

EC Leader



January 2014

Special points of interest:

- Great Lakes Special Meeting
- Exponential East 2014
- 2014 National Prayer Summits

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From the Bishop

This month I'm beginning a series of articles on the subject of ministry funds. Ministry funds, the money provided to the denomination by local churches, have always been a topic of discussion for pastors and lay leaders in the EC Church and every other denomination. Various denominations have used many ways to raise the funds needed to support the work of the denomination. Quoting our Rules of Conference: "Each congregation will pay a percentage, set by the National Conference, of their adjusted monthly income, for its budgetary needs. Requests will be received by the Finance Committee from Commissions, Committees and other endorsed ministries of the National Conference. ...All churches will share an equal percentage of the budget for all ministries, with the exception of our camping ministries, which will be supported by the churches in their given marketing area."

The Evangelical Congregational Church is both congregational and connectional. We believe that each local congregation has the responsibility to be a healthy expression of the

body of Christ. The pastor equips the members of that church who are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live out God's mission in community as witness to God's love and intention for humanity. We are connectional in our understanding that a local church cannot carry out the Great Commission alone. In community we pray together, fellowship together, develop leaders together, evangelize and disciple together, plant churches together, fellowship together, perform acts of mercy together, pursue justice together and celebrate God together.

In order to resource, encourage and equip one another our National Conference has decided to ask every local congregation to contribute a percentage of their income, with certain exclusions, to the National Conference in order to accomplish these "together" ministries. How we see this action of our National Conference is important. Some might suggest that this is a tax. If ministry funds are a tax, it would be understandable for local church leaders to find as many "deductions" as they can and pay as little as possible. But if we see

ministry funds as a gift to help other congregations and to support the "together" ministries in providing resources and encouragement to other congregations, it changes the view of ministry funds. The way our Rules of Conference describe it is "All churches will share an equal percentage of the budget for all ministries." We have large and small congregations, churches that receive a lot in offerings as well as churches that receive much lower contributions. In our connectional life we understand that ministry funds are not equal giving but equal sacrifice.

Ministry funds are one way local congregations spread across our National Conference, from New Jersey to Illinois and in between can, together, bless others.

In Christ's service,

Next month we'll begin to look at how ministry funds are used to bless others and further the building of God's Kingdom.



Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

1. Pray for our son, Tim, wife Steph, and baby Gabby, as they relocate to a new home and new jobs in the Washington, PA area. And praise the Lord for the really good time Gloria and I had with them for the 8 months they (and their two dogs, Otis & Sophie) lived with us! They will be missed.
2. Pray for Randy Sizemore and me as we make final preparations to go to Ukraine for the ordination of our missionary, Ken Sears. Prayers, too, for peace in Ukraine as there is increasing civil unrest.
3. Join me in prayer for Randy and Carla Sizemore as they settle in to the parsonage at Bethel EC Church, Dixon, IL and begin the new shared ministry position as Lead Pastor of Bethel and Director of Global Ministries for our denomination.
4. Pray for me as well as our commissions and committees as we make plans for the 2014 National Conference which will be held at Messiah College, May 28-30, 2014.
5. Pray for the man of God's choosing to be elected as the next Conference Minister during the special meeting of the Great Lakes Region of the EC Church on January 11, 2014. The new CM will officially begin his term of office on July 1, 2014.
6. Praise the Lord for being able to share time, food, and joy with family and friends over the Christmas season.
7. Thank and praise the Lord for the faithful service of outgoing Great Lakes Conference Minister Gary Brown and his wife Ann.
8. Praise God for the local congregations who continue to faithfully and sacrificially support the work of the EC denomination and all our affiliate ministries.
9. Praise God for his many blessings throughout the past year. The Lord is good! (Actually, he's better than "good", but you get the point!)
10. Thank God for the opportunities we all will have to lead people closer to Jesus during the New Year. God is at work, join him!

EXPONENTIAL⁷ Join thousands of church planting

Exponential East 2014 is scheduled for April 28-May 1 in Orlando, FL. The event features internationally renowned leaders Tim Keller, Bill Hybels, Andy Stanley, Craig Groeschel, Nicky Gumbel, Matt Chandler and 100+ speakers, 125+ workshops, 15+ tracks, 7 pre-conference incentives and thousands of other movement makers. "This year's theme is Seek + Save, focusing on evangelism as part of the discipleship journey," says Exponential director Todd Wilson. "The cross-section of the 100+ leaders we've enlisted to lead this conversation in main sessions and workshops is possibly the strongest lineup in the conference's seven-year history."

leaders for four days of inspiration, encouragement and equipping at Exponential East church planting conference in Orlando. This is the largest gathering of church planting leaders in the world. The 2013 conference sold out two months before the event, so don't delay. Exponential 2014 will take a fresh look at evangelism—proclaiming the Good News—as we rethink and challenge some of our old paradigms and rediscover some of Jesus' old truths. You can get information and register at <https://www.exponential.org/2014east>.



Evangelical Seminary is hosting the first annual 4 mile **Four Chaplains Scholarship Run** and 1.5 mile fun run/walk on February 8, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. The run honors the four U.S. military chaplains who perished when the USAT Dorchester sank on February 3, 1943 after being torpedoed by a German submarine. Registration and more information is available under events at www.evangelical.edu and www.pretzelcitysports.com

Great Lakes Region Meeting

Please remember: the special meeting of the Great Lakes Region to elect a new Conference Minister is scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2014 beginning promptly at 10:00 a.m. (Eastern); 9:00 a.m. (Central). The special meeting will actually take place in two locations: Lakeside E.C. Church, Transfer, PA and Bethel E.C. Church, Dixon, IL. Members of the National Conference from the Great Lakes Region must be present at one of the two locations in order to cast a ballot. Our Rules of Conference and the DISCIPLINE both allow for electronic meetings so while the majority of delegates will gather in Transfer there will be a live video feed to those gathered in Dixon. Ballots will be provided at both locations at the same time.

Two names will be on the ballot: Rev. Charles (Chuck) Campbell, pastor of New Zion EC Church, Emlenton, PA and Rev. Scott Carr, pastor of First EC Church, Akron, OH. Church Center will soon distribute resumes and other pertinent information provided by the candidates.

While only those members of National Conference from the Great Lakes Region can cast a ballot, we're asking the entire EC Church family to join in prayer for the Lord's leading as we approach this important day in the life of our denomination. Please be in prayer for these men and their families as they



honestly and humbly seek the Lord's will for their ministry. Thank you!



News from Evangelical

We're heading into a new year with fresh excitement. Our December 7 Open House brought many visitors to campus and resulted in 10 applications from potential students for spring and fall 2014. Our three week Winterim begins January 2 and extends until the start of spring semester at the end of the month. Check the website at www.evangelical.edu for a complete list of courses.

The Institute for Church Leadership has announced its 2014 spring classes. Rev. Jason Dickinson, of Fleetwood Bible Church, will teach the Jan. 28-March 11 course in Pastoral Leadership, and Rev. Mike Sig-

man, of Grace Community Church in Willow Street, will instruct the March 25-May 6 class in EC History and Polity. Under the umbrella of the Center for Lifelong Learning, this program is open to all without any educational prerequisites. While some denominations recognize the courses as training for local elders or lay preachers, the classes are also worthwhile for anyone desiring spiritual enrichment or leadership development. Classes meet in Zinn Commons on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-9:15, and there is also a simultaneous online option available for those interested in distance learning.

Check the seminary website under Lifelong Learning for complete information and registration.

Although this is the January issue of the EC Leader, the fact that it goes out in mid-December means that friends of the Seminary still have time to support the Annual Fund for Transformational Leadership with a year-end gift. If you've already contributed, thank you so much for your generosity! If not, a gift of any amount will help us toward the remaining \$100,000 needed for our 2013 goal!



Bishop's Speaking Schedule

The bishop is planning his preaching/speaking calendar for 2014. If you need to invite him in order to spare him of having to invite himself, now is the best 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 served.

So as you plan your congregation's 2014 church service schedule see when it would be good to have the bishop come preach. If you'd like to schedule a date please email your requested date(s) to his Administrative Assistant, jeahart@eccenter.com and she will work with him in developing his schedule for 2014. He hopes to see you soon!



Church Health Commission—Healthy Pastors Team

The Church Health Commission serves the local church that is in decline and in need of renewal and development. The commission shall give direction and oversight to a variety of programs including promoting wellness among the Pastors and their congregations. The Healthy Pastors Team is charged with this endeavor and has assisted with offering healthy initiatives for the pastors, families and EC Staff. One of these initiatives played a very large part in jump starting one of our pastors into a healthy lifestyle. It can happen to you and we are there to encourage, guide and support you.

Joel is that you? Wow you look great! Just some of many comments made to Rev. Joel Kime, Faith Evangelical Congregational Church (Lancaster) at National Conference 2010. The difference in his weight and energy was dramatic and visible. How did he do it? Here is what a recent interview revealed:



Joel what was your defining moment to change your lifestyle?
In the Fall of 2009 we had an intern from Lancaster Bible College with a background in exercise

with an interest in integrating exercise with

ministry. We would discuss the benefits of such a program but I had stopped being serious about my exercise and eating habits and struggled with motivation. My wife was encouraging me to get my health back on the right track so I agreed to meet the intern for early morning workouts expecting him to decline my offer but instead he accepted.

What was the plan and incentive?

We schedule early morning workouts at a local gym. The first workout was the toughest; I was definitely not in the condition I thought I was in. The EC church sponsored the All In One program with a \$75.00 gift card incentive. One stipulation was to get a physical exam; I got mine on Christmas Eve! The doctor told me my BMI (Body Mass Index) was in the obese category. That really hit me. I got my own gym membership using my EC Church Health Savings Account, changed my eating habits cutting out sugar and high carb food and watched portion sizes.

The results?

I ran my first 5K that spring, I felt much better, began sleeping better, had more energy. People from church started running with me; 8-10 of us entered a race and won a team 1st place. Some church members then wanted to run a marathon; we did an 18 week training program, had accountability among each other and ran the Baltimore Marathon the Fall of 2011

and again in 2013.

The church was very supportive. I also lost 40-50 lbs! My wife is happy!



What are you presently doing?

I watch my portion size and sugar intake, moderation is key. Four times a week you will find me at the gym. The last three summers I have done long distance training with some others.

Did this have an impact on your Spiritual Life?

It has helped me establish a better prayer life. Spiritual life + physical activity = improved physical & improved spiritual health. We are creatures of both body and spirit and when we commit to self control habits and a physical disciplined lifestyle it improves all areas of our Christian life.

Interested????? Your Healthy Pastors Team is here for you!

Contact Jackie Iatesta RN, FCN:

jiatesta@trinitybovertown.org



News from Twin Pines

50th Anniversary Party

Saturday, January 4, 2014; 2:00 p.m. there will be a party to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the ministry of Twin Pines.

Rooms are available for \$45 per room both Friday and Saturday nights.

Saturday dinner at camp and the cost is a donation.

Saturday evening there will be performance by the Sunshine Praise Puppets.

Tell your friends and contact camp for more information to make reservations for overnight accommodations. (No reservations required for the party!)

Contact: Anniversary@twinpines.org 570-350-4863



The EC Prayer mobilization Team Desires to Resource & Encourage Our Churches
through:
Offering the 2014 National Prayer Summits:



Delaware & Susquehanna Regions

Camp Swatara
March 28-29



Great Lakes Region

Delightful E.C. Church
March 29

Goals: to mobilize people to pray together, to foster unity across the denomination
and
to turn your prayer meetings into dynamic encounters with Christ.

These prayer summits are open to everyone (pastors, lay leaders, prayer coordinators, and laity).

NOTE: Details regarding the 2014 National Prayer Summits will be given in the February EC Leader.



Inviting Pastors to Share Their Prayer Concerns with the PMT Members

This can be done in two ways: (1) Attend a PMT meeting as a guest pastor with your written requests (2nd Monday of each month) so we can support and pray with you. Call Gary Kuehner at 1-610-914-2983 the first week of the month if you plan to join us.

(2) If you desire to send your prayer concerns the week of any month, email gckuehner@comcast.net and we will include your requests in our PMT meeting.



Praying for the Election of the Great Lakes Conference Minister

As a team, we desire to base our prayer for the election on Acts 1:24-25b: Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which candidate you have chosen to in this office. In Christ's name, Amen!



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

Phone: 717-866-7581
E-mail:
eccenter@eccenter.com

We're on the Web
www.eccenter.com

We've attached calendars for January and February and will attach subsequent calendars in the future issues so you can keep up-to-date with what is happening in the EC denomination. These calendars are also available on the EC website www.eccenter.com. If there is an event you would like to have included on the calendar please contact Brenda at blong@eccenter.com or call 717-866-7581.



News from Benefits Corporation

- Reimbursement for business miles will decrease \$.005 to \$.56/mile on January 1, 2014.
- The January 2014 health insurance payment increased 5% from the 2013 rates, with the first payment due December 15, 2013 at the new rates. Please see www.eccenter.com for the current rates.
- Enrollment forms from PrimePay must be completed prior to submitting your first HRA reimbursement for the new plan year of October 2013-September 2014. Please send your completed enrollment forms to Dave King.
The deadline to submit HRA reimbursements for the October 2012-September 2013 plan year is December 29, 2013. This is a federally mandated mandate deadline that cannot be changed.
- Church contributions to the 403(b) pension plan will increase on January 1 to \$190 for full time pastors and \$95 for part time pastors.
- W-2s and 1099-MISC forms are due to the recipients by January 31, 2014 and the respective Federal, State or Local taxing authorities by February 28 or March 31. Please refer to the specific taxing authority regulations for due dates. All full time and part time pastors should receive a W-2 from their church.
- Due Dates:
Disability Payment—\$100.00 due Jan. 15
Annual Statistical Reports

due Jan 25
Workers' Compensation
Insurance Information due 30 days after receipt.

- Under the Affordable Care Act the EC Church is considered a small employer and the reporting of the cost of health insurance on form W-2 for 2013 is not required.
- Please see the 2014 Treasurer's Guide located on www.eccenter.com, for additional due dates, currents amount due and ministry fund and camp funding percentages.
- Remember to add the following phrase (or something close to it) to all tax deductible giving receipts issued by a church or ministry, "No goods or services were exchanged for these contributions or they consisted of an intangible religious benefit." All year end contributions to a church must be received at the church on December 31 or have a postmark of December 31 or earlier. Electronic giving adds a layer of complexity to the yearend giving deadlines. There are extra entities involved e.g., credit card processors, banks and internet give-aways, that are involved in the processing of an electronic charitable contribution that churches and donors cannot control. The amount of time from the donor making a contribution until the church receives the funds can be a couple of days to a week or more. Church treasurers should carefully review the processing statements received to note what day

a contribution was processed.

IRS Guidance that has been released states that contributions made by credit card in 2013 are considered 2013 contributions, regardless if the donor does not make a payment on the credit card until 2014 or with normal credit card processing times the church does not receive the funds until 2014. The same is true for donations made via ACH transfer. A donor that initiates an ACH transaction in 2013 with the fund debited from the donor's bank account should be counted as a 2013 donation. Even though, the church will not receive the funds until 2014 with normal bank processing times.

As always please contact David King, Benefits Administrator, dking@eccenter.com or myself khenry@eccenter.com with any questions, 1-800-866-7584

Kevin Henry, Controller
David King, Benefits Admin.



January 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 EPIPHANY <i>Day of Prayer for Church Planting</i>	6	7 Evangelism & Discipleship Commission mtg.	8 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Church Center closed	9	10	11 Great Lakes Region Special mtg. Bethel, Dixon, IL Lakeside, Transfer,
12	13	14	15 Estimated Tax due Stationing Requests due Annual Disability Pmt. Due Church Pension Contribu- tion due Health Insurance Premium due	16	17	18 Berks District mtg., Leesport
19	20 Leadership Commission mtg.	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Spring Convocation—ETS	29	30	31	
PASTORAL ASSESSMENT CENTER						

Ministry Funds to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Disability payment to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Church Planting Offering Day of Prayer for Church Planting	3	4 StoneRidge Retirement Living Board Mtg.	5	6 Evangelical Seminary Board Mtg.	7 Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church	8
9	10	11 Church Planting Commission Mtg.	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due
16	17 Presidents' Day	18 Benefits Corporation Mtg.	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

Ministry Funds to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Church Planters' Offering to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067
(designate—Church Planters' Offering)

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067