



Community

OCTOBER
2015

Evangelical Congregational Church



EC Leader

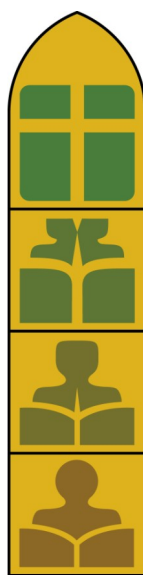
from the Bishop

Inside this issue:

<i>Bishop's Prayer & Praise</i>	2
<i>News from Global Ministries</i>	4
<i>News from Evangelical Seminary</i>	4
<i>News from Twin Pines</i>	5
<i>News from Benefits</i>	6
<i>C.E. Works</i>	8

I must admit there are months I sit in front of my computer and it takes some time to come up with what I want to write about. This is not one of those months. There are two things on my heart and mind and I can't decide which one to write about and which one to skip, so I'll write two short pieces this month.

#1—I am grateful our Leadership Commission and our Pastoral Assessment Center in affirming that as pastors and church leaders we must continually be learning; life-long learners. I graduated from a Bible college and seminary, but my real education started when I was assigned to pastor a local congregation. Over the years I have attended many continuing education events. While I learned more in some than others, each one has impacted my ministry in some way. Our denomination is partnering with Evangelical Seminary in bringing Dr. Reggie McNeal for a very special Leadership Forum on October 13. Reggie is a nationally known author and speaker. Reggie has said,



Learn
&
Grow

“The next frontier for the North American church involves changing our narrative from a church story to a Kingdom story. This leadership forum explores the Kingdom/Church relationship, the implications for moving to a Kingdom-centric ministry approach, and the strategies needed to make the necessary cultural transition in the church.”

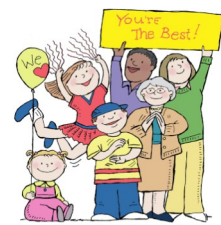
I trust you will make every effort to join me at Evangelical Seminary on October 13 for a day that promises to be one that will challenge our thinking and give us new ways to view the relationship between the Kingdom, the Church, and our culture.

#2—October is Pastor Appreciation Month. If you're a lay leader and you're reading this I hope you are planning a

time for your church to show your appreciation to your pastor. I'd also like to join with you and express my appreciation for our E.C. pastors. This is not an easy time in history to be a pastor. This is not a culture that appreciates Christians, let alone pastors. The book *For Ministers About to Start...or About to Give Up* by Travis Collins provides statistics which are consistent with previous studies and scary: 33% say being in ministry is “an outright hazard” to their families; 75% of ministers experience “severe stress causing anguish, worry, bewilderment, anger, depression, fear and alienation” during their careers.

Being a pastor has always been a challenging vocation. But the changing face of our culture, congregational finances, growing government and media oversight, and the

(continued on page 2)



Pastor Appreciation



PASTOR
APPRECIATION
MONTH

Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise



1. Join me in asking for the Lord's leading as I present nominees to the National Ministry Team for new leadership positions: Executive Director, Church Health Associate, Kingdom Extension Associate, and Ministerial Development Associate.
2. Pray for the members of the National Ministry Team as they meet on October 22 to adopt the National Conference budget for 2016 and discuss other aspects of the work of the Evangelical Congregational Church.
3. Thank the Lord for the generous stewardship that enables our denomination to join with Evangelical Seminary in hosting Dr. Reggie McNeal, a nationally known speaker and author, for a Leadership Forum on October 13.
4. Pray for safety as I travel to the National Association of Evangelicals Board meeting in Minneapolis, MN in mid-October.
5. As the final ordinations take place this month, ask the Lord to bless the ministries of each of the pastors who have been ordained this year: Keith Blank, Mike Campbell, Brad Hatter, Ken Kalisz, and Kyle Roth.
6. Praise the Lord for the men who are responding to God's call in their life and are now registering to participate in the Pastor's Assessment Center which will be held in January.
7. Praise God for the individuals who give so much time to volunteer on the boards of our affiliated ministries: Camp ECCO (OH), Evangelical Theological Seminar (PA), Rock River Bible Camp (IL), StoneRidge Retirement Living (PA), and Twin Pines Camp (PA).
8. Be sure to praise the Lord for the ministry of your pastor; and, since October is Pastor Appreciation month, it's okay to tell him that you are thankful for his ministry.
9. Praise the Lord for his wonderful creation during this beautiful time of the year and pray for times of refreshment as well as safety for me and many others who will take to the woods to enjoy God's creation (and maybe bring home some meat for the freezer).
10. Thank the Lord for the growth and discipleship taking place in many of our Evangelical Congregational congregations both here in the U.S. and around the world.

From the Bishop — continued from page 1

increasing expectations and demands placed on pastors by others and themselves makes being a pastor at this time in history even more challenging. As Bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church I thank you for your faithful service!

In Christ's service,



You are invited to attend the 2015 National Conference Ordination Services

The ordination of *Rev. Kenneth B. Kalisz*
Hope Community Evangelical Congregational Church
Fogelsville, Pennsylvania
Sunday, October 11, 4:00 p.m.



The ordination of *Rev. Keith A. Blank*
Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Sunday, October 18, 4:00 p.m.



StoneRidge Retirement Living is looking for copies of "The Singing Church" hymnal — Blue or red. If you have copies to donate, please contact Rev. Dana Logan, Chaplain at 717-866-3507.

The former Reading First EC Church has 23 choir gowns that are in good shape, free to any church that is interested. Please contact Ramon Mendez at 610-375-6913.



A Missional Holiness Conference "Fanning the Flames of a 21st Century Holiness Revival" will be held at Calvary Wesleyan Church in Bethlehem, PA. The conference is

Sunday evening, October 25 through Tuesday evening, October 27. The main speakers are Dr. Stan Toler and Rev. Anita Eastlack. In addition there will also be interesting and informative seminars on Monday and Tuesday. All of the information is available at www.missionalholiness.org. On the website you can find complete information about the conference, register and reserve your hotel at a special rate. This is the church's fifth year for the conference, but the first time they are extending the invitation beyond The Wesleyan Church. Pastors, local church leaders, missionaries and denominational leaders have attended and have reported the benefit they received from the conference.



A seminar sponsored by the **Church Health Commission**, entitled "*Leaving a Legacy in My Leadership*", will be held on Saturday, November 21st. Dr. James Ayers, who is a Professor at Large and former chair of Church and Ministry Leadership at Lancaster Bible College will be the presenter. The seminar will be held at Hope Community Church in Fogelsville from 8:30 am to Noon. Cost: \$10 Contact Rev. Kevin Roberts at revkev01@gmail.com



News from Global Ministries

GMC Pastors' Lunch:

Pastors and spouses are invited to a GMC luncheon on Friday, October 23, 2015 at Community Evangelical Church, Sinking Spring, PA. Come and hear updates from GMC Director Randy Sizemore and EC Missionaries Ken Sears (Ukraine) and Ed & Val Schubert (Honduras). Doors open at 11:30am. An offering will be taken to help cover expenses. Please RSVP by October 9th to Pat Strain by phone or at pstrain@eccenter.com. The first 25 pastors that register will receive a gift!



Susquehanna Mission Brunch:

Local Mission Leaders, Pastors and anyone interested in learning about what God is doing in and through the global EC Church is invited to Country Fare Restaurant (located on Route 422 east of Myerstown) on Saturday, October 24, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. Each person will be responsible to cover the cost of their meal. Please RSVP by October 9th to Pat Strain in the GMC office by phone or at pstrain@eccenter.com.

Prayer Needs:

1. Our EC Churches in North East India and Nepal are asking for prayer as their countries are experiencing civil and political unrest.
2. Randy, Carla and many GMC members will be traveling and attending various GMC meetings the week of October 18th. These meetings include the GMC Finance Committee, Global Ministries Commission, National Ministry Team, India/Nepal Committee, Japan Committee, GMC Pastors' Luncheon, Susquehanna Mission Bruch among others.

Missionary Gloria Smethers visiting Pennsylvania:

Gloria will be in Pennsylvania the first half of October meeting with supporters and sharing her ministry. There are still some Sunday evening and weekday slots open in her itinerary. If you would like to schedule her to speak to your group contact Pat Strain in the GMC office.



News from Evangelical Seminary

Christian Perspectives on the Paranormal

Join us on Thursday, November 5 for a morning seminar on this fascinating topic as Drs. Robb Palmer and Tony Blair try to make sense of a culture enamored with the supernatural and offer biblical insights for dealing with it in our churches, families, and neighborhoods. Dr. Blair will discuss "Why America is in Love With the Supernatural...Again!", drawing from cultural and historical trends which shed light on the current interest in the paranormal, and Dr. Palmer will present on "Hauntings, Ghosts and Supernatural Visitors." The seminar will conclude with a discussion on how we might better minister to a culture enamored by the paranormal.

Friends of Evangelical Banquet

You are invited to attend the 2015 Friends of Evangelical Banquet on Thursday, November 12, at Calvary Church in Lancaster. We are excited to announce that our speaker will be Andy Crouch, Executive Editor of Christianity Today. Andy is also a senior fellow of the International Justice Mission's IJM Institute, and is a member of the Board of Advisors for the John Templeton Foundation. He has written two books: *Playing God* and *Culture Making* (which won several awards).

If you are on the Seminary's mailing list, you will receive your invitation in September. If you are not on the mailing list or you want more information, call Evangelical at 717-866-5775.



News from Twin Pines



Twin Pines' Junior & Senior High Retreat

Summer camp is coming to November again this year! For those campers who want to experience the fun and games of summer camp again, this is the retreat for them! The Summer Staff and Program Directors are offering this retreat to anyone in grades 6-12 to get away from the distractions of school and media to focus on their faith. The dates for the retreat are November 6-8. Register online at www.tpjrshigh.eventbrite.com or download the brochure with registration form from our Facebook page or website (www.twinpines.org).

For more information, contact Andy at Twin Pines (Phone: 570-629-2411 or e-mail at andy@twinpines.org).



Fall Foliage 5K and Family Festival

Twin Pines will once again be hosting a 5K this year on Saturday, October 3. Throughout the day, there will also be a Family Festival with hayrides, pumpkin carving, and more! Come out and run the 5K and then enjoy the rest of the day with your family!

For more information, contact the Twin Pines office at 570-629-2411.



Twin Pines Celebration Banquet

The 2015 Celebration Banquet for Twin Pines will be held on Tuesday, October 20 at Good 'n Plenty Restaurant in Smoketown, PA. The doors open at 6:00pm and the evening will begin with supper at 6:30pm. Come out for a FANTASTIC meal and testimony about how God is working through the ministry of Twin Pines. There is no charge; however, a love offering will be taken to offset the cost for the evening and to support the camp. Please reserve your seat by calling the camp office at 570-629-2411 or email info@twinpines.org.

Shoppe the Poconos Retreat

If you love shopping, crafts, and fellowship then this is the retreat for you! Taking place over the weekend of December 4-6, 2015, guests will get to shop during the day and fellowship through devotions, crafts and snacks by night. The Poconos have a wide variety of stores and shops to experience. From The Crossings Premium Outlets, American Candle, and Country Kettle to Target, Kohl's, and the Stroud Mall, we have it all! The best part is most of these stores (and more) are less than five minutes from Twin Pines. What's more, many of them are donating coupons and discounts to the guests of this retreat. We will also have many door prizes to give away too! Come join us for this merry time!

To register for this retreat, register online at www.shoppethepoconos.eventbrite.com or download a brochure from our website at www.twinpines.org. For more information, contact the Twin Pines office at (570)629-2411 or e-mail retreats@twinpines.org.



Winter Thaw Youth Retreat

Has your church wanted to do a youth retreat but the idea of planning one is too daunting? Let us plan it for you! On February 19-21, 2016, we will host the first annual Winter Thaw Youth Retreat. Bring your youth group for this great weekend of faith, fun, and fellowship! Rev. Jeff Berger will be the speaker for this retreat and we will have a worship band and awesome fun and games for attendees to participate in! The rate is \$110.00 per person. If your group registers by December 31, each person will receive a free t-shirt!

Registration will open on November 1, 2015. For more information, please contact Andy at (570) 629-2411 or email winterthaw@twinpines.org.

News from Benefits Corporation

Active Pastors Health Insurance

The EC Benefits Trustees have approved a switch in the active pastors' health insurance plan to Capital Blue Cross (CBC) from Highmark effective October 1, 2015. The decision was mainly driven by cost. Capital Blue Cross offered a plan with a sub 3% rate increase and Highmark offered a 16% increase over the prior year's rates. The CBC plan is almost identical to the Highmark plan. Office visit co-pays are a little higher but prescription co-pays are a little lower with the CBC plan. The CBC plan does have higher deductibles however the annual maximum out of pocket for covered medical expenses, excluding co-pays, remains at \$500 with the HRA paying costs above \$500. The maximum out of pocket for prescriptions also remains at \$1,800 annually.

Two New Benefits on October 1.

- 1) A \$1,800 cap on out of pocket costs for outpatient therapy services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, respiratory therapy and manipulative therapy. The covered pastor will only incur a maximum in \$1,800 for covered outpatient therapy in either therapy visit co-pays or therapy visit costs. The HRA will reimburse the pastor for any out of pocket costs above \$1,800.
- 2) A limited dental plan has been added at no additional cost for health plan participants. The plan is the Value Plan 75. The plan will pay 75% of the cost of most dental services. The limitation of the plan is the number of participating providers. Please see <https://www.capbluecross.com> to confirm your dentist's participation.

An electronic participant file transfer is being utilized to facilitate enrollment in CBC. It is hoped that there will be minimal enrollment problems. Having everyone enrolled in CBC by October 1 will happen. Everyone receiving their new CBC cards by October 1 is possible but expect some delays. Once the contract with CBC is processed we will release the plan ID numbers to enable the processing of medical services until the new ID cards are received by the participants. Please plan appropriately if any of your prescriptions will need to be refilled around October 1.

The cost to the church is not increasing. The HRA cushion

is high enough to absorb the premium cost increase and the new benefits. It is unlikely that the rates will remain unchanged in future years. The EC Benefits Trustees are very aware of the tension caused by the cost of health insurance and they are committed to serving the pastors and the local EC churches. The US health insurance market is constantly in flux. The circumstances surrounding the annual plan renewal are different every year. However, the trend to push responsibility for healthcare and lifestyle decision onto the individual is continuing with your pocketbook feeling the most pain. Planning for your long term health is just as important as planning for your retirement. Accidents and illnesses are going to happen but many healthcare conditions are preventable and manageable with healthy lifestyle choices.



Highmark Senior Blue Renewal

The rates for the Highmark Freedom Blue plan are decreasing by \$14/month to \$197/month per person with no change in benefits. The change will be effective on January 1, 2016 to be paid by December 15, 2015.



Highmark Senior Blue Billing

Beginning in December 2015 for the January 2016 premium, Highmark Senior Blue is going to direct bill the retirees of the EC Church enrolled in the Highmark Freedom Blue plan for the full premium or the partial premium based on the Retiree Health Insurance phase out plan approved at the EC Benefits annual Corporation meeting in May 2015. For example, if the retiree is responsible for 10% of the premium cost then Highmark will send a bill to the retiree for \$19.70 for single coverage or \$39.40 for couple coverage. Highmark will bill the National Conference for the balance of the monthly amount. Each year the amount due from the retiree will increase and the portion billed to the National Conference will decrease.

It is very important that the retiree does not fall behind on payments to Highmark Freedom Blue. If a retiree is having difficulty paying the monthly premium the Manna Fund is available for financial assistance. Please contact David King in the EC Benefits office for a Manna Fund application.

Any amounts due from a retiree for health insurance prior to the January 2016 invoice will remain payable to the EC Benefits Corporation.

The 2016 Pastoral Compensation Forms will be available on the EC Church website no later than October 1, 2015. Expect the Social Security Administration to release the 2016 COLA in late October 2015. Early estimates from various internet bloggers is for a 0% COLA for 2016. However we have all felt the price increases at the grocery store and in energy prices. Please be respectful and honoring of the job your pastor is doing and do what is possible to increase his salary.

Please contact Dave King, dking@eccenter.com or Kevin Henry, khenry@eccenter.com or 1-800-866-7581 with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry
Controller

Dave King
Benefits Administrator



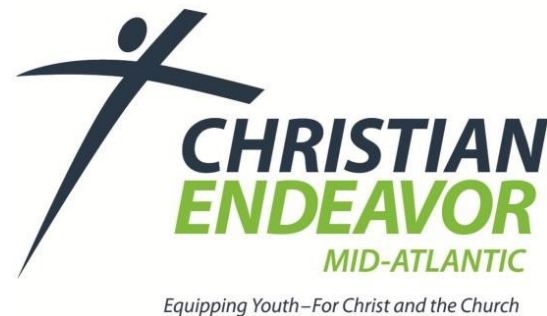
OCTOBER



The EC Church Center has an open position for a Business Office Specialist at 25 hours a week. This non degreed position is responsible for accounts payable, accounts receivable, cash receipts and donation processing. The ideal candidate will have a servant's heart, be a person of integrity, business office experience preferred, a strong comfort level with personal computers and software and a willingness to learn. If you are interested in this position please send your resume to khenry@eccenter.com or E.C. Church Center, Kevin Henry, Controller, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067.

C.E. WORKS!!!

By Dr. Dave Coryell, Executive Director, Christian Endeavor



We all know when something works. What is frustrating is when things don't work! I hit the wrong button on our TV's remote control and thought I would never get it working again! Some times life looks like this. Eight years ago I began serving with Christian Endeavor. Five years later C.E.'s mission and vision were clarified but it seemed like it would never work! Many people said, "You started too late" or "Shame, Christian Endeavor used to be such a great ministry."



Then the break through began to occur. C.E.'s first church of the new era, Trinity E.C. in Terre Hill, boldly launched C.E. in their setting. Fast-forward to today and roughly twenty churches are using the Simple, Biblical, Relevant C.E. process to grow youth as Christ's disciples. C.E. can work in your setting. I'm bold enough to say that if applied correctly it can improve even the most effective youth ministry because it harnesses the Biblical components our culture causes us to ignore.

C.E. is both intentional and sustainable. It does not involve adding additional meetings to the calendar. Instead it requires adapting what is already on the calendar so the ministry is run with purpose.

C.E. even works in settings where there are only two committed youth. If you have two committed youth, C.E. can be started and run effectively.

Maybe you are leading a church with only retired people. Even your church can connect with C.E. We have a booklet highlighting all the volunteer needs of the ministry and the ways servants from your church can be involved in C.E.'s Kingdom work. Churches also can consider C.E. as one of their mission projects that serves local churches while meeting needs domestically and internationally.

I'm convinced that C.E. works for two reasons. First, I've seen the fruit that has grown in churches here in our area. I was just talking to a pastor who told me how the change in youth who have committed to the C.E. pledge is transforming his church. An E.C. youth pastor told me about the incredible change he has seen in his students. A parent even approached me, made a \$2000 donation to the ministry and said, C.E. has changed the lives of my kids! God is at work!! Second, ten churches recently took the process we use and started C.E. when an intern with us from Lancaster Bible College traveled to his homeland in Ghana. The Ghanaians heard about the C.E. approach and the Holy Spirit moved! A similar event happened when I taught for a week at a Korean seminary in Moscow. I taught on leadership but shared about C.E. on the last day. C.E. is now embraced in several churches and C.E. Russia was officially launched. Praise the Lord!



I encourage you to check out our website at www.CEworks.faith. You can find information about how to get started with C.E. or how to get youth involved doing ministry through attending our work camp summer ministry. C.E. WORKS!!

Evangelical Congregational Church

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

Phone: 717-866-7581

Web: www.eccenter.com

Email: eccenter@eccenter.com



LEADERSHIP FORUM 2015

Featuring Reggie McNeal

Tuesday, October 13, 2015

Evangelical Seminary, Myerstown

Sponsored jointly by the Evangelical Seminary
and

E.C. Leadership Commission

Topic: Kingdom Leadership: Shifting from a Church-Centric to a Kingdom-Centric Culture

Registration: 8:30

Seminar: 9:00am—2:30pm

Cost: Includes Lunch

Individual — \$35

ETS Alumnus — \$20

EC Pastor/Elder — \$20

Students — \$10

0.4 CEUs — \$10

Session One: Aligning Church and Kingdom

Session Two: Changing the Scorecard

Session Three: Shifting Leadership Behavior



Please register online at www.evangelical.edu/leadership-forum

Or call Marsha at 717-866-5775 ext 2130

For questions, contact Ken Nafsiger—knafziger@evangelical.edu

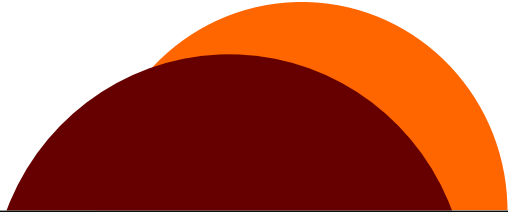
October 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Evangelical Seminary Board Mtg.	2 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	3
4 WORLDWIDE COMMUNION Home Missions Offering (Church Planting) Day of Prayer for Church Planting	5	6 Church Planting Commission Mtg.	7	8	9	10
11 Rev. Ken Kalisz Ordination	12	13 Leadership Forum	14	15 Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due	16	17
18 Rev. Keith Blank Ordination	19	20 Global Ministries Mtg.	21	22 National Ministry Team Mtg.	23 Pastors' GMC Lunch	24 Susquehanna Region GMC Brunch
25 REFORMATION SUNDAY	26	27	28	29	30	31

Ministry Funds to:
E.C. Church
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corporation
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Home Missions Offering to:
E.C. Church
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067



November 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Day of Prayer for Church Planting	2	3	4	5 Finance Comm. Mtg.	6 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	7
8	9	10	11 VETERAN'S DAY Church Health Com-mission Mtg.	12 Friends of Evangelical Banquet	13	14
15	16 Church Pension Contribution Due Health Insurance Premium Due	17	18	19	20	21 Church Health Seminar in Fogelsville
22 THANKSGIVING SUNDAY Thank Offering (optional)	23	24	25	26 THANKSGIVING DAY Church Center Closed	27 Church Center closed	28
29 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT	30					

Berks District Retreat

Ministry Funds to:

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

Insurance/Pension Payments to:

Benefits Corporation
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Thank Offering to:

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