

E.C. Leader

There are some months when I sit in front of my computer and struggle with what I should write about for the EC Leader. Usually that occurs when my article was due a few days ago and Brenda is patiently waiting for me to write something. This is not one of them. Oh yes, she's still patiently waiting but I have choices; I have a number of subjects I could spend some time with. I guess I'll have to save those for future issues. Actually, I should take the time now to at least start those articles so I don't forget them and maybe even get my stuff in to the editor on time! Maybe...

Anyway, I suppose you know that I have recently returned from a short term mission trip to Liberia, Africa where the EC Church has a number of churches. I traveled with Rev. Randy Sizemore (Director of Global Ministries), Rev. Josh Reinders (Pastor of Seneca EC Church) and Rev. Th. Janga (Field Superintendent of the EC Church in Nepal). I could write a lot about our trip; more than you'd probably be interested in reading. From our flight to Liberia, our travels around the country in the 106 degree heat, participating in their National Conference, visiting villages in the bush, and our trip home via the scenic route (Monrovia, Liberia to Conakry, Guinea to Paris, France to Minneapolis, Minnesota to Baltimore, Maryland) and finally home! But let me share five quick lessons learned from this visit with our brothers and sisters in Liberia.

1. **They were very generous even in their poverty.** A 14 year on-again, off-again civil war has destroyed the economy of this country. Most people live on less than one US dollar a day. Yet they sacrificially gave many free-will offerings to support the work of their National Conference. One pastor told me "We will not make our God a beggar. We will teach stewardship and our people will respond appropriately." And they do! Praise the Lord!



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2. **They were very gracious in their hospitality.** In the villages families joyfully moved out of their hut so we could live there. They showed their appreciation for our visit with the best they could give us: one village gave us a live goat and another, a duck and a rooster. (And we put them in the back of our truck and took them along with us, but that's a story in itself!)



3. **They are faithful in their journey.** They are trusting God for great things in the church and its ministry of the Gospel in Liberia and beyond. Even though it will take a long time to see their plans come to pass, the way forward will be difficult, they are faithful to the vision the Lord has given them over the long haul. We may not see our dreams realized, but we can stay faithful to what God's called us to. His plans that are bigger than ours.



4. **They take a healthy view of spiritual leadership, authority and accountability.** There was great respect shown for both their own Liberian leadership and for us as representatives of the EC Church. Even when there were complicated discussions held we all could sense the Holy Spirit leading and a willingness to receive counsel.

5. **For us, community is a theory, for them it is a practice and a way of life.** They share life in far more ways than we do! Their understanding of life in community is more Biblical than ours. You can

actually experience what is described of the early church in Acts 2. I believe we have many things we can learn from them in this area.

So these are some lessons I learned. Please join me in continued prayer for our dear brothers and sisters in Liberia (and for our fellow ECers around the world). Many of them live in circumstances that are difficult for us to imagine; the amount of time and effort it takes to do "normal" things, like get water and prepare a meal is challenging. Yet they both love and serve the Lord, engaging their friends and neighbors with the Gospel of Jesus. I am thankful to be a partner with them and with you in that effort!

In Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Hill".

Rev. Bruce D. Hill
Bishop



The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Please continue to be in prayer for the work of the Stationing Committee as they work on pastoral assignments and changes.
2. Pray that the Holy Spirit will move in powerful ways during the 2013 National Conference which will be held May 29-31.
3. Keep praying for the Lord's leading of our Futures Initiative Team as they wrestle with new ways for us to "do denomination." Pray that our way forward is clearly of the Lord's leading.
4. Pray for the board and staff of Twin Pines Camp as they navigate through difficult financial waters. (You can also pray about supporting their ministry financially at this time.)
5. Pray for and consider attending the upcoming women's events in our denomination: for the annual women's retreat to be held April 5-7 at Life Ministries ("The Castle"), Franklin, PA, for the Great Lakes Region and the annual "A Day Apart" on April 20 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Wyomissing, PA for the Susquehanna & Delaware Regions.
6. Praise the Lord for the reports we are receiving of growth in our local EC congregations. Continue to pray for those churches who struggle to return to spiritual health and vitality.
7. Praise the Lord for a good trip to visit our brothers and sisters in Liberia, Africa. Rev. Randy Sizemore, Rev. Josh Reinders, Rev. Th. Janga (leader of the EC Church in Nepal) and I learned a lot, participated in worship, and had some fun too.
8. Praise the Lord for our safe return to the USA even though we had to take the "scenic route" as we returned from Liberia during the blizzard that hit New York and New England.
9. Thank the Lord for the way he encourages us just when we need it; through the kindness, support, assurances and even hugs individuals share.
10. Praise God for the pastors and lay people who volunteer their time and talents on our denomination's commissions, committees, and boards. We need each and every one!



PRE-CONFERENCE MEETINGS

- Thursday, April 4 @ 7:00 pm in the Delaware Region
- Sunday, April 7 @ 6:00 pm at Lakeside EC Church, Transfer
- Tuesday, April 9 @ 7:00 pm in the Susquehanna Region
- Thursday, April 11 @ 7:00 pm in the Delaware Region
- Tuesday, April 16 @ 7:00 pm in the Susquehanna Region
- Wednesday, May 1 @ 7:00 pm at Bethel EC Church, Dixon, IL

2013 NATIONAL CONFERENCE MESSIAH COLLEGE MAY 29, 30, 31, 2013

Please plan on being present for the entire National Conference!



Upcoming GMC events:

- ◆ March 2, Mission Minded Kids Rally at Evangelical Seminary
- ◆ March 5 & 6, GMC Commission Meetings at Church Center
- ◆ March 11, Delaware Mission Leaders' Brunch at Superior Rest., Emmaus
- ◆ March 19, GMC Finance Committee
- ◆ April 2-9, visit EC Church of Mexico for Annual Conference



News from Global Ministries



- ◆ **Liberia trip was a success!** Thank you for your prayers on behalf of the GMC Team that visited the EC Church of Liberia. We had a very profitable time with our brothers and sisters in the EC Church of Liberia and were able to strengthen our partnership to reach Liberia with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. During the conference 18 Disciples graduated from the second year of their 5 year program and 10 new ministers were ordained to various offices!



- ◆ **GMC Finances:** Thank you for your faithful partnerships with GMC in the Great Commission. With your help we were able to meet the support goals of our international churches in 2012 and end the year without a deficit in the administration/operations account!
- ◆ **Self Denial/Global Giving Offering:** The annual GMC self-denial offering is scheduled for March 10, 2013. This offering is one of the 2 offerings GMC uses to help fund the administration/operations of the office so that we can continue to empower international churches, facilitate mission workers and engage the church in the Great Commission. Please help us by encouraging your members to give generously. If you have this offering as part of your congregation's annual budget, please consider increasing the amount you allocate for GMC.
- ◆ **Randy is now scheduling speaking engagements for 2013.** To schedule Randy for Sunday school, worship, Sunday evening, weekday/night or anytime that fits your church's schedule, contact him at rsizemore@eccenter.com or call the GMC office at 717-866-7584.
- ◆ **Please pray for the Mexico Trip:** Randy will be leading a GMC delegation to visit the EC Church of Mexico for their Annual Conference and El Retiro Board Meeting April 2-9, 2013. Please pray for the team as they prepare to go and minister to our brothers and sisters in Mexico. Rev. Angam, General Director (Bishop) of the EC Church of India has also been invited to join the team. Please pray that he can obtain a visa to make this trip. The team members include: Rev. Randy & Carla Sizemore; Rev. Jim & Kathy Price; Rev. Carlos Kelly (translator); Rev. Angam (EC India).
- ◆ **Missionaries need vehicles:** Brian & Missy Wagner will be returning from RVA for home assignment August 2013-July 2014 and will need to secure an SUV/van for transportation while they are here at the least possible cost. If you know of anyone who can help with this need, please contact Pat Strain (pstrain@eccenter.com or 1-800-866-7584) in the GMC office.





News from Twin Pines

Summer Camp

Now is the time to register for summer camp at Twin Pines. There are camps for kids and adults of all ages. For fathers and sons there is “Dads ‘n’ Lads” camp and for moms and daughters there is “Moms ‘n’ Gals” camp and this year “Moms ‘n’ Gals” will be staying in cabins! Both programs are only half a week and provide a great opportunity for parents to connect with their kids. For the whole family Twin Pines offers “Family Camp” with activities for every member of the family. If “Family Camp” sounds like fun but you would just like to try it, there is the half-week Family Camp. This program has all the same great activities but is only Sunday through Tuesday. Another opportunity for adults is “Adult Camp”, a special week for spiritual renewal, fun, fellowship, and interaction with other adults and the Twin Pines’ summer staff. Twin Pines also offers a wide variety of programs for kids of all ages. Twin Pines really does have a program for everyone! If you are unsure of what camp you would like to attend, take a look at the summer camp schedule on the Twin Pines website www.twinpines.org.



Summer Staff

Twin Pines is currently in search of young people interested in Christian service. There are opportunities for summer staff available. The areas of need include male counselors and lifeguards. If you or someone you know may be interested in serving on summer staff in 2013 please contact Shawn Fetterhoff at shawn@twinpines.org. If you are looking for a life changing service experience, don’t hesitate and apply today!



Summer Volunteers

Are you looking for an opportunity to volunteer this summer? Are you 21 or older and willing to help in the kitchen or on maintenance? If you answered yes to these questions you may be interested in signing up to volunteer for a week at Twin Pines this summer. If interested in volunteering please contact Shawn Fetterhoff at shawn@twinpines.org

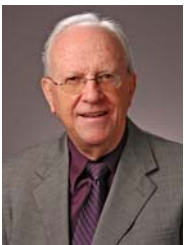
Summer Celebration

Join us Saturday, June 1st from 10 am until 4 pm for an exciting day at Twin Pines Camp. “Summer Celebration” is our official kick off to our summer ministry season. If you have been with us for “Summer Celebration” before, we have events for the whole family. Once again this year we will hold the Twin Pines Motorcycle Fun Ride. This ride will be through the Pocono Mountain area around Twin Pines. We will also have great food, and fun for the whole family. If you are interested in making this an overnight stay we also have accommodations available at a great rate! Visit our website www.twinpines.org or contact Shawn at shawn@twinpines.org for more information or to register for the motorcycle ride or to stay overnight.

News from Evangelical



The former Phonathon is now “Connect-a-thon”, and we’ll be using a variety of means to relate to our friends and alumni on the nights of February 18, 25, 26, and 28. Will you connect with us this month as we seek to raise \$74,000 in gifts and pledges to help prepare our students for effective service in this broken and complex world? Volunteer callers will be contacting alumni and friends of the seminary, and contributions can also be made online at www.evangelical.edu. Periodic campaign updates will be posted on the website and Facebook. Thanks to the many who’ve already made advance donations in our preliminary phase. We truly thank God for each and every supporter!



Dr. Eugene Merrill of Dallas Theological Seminary will present the first David A. Dorsey Lecture in Old Testament on Thursday, February 21, at 3:00 p.m. in Dech Chapel. A former professor of both Dr. and Mrs. Dorsey, Dr. Merrill has written many scholarly works and several textbooks on Old Testament studies. His topic will be “Life’s Intersections: What to Do with Forks in the Road.” The lecture is free and open to the public.

LAST CALL FOR “NOAH”! A new special offer has reduced the price for our March 14 event at Sight and Sound Theatre in Strasburg, PA. The package includes a 4:15 pm performance of “Noah” and dinner at a nearby restaurant. Call Marsha Conley at 717-866-5775, ext. 2130 for reservation information.

Amy Sherman, author of the award-winning book, *Kingdom Calling*, and Senior Fellow at the Sagamore Institute’s Center on Faith and Communities, will speak at the March 19 Faith in the Marketplace Breakfast. Reservations for the 7:00 a.m. event can be made at www.evangelical.edu or by calling Marsha Conley. Dr. Sherman will meet informally with students at 10:00 before speaking at the 11:10 chapel service, which is open to all.



Dr. John Tornfelt, Professor of Preaching and Ministry, is the author of a new book, *Reunion: Meeting Ourselves Again for the First Time*. The narrative focuses on ways biblical men and women faced their struggles and then suggests relevant mirrors for our own life stories. The book is available for purchase in the seminary office or on Amazon.

Tom Maiello has resigned as Dean of Admissions, effective February 28. During his 16 years of dedicated service to Evangelical, Tom has greeted countless visitors with his broad smile, represented the seminary in many venues, and ushered hundreds of students into our classrooms. He is dearly loved by alumni, students, faculty, and staff, and will be deeply missed.

News from Benefits & Compensation

Thanks to all that have returned the Worker's Compensation audit forms on a timely basis, a few audit forms remaining outstanding. It is very important that we receive all salary information to obtain an accurate worker's compensation billing. Missing information will be estimated and most likely estimated higher than actual, resulting in a higher bill. Please help yourself and other EC Churches by returning the Worker's Compensation audit forms.

The annual disability premium was due January 15 and the Benefit Corporation administrative fee is due by April 15, 2013, **retirees are not subject to the administrative fee**. Both of these fees are listed in the Treasurer's Guide available on the EC website (www.eccenter.com). Many have remitted the disability fee timely and a few have submitted the administrative fee and we thank you for your diligence and hard work.

Treasurer's please begin using the 2013 Ministry Fund forms for January offerings. Offerings collected in December 2012 should be remitted on the 2012 Ministry Fund forms.

As always, please contact Dave King, Benefits Administrator, dking@eccenter.com or Kevin Henry, Controller, khenry@eccenter.com with any questions or problems.



Twin Pines and the Christian Education Committee of the EC Church announces a seminar presentation by Walt Mueller.



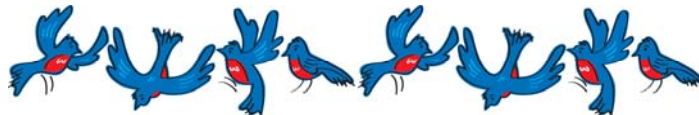
The Digital Brain
April 26-27, 2013
Twin Pines Camp
Dr. Walt Mueller



In a world where kids are interacting with technology and media for more than 7 and a half hours a day, researchers are now unpacking how that immersion is shaping the way kids think, read, write, and research. Yes, spending life in front of big screens and small screens is rewiring our kids intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. In this seminar, Walt Mueller will guide you into an introductory understanding of the fascinating and frightening world of growing data on kids and technology, along with practical strategies and responses you can employ with the kids you know and love. This conference will offer seminars for parents, youth workers and educators to help them understand the emerging world of media technologies and messages, how media is influencing and shaping their kids and biblically faithful response strategies.

Mark the date on your calendar and invite all those in your church to attend. The registration brochure and more information is available on the Twin Pines website, www.twinpines.org.

Dr. John Ragsdale, former Director of Global Ministries Commission, and retired EC pastor of Reading First Church has developed a ten-quarter Bible Study plan that he used at the Reading First church. The CD is available by calling the E.C. Church Center (717-866-7581) or emailing Brenda (blong@eccenter.com). If you have any questions you can email Dr. Ragsdale at jprmmr7712@yahoo.com.



A reminder to mail in your registrations to attend the upcoming Women's Retreats!

"Follow Me" is the theme for the annual Allegheny-Buckeye women's retreat to be held Friday through Sunday, April 5 to 7 at Life Ministries ("The Castle"), Franklin, PA.

Registration is \$80 each and are due March 26. Checks are payable to Women's Ministries. Send to Karen Howell, 4143B Greenville-Sandy Lake Road, Clarks Mills, PA 167114. For more information, call 724-253-2483.



"A Day Apart" on Saturday, April 20, 2013, at the Crowne Plaza, Wyomissing, PA. Registrations close April 6, 2013. Cost for retreat and luncheon is \$35.00. Call Mary Lou Reber at 717-768-0244 for more information.

If you have been to "A Day Apart" before, a brochure was sent to you personally, if you didn't receive this in the mail, check with your church office. Brochures were also sent to each church in the Delaware and Susquehanna Regions.

A special day is planned with guest speaker, **Brenda Robinson**, and music by **New Desire**. You won't want to miss this special day planned just for you. Coming together allows the Lord to energize us spiritually and renew our daily work with the him.

