

Evangelical Congregational Church

E.C. National News

100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067
1-800-866-7581; www.eccenter.com

FALL 2012

Pastor and wife to celebrate with Operation Christmas Child

In April of next year, Pastor Dan Blank and wife, Kim, of Reich's E.C. Church, Marietta, PA will travel to Orlando for Operation Christmas Child's Global Conference. They will help celebrate the organization's sending of its 100-millionth gift-filled shoe box to a needy child.

This past January, the Blanks became OCC's Lancaster Area Coordinators for Lancaster, Lebanon, and York counties. As volunteers, they oversee the areas of community, church, media, logistics of collection, and prayer mobilization. They also recruit, select, train, and supervise volunteers and help develop ministry strategies. Previously, they served for two years as Church Relations Coordinators.



Operation Christmas Child began in 1990 when David Cook of Wales visited an orphanage in Romania and observed the needs of the resident children.

The first boxes were sent to Romania. In 1993, Cook approached Franklin Graham about getting involved, and OCC became a project of Samaritan's Purse.

In 2011, 8.6 million boxes were distributed worldwide. This year's goal is over 9 million. Groups and individuals fill the boxes with toys, school supplies, clothing, candy, and personal care items. As the Blanks talk with visitors to their display at National Conference, they find that many of our churches participate.

Dan and Kim first learned about OCC in 1995 at the Billy Graham Training Center in Asheville, NC. When they came

to Reich's in 2001, they found the congregation already participating and joined the effort. Later, they volunteered at a processing center where they attended an information meeting and were recruited to give leadership.

Countries receiving the boxes have the same team structure we do in the States. They seek churches to receive and distribute boxes, with all work done by volunteers. The churches also conduct "The Greatest Journey", a twelve-week discipleship program for children who receive boxes. Students are honored with



a graduation ceremony and are awarded Bibles. Each child is challenged to share Christ with nine others, greatly multiplying the impact of each box.

The Blanks encourage participants to include notes to the children and pictures of themselves as they pack their boxes. "Many of the children don't have parents," they say. "By sending boxes, we can become their spiritual parents. A child may approach us in heaven and say, 'I got your box.'"

Dan and Kim are available to address groups or churches in their region and are able to connect those outside the area with their coordinators. They can also provide a list of desired gift items. They may be reached at 717-426-1339 or pastordblank@centurylink.net. Information is also available at www.samaritanspurse.org. Type in your zip code for the collection center nearest you. November 12 to 19 is National Collection Week.

Anniversary celebration planned

The Historical Society of the E.C. Church is announcing that Sunday, November 18 is a Day of Thanksgiving to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the denomination. Each church will receive a resource packet to help with planning.

Our beginning is traced to the Evangelical Association founded by Jacob Albright in 1807.

Fall Events



Retreats

"Decades of Decision" **women's retreat** will be held at Camp ECCO, Carrollton, OH September 21 to 23. Cost is \$50. Contact Nettie Wells at 330-750-0438.

Young people grades 8 through college age are invited to a retreat at Camp ECCO October 5 to 7. There will be separate programming and lodging for age groups. Cost is \$25. Contact Bob McGinnis at 724-791-2591 or jenbobmcg@aol.com

Rock River Bible Camp, Dixon, IL will host their annual "**Chick Fest**" (women's retreat) October 19-21. Cost is \$40. Contact Wendy Deitmier at 815-789-4740 or Rhonda Giedd at 815-563-4933. Website is www.rockriverbiblecamp.org

"**Courageous Men of God**" **men's retreat** will take place at Camp ECCO October 19 to 21. Cost is \$50.

Registrations should be sent to Jim Beltz, First E.C. Church, Akron, OH 44301, Attention: Men's Retreat by October 12. For more information, call Jim at 330-904-6192.

The **annual pastors' wives' retreat** will be held at Twin Pines Camp, Stroudsburg, PA October 26 to 28. Speaker will be Jessica Whittemore. Cost is \$140 payable to E.C. Church Center. Send to Tasha Byerly, 25 Meadowbrook Drive, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972. For information, call Tasha at 570-739-0952 or Deb Marks at 717-336-5338.

Seminary expands into Harrisburg

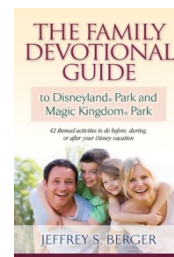
Evangelical Seminary of Myerstown is expanding into Harrisburg, PA. The opening of the Harrisburg MDiv of Evangelical Seminary was celebrated with an August 27 ribbon-cutting ceremony. Classes are meeting from 4:00 to 10:00 p.m. Mondays at Messiah College's Harrisburg Institute on 28 Dewberry Street. For more information, go to www.evangelical.edu



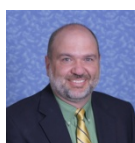
Family News

Book published

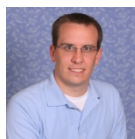
Jeff Berger, youth pastor at Mohn's Hill Memorial, Reading, PA, has written a book, *The Family Devotional Guide to Disneyland Park and Magic Kingdom Park*. It has been published by Evergreen Press. For more about the book, contact jeff@mohnshill.com



Ordinations



Rev. Charles Walker, pastor at California E.C. Church, Morgantown, PA, was ordained in his church on August 12. Bishop Bruce Hill brought the message. Wife is Kathleen.



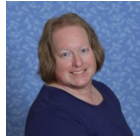
Rev. Adam Roberts, pastor at Kutztown, PA Grace, was ordained in his church on August 19. Rev. Michael Sigman brought the message. Adam's father, Rev. Kevin Roberts read Scripture and shared comments. Wife, Michelle, brought special music.



Rev. Glenn Lambert, pastor at Hatfield, PA Emmanuel, was ordained in his church on September 9. Rev. Philip Walck brought the message. Wife is Pamela.



Thank you, Shirley



Shirley Long, Administrative Assistant in the Finance Office at Church Center, has completed 25 years of service. We offer our gratitude for her commitment to the E.C. Church.

Weddings

Dr. John Ragsdale, retired Director of Global Ministries, married **Myrtle Wieand** on July 7 at Reading, PA First. John's son-in-law, Rev. Michael Leamon, officiated.



Brent Mavis, son of Pastor Robert and Beth Mavis, Transfer, PA Lakeside married **Tiffany Bauer** on July 14. The wedding took place in Markleyburg, PA, with the father of the groom officiating.

Anniversary

Rev. Randy Sizemore, Director of Global Ministries, and wife, **Carla**, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on July 25. Carla also works in the GMC office.

Welcome, Baby



Jodi Earhart, Administrative Assistant at Church Center, and husband, **David**, have a new son, **Owen Matthew**, born August 3. He has a big sister, Natalie.



Remembering loved ones...

Wilma Davidson, wife of retired pastor, Rev. Gerald Davison of Warren, OH passed away on July 11. She is also survived by children Anita, Twila, and Jerry.



William Sibley, a former pastor of Bartonsville, PA St. John's, passed away on July 10. He was a member of Allentown, Christ Church. He is survived by wife, Pat, and children, Kelli and Bill.

Leroy Heim, former Lay Delegate from Pitman, PA Zion, passed away on August 21. He is survived by wife, Jean and children, Charlotte, Lois, Joan, and Gary. He was preceded in death by son, Leroy, Jr.

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Through him ALL THINGS were made.

John 1:3, NIV