

# EC LEADER

A publication of the Evangelical Congregational Church



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## FROM THE DESK

Bishop Randy Sizemore

### Share Jesus

“When you have opportunities to do ministry, don’t think about what you don’t have.

But what do you have?  
You have Jesus.”



Click [HERE](#) for the Bishop’s  
*July / August video  
message*



### Speaking Schedule for 2025

Bishop Randy is now scheduling his 2025 preaching schedule.

If you would like to schedule him at your church, please contact Bishop Randy directly at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com).

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS

KEVIN HENRY

As always, please email:

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Executive Director  
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with any questions  
or call  
**717.866.7581**

The latest **semi-annual report** is now available on our website in both [online](#) and [paper](#) formats. This report is due by July 25, 2025. Churches submitting reports online will receive an emailed copy, which may be easily forwarded to your District Field Director for reference. Remember, if submitting online, you do need to first log into the member portal of our website before completing the report. We encourage timely submissions to ensure a smooth reporting process.

We extend our **appreciation** to the churches that have promptly remitted their **disability plan premium, EC Benefits Corp. service fee and worker's compensation premiums**. Your diligence in meeting these financial responsibilities helps sustain vital support services. For churches with outstanding balances, reminder notices have been sent, and we encourage prompt resolution to maintain compliance and uninterrupted coverage.

Additionally, churches **outside of Pennsylvania and New Jersey** are reminded to provide proof of worker's compensation coverage. Please submit this documentation to Bethany White at [bwhite@eccenter.com](mailto:bwhite@eccenter.com) to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

Thank you for your cooperation in these essential matters. Your commitment to timely reporting and financial stewardship strengthens our collective efforts in serving our communities effectively. Please contact Kevin Henry, [khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com), 717.628.2171, or Bethany White, [bwhite@eccenter.com](mailto:bwhite@eccenter.com), 717.866.7581, with any questions.

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**EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
Semi-Annual Report  
Reporting January 1 – June 30, 2025  
Due July 25, 2025

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Membership	Total Sundays Open *N2
Average Attendance In Person Worship *N1	Professions of Faith
Average Attendance Online Worship	Baptisms
Primary Streaming Media (Facebook, YouTube, Etc)	Number of Employees (Not Including Assigned Pastor)
Number of Discipleship Groups	Number of Assigned Pastors
Average Attendance of ALL Discipleship Groups	Do you have an Evangelism Committee? Yes or No
Average Attendance Sunday School (all ages)	Do you have a New Believers Class? Yes or No

\* N1 - Include children - nursery and children's church in average attendance for in-person worship.  
\* N2 - If Inclement weather prevented an in-person worship service, and an online worship service was held, count as open. DO NOT INCLUDE the number of Sundays where services were canceled, and there was no online option.

What evangelistic initiatives are you using or planning to use?

Joys:





## Church Health Community News

### FROM THE DESK

Rev. Wayne Houck, CHC Associate

## Strategy v. Culture

*"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."* - Peter Drucker

I am sure we have all got a list of restaurant horror stories. Remember that place where your feet stuck to the floor, and where the server seemed too busy with other things to take your order? Even when the food came out, it was mediocre at best: lukewarm, poorly seasoned, unappetizing in appearance. You decided right away to never go back there because there are other options in the area. One negative experience is all it usually takes to make that decision.

Contrast that place with your local Chick-fil-A restaurant. It is always clean, always friendly, always a pleasant experience. The culture of Chick-fil-A is the reason. As is published on their website, *"Whether greeting you at the drive-thru or making your meal inside the restaurant, Chick-fil-A® Team Members strive to serve up memorable experiences for each and every guest. And we hope that dining with us inspires you to spread that sense of warmth to others, too."* You are called by name when your order is ready, and it is always their pleasure to serve you. The food is good, but the atmosphere (culture) in which it is served makes it taste even better. All the employees are trained in the corporate culture and values, and it is no wonder that Chick-fil-A restaurants earn dramatically more per restaurant than the competition. Around here, the drive-thru is busy almost all day. The parking lot is always busy, and the restaurant is always humming. When you drive by another place to eat, and the parking lot is empty, your first thought is not that it must be a really good restaurant. Rather, you may assume that there is a reason no one is there.

Like in a restaurant, the culture of a church is immediately apparent to those who walk through the doors. When guests feel welcome and appreciated; when it feels like people care and the experience is positive, they are more likely to come again. Thom Rainer's short book, *Becoming a Welcoming Church*, can offer some valuable insights on the guest culture of the congregation. When the culture feels like the church is a small group of insiders, it can be much harder for guests (notice we are not referring to them as visitors) to picture themselves fitting in. Ed Stetzer

# Church Health Community News

## FROM THE DESK

Rev. Wayne Houck, CHC Associate  
continued...

## Strategy v. Culture

continued...

and Mike Dodson call this the "Us Four and No More" church (*Comeback Churches*, B&H, 2007). They say those churches "have determined that if they get any larger, they will lose their sweet fellowship. They do not intentionally reject 'new' people, but their present relationships are so intimate that any new attendee of the church cannot break into the group. They want a family feel which means a group small enough to relate like a family."

Shifting the culture of a church can be difficult, but it is possible. Stetzer and Dodson say there are two things which stand in the way. "First, most churches will not admit how bad it is. Second, most churches will not make the needed changes."

The Church Health Community would like to encourage you to assess the culture of the church. Is it a place where guests have a great experience about which they are excited to tell their friends or would they likely give the service a bad review? The Church Health Checkup can be a good place to start in seeing how things are going in your church. Just go to the Church Health Community page on the EC website and print as many copies as you need. We are happy to help you understand and respond to the results if you would like. As you complete the Checkup, try to look at your church through the eyes of a first-time guest. What will they see, feel, smell and perceive which those who have been there for a long time may no longer notice? Is the culture inward-focused or guest-friendly? What might change if our church culture was more like Chick-fil-A's: "Whether greeting you at the drive-thru or making your meal inside the restaurant, Chick-fil-A® Team Members strive to serve up memorable experiences for each and every guest. And we hope that dining with us inspires you to spread that sense of warmth to others, too?"

The Church Health Community is here to help you navigate the changes which will positively impact your ministry so please do not hesitate to reach out. You can email me at [waynehouck@gmail.com](mailto:waynehouck@gmail.com) or call at 610.716.5603.

Wayne



### CHURCH HEALTH CHECKUP



BASED ON  
THE GREAT PLAN OF ACTS 2:42-47

The Church Health Checkup may be found on the EC Center website at: <https://eccenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Church-Health-Check-Up-Complete-Packet.pdf>.



## THE GMC IS HEADED BACK TO HONDURAS. WILL YOU JOIN US?

The GMC is headed back to Honduras in November (4-11) to once again partner with Casa de Luz and Ed and Val Schubert. Would you prayerfully consider if the Lord would be calling you to step onto the mission field for a short-term trip? A great adventure begins with one step of obedience.

To have a packet emailed to you with information and an application contact Dee at the GMC office at 717-866-7581 or [ecglobal@eccenter.com](mailto:ecglobal@eccenter.com).



**November trip application deadline is August 31st!**





A blurred background image showing a group of people in a meeting or conference setting, with a man in the center wearing glasses and a blue shirt.

## Kingdom Extension Community News

**Rev. Mike Snedeker, KEC Associate**

### **Discipleship Multiplication Cohorts**

During the Kingdom Extension Community report at May's National Conference, I talked about discipleship multiplication cohorts that would begin this fall. This article will explain the purpose, function and details of those cohorts so you can make an informed decision for you and your church about making a commitment to the multiplication process.

**Who should consider a Discipleship Cohort?** Any pastor or church who is frustrated with the attractional model of ministry; who wants to clarify the process of disciple-making; who would like to work with a team of like-minded church leaders to help churches fulfill the Great Commission; or who wants to connect with an accountability circle to follow through with discipleship multiplication should consider a Discipleship Cohort.

**Why Cohorts?** Most of us have been to conferences, retreats or presentations that struck a chord in our hearts. What was being presented rung true inside, resonating with us that we need to go that direction. Then when we walked away from the event, nothing really changes. The idea of a cohort is to both learn the concept of a discipleship pathway and to walk with a group to develop a plan and then hold each other accountable to application and follow-through. The cohort will help put feet to the plan.

**What is a Pathway?** Every pastor and most followers of Christ could recognize and defend the importance of making disciples, even making disciples who make disciples. The difficulty most churches run into is having a solid plan to follow that can be easily replicated in each consecutive generation of Jesus followers. Together, we will develop a discipleship pathway unique to your context that can help someone walk through being a disciple that has the tools to make disciples who make disciples.

**What is involved in a Cohort?** Cohorts will begin with a one and a half hour training Zoom call in October followed by monthly check-ins with your cohort. Each Zoom call will involve next steps in the Pathway development process and implementation, as well as reporting in and accountability on past action steps with the end goal of becoming churches who are actually reproducing disciples.

**How do I learn more or get connected to a Cohort?** New cohorts will begin in October 2025. They will be made up of four to eight pastors or church leaders. The exact scheduling will be dependent on interests and schedules of the participants. To learn more and to sign up for a cohort, please email me at [msnedeker@eccenter.com](mailto:msnedeker@eccenter.com).

Mike



# Kingdom Extension Community News

*Please continue to pray this month for the following new church planting opportunities that God is raising up:*

**El Shaddai** – The Dominiques and Martial Pierre are well into actively planting a Haitian church in Lancaster, PA. El Shaddai Community has been meeting on Sunday evening for worship service at Trinity EC Church in Lancaster, PA. They are seeing new families every week and seeing people come to know Christ and follow Him. Please pray for our Haitian brothers and sisters. Despite having legal status, there is much fear in the Haitian communities at this time with the increasing deportation measures being taken. This has impacted church attendance and participation. Pray for peace in their hearts and the ability to keep their eyes on and hope in Jesus. Please pray especially for Martial and his family. His wife and children remain in Haiti and are seeking to gain asylum to the US.

**Manuel and Luz Arias** – In Lexington, South Carolina, the Arias family is starting a new EC Church. Manuel and Luz continue to develop a team for ministry, as well as strategizing ways to share the Gospel in tangible ways. Please pray that God would provide a location for this church to use for worship gatherings. Manuel and Luz have had numerous disappointments as location opportunities have fallen through. Pray also for wisdom, strength and renewed energy for this couple. Manuel and Luz have especially asked for prayer for their family. They are considering potential changes that would allow them to devote more time to the church. Pray for wisdom for them and their family.

**Tim and Pam Ream** – The Reams moved to Thorn Hill, Tennessee. They are pursuing the opportunity to engage in planting an EC Church in their new community. Pray that God would begin preparing that community to be receptive to His glorious presence. Pray also for the Reams as they begin building relationships and engaging in discipleship relationships through inviting people into their home and engaging individuals in their community.

**Mike Coulson and People's EC Church** – Echo, the name of this church that is meeting in the Virtual Space, is reaching people with the Gospel and making disciples. Pray that the team will continue to develop and grow. People's is also beginning a micro church that will meet at Confessions Bar in Nesquehoning. Pray for this open door to be a Gospel presence where people who need Jesus hang out!

**Zach and Kelsey Van Dyke** – Zach and Kelsey have begun planting a network of house churches in and around Davenport, Iowa. They are currently meeting with a group in their own home weekly and seeking God's plan for their future. They are developing a vision for raising up house church shepherds and developing a discipleship and multiplication strategy. Zach and Kelsey are actively discipling people through a discipleship multiplication pathway. Pray for them in July especially as the busyness of Camp ECCO happens, and they are involved in leadership responsibilities there as well.





## Ministerial Development Community News

### FROM THE DESK

Rev. Matt Hill, MDC Associate

## Summer Reading List

Summer is finally here! The cold and dark days of winter are behind us; the waves and sun call us to rest and relaxation. Each summer our family travels to the coast of New Jersey to soak in the sun and enjoy quality time together. As a part of our vacation, I set a goal to read at least one book. Vacation is a great time to read. Rather than being glued to my phone, I turn off my device and turn pages of a paperback or hardback book. In the busyness of ministry and life, we often do not take time to learn new things, to grow personally, to rethink ministry or to feed our souls.

Reading is a great way to turn off the distractions, to spend lazy summer days reminding ourselves of the joy of ministry, of our need to rest and of ways to connect the timeless truths of Scripture to our ever-changing culture. This summer as you think about days of sitting and resting, I would challenge you to read, to turn off your devices, to allow your mind and heart to detox from the constant draw to answer calls, texts and emails.

Instead of your phone, why not pick up a book? Would you consider joining me in the goal to read one book this summer? If you are like me, I am sure you have people who constantly recommend books to read. You might have a stack of books next to your desk or on the nightstand in your room. Why not pick one up, slow down and read?

If you are not sure what to read, consider texting a fellow pastor today about what they may be reading, or grab one of the books below. Enjoy the summer, rest well and grow in the Lord!

Books to consider:

*Lead with Prayer* by Ryan Skoog, Peter Greer, and Cameron Doolittle

*When People are Big and God is Small* by Edward Welch

*The Overcomers* by Matt Chandler

Matt





## CHAPLAINCY CORNER

Rev. W. Joel Copeland, Jr., Chaplaincy Committee Chair

### Prayer Focus on our Heroes - Our Chaplains

In addition to our military chaplains, the EC Church has been blessed with a number of civilian chaplains both appointed by the National Conference and chaplains who volunteer to give service to local organizations and facilities along with fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities. The chaplain we focus on this month has been part of the latter group.

Rev. Dr. William Stoffel (wife is Carol) started out as a high school science teacher. He became the Chair of the Science Department before retiring from the teaching profession and entering the ministry. During his teaching career, he would be assigned two students a year that he would counsel until they graduated. A few of those students still seek his advice and now offer him continued friendship and company. After entering the ministry, he was assigned to Lawn in 2012 where he served until his retirement in 2024.

After going into the pastorate, he saw a need in the Masonic Lodge for a chaplain and volunteered. Many of the chaplains God calls and uses end up in that work because God motivated them to respond to a need. It was through a need that he said the Holy Spirit spoke to his spirit, and he responded. He said this was one type of chaplaincy, but he was also led into a different type of chaplaincy when he started to serve in the Lawn Volunteer Fire Company. He remained in this position until the Lord provided a younger man to take over.

He said that serving in the fire department gave him additional exposure to the community on a more personal level. It also gave an opportunity to the members of the fire company to get to know him more personally. He believes that serving alongside the other volunteers with them knowing he was a pastor minimized his having to hear the improper language and jokes or to contend with other forms of conduct which has a tendency to surface from time to time.

Rev. Stoffel enjoyed his time with the fire department. He said that "going to a fire scene does tend to get one's blood pumping a bit faster and hotter, but what may be seen at a fire by the firemen (normal human beings) sometimes can be horrifying and often lingers in their minds long aft[er] the fire is put out and the men have returned to the station."

As a result of the years spent with the fire department, he still counsels many of the men he knew from the fire department. While with the fire department, he was able to share prayers and counseling sessions with distraught firemen. Sometimes he would meet with a fireman and through counseling with him, the man would reveal the cause of his anxiety or need. He believes that knowing the secret private life of any person, let alone a fireman who is kind of a local hero, is a sacred responsibility bestowed upon all chaplains. Over time, this



## Ministerial Development Community News

### CHAPLAINCY CORNER

**Rev. W. Joel Copeland, Jr., Chaplaincy Committee Chair**

*continued...*

### Prayer Focus on our Heroes - Our Chaplains

*continued...*

personal knowledge a chaplain is privy to can have a detrimental effect on them personally, including the chaplain's well-being and moods. This is one of the root causes of chaplains burning out and quitting, he believes.

As we realize the many situations faced by our chaplains and the lasting impact those situations can make on an individual, it is a call to prayer for all chaplains and not just our EC chaplains.

Some of our EC pastors reading this are serving as a chaplain in some community organization or facility, and the Chaplaincy Committee extends their appreciation for your service, but we would like to know how and where you are serving. If this describes you and you have not let us know of your service, would you be so kind as to do so? The Chaplaincy Committee and the denomination are trying to compile a list of individuals serving in a chaplaincy capacity. Just email me at [ecparson@hotmail.com](mailto:ecparson@hotmail.com) and include where you are serving as a chaplain, when you started and if this is a volunteer position. Thanks for your cooperation.

Rev. Dr. W. Joel Copeland, Jr.

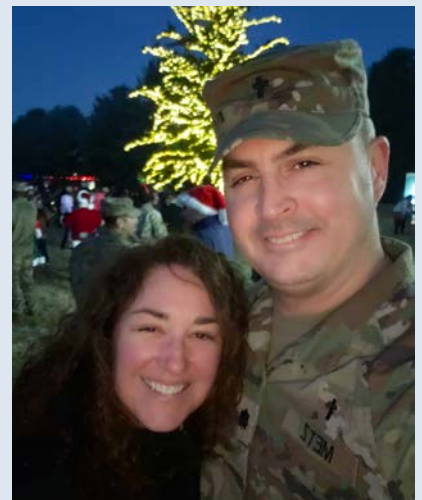
Chaplaincy Endorser and Chair, Chaplaincy Committee

### Update on our Military Chaplains



**Chaplain K. Noel Blancaflor**

We would like to congratulate our two military chaplains. Chaplain Karl Noel Blancaflor was promoted to colonel in the US Air Force in the early part of June and will be stationed in San Antonio, while Chaplain Joshua Metz was approved for promotion to colonel this month and will be serving short-term in the Middle East. We are thankful for the service each of these men render to our Lord, our denomination and our nation. Congratulations to you both!



**Chaplain Joshua Metz**



# TWIN PINES

CAMP, CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER



Youth group planning may be underway at your church – would you consider joining us in 2026 for Winter Thaw? This weekend is packed with fun, fellowship, and faith. We ask you to bring the youth group (and chaperones), and we plan the rest!

- **Winter Thaw A:** January 16-18, 2026
- **Winter Thaw B:** February 13-15, 2026

If you have questions or want to make sure you receive updates when it's time to register, email [retreats@twinpines.org](mailto:retreats@twinpines.org).

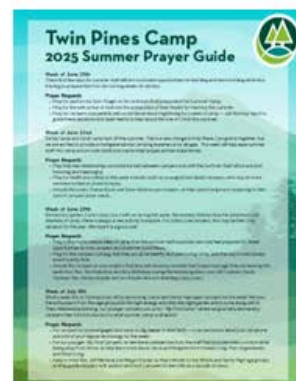
## Join us in Prayer!

Summer is finally here! As schools let out for the summer, and the weather warms, Twin Pines is ready for summer campers to arrive.

There are a lot of moving parts which go into a successful summer camp, and we invite you to join us in prayer this summer. You can follow along week by week with this prayer guide, designed to allow our broader community to lift this ministry up in prayer!

You can download and print the Summer Prayer Guide [here](#).

Follow along on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) as well for weekly posts.



**TWIN PINES**  
CAMP, CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER

[www.twinpines.org](http://www.twinpines.org)  
3000 Twin Pines Camp Road,  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360  
(570)-629-2411



# CALENDAR

## **JULY 2025**

### **Wednesday, July 2**

Day of Prayer and Fasting for the EC Church

### **Thursday, July 3**

EC Church Center Closed

### **Friday, July 4**

Independence Day

EC Church Center Closed

### **Sunday, July 6**

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Sunday, July 13**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Sunday, July 20**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Friday, July 25**

Semi-Annual Reports Due

### **Sunday, July 27**

Liturgical Color - Green

## **Ministry Funds, Insurance & Benefits**

Mail to:

**EC Church Center  
100 W. Park Ave.  
Myerstown, PA 17067**



**Our 2026 National Conference  
Gathering will take place May 20 - 22  
at Messiah University.**

## **AUGUST 2025**

### **Sunday, August 3**

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Wednesday, August 6**

Day of Prayer and Fasting for the EC Church

### **Sunday, August 10**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Sunday, August 17**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Sunday, August 24**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Sunday, August 31**

Liturgical Color - Green

## **SEPTEMBER 2025**

### **Monday, September 1**

Labor Day

EC Church Center Closed

### **Wednesday, September 3**

Day of Prayer and Fasting for the EC Church

### **Sunday, September 7**

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Thursday, September 11**

First Appointment Orientation

### **Sunday, September 14**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Tuesday, September 16**

Finance Committee Meeting

Loan and Investment Committee Meeting

### **Sunday, September 21**

Liturgical Color - Green

### **Friday, September 26**

Episcopacy Committee Meeting

### **Sunday, September 28**

Liturgical Color - Green



## Mindful Leadership

"Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you even as your soul is getting along well."

3 John 1:2

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8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



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**Wendy Beard**

July / August 2025 Edition - Editor/Art Design

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