

# E.C. Leader

## Futures Initiative—Part 1

**L**ast month I promised to keep you “in the loop” regarding the work of our Futures Initiative. I am pleased to report that the members of the Core Group and the six Work Groups met on August 18 to launch this challenging project of strategic planning for our denomination. A total of 34 pastors and lay people make up the Futures Initiative Team. If you recall there are six Work Groups; each studying a different aspect of our denominational life: Affiliates, Congregation-Denomination Relations, Denominational Structure, Ecclesiology, Finance, and Global Ministries. These groups have been tasked with studying their area of focus and presenting a written report with specific recommendations to the Futures Initiative Core Group.



For the next few months in the pages of the EC LEADER I’ll be sharing a brief overview of each of the Work Groups to help you understand the kinds of issues they’ll be wrestling with and to help you pray more specifically. As you’ll see below there is a description of the Affiliates and Congregation-Denomination Relations Work Groups. Please join me in lifting up this entire process in prayer. I am depending on the presence and leading of God’s Holy Spirit as we undertake this comprehensive project together.

In Christ’s service,

Rev. Bruce D. Hill  
Bishop



*(continued on page 2)*



### Inside this issue

Evangelism & Discipleship Commission	2
The Bishop’s TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items	3
News from Global Ministries	4
Healthy Pastor Team	6
National Prayer Summit	7
Biblical Preaching Seminar	7
News from Evangelical	8
News from Benefits & Compensation	9



Evangelical Congregational Church  
 100 West Park Avenue  
 Myerstown, PA 17067  
 717-866-7581  
[www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com)  
[eccenter@eccenter.com](mailto:eccenter@eccenter.com)

(continued from page 1)

## Affiliates

To evaluate our current relationship with our various affiliates (seminary, retirement village, camps, camp meetings, etc.) and determine if these relationships serve the mission of the Church. To dispel the confusion and questions associated with relationships the EC Church maintains with our affiliate organizations. If we are to be a people on Christ's mission, we must make sure that our partners in ministry (affiliates) enhance what we do. As an expression of the Church, the EC Church and our local congregations should serve Christ's mission in and to the world.



## Congregation (Pastors and Churches) - Denomination Relations

To define connectionalism as used in the Discipline: "With the understanding that the local church cannot carry out the Great Commission alone, we surrender self-sufficiency and autonomy to join together in love." To respond to the reality that the denomination cannot give every local congregation what it wants, or even sometimes needs. To determine how to provide the best pastors for our churches, and to make possible the best churches for our pastors (a process of monitoring and encouraging). This will involve defining what we do to create pastors, how we support/care for pastors, and how we seek to help our pastors "fit and flourish". The other side of this issue is the relationship of the denomination with the local church. Define this relationship and measure it for health and viability for a hopeful future.



We know that one of the most important aspects of discipleship is getting people into the Word of God. The challenges to that are many: "I don't have enough time", "where do I start", "it takes too long". You've heard them all. The **Evangelism & Discipleship Commission** has been in contact with Tyndale House Publishers about a new resource they are offering to local congregations and one of the best things about it is that it is completely FREE! That's right: no money; just download and use what you want in your congregation.

This new resource **REFLECT PS119. REFLECT** is designed to guide readers through the entire Bible in just 15 minutes a day. Tyndale has said their goal in developing this resource is that it be practical and effective, multi-generational, and flexible. This is one resource available for you to consider sharing with your congregation to help them get into their Bibles in 2013. Online resources will be available beginning September 17. You can download PDF resources from [www.reflects119.com](http://www.reflects119.com). There you will be able to get reproducible Weekly Reading Guides, Weekly Discussion Guides, Posters, and a Leader's Guide all with excerpts from One Year Study Bibles.



The Bible is vital to believers' growth and maturity; to discipleship. The Evangelism & Discipleship Commission will continue to share new ideas and resources with you as we become aware of them.

## The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Join me in prayer for our Futures Initiatives Team as they work on this very important strategic planning project for our denomination.
2. Pray for the six pastors who, since approval by the National Conference, are taking a significant step in their spiritual journey by being ordained.
3. Ask the Lord to bless the many local congregational ministries that are being launched with the coming fall season; may we not just be busy, but effective.
4. Pray for a great start to the fall semester at Evangelical Seminary; to reach enrollment and financial goals on the main campus in Myerstown and the new satellite campus in Harrisburg.
5. Pray for me as I spend a lot of time involved in meetings and retreats away from my office: Twin Pines Bible Conference, National Conference Relations Committee Retreat, National Association of Evangelical's Denominational Executives' Retreat, and a Supervisory Committee Retreat.
6. Praise the Lord for the reports of lives changed through the summer camps at Camp ECCO, Rock River Bible Camp, and Twin Pines Camp. (Pray, too, for the continued discipleship of those who made commitments.)
7. Thank the Lord for giving me opportunities to preach in local congregations on Sunday mornings. (Remember, if you'd like to schedule me to come to your church in 2013 all you have to do is contact Brenda at [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com) with dates.)
8. Praise the Lord for Jodi's (my Administrative Assistant) big and healthy new baby boy Owen Matthew Earhart.
9. Praise God for individuals already making contacts with the Conference Ministers about attending the Pastoral Assessment Center scheduled for January 16-19, 2013.
10. Thank God for his safety in travel and faithful blessings each day. Great is his faithfulness!



**2012 National  
Conference  
Journals  
Are  
Ready!**

**Churches  
should have re-  
ceived their  
free Journal  
CD.**

Journals & additional  
CD's can be ordered  
by contacting the  
Church Center Office  
[blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com)  
or 717-866-7581.





## News from Global Ministries

### **GMC FALL FAMILY MISSION RALLY: October 12-13, 2012**

The Fall Rally will be held at the Boyertown Trinity EC Church and will begin on Friday with a luncheon for pastors and mission leaders. Saturday's Rally will include programs for adults, youth and children that will run concurrently. We have a great group of missionaries on home assignment this year who will be sharing their ministries with us including:

- Nick & Lisa Lakatos
- Dan Dixon
- Lamar & Janice Stoltzfus
- Gloria Smethers
- Rev. Elias Martinez, the Director of the EC Church of Mexico



### **\*ATTENTION YOUTH PASTORS & LEADERS:**

We are super excited to announce that Tim King, Director of the evangelism ministry DRAMA will be leading the youth track. Check out this ministry at [www.dramateam.org](http://www.dramateam.org).

You will be receiving bulletin inserts and invitation letters to use in your congregation soon! In the meantime you can RSVP to the GMC office by October 1, 2012.



### **VBS PROJECT UPDATE**

The VBS project for this year—funds to build a security fence around the women's dormitory at Evangelical College of Theology in Churachandpur, Northeast India— is going well. It looks as if we are close to reaching our goal of \$10,000. If you haven't sent in your VBS offerings, please send it as soon as possible so we can get a final total and send the funds in October. Thank you!!!!

### **Susquehanna Mission Leaders' Brunch: November 13, 2012**

Susquehanna Region mission-minded leaders, mark your calendar for the second annual Mission Leaders' Brunch for November 13, 2012 from 10:00-12:00. The location is still being confirmed but watch for an invitation letter and more information within the coming weeks!

### **GMC ACTS ON TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The task force organized by the National Ministry Team and charged with examining the breadth and scope of the GMC and its finances has completed their work and made several recommendations to the Global Ministries Commission and the National Ministry Team. The NMT will take the task force's finding into consideration as they continue the work of strategic planning for the EC Church. The GMC has acted on several of the task force's internal recommendations including:

1. The voluntary "Thank Offering" funds will be re-designated from the current purpose described in Rules of Con-

ference section 704.3.2. The rule says these funds are to be used as missionary benevolence and office staffing. Currently there is no regularly designated income stream to help support our international EC churches. The other GMC offerings will remain as listed.

2. While we will continue our policy of only sending to our international churches the funds we are able to raise, the GMC will set an annual budget or target amount for each mission conference and when one conference's target has been reached, any excess funds received will be allocated to a mission conference that has not yet met its target, and so on until all of our international EC church mission conferences have met their funding targets. This will help us achieve a more equitable support strategy for our international EC churches.
3. The GMC will begin applying 5% assessment on all funds coming through GMC, excluding missionary support, to help fund the administration and operation of the GMC office.
4. Since the GMC is not supported through National Conference Ministry Funds, we will continue to invite churches and individuals to regularly support the administration and operation of the GMC office through the general fund.

### **YOU CAN HELP THE NEW PRINCIPAL OF EVANGELICAL COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY**

Rev. Lalrosiem Songate, former General Director (Bishop) of the EC Church of India was elected the next Principal of our Evangelical College of Theology in North East India. However, he is required to earn a Doctoral Degree within the next 2 years to ensure the accreditation of ECT. We praise God that he has been offered a tuition scholarship at Concordia (Fort Wayne, IN) but he still is in need of further support for tuition, housing and living expenses. The GMC considers this a strategic investment in the future of ECT, the EC Church of India and a very gifted leader who will continue to provide excellent leadership for ECT and the EC Church of India. We are setting up a special fund to help Rev. Songate achieve this necessary goal. If you and or your church would like to help with this need please make checks payable to GMC and mark them "Songate education". If you want more information, please contact Randy at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or 717-866-7584.



### **Randy & Carla Sizemore to serve as Campus Pastor for Evangelical Seminary:**

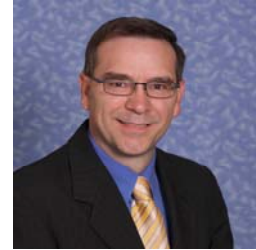
Evangelical has identified the need to have a volunteer Campus Pastor who would be available to come alongside and minister to the unique needs that our seminary students, faculty and staff experience. After some prayer and initial informal discussions involving time constraints, availability, the desire to serve as a couple, etc., Randy & Carla offered their services for consideration and after an official interview with the Dean's Council were happy to accept the offered appointment.

## GMC TRAINING SEMINAR: Youngstown, Ohio

Saturday, September 15, 2012

9:00—3:00 (refreshments & lunch included. Offering will be received.)

**Hosted by:** Wedgewood Park EC Church  
1944 South Meridian Road  
Youngstown, OH 44511



**Speaker:** Rev. Randy Sizemore, Director Global Ministries Commission

### Seminar 1: “Building Missions Into Your Congregation’s DNA”

- Exploring creative ways to engage your congregation in the Great Commission

### Seminar 2: “Money, Missionaries & Missions”

- Explores how congregations can successfully raise and distribute support funds for missionaries and mission projects.

Designed for Pastors, Mission leaders and anyone interested in helping their churches participate in Christ’s command to make disciples of all nations.

RSVP by September 10 to: [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or 1-800-866-7584



Recruiting new members for the Healthy Pastor Team:



The **Healthy Pastor Team**, a sub-committee of the EC Church Health Commission is looking to expand its membership. The purpose of this team is to provide support, resources and encouragement to our pastors, their families, and our churches as they strive to lead healthier lifestyles and thereby strengthen their ability to carry out ministry and build the Kingdom. They can also assist churches as they consider and start healthy ministries in their own congregations. This team meets informally 2-3 times a year at a central location, and is comprised of clergy, health professionals and lay persons.

If you have an interest, desire or passion to serve the denomination by encouraging health and wholeness in our churches, please contact Margie Miller, Chairperson for the Healthy Pastor Team at [margie@communityec.org](mailto:margie@communityec.org) or Phone: 610-670-1942.

Be Healthy - Be Holy!  
Margie Miller, for the HPT



## "LIGHT THE FIRE AGAIN"

### The E.C. National Prayer Summit

FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AND AWAKENING



Will you join us this October 8, 9, 10 in Emlenton, PA at the Whitehall Camp and Conference Center for this Summit? The cost for six meals and two nights lodging is only \$77/person in motel-like rooms or \$61/person for a dormitory room. You can Google "Whitehall, Emlenton, PA" and see their brochure with pictures of the lodging and sylvan setting. It should be beautiful in October. We have also reserved the Missionary Cottage Auditorium for our meetings. Sign up today and think about who you would like to take along. **Make your reservations with the E.C. Church Center and mark your check "E.C. Prayer Summit."**

A registration form will be included in the forthcoming HeartCry and you can also get it online at [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com)



## Biblical Preaching Seminar

TUESDAY, October 30th

12:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Grace Community EC Church

212 Peach Bottom Road, Willow Street, PA 17584

Featuring **Rev. Dr. Randal Pelton**, pastor at Calvary Bible Church. This is a seminar that is applicable for all levels of speaking, teaching and preaching. It will be extremely practical and well worth your investment. We encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity!

Cost: \$15 advanced; \$20 after October 20th.

Send registration & payment (make checks payable to EC Church) to: Rev. Dr. Gordon R. Lewis, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067. Should you desire to register by email or phone, please contact Rev. Lewis at (717-866-7581) or [glewis@eccenter.com](mailto:glewis@eccenter.com)

## News from Evangelical



**Excitement is building as Evangelical begins its 60th year of Kingdom service!** Ribbon cutting for the new Harrisburg MDiv program takes place on August 27 at 3:00 pm, with representatives of the seminary, local government and Chamber of Commerce participating. Myers-town campus classes begin August 30, and Fall Convocation/Wittmaier-Sailer Lecture is set for Dech Chapel on Tuesday, September 4, at 11:00 am. **Dr. John Tornfelt**, Professor of Preaching and Ministry, will bring the address, based on his newly completed book.



**Fall Enrollment has surpassed that of 2011**, with 23 new students beginning first-time studies at the seminary. Applications are still being considered, and September 18 is the deadline for final registration. Reminder: All pastors and senior citizens (65+) may audit any seminary course for only \$50.

**Evangelical's Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL) has announced its fall learning opportunities.** Check [www.evangelical.edu/lifelonglearning](http://www.evangelical.edu/lifelonglearning) for information on costs and online registration, or call the seminary at 717-866-5775 for details on these events:

- **Institute for Church Leadership (formerly Leadership Contact)** resumes Tuesday evening classes from 6:30-9:15 this fall with a course in New Testament Survey (September 4 to October 16) and The Healthy Church (October 23 to December 4). These credit-free classes are open to all who want to deepen their knowledge and sharpen their skills for greater ministry in the local church. Deadlines for registration: August 28 (NTS) and October 16 (THC).



- **Leadership Forum on September 18 presents Todd Hunter**, past president of Alpha USA, prolific author, former head of the Vineyard movement, and now an Anglican church-plant bishop. Hunter skillfully integrates the "doing" of evangelism with the "being" of spiritual formation. The event is co-sponsored by Evangelical's Alumni Council. Please register by September 11.
- **Faith in the Marketplace on September 27 features Christian Leinbach**, Chairman of the Berks County Board of Commissioners. The breakfast program runs from 7:00-8:30 am in Zinn Commons. Please register by September 20.
- **Save the Date:** A seminar for pastors and others helping families cope with end-of-life issues is coming on Monday, October 29. Sponsored by Lebanon's Good Samaritan Hospital and CLL, the day-long event will include input from a pastor, physician, and funeral director. Watch for upcoming details.



**Friends of Evangelical Banquet welcomes gifted singer and songwriter Steve Green—and YOU—to our annual dinner and inspirational evening on Friday, October 19, at Lancaster's Calvary Church. Call Evangelical or go online to reserve your place!**



A **MACL (Master of Arts in Christian Leadership) Cohort** is now forming for a November launch. Check the website or call for information on this exciting new degree.

**Joel Bell**, an MDiv. Student from Shippenville, PA, has been granted the first Dr. David A. Dorsey Scholarship. Joel's father, Tim Bell, is a regular OMS representative at National Conference, and his grandparents are active at Knox (PA) EC Church.

---

## News from Benefits & Compensation

We received our health insurance plan renewal quote from Capital Blue Cross and the rate increase is much lower than previous years. The quote is based on the same plan with the same benefits. The concerns with the level of benefits of our current plan have been noted and additional products and insurers are being reviewed. Any increase in benefits will come with additional costs that will be weighed against the benefit increase.



We are currently in our open enrollment period (lasting until October 1), during which you can make changes to your coverage including joining the plan, adding dependents, etc. The two dental plan offerings (Value and Basic) will most likely continue to be available. Changes to your dental insurance coverage can also be completed during open enrollment.

Those on the group health insurance plan should have received two letters, one from Capital Blue Cross and one from Aetna, concerning the Medical Loss Ratio (MLR) and premium rebates. Capital Blue Cross met or exceeded the required MLR and as such no premium rebate is due. Aetna did not meet the MLR and EC Benefits received a premium refund of \$11,551.22, which is less than 1% of the premiums EC Benefits paid to Aetna. There are two distribution premium rebate options available under the Affordable Care Act; distribute the rebate directly to the employees or reduce the next year's premiums. At the next EC Benefits board meeting the Trustees will determine how to distribute the premium rebate.

Please remember to submit all of your deductible and coinsurance claims to PrimePay on a timely basis.



PrimePay will track all of your covered out of pocket healthcare expenses, including the first \$500 that is the responsibility of the pastor. Timely submission of claims helps EC Benefits monitor and assess the cost efficiency of the health insurance plan. Also, covered deductible and coinsurance claims must be incurred by September 30, 2012 and submitted to PrimePay for reimbursement ninety days from the end of the plan year which is December 29, 2012.

**New to PrimePay.** On [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com), under Benefits Corporation, then Capital Blue Cross, is a form

“PrimePay Direct Deposit Authorization Form” in WORD and PDF format. If you would like to have your reimbursement checks direct deposited into your bank account instead of waiting for a check to be mailed, complete one of the forms and send it to Dave King, Benefits Administrator, for processing. We are being told that PrimePay will be processing direct deposit payments everyday at 3:00 pm. The payments should be received in your bank account within 24 to 48 hours, depending on individual bank processing requirements.

Also, if you are establishing an online account with PrimePay you will need your **Employer ID** which can be found on the instructions posted on the EC Center website or by following this link, <http://www.eccenter.com/files/ECC/Benefits/PrimePay%20Online%20Access%20Information.pdf>.

Kevin Henry  
Controller

David King  
Benefits Administrator



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Shirley Long, Administrative Assistant in the Finance Office at EC Church Center. Shirley has very graciously served the EC Church for **25 years!!!** And we certainly hope she will continue to serve for many more!

You can congratulate her by sending cards to the Church Center or emailing her at [slong@eccenter.com](mailto:slong@eccenter.com)



Please make a note that the National Conference sessions will begin on **Tuesday, May 28** in 2013. Our National Conference dates are set in direct relationship to Commencement at Messiah College. Therefore, in 2013 we will be meeting **AFTER** Memorial Day.