



National Conference 2013 is now history; the chairs have been put away, the platform disassembled, and we've all gone back to our homes and local churches. That's a good thing. As much as I look forward to National Conference, I'm also thankful when it's over. That's not because I'm so busy during the days of conference but because I understand the purpose of the church, the purpose of being a denomination is not found in being together in a big room to discuss and vote on various issues, even important issues. The purpose of the church is to live in community as witness to God's love and His intention to redeem humanity and the whole created order. As a denomination our purpose is to raise up, encourage, and resource

healthy churches who proclaim Christ to a hurting world. Our goal is not good meetings; instead we are to engage our culture with the life-changing truth of the Gospel.

As I quoted in my Episcopal Address to National Conference, "the authors of *The Church Turned Inside Out* note, 'During football games teams are called together, as necessary, to form huddles. In these huddles, the players communicate important information, strategize next moves, and celebrate victories. The point of the game, though, it not to huddle. The measure of being 'called together' is largely seen as the players are 'sent out.'" We are to be the church "out there", in our neighborhoods, communities, and world. Our theme for NC2013 was ENGAGE. My true hope is that it is much more than a National Conference theme. If it's just a theme we can remember it; we can recall the speakers who talked about it from God's Word, we can even visualize how Emma and Effie shared it in their own crazy style. But if we go back to life and ministry as normal we've missed the point of it all.

I praise God for the reports I've already received from individuals who are taking the ENGAGE theme to heart and applying it to

their own lives and ministries.

- ◆ An individual who told me how he and his wife engaged a Pakistani neighbor in conversation during a neighborhood walk; that conversation soon led to sharing a meal together.
- ◆ A pastor and lay delegate who talked about their shared burden for their congregation and decided to develop an ENGAGE sermon series for their congregation.
- ◆ A pastor who will challenge each person in his local church to ENGAGE with one person outside the church and lead them to be a disciple of Jesus.

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One Nation Under God

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The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items



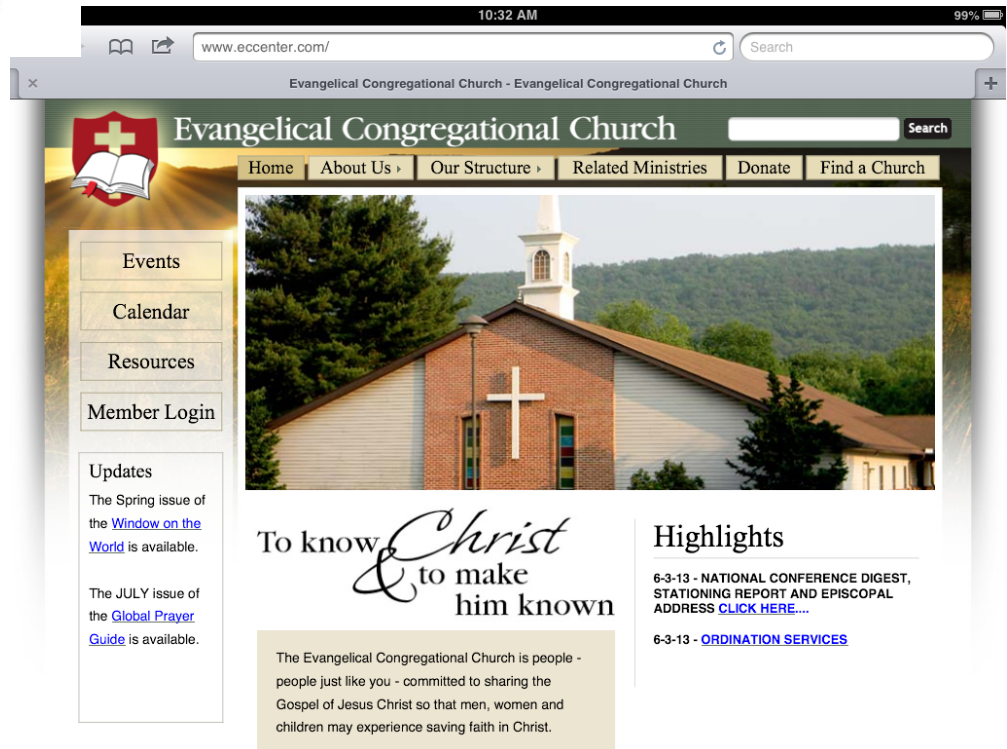
**The E.C. Church
Center will be
closed on July 4th
& 5th to celebrate
the Independence
Day holiday!**

1. Join me in prayer for the many campers who will attend one of our summer camping ministries (Camp ECCO, Ohio; Twin Pines Camp, Pennsylvania; Rock River Bible Camp, Illinois). Pray that many would come to faith in Jesus!
2. While the initial Futures Initiative proposal was not adopted at National Conference, we voted to continue to move the process forward with additional study. Pray for the Lord's leading of the Futures Initiative work.
3. Pray for the pastors and congregations who are beginning new ministry relationships effective July 1. Ask the Lord to bless them with the power of His Holy Spirit as they begin to serve together.
4. Ask the Lord for safety and protection and for relaxation and refreshment for many of our E.C. families as they travel on vacations this summer.
5. Pray with me that the Holy Spirit would empower each of us to engage with our friends and neighbors during the summer season. Ask Him to lead you to someone you can share your faith with.
6. Praise the Lord for opportunities to participate in the summer ministry events our congregations will be holding in the next few months. Look for opportunities to share your gifts and talents.
7. Thank the Lord for His leading during the sessions of National Conference and look forward to the ways in which He will lead us in the future.
8. Praise God for the many short term mission groups being sent out from our E.C. churches this summer to minister to the needs of people close to home, across the United States, and around the world.
9. Praise the Lord for opportunities to spend time with family and friends as we enjoy the beauty of God's wonderful creation.
10. Thank God for chocolate! (Hey, it's my list, I can praise Him for that if I want.)





SAME ADDRESS: www.eccenter.com



We are especially excited about the new site!! Check it out!! At the bottom of the home page is a link for a site map which will help you navigate the new site.

New to this site is a “Member Login” area that includes the Benefits and Compensation information; Addresses for the pastors and lay delegates; Retirement Information and Treasurer’s Information including the Ministry Fund forms.

Feel free to become a member if you are in need of any of this information. Please make special note that your user name is your email address.

Contact Brenda at blong@eccenter.com or 1-800-866-7581 if you have a problem.

News from Evangelical



We're celebrating accreditation by the Commission on Marriage and Family Therapy Education of AAMFT! This makes Evangelical the only degree-granting institution between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh (and only the fourth in the state) to have this important distinction for its MAMFT program. Praise God with us!

Two records were set this spring through the Wenger Foundation Praise Dinner and the 28th Annual Golf Tournament. Each year a portion of the total Praise Dinner receipts benefit Evangelical, and this year a record \$20,716 came to the seminary's Annual Fund for Transformational Leadership (AFTL).

Although net receipts have not yet been tallied from the golf tournament, we registered a record 144 golfers. The team from Faith E.C., Bair, PA took first place both overall and in the church category, and Trinity E.C., Manheim, PA



took third place in church competition.

Summer classes are in full swing and we're busy recruiting students for the fall semester. A **Lancaster Information Night is set for June 24**, from 6:00-7:45 p.m. at the Parish Resource Center. The evening offers refreshments and informal conversation about Evangelical's training for ministry, therapy, education and leadership. Reserve a place by calling George Davis at 717-866-5775 or emailing admissions@evangelical.edu.

Please pray that God will send us the students He wants here...and tell your circle of acquaintances about us.

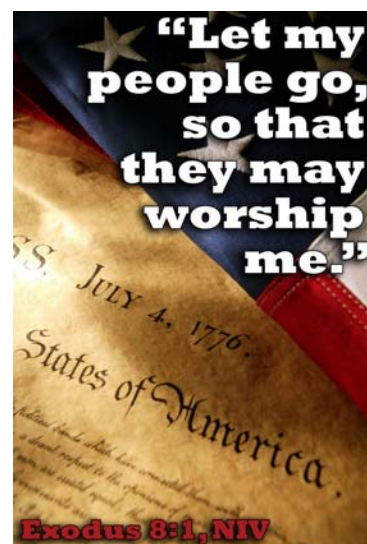
The fiscal year ends June 30, and we still need about \$104,000 to meet our Annual Fund goal of \$491,000 for the year. You'll be encouraged to know that 100% of our faculty, staff, and trustees contribute, and as of May, a substantial number of alumni had also responded. We deeply appreciate each gift and every supporter...if you've already given, thank you; if not, we humbly ask your help.

Dr. Leonard Sweet, prolific author and nationally-honored provocative thinker on ministry matters will present a "Future Forum" on Monday, July 22, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. There's no charge, and all are welcome.



Save These Dates: September 10—Homecoming and Fall Convocation, including a 5:00 p.m. cookout and 7:00 p.m. Convocation with Wittmaier-Sailer Lecture give by Dr. James Yoder.

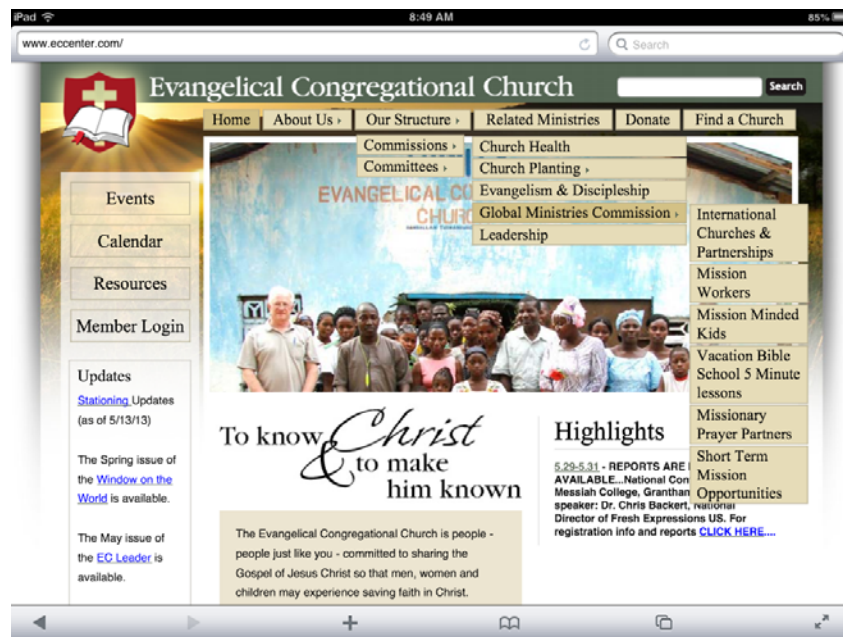
Come and greet other alums and current and past professors. There's no charge, but reservations for the meal are necessary; check the Evangelical website for more details during the summer. **November 1—Friends of Evangelical Banquet featuring U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry Black.**



News from Global Ministries

1. GMC'S NEW WEB LOCATION

We are excited to announce the new EC Church website which includes the former GMC website. To access all the great GMC web material and information go to: www.eccenter.com/Our Structure/Commissions/Global Ministries Commission and choose from the drop down menu.



2. MISSIONARY UPDATES:

- ◆ **Brian & Missy Wagner** will be returning from RVA for home assignment August 2013-July 2014 and will be living in the Millersville EC Church parsonage. Contact Pat Strain (pstrain@eccenter.com) for more information.
- ◆ **Andrew Roof**, son of Dave & Conce Roof, EC missionaries in Brazil, will be returning to Pennsylvania in July for his senior year of high school at Eastern Lebanon County School district. He will be living with his grandparents, Rev. David & Shirley Roof in Myerstown.

3. PLEASE BE IN PRAYER FOR THE FOLLOWING GMC SPONSORED TRIPS:

- ◆ July 16-30, 2013 Brazil. DGM Randy Sizemore will be leading a small team to attend a training conference and to view the field work of OMS/EC missionaries Dave & Conce Roof.
- ◆ July 19-31 Japan. Rev. Mike Snedeker will be leading a team to Japan to engage with the Japan EC Church in ministry opportunities and outreach.
- ◆ August 1-14 India. Nancie Young and Lucille Putt will be leading a team to do work and ministry projects at the Evangelical College of Theology in North East India.



News from Benefits Corporation

I had planned to share the upcoming changes and challenges we can expect from the Affordable Care act during the EC Benefits Corporation meeting at National Conference but unfortunately time constraints and melting ice cream prevented that from happening. Over the next four EC Leaders I will explain portions of the anticipated changes in small pieces for easy digesting.

History and Current Status

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) is federal law and employers must adhere to all applicable portions of the law. While there are ongoing legislative and legal challenges, those actions are not prohibiting the full implementation of the law. The penalties for non compliance of the law are severe.

Because of the sheer size and scope of the law, guidance or interpretation of the law is slowing being released and there are many unanswered questions. It is likely that what



we know today may change tomorrow and standard or accepted definitions are being interpreted differently under the ACA. For example, one of the large questions facing the EC Church is who exactly is an employee of the National Conference. It may be the thirteen people on the Church Center payroll or it may be all assigned pastors or local church staff may be included or even all employees of affiliate agencies may be included. We do not know. We have legal counsel that is reviewing the organizational documents (corporate bylaws, EC Discipline, rules of conference, etc.) of the National Conference and all affiliates for an opinion of who are employees of the National Conference. The number of employees an organization has will determine if it is a small employer or a large employer. Small and large employers have different requirements under the law.

What we do know is that the ACA is going to make health insurance available to many uninsured Americans. This is a good thing. What the ACA does not do is address the root cause of the high cost of healthcare in our country. This is not a good thing. I have heard the ACA described as the “great cost shift”. The total cost of healthcare is not going to change, and most likely continue to increase, but who pays for healthcare is going to change. We all are going to pay.



The first payment will be the Patient Centered Outcome Research Institute (PCORI) Fee at \$1 per member per year in 2013 and \$2 per member per year in 2014 and then phased out by 2017. While the per member amounts are not that expensive the fee is based on the number of “health plans” the employer maintains. In this case a “health plan” is defined as the number of health insurance products an employer funds, the EC Church funds three health insurance products; the Highmark premium, the HRA and the FSA. So, we will pay the fee three times on each of the three health insurance products. The first fees are due July 31, 2013.

Two new fees applicable in 2014 are the Transitional Relief Fee of \$63 per member and the Health Insurer’s Tax at 2.3% of insured premiums. These fees will affect us with our October 2013 health insurance renewal. These fees are to be paid by the health insurer but, health insurers have stated publicly that these fees will be passed on to the insured, i.e. you and me.

Another change coming is “Fair Health Insurance Premiums”. The ACA will limit the factors that can vary health insurance premiums in the small group market. Health insurers will only be allowed to vary premiums based on: age, tobacco use, family size and geography. The EC Church is considered a small group per the health insurance industry standards of less than 100 contracts. Other factors that

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“Main Street” at StoneRidge Retirement Living

Over the past year the sound of digging and the hum of machinery have become commonplace on the Poplar Run Campus of StoneRidge Retirement Living in Myerstown, PA. The “Main Street” addition has been completed on the outside and the finishing touches are being finalized in the interior. The EC retirement community has been serving senior adults for over seventy years. Although many changes have occurred to the buildings and campuses, the ministry of the community—to provide responsive care, organizational flexibility, a well-trained devoted team and

an appealing, secure residence—has endured.

The Main Street addition to the campus features an indoor walk with a Grocery Store, Scoops Ice Cream Emporium and Hidden Treasures Crafts and Gifts. A beautifully constructed dining area, Vistas, is being enjoyed by the residents and the Meier Room for meetings, groups and functions is ready for reservations. Five Park Avenue premier apartments will be introduced with this new area. Still under construction are the indoor pool and fitness center and the Arts and Entertainment Center that are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013.

StoneRidge offers all levels of retirement living: Independent Living, Personal Care, Skilled Nursing Care and Rehabilitative services. www.stoneridgeretirement.com



(Cover story—continued from page 1)

His prayer is that his people and even other congregations will join him in this challenge for each of the next three years.

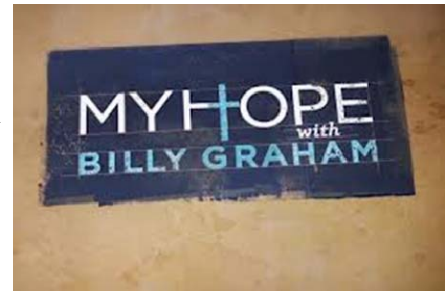
Those kinds of responses are why we have National Conference; to come together, hear what God is saying, and return to our churches and communities with a new energy and enthusiasm for serving the Lord and making disciples of Jesus. National Conference is over for another year, but the work of the Gospel continues. We are on a mission from God. It is His mission. He is leading His church. I pray that each member and friend of the Evangelical Congregational Church will join God in what He is doing as we engage our world with the Good News about Jesus.

In Christ's Service,

SHINE
This Summer

The Evangelism & Discipleship

Commission recommends for your consideration a nation-wide evangelistic opportunity your church may want to incorporate into your fall ministries: My Hope With Billy Graham. Last year over 100 evangelical leaders from the United States and Canada gathered at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association offices in Charlotte, North Carolina, to discuss an evangelistic project that could reach North America. The meeting and the evangelistic project, come at the request of Billy Graham, who in spite of his 93 years, is deeply concerned about the spiritual state of our country, and still feels a burden to reach more people for Christ. Franklin Graham is leading the effort for pastors and local churches to join this massive outreach.



November 2013 is the key date for this nationwide evangelistic effort, which focuses on local mobilization of Christians across North America. The goal of this campaign is to reach people through friendly, relationship evangelism. My Hope with Billy Graham will use wide media saturation (television, streaming internet, DVDs, downloadable programs, and mobile platforms). If you'd like more information and to receive updates about this fall evangelistic effort, please go to www.MyHopeWithBillyGraham.org. A schedule of training seminars to be held in May in Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania can be found at the website. In addition, you can find fresh news, sermon material on prayer and evangelism, and other resources for pastors who want to encourage their congregations in effective relationship evangelism.



On the left, Robert Certain, Executive Director of the Military Chaplains Association of the USA, Juliana Lesher, and Ed Brogan, president of MCA. Juliana was awarded the Distinguished Service Award at MCA's recent National Institute held in Gettysburg.

Military Chaplains Association Distinguished Service Award

Chaplain Juliana Lesher was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Military Chaplains Association on April 10, 2013. As Chief of Chaplains Service at the South Texas Veterans Healthcare System, Chaplain Lesher made history when she led her team to become the first VA Chaplain Service to be granted dual accreditation with the Commission for Accreditation of Pastoral Services (CCAPS) and the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). The 400 page books prepared to achieve these milestones serve as examples and guides to other VA Chaplains Services as they seek such accreditation. Chaplain Lesher led the Department of Veterans Affairs in establishing a curriculum for OEF/OIF/OND Family Support Groups across the county, an effort that led to the Secretary's Award for Excellence in Chaplaincy and the Best Practice Award in VA Chaplaincy. She is a published author and frequent interviewee on matters related to the spiritual care of Veterans. She cares deeply for the Veterans in her care, and sets the highest standards for others to follow.

Church Health Seminar—Devotional Life

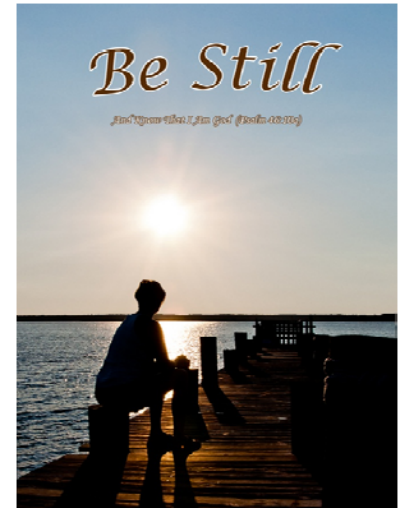
The Church Health Commission is sponsoring a Seminar “**BE STILL**” on Saturday, September 21, 2013 at the Zion E.C. Church, Annville, PA.

BE STILL is a book/process devoted to helping skeptics, seekers, and believers to know God through conversation with Him in prayer and meditation on His Word.

The purpose of **BE STILL** is to provide a discipline for the pursuit of knowing God.

BE STILL simply provides a tool and a discipline for you to hear directly from God Himself.

Cost is \$15 advanced; \$20 after September 9th. Checks should be sent to Rev. Dr. Gordon R. Lewis, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067. Should you desire to register by email or phone, please contact Rev. Lewis at glewis@eccenter.com or 717-866-7581.



A True Global Community

Recently I was at one of our EC congregations sharing about the work of the global EC Church and the way our international EC Churches are investing in each other in prayer, financial and logistical support. In my presentation I focused on one specific case where the EC Church of Nepal gave up their entire year’s building fund of approximately \$500 and donated it to their brothers and sisters in the EC Church of Liberia. I concluded by presentation and while I was preparing for the next service I was handed an envelope and was instructed, “Give this to our brothers and sisters in Nepal for their building”. When I got back home and opened the envelope inside was \$500! Praise God for what He is doing in our hearts as He continues to form us into a true global family. We are experiencing the reality of Ephesians 4:5, 6 that teaches, “One Lord, one faith, one baptism with one God and father of all, who is over all and through all and in all”!

— By Randy Sizemore



Joe Toy will once again be collecting school supplies to distribute to underprivileged children in Philadelphia.

Items needed are:

Crayons	notebook paper
pencils	composition books
pens	backpacks
markers	calculators
rulers	small notebooks
erasers	pencil boxes
sharpeners	tablets
glue sticks	construction paper
notebooks	tissues
copy paper (for the classrooms)	

All items must be sent to Joe by August 12th. **DO NOT BRING ITEMS TO CHURCH CENTER.** Contact Joe at oamphilly@aol.com or call 610-583-2266 for possible pick-up points.

(Benefits—continued from page 6)

have been used in the past to set premiums such as, medical underwriting, gender, duration of coverage or occupation can no longer be used. Previously, the insurance industry operated on the premise of minimizing risk and setting premium prices based on risk. The “Fair Health Insurance Premiums” hinders the ability of the insurer to manage risk. If the insurer cannot manage risk, what option do they have but to increase premiums enough to cover anticipated risk.

Next month, the focus will be on the new employer mandates included in the ACA.



Please pray for the EC Benefits Trustees as we begin the renewal process for the health insurance plan this summer with an effective date of October 1, 2013.

There are some creative options in the group health insurance market that have some merit. This may or may not be the direction the trustees choose to go and change may not come this year but change will come. Larger churches from the ACA are coming in 2014 and beyond and we must begin to prepare now.

Other news from EC Benefits:

Retirement: As in years past Jennifer Buehler, Wells Fargo Advisors, had the most visitors during National Conference but please remember she is



available for retirement planning assistance year round. Jennifer may be reached at 1-855-603-8146. We hope all our pastors are actively planning of their retirement; make consistent contributions to your 403(b) or Roth account (in addition to your church’s contributions) and at a minimum spend an hour or two annually with a financial professional reviewing your investments. Please don’t delay in becoming personally involved in your retirement planning.

Workers Compensation: Thank you to all that have timely paid the worker’s compensation invoices. For those that haven’t the **due date was May 15.** Payment for the Disability and Benefit Corp Services fee **were due January 15 and April 15** respectively, both fees are listed on the 2013 Treasurer’s Guide available on www.eccenter.com.

The new EC Center website is available with a new section for members only. Included in the members only section is information on the benefit plan and forms and information for church treasurers.

If there are any questions please contact Dave King, Benefits Administrator (dking@eccenter.com) or Kevin Henry, Controller (khenry@eccenter.com) with any questions or problems or call 717-866-7581.

