
6. Multiple grants are possible.

Please contact me with any questions.

Kevin Henry
Executive Director
717-628-2171
khenry@eccenter.com



Twin Pines Camp

2020 Winter & Spring Happenings

Winter Thaw B – January 31-February 2	
	Speaker: Justin Watkins Space is available for your group to register for this weekend.
Winter Thaw C – February 14-16	
	Speaker: Jonny Radcliff Music: <i>On The Way</i> from Cairn University. < Teens without a youth group attending Winter Thaw may register as an individual for this weekend. Twin Pines provides supervision for these teens. >
Craft Retreat – March 19-22	
	Enjoy a laid-back weekend of fellowship and Bible study while working on your crafts. Fellowship as you work on things you have put off, such as knitting, quilting, scrapbooks, crocheting, etc.
Men's Weekend – March 27-29	
	Speaker: Eli Tyler Eli is the Pocono/Slate Belt Ministry Coordinator for Youth For Christ. Men will appreciate a weekend together with other men to focus on strengthening their relationship and discipleship of Jesus Christ.

Spring Fling – April 24-26	
	Theme: <i>A Rootin' Tootin' Weekend</i> A weekend retreat focused on children currently in grades 3-5. Come and enjoy Twin Pines Camp and learn about some Biblical outlaws. Participating groups must provide chaperones for the weekend.
Spring Spruce-Up – May 5-7*	
	Join other volunteers for a mid-week volunteer opportunity to help the ministry "spruce-up" camp and prepare for summer ministry! Projects include both indoor and outdoor sprucing-up. There are always tasks for volunteers of any skill level!
For Ladies Only Retreat – May 12-14*	
	Speaker: Sue Duffield A relaxing and laugh-filled mid-week retreat "for ladies only." Enjoy fellowship, worship, and in-depth Bible sessions.
Summer Camp – June 14-August 8	
	The summer starts with a week for Adults, who are matched with summer staff as prayer partners. The summer continues with 7 weeks of a variety of camps for a range of ages and interests. Check out the list of camps offered during Summer 2020 at bit.ly/20SumSchedule . Then choose which camp you will attend and/or send someone to.

*These dates are different from previously publicized. They are now correct.





Evangelical Congregational Church

100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
717-866-7581
www.eccenter.com



Who We Are

“...you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light”.

1 Peter 2:9

Happy Valentine's Day

JODI EARHART
KEVIN HENRY
BISHOP BRUCE HILL

DAVID KING
SHIRLEY LONG
REV. TED RATHMAN

PATRICIA STRAIN
PATRICIA WOLFE
ABIGAIL ZIMMERMAN



February 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Ministry Funds to: EC Church 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	Insurance Payments to: Benefits Corp. 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067					1 Twin Pines Winter Thaw-B
2 Twin Pines Winter Thaw-B Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension	3	4 StoneRidge Retirement Living Board Mtg	5	6	7 Twin Pines Board Mtg Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church	8
9 Church Planting Offering	10	11	12	13	14 Health Insurance Due HAPPY Valentine's Day Twin Pines Winter Thaw-C	15
16 Twin Pines Winter Thaw-C	17 PRESIDENT'S DAY Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg	18 Benefits Corp Mtg	19	20 Info for the March EC Leader is due	21	22
23	24	25	26 ASH WEDNESDAY Church Health Community Mtg	27	28	29

March 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extensions	2	3	4	5	6 Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church	7
8 SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT Daylight Savings Begins Self Denial Offering	9	10 Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	11	12	13 Health Insurance Due	14
15 THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT	16	17 Loan & Investment Comm. Mtg.	18	19 National Ministry Team Mtg.	20 Info for the April EC Leader is due	21
22 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 PASSION SUNDAY	30	31	Ministry Funds to: EC Church 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067			
Twin Pines Men's Retreat	Twin Pines Craft Retreat	Twin Pines Men's Retreat				