



**connect**

"We loved you so much that we shared with you  
not only God's Good News but our own lives, too."  
— 1 Thessalonians 2:8

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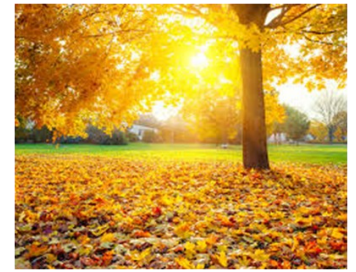
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# EC Leader



SEPTEMBER 2014

## From the Bishop

In the July issue of the EC LEADER I highlighted the Covenant that was adopted during National Conference. This month the Covenant Implementation Team will meet on a short retreat to begin the work of identifying how the Lord is leading us to make the changes necessary to fulfill our covenant responsibility. We believe taking the strategic steps enumerated in the Covenant will help us to be a provider of healthy connections and resources needed by our congregations in the 21st century. The Covenant states:

1. We will move to a regional shared ministry and leadership model.
2. We will reevaluate our denominational relationships with affiliate ministries.
3. We will substantially reduce denominational operating expenses.
4. We will significantly reduce ministry fund asking from local churches.

One of the items in my Top Ten Prayer and Praise list is that the EC Church would join together to pray for the Lord's clear leading of this implementation effort. I'm sure you can agree with me that change seems to swirl around us at church, at work and

at home. Everything seems to be up for grabs. You've no doubt heard it said, "Change is the one constant in our lives." Yes we live in a crazy, mixed up upside-

down world. However, as a follower of Jesus, I am thankful for many constants that are a very real part of my life. Here are four I hold on to:

- God very simply "I am the Lord, and I do not change." I am thankful that no matter what happens in our lives he is still the Lord; he is a sovereign God.
- I am thankful that God's Word doesn't change; it is true whether our culture wants to accept that truth or not. As the psalmist wrote "The very essence of your words is truth; all your just regulations will stand forever."
- Jeremiah reminds us the Lord said "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love." God's love is real and Paul reminds me that nothing, not even the change that challenges me every day, can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
- The Good News is still Good News and sharing that Good News and making disciples of Jesus is still God's will for all of God's people all around the world. The Great Commission and the Great Commandment have not changed!

In Christ's Service,

## Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

1. Continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Liberia, Africa as they deal with the ongoing Ebola health crisis.
2. Pray for safety and the Lord's blessing as Randy & Carla Sizemore, Pat Strain and Gloria and I travel to Japan (Sept 22-30) to celebrate their becoming an Evangelical Congregational Church National Conference.
3. Ask the Lord to bless all of the students, teachers, and administrators who are beginning another year of school. Pray too for those who have been in school a loooooong time—those who are working on degrees at Evangelical Seminary.
4. Pray for those who made decisions for Jesus during the summer at one of our camps. Ask the Lord to strengthen their faith and to bring someone to walk alongside them in discipleship. (That someone may be you!)
5. Ask the Lord to make his will plain to me and the Conference Ministers as we work with a number of congregations in transition.
6. Praise God for those who have responded to the invitation to be a part of the Covenant Implementation Team. Continue to ask the Lord to bless their efforts.
7. Thank the Lord for the congregations who continue to faithfully support the work of the denomination in prayer and with their giving.
8. Praise the Lord for my safety as I have traveled around the conference and for Gloria's safety as she has spent many days and nights home alone this summer.
9. Praise the Lord for the reports I am receiving from churches and individuals who are seeking ways to intentionally connect with the people around them.
10. Praise God for next generation lay leaders and pastors who are responding to the Lord's call on their lives both here in the EC Church USA and in the EC Church around the world.



### You are invited to attend the 2014 National Conference Ordination Services

The ordination of **Jacqueline B. Iatesta**  
Trinity Evangelical Congregational Church  
Boyertown, Pennsylvania  
Sunday, September 21, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Nathanael J. Kennedy**  
Ebenezer Evangelical Congregational Church  
Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania  
Sunday, September 7, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Kenneth B. Ogden**  
People's Evangelical Congregational Church - East Weissport  
Lehighton, Pennsylvania  
Sunday, October 5, 4:00 p.m.

## News from StoneRidge Retirement Living



An announcement was made early in August by StoneRidge Retirement Living's President/CEO, Steven Reiter, that the Myerstown, PA based retirement community recently acquired Schoolyard Square, a 65 bed licensed personal care home in Pine Grove, PA. Schoolyard Square has been operating on the five acre campus since 1985 accommodating the needs of senior adults who require some personal assistance with activities of daily living. The Pine Grove campus located at 11 High Street will be known as "Schoolyard Square, a StoneRidge Retirement Living Community."

StoneRidge Retirement Living, formerly known as the Evangelical Congregational Church Retirement Village, has been operating in Myerstown since 1955 where there are two campuses providing services for senior adults. Towne Centre located at 7 West Park Avenue and Poplar Run located at 440 East Lincoln Avenue.



In January, 2014, the Church of God Home, a continuing care retirement community, located at 801 North Hanover Street, Carlisle, PA, completed an affiliation with StoneRidge Retirement Living. StoneRidge Retirement Living Communities are now able to serve the needs of seniors in Cumberland, Dauphin, Lebanon, Berks, Schuylkill and the surrounding counties.

StoneRidge Retirement Living Communities now have the capacity to serve over 700 seniors by offering an array of services from Independent Living to Skilled Nursing Care and Rehabilitation Services. For more information, contact 717-866-3200 or visit the website at [www.stoneridgeretirement.com](http://www.stoneridgeretirement.com).



**The 2014 National Conference Journals are ready!!!** If you placed an order you can either pick it up at Church Center or it will be mailed to you are you indicated.

If you did not place an order you can still do so by calling or emailing Brenda at 1-800-866-7581 or [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com)

Each church will be sent a Journal on CD FREE of charge.

Cost:  
 Binder—\$7.00  
 Indexes—\$4.00  
 Printed Contents—\$14.00  
 Additional CD—\$5.00



I have been very humbled and thankful for all the cards and messages that have been sent my way in celebration of my working for the Evangelical Congregational Church for the past 40 years. Through these years I have met and worked with some of the most incredible, God-loving people in the world. I feel my life has been very blessed.

*Brenda Long*

## News from Evangelical

Volunteers are needed for some light clerical duties at the Marriage and Family Centers in Myerstown and Lititz. This help is needed during the evening hours while interns are seeing clients. If you are able to assist the Seminary in this way, contact Elizabeth Brunsting at [eburusting@evangelical.edu](mailto:eburusting@evangelical.edu) or 717-866-5775, ext. 2116.

The Institute for Church Leadership is offering two classes this fall. *Studying and Interpreting the Bible* will be offered September 2-October 14 and *Preaching* will be offered October 28-December 9. Classes meet from 6:30 pm to 9:15 pm. For more information and to register, please visit our website [www.evangelical.edu/lifelonglearning/](http://www.evangelical.edu/lifelonglearning/).

The Seminary's Alumni Council in conjunction with the Center for Lifelong Learning will present the 2014 Leadership Forum on September 25 in Dech Chapel. Our Marriage and Family Therapy faculty will discuss Healing Relationships in a Broken World. More information is now available on our website. Add your registration to those already being received.



The first Faith in the Marketplace event for the fall will be on September 22. Our Speaker will be Greg Leshar, president of Leshar Mack Sales & Service, Inc and Leshar Leasing, Inc of Lebanon. The event will be held at StoneRidge: Theater on Main at Poplar Run, Myerstown, at 7:00 am. To register, please visit our website: [www.evangelical.edu/faith-marketplace](http://www.evangelical.edu/faith-marketplace).

Dr. Kyle Strobel, Assistant Professor of Spiritual Theology and Formation at Talbot School of Theology, will be our speaker at the 2014 Friends of Evangelical Banquet on October 17 at Calvary Church in Lancaster. Dr. Strobel is a dynamic and engaging speaker. Also, a prolific author, his third book will be publishing in October. If you did not receive an invitation but would like to attend, you can register on our website or contact Marcia Conley at 717-866-5775, ext. 2130.



The Rural Home Missionary Association (RHMA) will be offering a Lancaster, PA **“Small-Town Pastors’ Conference”**, September 29th through October 1st, at Calvary Church, Lancaster. This year’s conference is titled **“Weathering the Storms.”**

I want to encourage you to check out the brochure for the conference at <http://rhma.org/index.php/conferences>.

The cost is reasonable, the instruction is beneficial, and the fellowship is encouraging. Feel free to contact me with any questions ([revjfp@comcast.net](mailto:revjfp@comcast.net)).

For those in the Great Lakes Region, a conference will be held in Morton, IL April 27-29, 2015. A one day conference is planned for Taylor University, Upland, IN October 25, 2014. information on these conferences is available on their website.

Jim Price  
for the Church Health Commission

## News from Twin Pines



Twin Pines will be host to Family Life's the Art of Marriage retreat on the weekend of September 26-28, 2014. The retreat will be a special time for couples to relax and grow closer together all while continuing to explore the beauty and challenges of God's plan for marriage that begins on their wedding day. You won't want to miss this awesome fall weekend in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains. Registrations are now being accepted. Standard and Aspen rooms are available. Call or e-mail the camp for more information: 570-629-2411 or [retreats@twinpines.org](mailto:retreats@twinpines.org)



### News from Global Ministries

- Congratulations to GMC member Pastor Nathanael Kennedy on his ordination as an Elder in the Evangelical Congregational Church on September 7th at the Ebenezer EC Church in Jim Thorpe where he serves as pastor.



- Please be in prayer for upcoming GMC trip to Japan September 22-30. The GMC is sponsoring this trip to celebrate the EC Church of Japan's graduation to National Conference status. The team will include Bishop Bruce & Gloria Hill, DGM Randy & Carla Sizemore and Deputy Director Pat Strain.
- Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our brothers and sisters in the EC Church of Liberia as they deal with the Ebola virus outbreak. The international EC Church has been praying and we have sent approximately \$2,500 to help with the emergency.



- The Susquehanna Region Mission Leaders' Brunch will be held on Monday, October 20, 2014 at 10:30 am. Location to be confirmed.

## DISCIPLESHIP & MISSION WORKSHOP

### A 3D AND Navigator Event

October 24-25, 2015  
Columbia Presbyterian Church  
Columbus, MD

Registration and more at:  
[3dmovements.com/workshops](http://3dmovements.com/workshops)  
Or 843.237.3800

**\$149 — register early and save**

According to *BUILDING A DISCIPLING CULTURE*, p. 21ff, there's three ways we ALL learn. 1) Classroom info, 2) Apprenticeship, 3) Immersion. We've been talking and doing some reading. A few of us have also been huddling together. And now, an opportunity for an entry-level immersion experience is available to you. **Rev. Al Giles**, St. Matthew's EC Church, Emmaus, will be a part of the presentation team and leadership for this event, and he'd love for you to consider participating and bringing folks from you congregation along who have any interest or passion for making disciples AND connecting with the world OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.

You can see a description of the Discipleship & Mission Workshop here: [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)

## News from Benefits Corporation

The active pastor's health insurance renewal negotiations are not as bleak as in years past. Our renewal rates are lower increases than what the market is experiencing this year and the HRA has a healthy cushion. With these factors in place, I anticipate rate increases to the churches to be under 10% and possibly under 5%. The EC Benefits Trustees are meeting in early September and the new rates will be announced shortly after the meeting.



As we are currently in our open enrollment period, 60 days before the start of the new plan year of October 1, you can make changes to your coverage, join the plan, add dependents, etc. outside of change of life events. Please contact Dave King if changes to your health insurance coverage are needed.



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 in covered medical expenses and the first \$1,800 in prescription co-pays that are 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, 2014 and submitted to PrimePay for reimbursement ninety days from the end of the plan year which is December 29, 2014.

Detailed instructions on how to submit a reimbursement claim to PrimePay was emailed to all participants on the active pastor's health insurance plan in late July. PrimePay was established to assist pastors with lowering their out of pocket medical and prescription costs for covered medical expenses. Funds are available to reimburse covered out of pocket medical and prescription costs. Contact Dave King or Kevin Henry with any questions on submitting claims to PrimePay.

Please contact Dave King, [dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com) or Kevin Henry, [khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com) with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry  
Controller

Dave King  
Benefits Administrator



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Myerstown, PA 17067

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[eccenter@eccenter.com](mailto:eccenter@eccenter.com)

We're on the Web  
[www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com)

We've attached calendars for September and October and will attach subsequent calendars in the future issues so you can keep up-to-date with what is happening in the EC denomination. These calendars are also available on the EC website

[www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com).

If there is an event you would like to have included on the calendar please contact Brenda at [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com) or call 717-866-7581.



The **Christian Education Committee** wants invite you to a valuable training opportunity coming up on September 18 in the Lancaster, PA area. Gap Family Resources and Counseling Center (FRCC) is offering a FREE training on the topic of Mandated Reporting.



Changes in the Mandated Reporting laws signed by governor Corbett will go into effect in 2015. This is a chance for you to learn more about these changes and how to train your church volunteers.

The training opportunity is being held at Calvary Church in Lancaster on Thursday, September 18 from 8am—9:15 am includes breakfast. To register for the breakfast [click here](#). Please register by Wednesday, September 10.

At the breakfast you will learn more about FRCC's future direction, and their staff will provide information on these important updates. You will also be briefed on why it is important to register for FRCC's Mandated Reporter Training which will take place on October 17th.

The Friday, October 17th, 8:30am-12pm event is training for paraprofessionals and volunteers and will answer the following important questions.

- Who is a mandated reporter?
- Do you know the signs of neglect & abuse?
- Do you know how to report and respond to suspected child abuse and neglect?
- Do you understand the new guidelines and responsibilities under PA laws?
- What is the process once a report has been made to child protective officials?

You may register for this training by [clicking here](#). Registration/Admission is #35 per person. Group discounts for four or more people available. Registration cut off is Thursday, October 9, 2014.



LOOKING TOWARD FALL





# September 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> LABOR DAY Church Center Closed	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Benefits Corp. Mtg.	<b>5</b> Day of Prayer for The EC Church	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Day of Prayer for Church Planting	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Fall Convocation	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
		Twin Pines Bible Conference				
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Church Pension Contribution due Health Ins Premium due Estimated Tax Payment due	<b>16</b> Evangelism & Discipleship Com- mission Mtg.	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
		Twin Pines Fall Fix-Up				
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
		Supervisory Retreat		National Conference CRC Retreat		
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Leadership Commission Mtg.	<b>30</b>				

**Ministry Funds to:**  
E.C. Church  
100 W. Park Ave.  
Myerstown, PA 17067

**Insurance/Pension Payments to:**  
Benefits Corporation  
100 W. Park Ave.  
Myerstown, PA 17067  
(designate Church—4th Quarter/Pastor)

**Medical/Pension Payments to:**  
Benefits Corporation  
100 W. Park Ave.  
Myerstown, PA 17067

# October 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	4
5 WORLDWIDE COMMUNION Day of Prayer for Church Planting	6 Leadership Commission Mtg.	7 Church Planting Commission Mtg.	8	9	10	11
12 Home Missions Offering (Church Planting)	13 Supervisory Retreat	14 CRC Retreat	15 Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due	16	17	18
19	20	21 Twin Pines Celebration Banquet	22 GMC Meeting	23 National Ministry Team Mtg.	24	25
26 REFORMATION SUNDAY	27	28	29	30	31	

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**Home Missions Offering to:**  
E.C. Church  
100 West Park Avenue  
Myerstown, PA 17067  
(designate—Home Missions Offering)