

National Conference Digest 2025

Wednesday

The 22nd National Conference started at 1:30 pm with a communion service at Hostetter Chapel. After a time of singing, the message was given by Rev. Jim Price titled, “The Cup We Bless, The Bread We Break” followed by Rev. Timothy Valentino leading us in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

After the communion service, the National Conference came back together at Brubaker Auditorium, opening our business sessions with the housekeeping items needed.

Bishop Randy Sizemore shared his Episcopal address, where he challenged pastors, leaders and churches to be intentionally aware of their spiritual health. Spiritually healthy churches and leaders are to do what Jesus instructed us to do with a burning zeal for the lost, raising up disciples of Christ.

Following the Episcopal address, there was a resolution to receive St. Matthew’s Church of Kunkletown as an official congregation of the Evangelical Congregational Church. They were warmly received into the EC family.

The National Conference Secretary’s report was given by Rev. Brad Hatter. After the secretary’s report, the National Conference Treasurer’s report was given by Mr. Carl Butler, Jr.

The Episcopacy Committee, Conference Network Team and Conference Support Team reports were approved.

Two resolutions were presented. The closure of Trinity EC Church of Mount Joy and the disaffiliation of Wyndamere Heights EC of Lewisberry were approved.

There were proposed rule changes of annual conference and finance sections led by Executive Director, Kevin Henry, that were explained, discussed and approved. Rule 704 was amended to keep Twin Pines and to

include ECCO and Rock River as a requested offering.

After dinner and a time of fellowship, there was a time of worship with singing led by Andy Sell and a message by Rev. Will Lockhart on the theme of National Conference, “Mindful Leadership.” The evening concluded with an ice cream social that was enjoyed by the conference.

Thursday

National Conference reconvened with worship through song led by Chris Lehigh and a sermon by our conference speaker, Rev. Will Lockhart, who continued his message on Psalm 103.

The annual meeting of the ECC Benefits Corporation was led by Rev. Frank Schock, where the conference approved various business items. The Finance Committee Report was given by Mr. Carl Butler, Jr. and Executive Director, Kevin Henry. Ministry Funds will remain at 5.65%. Individual items were adopted. The 2026 Budget and Compensation reports were approved.

There were four proposed rule changes to the Rules of Conference on the Ministerial Credentialing and Classification led by Rev. Matthew Hill that were explained, discussed and approved. Executive Director, Kevin Henry, presented proposed rule changes to the Rules of Conference that were explained, discussed and approved.

Updates from the Global Ministries Community were given by Associate Rev. J. Ted Rathman. He welcomed some of our international leaders from Mexico and Japan. Ron Anderson and BJ Whitaker spoke on missionary work, discipleship and the value of short-term missions. The Kingdom Extension Community update was given by Associate Rev. Michael Snedeker who

highlighted church planting, discipleship cohorts and mobilizing people to the mission God has called them to in reaching their community.

Chaplains stood and were recognized by the Conference for their excellent service. Rev. K. Noel Blancaflor, Lt. Col., serving as a chaplain in the USAF, led the conference in prayer before lunch.

The afternoon session of National Conference was our Equipping Experience: “The Spiritually Healthy Leader: Finding Freedom from Self-Sabotage,” which was led by Dave Wiedis from ServingLeaders.

In the evening session, the Church Health Community report was given by Associate Rev. Wayne Houck who is working with churches to help them revitalize and help pastors with resources to help them to be healthy. Following the Church Health report, there was a time of worship through song by Rev. Bruce Sellers and a final message from our conference speaker, Rev. Will Lockhart.

Friday

The final day of National Conference began with the Twin Pines report that was shared by Rev. Jeff Merwine. The Statistician report was presented by Executive Director, Kevin Henry.

Rev. Matthew Hill gave the Ministerial Development Community report and the credentialing report. In open session, 16 individuals answered the questions for applicants given by Bishop Randy Sizemore.

In closed executive session, the following statuses were approved:

Local Itinerant Elder: Ghosoub Al-Khal, John Baker, Carlos Kelly; **Ordained Deacon:** Janet Watt.

Transferring Credentials:

Approved Elder: Terence Brosius; **National**

Ordained Elder: Kenneth Gimmi, Eric Johnson and Andrew Reitenauer; **Local Ordained Elder:** William Young

In open session, the following statuses were approved: **National Licensed Candidate:** Daniel Havrilla; **Local Pastor:** Dale Oplinger, Nelson Shertzer; **Licensed Pastor:** Chris Braun, Evan Clelan, Keith House; **Approved Pastor:** Martial Pierre-David; **Approved Candidate:** Thomas Elder, Marq Fowler, Wilbert Hoffman, Jason Parsons; **Local Candidate:** Robert Heagy; **Licensed Deacon:** Denise Jaramillo; **National Licensed Candidate:** Joshua Marcroft; **Superannuation classification:** David Carr, Dana Logan, Timothy Seiger and Raymond Newlin; **Supernumerary classification:** Kirk Marks, David Mennig, Doug O’Brien and Adam Roberts.

Following the Credentialing Report, worship was led by Rev. Bruce Sellers. The Memorial Report was given by Rev. Mike Sigman, remembering pastors, lay delegates and other EC members who were mentioned. Retirees were recognized: Rev. David Carr, Rev. Dana Logan, Rev. Ray Newlin and Rev. Timothy Seiger.

A concluding message was given by Bishop Randy Sizemore. The Conference concluded with “Wonderful Grace of Jesus” and was adjourned.