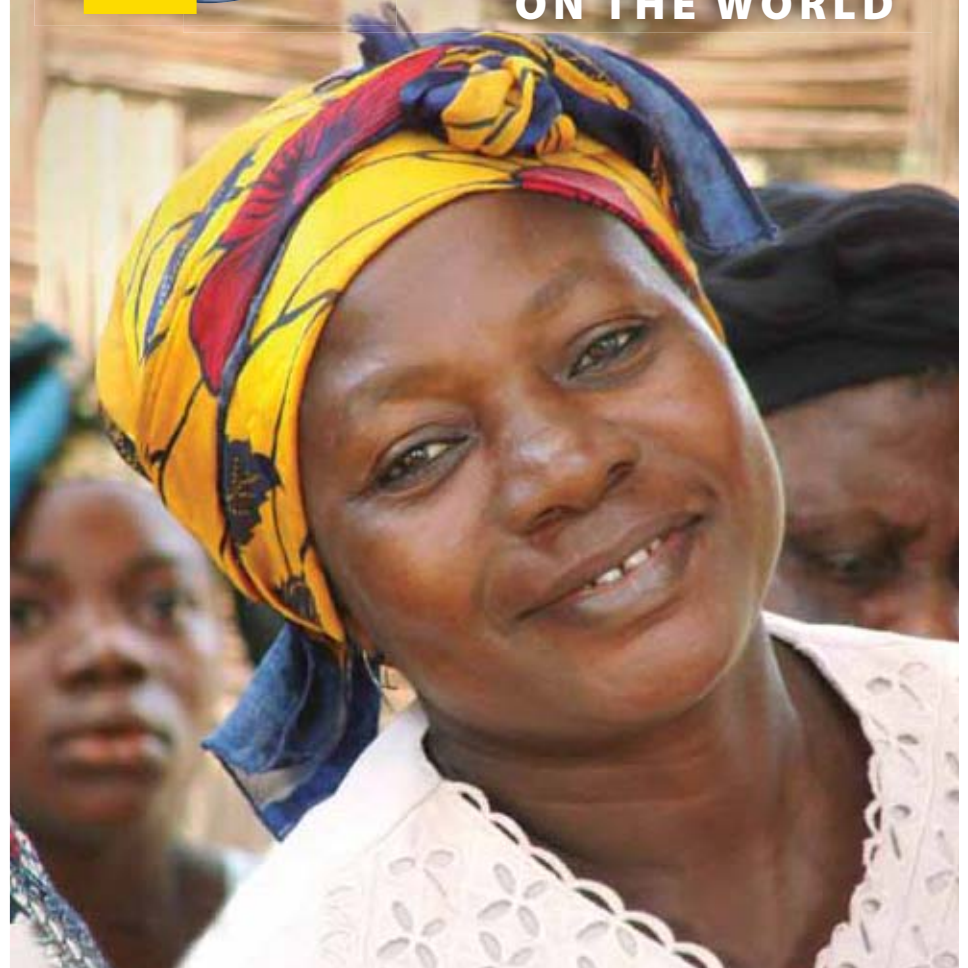




A publication of the Global Ministries Commission of the EC Church

window

ON THE WORLD



WORLD-CLASS CHRISTIANITY

Summer 2012 • Volume 24 Number 2

CONTENTS

3 World-Class Christianity

- 4 Thankoffering Change
- 4 Fall Rally

5 T.E.A.C.H. International 2013 Postponed

- 5 Vision Japan 2013

6 The Financial State of GMC

- 7 Homegoing of a Special Lady
- 7 Memorials

8 PASSION!

- 9 Newest Member of Global Ministries Commission

10 Seeing the Good News at Work in Northeast India

- 11 Wedding Bells!
- 11 Missionary Prayer Parters Update

12 "I do not want to go to Spain."

- 17 Spain Vision Trip – September 2013

18 International Church Update:

Celebrating the World-Class Faith, Labor, Love and Endurance In The Global EC Church

- 18 **Japan's** Endurance Inspires Hope
- 20 **India's** 3rd General Conference Highlights a Work Produced by Faith
- 22 **Nepal** Continues a Labor Prompted By Love
- 23 The Work in **Costa Rica** Comes To an End
- 24 **Mexico** Takes Next Steps toward National Conference Status
- 25 **El Retiro** Children's Home Ministers to Record Numbers in the Name of Jesus Christ
- 26 **Liberia** is Engaged in the War of the Century

Graphic Design: Maureen Logan / mlart1@verizon.net

 **window**
ON THE WORLD

A publication of the Global Ministries Commission
of the Evangelical Congregational Church
Summer 2012 • Volume 24 Number 2

THE GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION is the international ministry arm of the Evangelical Congregational Church. With missionaries in nine nations, over 400 churches in six countries, and several strategic initiatives, GMC is dedicated to mobilizing the worldwide Church into acts of love, service, and gospel proclamation.



100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

717.866.7584
717.866.7383 (fax)

ecglobal@eccenter.com
www.ecglobal.org

GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION MEMBERS

Rev. Randy Sizemore – Director, Executive Editor
Patricia Strain – Managing Editor, Deputy Director of Missionary Care
Kathy Friedlund – MMK Coordinator
Jerry Virtue – Work Teams Representative
Rev. John Friedlund – Delaware Region Representative
Andrew Maitland – Great Lakes Region Representative
Calvin Cramer – Finance Committee
Nancie Young, Lucille Putt – Volunteer Services
Rev. Joshua Reinders – Mahatma
Rev. Nathanael Kennedy – Youth Representative
Mary Ray, Carla Sizemore – Advisory Members
Timothy King – Short Term Missions Representative

World-Class Christianity

MANY OF THE POLITICAL, social, economic and cultural conflicts presented in living color and graphic detail each night for us on the evening news involve the age-old struggle between the classes. Upper class, middle class, lower class – as much as we may be embarrassed and uncomfortable with these designations and descriptions, they are indeed a persistent and ever-present part of our world's cultures. The Gospel however has been called the "great equalizer" because regardless of pedigree or political status, those born again by the Holy Spirit into the family of God through Jesus Christ are all seated with Him in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6). Furthermore with this wonderful new birth comes a new designation, we are now **World-Class!**

Pastor Rick Warren describes world-class Christians in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. He writes, **"..world-class Christians know they are saved to serve and made for a mission. They are eager to receive a personal assignment and excited about the privilege of being used by God. World-class Christians are the only fully alive people on the planet"** (Day 38, p.297-298).

In our lexicons "world-class" has also come to mean first-rate, the highest caliber and the very best of any classification. In this issue of **Window on the World**, we are celebrating the forward progress of the Gospel through the excellent work of our missionaries, mission conferences and local EC churches – all of which/whom can be described as "world-class"! 🌍



– by Randy Sizemore,
Executive Director
Global Ministries
Commission

...celebrating the forward progress of the Gospel through the excellent work of our missionaries, mission conferences and local EC churches – all of which/whom can be described as "world-class"!



Thank Offering Change

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 findings 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:

...we will continue to invite churches and individuals to regularly support the administration and operation of the GMC office...

1. The voluntary "Thank Offering" funds will be re-designated from the current purpose described in Rules of Conference section 704.3.2 as missionary benevolence and office staffing to be used as a source of income support for our international EC Church mission conferences. Currently there is no regular 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. 🌐

– by Randy Sizemore

T.E.A.C.H. International 2013 Postponed

– by Randy Sizemore

EVANGELICAL
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH



PARTNERING FOR
THE WORLD

THE T.E.A.C.H. CONFERENCE scheduled for May 2013 has been postponed until an undetermined date in the future. The GMC hosts the leaders and delegates of our international EC conferences every five years here in the United States. This five year schedule is designed to coincide with the terms of the Bishop and his strategic plans for the EC Church. The untimely death of Bishop Leibensperger required the mid-term election of Bishop Hill, who is in the beginning stages of evaluating and creating his own strategic plans for the EC Church. In addition to this issue, the GMC is currently experiencing financial difficulties funding its general day-to-day operations and is also in the midst of strategic plans and discussions about sustaining a viable GMC over the next few years and beyond. As the T.E.A.C.H. steering committee began their initial meetings to plan the 2013 conference, it became apparent that we would be inviting our international leaders at a time when we could not fund the \$40,000-\$50,000 needed to transport and host our guests for this conference and we would be inviting them during a time when our unfinished strategic plans would involve more questions than answers. We felt it best to postpone T.E.A.C.H. until our strategic plans are in place and we can be sure that the funds used to host the conference will not only be available but will be well spent. This decision has been communicated to our international leaders who understand completely and have assured us of their prayers as we continue to partner together for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. 🌐

VISION JAPAN 2013

THE GMC IS SPONSORING a Vision Japan tour in late July of 2013. Originally planned as a youth trip, we have found that this event has evolved into more of a mixed group, due in some part to the cost. The team will be teaching English at a camp for a week, plus visiting our EC churches in Japan, and some sightseeing. We are hoping to do homestay to help with some of the costs. The group is limited in size, but if you would be interested in receiving more information, contact the GMC office to be put on the mailing list. Our email address is ecglobal@eccenter.com, or call 1-800-866-7584. 🌐

FALL RALLY

The GMC will again be holding its Fall Family Missions Rally on Saturday, October 13th at Trinity EC Church, Boyertown, PA. Mark this date on your calendar now! We will be having separate programs for the adults and the children (MMK) that will run concurrently. We have a 'bumper crop' of missionaries coming home this year, so you'll want to come and hear them share! 🌐



The Financial State of GMC

...the GMC continues to be unable to secure enough voluntary funding to meet the expenses of the administration portion of the GMC budget.

OVER THE COURSE of the past four years the GMC has significantly improved our financial state through cost containment measures, reductions in support to the international churches and ministries, and by educating and encouraging more local churches and individuals to contribute to the general operating fund of the GMC. However, even with these positive changes in place, without the benefit of receiving National Conference Ministry Funds, the GMC continues to be unable to secure enough voluntary funding to meet the expenses of the administration portion of the GMC budget. Of the three sections of the GMC budget: missionary support, international church support and the general operating or administration support, it is the administration portion of the budget that continues to remain in serious deficit. The income sources for GMC administration are the two required offerings per year, the Spring Self-Denial and the Christmas Missionary offering, individual and church donations, investment income, bequests and other unspecified income.

At the October 2011 session of the National Ministry Team, I reported the National Conference Controller's prognosis that by 2013, GMC would no longer have the cash we are taking from reserves and investments to apply to the ongoing deficit in the general operating portion of their budget, leaving us in a crisis. Based on this information, Bishop Bruce Hill appointed a task force to review the breadth and scope of the Global Ministries Commission's ministry with special regard to its funding in order to assess its viability under the current structure and to propose any strategic changes that would

HOMEGOING OF A SPECIAL LADY

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE the homegoing of Jane Cattermole, widow of Rev. Richard Cattermole. Dick served as Director of the Division of Missions prior to his term as Bishop, and Jane often accompanied him on several of his trips to our mission conferences around the world. She was active in missions for most of her life, serving as the bookkeeper for European Christian Missions for many years.

Jane joined her Savior and her beloved husband in eternity on April 9th of this year. She is survived by her two daughters and their families. 🙏

facilitate a long-term sustainable structure. The task force held a series of meetings and reported back to the March 8, 2012 National Ministry Team meeting. The National Ministry Team will take their findings into consideration as part of their strategic initiatives for the denomination.

In the mean time the GMC was advised to continue to educate the local church about this shortfall and invite them to regularly support the "general fund" of the GMC from their missions and/or church budgets. Along with this continued education and appeal, the GMC Executive Committee will be meeting in June and throughout this year to consider what reductions, reallocations and changes may have to be made ensure the sustainability of the mission department of the EC Church.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to those churches and individuals who are regularly sending in support for the general operating fund and humbly ask those who are not to consider supporting the GMC so that the great work of our 250 plus missionaries, 400 international churches, children's homes, orphanages and schools can continue to minister the Good News of Jesus Christ on behalf of the Evangelical Congregational Church. 🙏

-by Randy Sizemore

MEMORIALS We want to thank the following people, organizations and companies for donations to Global Ministries in loving memory of **Sandy Yeager**, wife of Rev. Lloyd Yeager. Sandy and Lloyd served as missionaries for many years, and Sandy was an active member of the Eastern Branch/ Eastern Committee on Missions.

Jennifer Adams	Edith Houtz	Rodney Paul
Robert Becker	Hans & Kerri Keller	Ina Pijar
Edgar R. or Erika Bennett	Rev. Richard Kern	Charles & Esther Popjoy
Dr. David D. Coryell	Arnold & Cathy Mogel	Mr. & Mrs. David Snyder, Jr.
David & Rebekah Daye	Lois Morrell	David and Delight Stevens
Evelyn Glessner	Newhurst, Inc.	Lester & Nancy Wright
Brenda Heme	PA Christian Endeavor	

We also want to thank Delightful Evangelical Congregational Church in Southington, Ohio for their donation to Global Ministries in loving memory of their former pastor, Rev. Nelson Wilhelm. Rev. Wilhelm was very missions minded, and promoted missions in all his churches. 🙏



PASSION

THE THEME for our 10th annual National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church this year was Passion. The key verse was “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength... Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:30-31) Over 300 people gathered as part of the Body of Christ to worship, to fellowship, and to conduct business on behalf of the EC Church. Bishop Bruce Hill introduced our theme, sharing his passion for the EC Church to grow and flourish as part of the larger Church, the Bride of Christ.

The passion of Global Ministries is three fold: to empower national churches, facilitate missions workers, and create world Christians. We were very fortunate to have Rev. Ron and Brenda Anderson as the keynote speakers at our GMC luncheon at National Conference. They shared their passion to see Europe come back to Christ. Ron shared

about the work of European Christian Mission International, for whom he is European Director for Field Ministries. Brenda serves as Member Care Coordinator for ECMI, in addition to a prison ministry to women. Both Ron and Brenda are involved with church planting as well. *(Read more about the Andersons’ ministry in the center page spread in this issue of Window on the World.)*

We were privileged to also have a number of our EC missionaries with us at National Conference. These included retiree Fern Sweigert from Kentucky, Jonathan & Kathy Wilson who are heading back to Papua New Guinea in mid-June, David & Conce Roof who are returning to Brazil at the end of July, and Jamie Farr and Dan Moury from Wycliffe’s headquarters in Florida.

All the people mentioned above shared their passion for seeing a broken world come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Savior. What are you passionate about? 🌍

What
are **YOU**
passionate
about?

Newest Member OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION

TIM KING has 11 years experience serving as Director of Ministries for a local youth discipleship and evangelism ministry called DRAMA Ministry (www.dramateam.org). In his capacity with DRAMA and through their parent ministry, AIM Around the World, Tim has led short-term mission trips internationally to Grenada, Scotland, England and Colombia with the result of local teams being started in Scotland and Colombia and youth trained in England taking their own short-term trip to France. He has also led several national youth trips as far south as Florida and west to Missouri with local teams being planted in Virginia and Michigan. His passion in short-term missions is to see trips utilized strategically for the discipleship of the youth on the trip and the mobilization and encouragement of local ministries partnered with at each destination. 🌍



Welcoming Tim King, who’s passion is short-term missions with a dual purpose.

LEFT: Tim and new friends



Seeing the **Good News** at Work in Northeast India



— by Bishop
Bruce Hill

ON APRIL 17, 2012 four of us; Randy Sizemore, Director of Global Ministries, Gordy Lewis, Susquehanna Conference Minister, Dave Swift, Pastor of Zion EC Church in Myerstown, and I left the comforts of home for a trip to participate in the National Conference of the EC Church of India (ECCI). It was an interesting and wonder-filled trip. Of all my memories, the one that stands out the most is the keen missionary spirit of the EC Church of India. The church came into being many years ago through the desire of husband and wife missionaries Paul and Ella Rostad who left America to take the Gospel to northeast India. That same desire to share the Good News about Jesus is still evident today in the life and work of ECCI. Did you know that they currently have 197 missionaries working on 97 different mission stations with 30 different people groups in five different countries? That is the missionary spirit in real life! In their culture, two of the most effective ways to reach out are through developing orphanages and schools. What a joy to travel from village to village and interact with children who were being cared for by compassionate Christian leaders. It was wonderful to meet children being taught in church sponsored schools. Yes, the conditions were very different from what we would expect here in the USA, but children are the same all around the world; they love to sing, to have fun, and



to learn. Praise the Lord for ECCI and the work they are doing to share the Good News about Jesus to the coming generations! I don't think that missionary couple had any idea what they were starting the day they arrived in northeast India. So too we may not know the impact we have when we share our faith with those around us. But thank the Lord, he takes the efforts of his church and multiplies them more than we could ever imagine as we take seriously the call of Jesus to go out and make a real and practical difference in the world. 🌍

WEDDING BELLS!

CONGRATULATIONS to former Director of Global Ministries Dr. John Ragsdale on his engagement to Myrtle Weiland, a member of Reading First E.C Church, where John has been pastoring. John and Myrtle will be married on July 7th, and honeymoon in England. We wish John and Myrtle all the best.

Dr. Ragsdale has also made the very gracious offer that, beginning next year, he will be available two Sundays of every month to speak in churches about Global Ministries. Contact the Global Ministries office if you would like to make arrangements for John to come and share about the work of the EC Church around the globe. 🌍

Missionary Prayer Partners Update

THE FOLLOWING MISSIONARIES still have months available for 2012. Please check out the webpage, call or email Carla Sizemore at csizemore@eccenter.com to choose your missionary and month.

- **Randy & Chris Amberman** have July, August, November and December
- **Chris & Deb Bowers** have July, August, September and December
- **Dave & Celia Dick** have September, November and December
- **Dan Dixon** has October, November and December
- **Marcia Hople** has, July, August, October and December
- **Jeremy Kunkel** has July-August, October– December open.
- **Nick & Lisa Lakatos** have June – December
- **Kitty Miller** has, July, September, October, November and December
- **Robert & Bettina Schaeffer** have July
- **Ed & Val Schubert** have July, August, November and December
- **Jim & Janet Stahl** have open July, August, November and December
- **Dan & MaryLynne Wills** have August, October, November and December

The missionaries for **2013** will be: Ron & Brenda Anderson, Jamie & Anita Farr, Jim & Joan Farr, Kurt & Nancy G., Roy & Sue Haglund, David & Emily Hershey, John & Carolyn Miller, Dan & Melinda Moury, David & Conce Roof, Gloria Smethers, and Joe & Wendy Toy. 🌍



“I do not want to go to **Spain**.”

– by Ron Anderson **“I DO NOT CARE** what country of Europe you send me but I do not want to go to Spain.” This was my straight answer to the OM missionary trying to sort out where 1000 summer workers would go for the month of July 1974. “But why would you not want to go to Spain? After all, your upbringing in Guatemala and your knowledge of Spanish would be very helpful for the others going to that country.” So at the age of 19 all I knew was that I wanted to serve the Lord, which I thought would most likely be in Guatemala where I grew up in a missionary home. Little did I know that in the next 60 days God would change my heart, and the direction of my life. While I did start off that summer in a team that went to Italy, I ended up in Spain for 15 days in August. What I saw and experienced was a totally different scenario than what I expected. I was not ready for the spiritual depravity that I witnessed. As we tried to give out Bible literature, people would close their doors and shutters. When we walked back to the car we would see the literature that we had put in the doors torn up in the middle of the street. Over the next few years of my college career the Lord continued to work in my heart and gave Brenda and me a burden for the people of Spain. One week before we graduated from college I attended the Mission Board meeting of our conference and a year later we were commissioned to serve as missionaries to Spain under the guidance of the European Christian Mission.

What I saw and experienced was a totally different scenario than what I expected. I was not ready for the spiritual depravity that I witnessed.

We first set foot in Spain as a couple after one year of marriage at the age of 23. The 40-year dictatorship of Franco had just ended and the country had just adopted a new Constitution and a Democratic government. It was an exciting time as everything was changing constantly for the country as well as for my new bride and me. Being the first couple assigned to church planting by our mission to Spain, we had to learn a lot of things on our own. It was agreed that we should start our ministry in the province of Cordoba in the town of Puente Genil, a town with a population of 30,000. We were to work

with 15 young Christians that had accepted the Lord the year before but needed someone to disciple them and form a church fellowship. We did not know much about church planting, but we did our best by imitating what we had seen done at home. At the end of the first year we were very discouraged because we had managed to lose half of the group. Not only was getting people to respond to Christ hard, it was also very hard to keep those who had made a decision to follow him. We

were reminded of the parable of the sower as we saw fruit spring up but soon be scorched with the cares of the world because they did not have good Biblical grounding. We rejoiced that seven did stay firm and of those seven, five went to Bible school, and one of those five is now the Field Leader for ECMI in Spain. We ministered in the Cordoba region for 17 years, and over that time we saw God bring a team of over 60 missionaries with ECM to



the province who were instrumental in seeing a half dozen churches established, and indirectly were involved in seeing another 20 places of regular worship come into being.

ABOVE: Rev. Ron and Brenda Anderson

During those 17 years the Lord gave us three wonderful children: Rachel, Jenny and Mark. They were all born in Spain and went to public schools until the inevitable came. We had to make a decision as to where Rachel, our eldest, would go to college. Would it be in Spain or in the USA? Our decision was that the USA would be the



We have become increasingly involved in two ministries that are linked to the work of ECM in 18 countries of Europe.

best option for her so we had to find a place for her to finish her high school studies in English so that she would be ready for college in the USA. At the same time that we were making this decision, the mission suggested that I leave the Cordoba region and become more involved in a wider European ministry. This opened the door for us to go to Madrid where our children began to study in English for the first time, and where I had easy access to the airport that would facilitate my travel around Europe.

Over the 17 years that we have lived in Madrid we have become increasingly involved in two ministries that are linked to the work of ECM in 18 countries of Europe. I am responsible for the Field Minis-



ABOVE: Ron preaching at a communion service

tries in these countries and Brenda is the Coordinator for Member Care for the missionaries in these same countries. Over the past decade I have been able to work with and encourage the field leaders who in turn lead the ministry in each country. On the other hand Brenda has been able to appoint and train a group of member care facilitators who are the “eyes and the ears” for the member care needs of the mission family of nearly 200 members. In recent years as we have become “empty nesters”, we have been able to travel together to minister to the teams across Europe. In a recent trip to Croatia, Bosnia and Slovenia, I was able to cast a whole new vision that included the use of Brazilian and Ukrainian church planting teams, while Brenda was able to come alongside some of those who just needed a word of encouragement to keep on keeping on.

While it is a special joy for us to be able to minister as a couple at this stage in our life, we also have other ministries that allow us to express our calling in a different way. After seeking the Lord for

many years, Brenda was guided to visiting several foreign ladies in the federal prison close to our home. For years she persisted in bringing joy and hope to a few ladies, even though she had to communicate with them through the small hole in a very thick glass that separated them. Her determination to serve these ladies led her to be chosen to form part of a ministry team that received special permission to minister as official Religious ministers inside the prison. Once inside the prison Brenda and the team were free to minister to any person who wanted their help. Over the years they have had hundreds of ladies come to their Bible studies and worship services. Dozens have been baptized and after serving their sentences, some have even returned to their home countries to join churches and serve the Lord. Many are the stories of ladies who have been truly reformed by the grace of God.

God continues to surprise us with new ministry opportunities. Our last surprise was when we began to pray for our small village of Camarma with a population of 5000 but with no Bible-believing church. God answered our prayers by leading our little prayer group to a lady who had been praying for the town for 25 years. She was not only a strong Christian, she was a person of peace and seemed to know everyone in town. It did not take long for the Spirit of God to bring others into our little group who also wanted to see a witness started. Within months of finding this lady, we began to witness the beginning of the most exciting church plant we have ever been a part of. Just as this was starting, I was lent a copy of the book “The Forgotten Ways,” by Alan Hirsch. After reading that book and others, I was able to prompt the leadership team to lay some fundamentally different foundations to what I had done in our church plants up until that point. The result has been dynamic as we have seen the Christian Community grow to a regular attendance of around 150 people in only 4 years. In reflection I see that God has honored our understanding of the priesthood of all Christians, taking down the wall between secular and sacred, the

God continues to surprise us with new ministry opportunities.



ABOVE: Statue of Don Quijote in Madrid, Spain



recognition of the God-given gifts and ministry abilities, and the desire to keep Jesus at the center of everything.

Nearly four decades after I said, "I do not want to go to Spain," we find ourselves in Spain. The ECM Spain team is led by one of our first disciples, and our daughter Rachel and her husband BJ are there as missionaries. Ladies around the world have linked their salvation to the ministry in the prison. Churches have been established across Europe. Camarma has a vibrant church. We get to minister as a couple. What would have happened if I would have followed through with

BELOW: Brenda and one of the ladies she has led to the Lord.



what I wanted and not followed what God wanted? We can trust the Biblical mandate with confidence: *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will direct your paths."*

P.S. Ron and Brenda Anderson are commissioned missionaries of the EC church and are serving the Lord in Europe through the European Christian Mission International. They live in a village close to Madrid, Spain. They welcome anyone who would like to join them in their vision to see Europeans won to Jesus. (See article on Spain Vision Team in this issue, page) You can partner with them in going, giving and/or praying. You can get regular updates regarding their ministry by adding your name to their monthly e-mail update. You can do this selecting "newsletters" on their blog: www.Reamadrid.wordpress.com

"What would have happened if I would have followed through with what I wanted and not followed what God wanted?"

SPAIN VISION TRIP – September 2013

GLOBAL MINISTRIES is sponsoring a vision trip to visit Ron & Brenda Anderson as well as BJ & Rachel Whitaker next fall. We will fly to Madrid and spend time with the Andersons, meeting the believers and churches with whom they work, and then travel down to Alcora to spend time with BJ and Rachel where we will do encouragement ministry and worship with their church plant. The purpose of this trip is to learn more about the work of ECMI and our missionaries in Spain, and to encourage them as they share the Good News in Europe.

Tentative dates are September 1-15, 2013. Some touring will be included with the trip, including sightseeing in Madrid and a visit to the Mediterranean while in Alcora. There only will be room for about 8-10 people on this tour, so if you are interested, please contact Pat at the Global Ministries office now (pstrain@eccenter.com) to have your name put on the list. The final cost is not set at this time, but we are thinking it will be in the neighborhood of \$2000-\$2500. This will be a unique opportunity to see our missionaries on the field, and to join them in their ministry outreach. (Read more about the Andersons' work in Spain in center spread article.)



JUNE 2012

International Church Updates

Celebrating the World-Class Faith, Labor, Love and Endurance In The Global EC Church

...celebrating what God is doing in and through us. Reminding and encouraging us to be engaged with our brothers and sisters around the globe in prayer and support.

THIS COMMENDATION to the church of the Thessalonians by Apostle Paul in 1Thessalonians 1:3 is a perfect description of our international EC Churches. The following updates not only celebrate what God is doing in and through us but remind and encourage us to be engaged with our brothers and sisters around the globe in prayer and support.

Japan's Endurance Inspires Hope

Our four EC Churches in Japan: Kyodo Grace, Sagimahara Grace Chapel, Kobuchi Mission Church and Fuchinobe Community Church continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a variety of creative ways, experiencing some exciting successes and continued stability amongst one of the most challenging populations in the world. The 7th edition of Jason Mandryk's prayer guide, Operation World, lists the many social, economic and spiritual challenges facing Japan. His list of spiritual challenges include:

- The spiritual powers that exercise authority over Japan have not been decisively challenged
- The Bible is alien to the worldview of the Japanese
- Christianity is regarded as an outside/Western religion
- Christians are a tiny minority in a culture that emphasizes consensus and conformity
- Unity is lacking among the established Christian churches
- Non-active membership and back-sliding is rampant among the Christian Churches
- The lack of men in churches - on average women outnumber men 7-1
- The lack of viable, active congregations – at least 70% of churches average less than 30 in worship attendance & most churches will not have at least one baptism in a year (p. 489-494).

In spite of these challenges however, our EC Churches are seeing men, women and youth coming to Christ and being baptized. Director Nobuo Abe and our pastors are reaching out to other pastors and congregations and are networking together to reach this great nation. Our Japanese leaders and pastors are using culturally relevant worship styles and outreach methods to engage the population with the Gospel. As you can imagine, facing these political, social and spiritual challenges on a daily basis, year after year leave most Christian pastors and church members in Japan tired and discouraged with feelings of isolation and loneliness. I am sure that our brothers and sisters in the EC Church of Japan often struggle with these same feelings. Would you join with me in celebrating all that God has accomplished and will continue to accomplish through the people in the EC Church of Japan? Let's renew our commitment to partner with our brothers and sisters in Japan, **praying for them** as they serve in this difficult culture, **praying with them** for the hearts of the citizens of Japan to be opened to the Good News of Jesus Christ, and **financially supporting** the church planting and outreach efforts of the EC Churches in Japan through the GMC. Together, God is using us to transform this least-reached nation into a beacon of light for Christ in Asia and around the world!

Together, God is using us to transform this least-reached nation into a beacon of light for Christ in Asia and around the world!

To receive the Japan church planting newsletter email Jessica Abe at jabe216@gmail.com. To financially support the EC Churches in Japan please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.



LEFT: Great Buddha at Nara, Japan





ABOVE: Rev. L.B. Angam, newly elected General Director of ECCI and his wife Hoinu.

India's 3rd General Conference Highlights a Work Produced by Faith

Visit the EC Church of India's website at ecchurch.co.in and you will find this description under the "Who We Are" tab: *"The Evangelical Congregational Church of India (ECCI), formerly known as the North East India General Mission (NEIGM) was founded by Rev. Watkin Roberts who*

was instrumental in bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the hill tribes of Manipur South in 1910. Today we are one of the largest evangelical denominations in the region of north east India. We are committed to the propagation and perpetuation of the Evangelical Faith in partnership with the EC Church of America in the regions of north east India and even to the neighboring countries of Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan.

*We are a confederation of six different conferences which are formed on the basis of our tribal distinctives. The present conferences include **Evangelical Assembly Church (EAC)** representing the Hmar tribe, **Evangelical Churches Association (ECA)** representing the Thadou-kuki tribe, **Evangelical Organization Church (EOC)** representing the Vaiphei tribe, **Evangelical Synod Church (ESC)**, representing the Gangte tribe, **Evangelical United Church (EUC)** representing the Anal tribe and **Bible Believing Evangelical Church (BBEC)** representing the Lushai tribe."*

Every four years these six conferences come together for a General Conference to elect leaders, review policy and set strategies for the continued work of ECCI. Leaders and delegates from other international EC Conferences were invited to attend this 3rd General Conference of ECCI. Rev. Th. Janga, Field Superintendent of the EC Church of Nepal was invited along with Bishop Bruce Hill, Director of Global Ministries Rev. Randy Sizemore, Rev. David Swift and Dr. Gordy Lewis from the EC Church USA. Rev. Matthew Gueh, Field Superintendent of the EC Church of Liberia was also invited but was not granted a visa so he was unable to attend. The theme of this General Conference, "Evangelism through Perseverance" was highlighted in the messages, reports and future initiatives of ECCI. During our visit to North East India, the GMC team enjoyed times of worship, experienced great fellowship, travelled to visit various mission schools and stations, was privileged to preach during

Paul writes in Philippians 2:19-30 to welcome with great joy and honor those who give their lives for the work of Christ.

the conference and at other venues, held formal and informal meetings with the leaders of the EC Church of India and Nepal and participated in the sessions and celebrations of the General Conference. Some of the highlights of the General Conference include:

- The report of the missionary activity of ECCI which celebrates 197 missionaries at 78 mission stations in 5 countries, ministering among 31 people groups with 20 different languages to record **124 new conversions, 84 baptisms and 179 reclamations in 2011**
- The report of Evangelical College of Theology which includes a total enrollment at 105 students. Of the 41 students graduating on May 20, 2012, 23 will graduate with a Bachelor of Theology degree and 18 with a Master of Divinity degree
- The recognition of ECCI conferences, congregations and individuals who gave generously to the EC Church of Liberia
- The election of Rev. L.B. Angam as the new General Director (Bishop) of ECCI
- The celebration of the years of faithful leadership by retiring ECT Principal, Dr. Khaute Khaizakham
- *The election of Rev. Lalrosiem Songate as the new Principal of Evangelical College of Theology

The 3rd General Conference concluded with a worship service and Randy's message honoring the years of service of Dr. Khaizakham and Rev. Songate, based on Paul's admonition in Philippians 2:19-30 to welcome with great joy and honor those who give their lives for the work of Christ.



ABOVE: Randy preaches with a translator in NE India.

BELOW: EC USA team visits an orphanage in NE India.

** Please pray for Rev. Lalrosiem Songate's need as the new Principal of ECT to obtain a Doctoral Degree within the next two years to meet the accreditation requirements for the school. If you would like to help fund this critical need, please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.*



RIGHT: Rev. Janga prepares candidate for baptism.

Nepal Continues a Labor Prompted By Love

As one of the world's poorest countries, most Nepalese live on less than \$1US/day. The majority of Nepal's population survives on subsistence agriculture. Nepal was once the world's only Hindu Kingdom but since 2008 it has been transitioning into a secular democracy. This transition has not been smooth, as the various people groups of Nepal are demanding representation and recognition in the new government constitution. Even as I write this update we have received an urgent email from Nepal requesting prayer in the midst of yet another extended "strike" that interrupts electricity, shuts down transportation, ambulance service, hotels, schools, markets, colleges, factories, government and non-government offices, gas stations, and virtually everything! With this new government development comes a relatively new, if somewhat limited freedom of religion. For example, non-Hindu natives and foreigners cannot proselytize or they risk fines, imprisonment or expulsion from the country. The great news is, **even with these**



TOP: Celebrating at the EC Church in Nepal

BOTTOM: Teaching children's Sunday School class



challenges and others, the EC Church in Nepal continues to flourish. Rev. Janga reports 46 conversions, 58 baptisms and the construction of a new village church in the first quarter of 2012! The fields of Nepal are ripe for harvest with at least 55% of the population unevangelized and over 300 people groups or castes unreached!

Along with supervising the church planting and evangelism efforts of ECCN, Rev. Janga and Mercy also care for 8 orphan boys in their rented home. Unfortunately we have just learned that the owner of the home has given them a limited time to find another location so that he can sell this property. Janga has purchased a small parcel of land and is praying for resources to build the ECCN Headquarters office and orphanage on it. Please pray for Rev.

Janga, Mercy, the orphans, the churches and the people of Nepal that they can find Jesus and His peace that passes all understanding, even in the midst of the chaos and unrest around them.



ABOVE: Rev. Janga celebrating with newly baptized believers.

Rev. Janga and Mercy are in need of a washing machine to clean the orphans' clothing. If you would like to help with this need of approximately \$500, please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.

The Work in Costa Rica Comes To an End

My recent visit to the work in Costa Rica in February 2012 was the completion of a three year evaluative process of the ministry and leadership of the Costa Rica mission conference. The work in Costa Rica began in 1996 and continued to advance slowly over the next decade. Unfortunately a series of conflicts within the leadership team, poor financial management and an ongoing lack of effective leadership have brought this work to a point of decline and dysfunction. Members of the Latin America Committee, the GMC and I have spent many hours over the past three years evaluating this work both on the ground in Costa Rica and here in the United States and have come to the conclusion that in its current condition, the mission conference of Costa Rica is beyond the point of being able to continue effective ministry. Based on our findings and the improbability of being able to successfully re-start this work in the near future, the Global Ministries Commission has decided to discontinue our partnership with the Costa Rica mission conference as of June 1, 2012. While we are saddened by the loss of this work, we are encouraged by the fact that we have been able to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both word and deed in Costa Rica for the past 16 years. We are also encouraged to know that there are many other solid, mature, evangelical churches and mission organizations in and around the same areas where we were working that will continue to provide the truth of Jesus Christ to Costa Rica.





ABOVE: Rev. Elias Martinez, Director, his wife Smyrna, and their two daughters.

Mexico Takes Next Steps toward National Conference Status

Rev. Elias Martinez opened the 35th Annual Conference of the *Iglesia Evangelica Congregacional Latinoamericana Asociacion Religiosa* (EC Church of Mexico) with an inspiring message on the conference theme, "Tiempo De Expansion" (A Time To Expand) from Isaiah 54:2-3: "Enlarge the place of your tent... do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the

left..." The EC Church of Mexico has been steadily growing toward the goal of graduating from a Mission Conference to a National Conference. Over the past four years they have worked very hard on becoming more self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. This Annual Conference was truly a milestone in their journey as Rev. Martinez presented the end result of two years of persistent work to produce the Official Regulation Book containing the constitution, creed, parliamentary procedures and regulations of the local congregation for the IECLAR. The conference also celebrated the addition of new pastors, families and congregations to the association. I was very pleased when the conference overwhelmingly approved the GMC proposal to replace the current Field Superintendent position with the next step toward becoming a National Conference, the position of Director. Current Field Superintendent, Rev. Elias Martinez was appointed Director of IECLAR from July 1, 2012 to July 1, 2016. During these four years Elias will discontinue his secular employment (*his income will be replaced by support from the GMC), he will continue to pastor his local church, continue the work of the Field Superintendent and he will use the time gained from no longer needing secular employment to lead the EC Church of Mexico to National Conference Status. This truly is a time of expansion for the EC Church of Mexico!

**We praise God that some have already made commitments to financially support this new chapter in Mexico's journey toward National Conference status! If you would like to help the EC Church of Mexico with financial support, please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.*

Over the past four years the EC Churches of Mexico have worked very hard on becoming more self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating Conference.

El Retiro Children's Home Ministers to Record Numbers in the Name of Jesus Christ

Over these past four years we have been praising God for the strategic changes we were able to facilitate at the leadership level of ERJ (EL Retiro Juvenil Children's Home) that have allowed for financial stability, improved credibility, increased self-sufficiency and long-term viability for this much needed ministry to Mexico's needy children. I am happy to report that at the April 2012 meeting of the ERJ Board of Directors, we learned of more intentional strategies and creative initiatives to help them fulfill **their mission of caring for the 39 children that are at ERJ.**

Your generous giving through the VBS project allowed us to put a new roof on the dining hall and washroom, to replace a critical electric pole, transformer and power line, to help replace the old inefficient van with a newer, gas-friendly van to transport the children to school, church, doctor's appointments and other places. With this record number of children to care for, directors Carlos and Martha shared that they are using more wood to heat the water and keep the LP gas expenses down. They are also allowing the older youth to help with building and maintenance projects. They have expanded their garden plots to produce more vegetables and they have acquired animals like chickens, goats and cows to help with feeding the children and producing extra income. Carlos told us that allowing the children to care for the animals helps them in many ways in their recovery from the neglect and abuse issues that affect most of ERJ's children. The major challenge now facing ERJ is the new government regulations requiring all children's homes to meet strict safety and care standards such as having a medical doctor, psychologist and social worker on retainer. New regulations require many safety additions and improvements to the buildings and grounds and will require much more legal paper work and documentation. While all of these regulations will ultimately benefit the children being cared for, the costs and complications involved may actually result in fewer homes being able to care for the children in Mexico. While we



TOP: New van to transport children

MIDDLE: Sheep raised at El Retiro

BOTTOM: Relocated transformer and electric pole



celebrate ERJ's ability to reduce their dependency on the USA to the point where only 43% of their operating budget comes from GMC, we understand that these new regulations and requirements will significantly drive up the costs of operating this ministry. Please pray with me that God speaks to many in His Church in the USA and Mexico to support this worthy work with their prayers and financial support.

Carlos is in need of a projector and a screen to use with the Psychologist's parent/child training classes and for use with the children's programs at ERJ at an approximate cost of \$1,000. If you would like to help meet this need or partner with ERJ in financial support please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.



ABOVE: New well in village

TOP RIGHT: Woman helped by micro-enterprise loans

Liberia is Engaged in the War of the Century

Liberia continues to rebuild after two civil wars that devastated their country and traumatized its people. The size and scope of the healing that must take place is beyond our comprehension. Experts estimate that 65% of the population was uprooted and almost 98% were either victims or perpetrators of unspeakably

cruel and harsh crimes. Christians in Liberia are included in this 98% as either the victims or in many cases, the perpetrators. The lack of Biblical discipleship and leadership development in the church before the wars resulted in a church compromised by African traditional beliefs, secret tribal societies, fetishism, the absence of holiness and spiritual power. Added to these daunting spiritual needs are the critical physical and social challenges of Liberia including poverty, illiteracy, under-education, HIV/AIDS, lack of public health and sanitation, no vocational training, political corruption, dysfunctional infrastructure, and the list goes on! We heard Rev. Matthew Gueh, Field Superintendent of the EC Church of Liberia speak of these challenges in person at the 2011 National Conference. The ECCOL (EC Church of Liberia) is currently engaged in the "war of the century" against these seemingly insurmountable obstacles, inspired by the belief that Jesus Christ is the answer to all of Liberia's enemies!



The ECCOL is engaged in intentional discipleship, Bible distribution, the education of children, the installation of sanitary wells, the care of elderly widows and setting up micro-enterprise opportunities for single and vulnerable women. Local churches damaged or destroyed by the wars are slowly being repaired and re-built as resources become available. New churches have been planted in the outlying villages and lay men and women are being trained to fill the gap of leadership until new pastors can be trained and stationed. What a joy to know that while these challenges in Liberia are great, the members of ECCOL are not alone. The EC Churches of India, Mexico, Japan, Nepal and the USA are partnering with our brothers and sisters in Liberia in both prayer and financial support to rebuild this great country one person at a time by meeting their physical needs, introducing them to Jesus, discipling them to maturity, and deploying them to repeat the process among their friends and neighbors! Please continue to uphold our Liberian brothers and sisters in prayer as they struggle daily in this extremely difficult and discouraging environment. 🌍

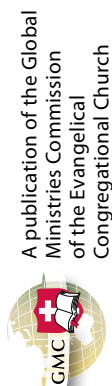
As you can imagine the financial needs in Liberia are many. The GMC is committed to helping in the most effective and efficient ways possible to maximize the limited finances we can send. If you would be willing to help financially support the EC Church of Liberia please contact Randy Sizemore at rsizemore@eccenter.com or phone the GMC office at 717-866-7584.

NECH The EC Churches of India and the USA partner together to help support North East Children's Home and Academy in Churachandpur, North East India. Financial donation to NECH must be made through the GMC but if you would like to receive NECH's electronic newsletter contact Director Timothy Changsan at timothy_changsan@yahoo.co.in and request to be put on the email list.



Non-Profit Organization
BULK RATE
U.S. Postage PAID
Lebanon, PA 17042
Permit No. 215

**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**



100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067

 **window**
ON THE WORLD

A publication of the Global Ministries Commission
of the Evangelical Congregational Church
Summer 2012 • Volume 24 Number 2



CURRENT FENCE



PROPOSED FENCE

2012 VBS PROJECT: INDIA: a security fence at the Evangelical College of Theology

THE EVANGELICAL COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY is a ministry of the EC Church of India that trains both men and women for missions & pastoral ministry. Because the students live on campus, there is a need to construct a permanent security fence to keep them safe. The high cost of constructing such a fence cannot be covered by student tuition or the general operating funds of the college so we are partnering with ECT to complete this project. The goal for this project is \$10,000. 🙏