



Evangelical Congregational Church E.C. National News

Summer, 2018

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Bishop addresses Sixteenth National Conference



Bishop Bruce Hill opened the Sixteenth Session of the National Conference of the E.C. Church with his annual Episcopal Address on Wednesday, May 30 at Messiah College,

Grantham, PA. He focused on the Conference theme, "ALL IN", based on 2 Corinthians 5:15— *"He died for everyone so that those who receive His new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them."*

The Bishop pointed out that we have become a "culture of choices," resulting in the thinking, "We don't have time for faith and church. How can we be "ALL IN" with so many choices

vying for time and attention?" He explained that discipleship isn't about "doing church", but about "being church in our daily lives."

He added that discipleship is not an option, referring to Jesus' Great Commission to "go and make disciples." He continued, "If we don't make disciples, we are in danger of losing the next generation as in Judges 2:10: 'Another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord.'"

Bruce cautioned pastors that being "ALL IN" doesn't mean sacrificing their health or that of their families. He emphasized that they must care for themselves before they can care for others.

He went on, "We need individuals who are "ALL IN", so we can have churches who are "ALL IN." Oh, how I pray for healthy local churches!"

He clarified that healthy doesn't mean large. "We need large churches, and we need small churches. Each and everybody of believers is important to the Lord's strategy of reaching our neighborhoods, communities, and the world."

The Bishop outlined three challenges of the Stationing Committee:

- Finding bi-vocational pastors who are within commuting distance of churches in need.
- Finding pastors who are willing and able to move to churches who need revitalization.
- For congregations to desire to change and be restored to vital missional ministry.

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Ted Rathman is new Global Ministries Associate

Rev. John (Ted) Rathman, pastor at Schuylkill Haven, PA Grace, was installed as Global Ministries Associate on June 1 during National Conference. He began service on July 1, dividing his time between pastoral ministry and his new position.

Ted is a U.S. Navy veteran. He has a degree in International Relations

from Penn State University and is a graduate of Evangelical Seminary. He has served with the Global Ministries Community since 2013. He and wife, Jessica, have two daughters, Lily and Leah.

Bishop Bruce Hill comments, "I want to express my appreciation for Ted and Jessica's willingness to follow the Lord's leading in their lives and ministry. I am also thankful for the lay leaders of Grace E.C. Church for their Kingdom vision in allowing Ted to serve

both them and the world-wide E.C. Church."

Ted follows Rev. Randy Sizemore of Dixon, IL Bethel, who had been Global Ministries Associate since 2008.



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Bruce commented, "Ministry means I am to be involved in little acts, small gestures, and everyday service. Ministry, bi-vocational, volunteer, and/or full-time, requires us to be "ALL IN."

The Bishop reported on our international churches, stating, "I am excited about what God is doing in other parts of the church, even as they deal with very difficult circumstances..."

The church in Nepal continues to grow despite a daily threat of persecution.

Our fellow believers in Japan continue to serve in a country that is less than one percent Christian.

Churches in Liberia share the Good News in remote areas of their developing country.

The church in India is sending missionaries to least-reached areas of their country and beyond.

The churches of Mexico are working together to tell others about Jesus under the threat of drug cartel violence."

Bruce summarized, "May God continue to give all of these brothers and sisters strength and encouragement...may they always be near the top of our daily prayer lists."

He urged that our churches "continue and increase their volunteer funding of affiliate ministries, Evangelical Seminary and our camps. At the same time, these affiliates are looking for ways to serve the churches."

The Bishop expressed thanks to Rev. Randy Sizemore and his wife, Carla, as he steps down as Global Ministries Associate. He announced that Rev. Ted Rathman will be installed into that position on Friday. He thanks Grace E.C. Church in Schuylkill Haven for sharing their pastor to serve.

Bruce acknowledged with appreciation the BEDAS (Bishop, Executive Director, Associates, and Secretary of National Conference) leadership team, as

well as the 13 District Field Directors.

He continued, "I believe our two year old denominational structure is beginning to take hold and build a sense of community... we need to begin to think about making the changes permanent... so we can begin the process of writing the appropriate amendments for the next edition of the *Discipline*. That will begin next year!

Bruce share a list of good things happening in our churches, which he had read in quarterly reports. He commented, "God is at work in and through His people!"

He mentioned with gratitude those on the Church Center staff: Brenda Long, Jodi Earhart, Kevin Henry, Pat Wolfe, Shirley Long, Abi Bomgardner, Dave King, and Pat Strain. He gave special thanks to his wife, Gloria, for "her deep love and support."

The Bishop concluded, "Thanks be to God for His wonderful gift of mercy, grace, and love in Christ Jesus. May each of us be "ALL IN" for Jesus.

Lift Hymn Up!

Twin Pines Camp is "going from camp to communities" to conduct "Lift Hymn Up!" hymn sings. The next will be held at Reedsville Bethesda Church, 155 Reedsville Road, Schuylkill Haven, PA at 3:00 pm, Sunday, September 23. Bob Fetterhoff is song leader, and Matt Logan is pianist.

Additional Twin Pines events are the Fall Fix-Up, Tuesday and Wednesday, September 18 and 19 and the Fall Family Festival on Saturday, September 29.

The camp is located at 3000 Twin Pines road, Stroudsburg, PA. For more information, call 570-629-2411.

Retreats are planned

"Rock Solid Men" is the theme for a one-day men's retreat Saturday, September 22 at Trinity Lighthouse Church, Royersford, PA. Starting time is 8:30 am and conclusion is 4:30 pm. A cost of \$29 includes lunch. To register, go to www.trinitylighthouse.org. For more information, call 610-948-5560.

Camp ECCO, Carrollton, OH will have a women's retreat 7:00 pm Friday through 2:00 pm Sunday, September 14-16. Women are invited to "come find out who the real you is."



Registration with \$60 should be sent to Annette Campbell, 7666 Pegotty Drive NE, Warren, OH 44484 by September 3. For more information, call 333-272-8171.

The men's retreat, "Wild at Heart," will take place at Camp ECCO, 5:30

pm Friday through Sunday lunch, September 28 to 30. A golf scramble, the Tin Man Contest, and Chuck Campbell's famous steaks will be included. Registration with \$60 should be sent to Akron First EC Church, Attention: James Beltz, Men's Retreat, 369 East Woodsdale Avenue, Akron, OH 44301 by September 21. Jim may be reached by calling 330-904-4322.



RHMA announces conferences

The Rural Home Missionary Association is hosting a six-hour seminar, "Maximizing the Strengths of the Small Church," beginning at 8:30 am on Saturday, September 22. Pastors, spouses, and church leaders are invited. Location is Cedarville University, Cedarville, OH.

RHMA's fall Small-town Pastors' Conference will take place Monday through Wednesday, October 8 to 10 at Calvary Church in Lancaster, PA. Theme is "Anomaly...Decidedly Different." Cost is \$115 per pastor and \$160 per couple, due September 24.

For more information, contact Pastor Jim Price at revjfp@comcast.net, 610-451-5908, or the RHMA office at 866-263-2350. To register, go to www.rhma.org.

Reedsville church dedicates community building

On Sunday, July 15, a former police barracks in Reedsville, PA was officially "re-purposed" to serve as a community center. Between Sunday morning worship services, new owner, Bethesda EC Church, dedicated the building "to service to the community under the Lord's direction." Renamed 23 Meadowbrook Center, the structure is located on Route 183 directly across the road from the church.

After state police moved their headquarters a few miles away, Jim and Michelle Miller of Miller Brothers construction acquired the property. A year ago, they met with church leaders to discuss the transfer and possible uses of the former barracks. Early last fall, the Millers gave the property to Bethesda.

Throughout the winter, volunteers from the church worked at demolishing walls and structures. The Design

Committee began work on an office suite and conference room for the church.

The Usage Committee surveyed the community and discovered some needs of senior citizens in the Wayne Township area. They worked with Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries to create a new senior center without walls. They also connected with Big Impact Group, a big brother/big sister program of Schuylkill County, who now occupy another part of the building.

Participating in the dedication service were State Senator David Argall; Michelle and James Miller; Pastor Jeff Byerly; and District Field Director Jim Price.



Contactors, the director of Big Impact Group, community people, and the congregation attended. State troopers who had served from the building, as well as residents of the Meadowbrook Community, were special guests at an afternoon drop-in event.

FAMILY NEWS

Birthday

Virginia Zimmerman, a member of the former Lancaster, PA Grace Church, celebrated her 100th birthday on May 11. She lives in the Landis Home near Landisville, where she enjoys visiting the other residents.



The following recognitions were made at National Conference...

Retirements

Pastoral couples honored for retirement are **Jeff and Dawn Martin** of Ephrata, PA and **Ralph and Connie Owens**, who recently served Trinity Light-house Church, Royersford, PA.

Fifty-year credentials

Three pastors were recognized for holding EC credentials for fifty years.

Donald Metz, came from Hosensack, PA Grace. He served 10 churches and was Christian Education Director. Wife is **Martha**.

Robert Nissly came from Birdsboro, PA Calvary. He served eight churches and was a Pennsylvania Council About Alcohol Problems Representative. Wife is **Barbara**.

Franklin Schock's home church is Tamaqua, PA Bethany. He served two churches, worked with Christian Endeavor and spent a number of years in retirement home administration. Wife is **Eileen**.

All three couples reside in Lititz.

First-time credentials

Receiving credentials for the first time were...

Manuel Arias of West Hazleton, PA Buenas Nuevas. Wife is **Luz**.

Larry Bentz of Sinking Spring, PA Community. Wife is **Dee**.

Mark Reigle of Akron, OH First. Wife is **Kara**.

Wedding

Austin Morgan, son of Pastor Shawn and Jennifer Morgan, Fern, PA Trinity, married **Kaylee Schulze** on July 14. The wedding took place at Impact Church, Lake Wales, FL. Pastor Dana Hiffstrom officiated, while Kami Schulze, mother of the bride assisted with foot-washing. The father of the groom assisted with communion.

bride
AND
groom

Rev. Timothy King, pastor of Christ House, Lancaster, PA and The Next Step, York, PA, married **Mary Christe Ruella Miole Cadayona (Christe)** on July 14. The official wedding took place in Singapore where Christe has been working for the past several years. A celebratory "reaffirmation" of the wedding will be held in Christe's native home of Amadeo, Cavite, in the Philippines on October 23, where family and friends will be able to attend. David King, Compensation/Benefit Coordinator for the National Conference, father of the groom, will officiate.

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