

EC LEADER

A publication of the Evangelical Congregational Church



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The EC Center Staff wish
all our readers and their
families a

Merry Christmas!

Randy Kevin

Jodi Shirley Ted

Bethany Alice



Speaking Schedule for 2026

Bishop Randy is now scheduling his 2026
preaching schedule.

If you would like to schedule him at your church,
please contact Bishop Randy directly at

rsizemore@eccenter.com.



FROM THE DESK

Bishop Randy Sizemore

The Gift of Peace

What is your definition of peace? Tranquility? Harmony? The absence of conflict? No matter how it is defined, most people would like to see it under the tree or overflowing the stockings hung by the fireplace this Christmas! According to the 2025 Global Peace Index (Yes, there is such a thing. You can check it out at www.economicsandpeace.org), the world has become less peaceful over the last seventeen years. No surprise here. Survey any demographic of people, and you will find very few have an expectation of experiencing global peace. However, in the midst of our turbulent world, one of the most recognizable Advent passages of Scripture, Isaiah 9:1-7, promises a time of peace where there will be no more gloom, distress or darkness. No more oppressors, warriors, blood or battles. A time where there will be justice, righteousness and peace! I will admit that global peace, national peace, even local peace, seems too much to ask for, too much to comprehend, so the good news of the Gospel translates this global peace down to a very personal level of peace for any and every person who wants it through the advent of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah begins chapter nine in verses 1-2 with a dark picture of gloom and distress and then declares that people walking in darkness, living in darkness, navigating the valley of the shadow of death as it were, will have a great Light! His name is Jesus, and he himself declares to be the Light of the world (John 8:12). Peace as light? Absolutely! To speak of Jesus in terms of light is to speak in a universal language. For most of our world's population, light is something to love and embrace while darkness is something to fear.

Not only peace as light, but Isaiah also continues in verses 3-5 to describe peace as joy for those in sorrow. The angels who announced the birth of Jesus proclaimed, "good tidings of great joy." Why? "For unto you a savior is born" (Luke 2:10-11). In other words, you now have someone in your corner, someone who gets you, someone who loves you, someone who will fight to the death for you and then come back from the grave for you to live with you and give you an abundant, secure life! That my friends is cause for pure joy!

FROM THE DESK

Bishop Randy Sizemore
continued...

The Gift of Peace

continued...

Finally, in verse 6-7, Isaiah prescribes peace for those who are oppressed. The English word, "oppression," comes from the Latin word which means, "a pressing down." The greatest oppressor in history is not government, economics or even harmful human treatment. The greatest oppressor is the opposition of the Prince of Peace. His name is Satan, and for now he is "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2-4). However, our Prince of Peace, Jesus, rules and reigns supreme. The government is on his shoulders, and his Kingdom will be everlasting!

Jesus came that first Advent season to be peace and to make peace for any who place their lives in his hands. Brothers and sisters, enjoy this Good News and shout it from the roof tops this Advent season. Remind all who will listen, "For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross" (Colossians 1:19-20). May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts this Advent and Christmas season!

Merry Christmas!

*The people walking in
darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the
land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.
(Isaiah 9:2)*



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS

KEVIN HENRY

As always, please email:

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Kevin Henry
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khenry@eccenter.com

with any questions
or call
717.866.7581

The annual Treasurer's Guide and the 2026 Ministry Fund forms are now available within the Members' Section of the EC website. Additionally, the updated Pastoral Compensation forms may be accessed online. All forms are located in the designated Members' Section for your convenience.

A couple of end of the year reminders:

- Pastoral Compensation Forms should be returned to the EC Church Center by **December 31, 2025**.
- The Annual Statistical Report is due to the EC Church Center, 100 W Park Ave, Myerstown, PA 17067, by **January 25, 2026**. An Electronic Reporting option is available.
- W-2 forms for employees, including pastors, and 1099-NEC forms for independent contractors are due by **January 31, 2026**, to the recipient and to the respective government agency. The 1099-NEC is a newer form which replaces the 1099-MISC in most instances for churches; payments made during 2025 are to be filed by **February 2, 2026**. Pastors are employees of the local church and should receive a W-2 with federal, state and local taxes withheld from every paycheck.

May you have a blessed holiday season celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

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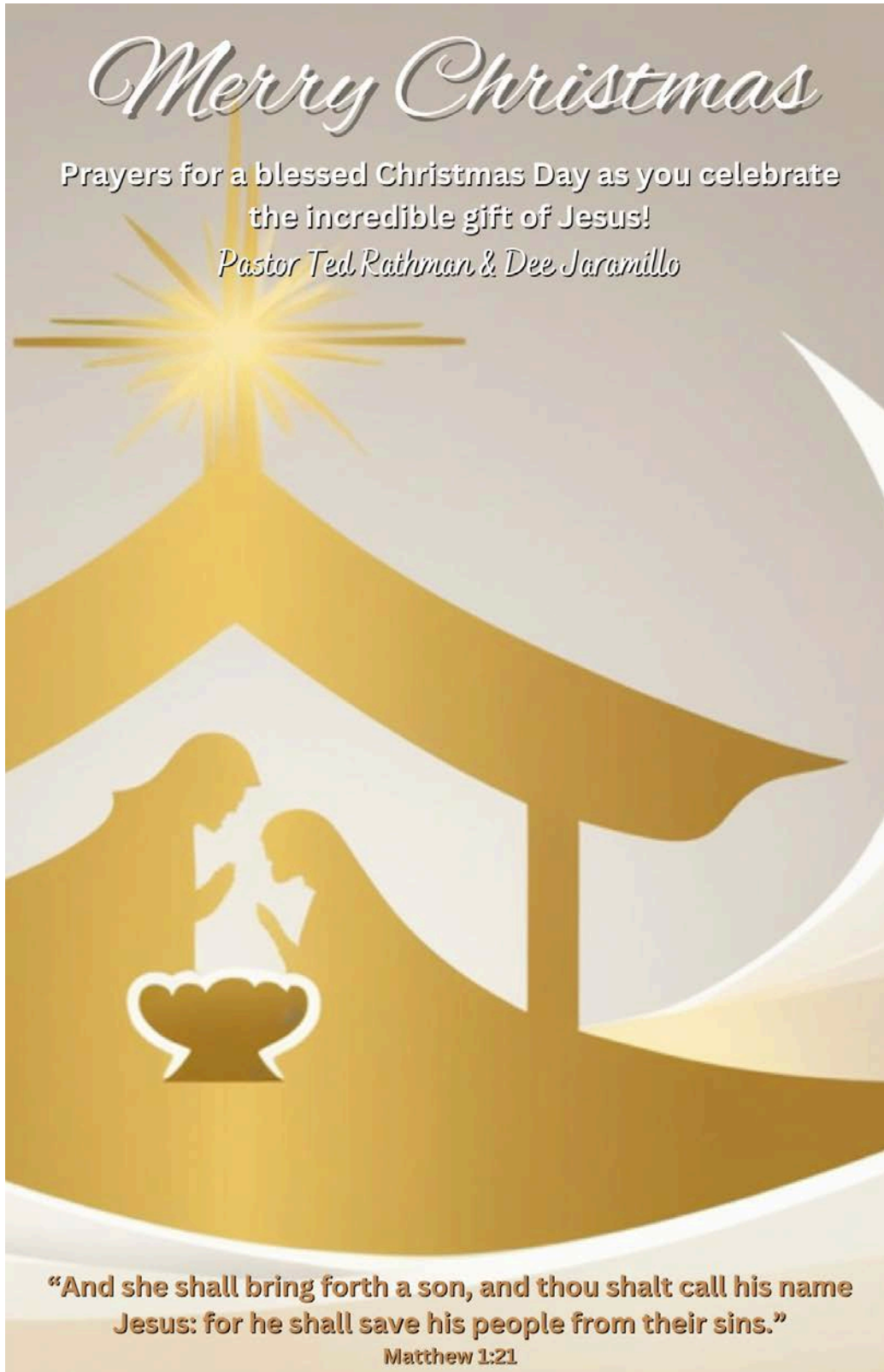




Merry Christmas

Prayers for a blessed Christmas Day as you celebrate
the incredible gift of Jesus!

Pastor Ted Rathman & Dee Jaramillo



**"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name
Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."**

Matthew 1:21

Ministerial Development Community News

CHAPLAINCY CORNER

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

Christmas Greetings from our Chaplaincy Committee

The Evangelical Congregational Church's Chaplaincy Committee would like to join with the EC Church Center staff in wishing each of our EC leaders a blessed and joyous celebration of Christ's birth and a very fruitful and prosperous 2026. We especially want to express our appreciation to the EC Chaplains, including our military and civilian chaplains. We appreciate your ministry and your compassion to those in need of spiritual care.

We also suggest that our churches send a note of appreciation to our National Conference-appointed chaplains and their families assuring them of their love and prayer support. The National Conference Chaplains are Colonel Karl Blancaflor (San Antonio), Lt. Colonel Joshua Metz (Persian Gulf), Rev. Evan Clelan (Lebanon VA Medical Center) and Rev. Glenn Lambert (Community Hospice). We are thankful for their service to the country and our Lord.

National Conference Chaplaincy Committee:

Rev. W. Joel Copeland, Jr., DMin., Endorser and Chair

Rev. Mark Brooks

Rev. Harold Easter

Rev. Robert Shuey

Rev. Dr. William Stoffel

Rev. Charles Walker

Rev. Randell Sizemore, Bishop

Rev. Matthew Hill, Ministerial Development Associate





TWIN PINES

CAMP, CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER



Winter Thaw A – January 16 – 18, 2026

Winter Thaw B – February 13 – 15, 2026

Check out our [website](https://www.twinpines.org) for more information and to reserve a spot for your youth group!

Register early to lock-in an early registration rate of **\$135/person**

(before 12/29/2025 for WT-A and 1/26/2026 for WT-B)

RSVP Now! Space is limited

We're excited to welcome you to **Winter Thaw 2026: Kingdom Seekers!**

We would love to see you and your youth group join us for one of these planned weekends. You bring youth and chaperones, and we take care of the rest of the planning. If you have questions, please reach out to thaw@twinpines.org.

Matthew 6:33 says, *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* Spoken by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount, this verse is both a command and a promise: when we seek God first, He will provide.

Throughout this weekend, our hope is that you'll encounter meaningful teaching, engaging discussions, and time for reflection—opportunities to consider what it looks like to make Christ's mission not just a part of your life, but the **first priority** in your life.

Let's pursue His kingdom—together.

JANUARY 16-18, 2026 (WEEK A)

Rev. Jeff Wadley is an avid outdoorsman, educator and adventurer extraordinaire who loves being present with the Creator in the midst of His creation. Jeff is heavily involved in Search and Rescue, including as a trainer. He loves to hike, backpack, and paddle. Jeff introduced our new CEO, Tony Lea, to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in northern Minnesota in 2016.



FEBRUARY 13-15, 2026 (WEEK B)

Zack Ortman is the Pocono/Slate Belt Area Director for NEPA Youth For Christ. A passionate communicator and small business owner, he has shared the Gospel with audiences from our local communities all the way to Jamaica. He is a husband, a father of two, and is driven by a mission to share the truth of God's Word wherever he goes.



TWIN PINES
CAMP, CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER

www.twinpines.org
3000 Twin Pines Camp Road,
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
(570)-629-2411

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2025

Wednesday, December 3

Day of Prayer and Fasting for the EC Church

Sunday, December 7

Second Sunday of Advent

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension

Liturgical Color - Purple

Sunday, December 14

Third Sunday of Advent

Liturgical Color - Purple

Sunday, December 21

Fourth Sunday of Advent

GMC Christmas Missions Offering

Liturgical Color - Purple

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

EC Church Center Closed

Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day

EC Church Center Closed

Sunday, December 28

Liturgical Color - White

Monday, December 29

EC Church Center Closed

Wednesday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Pastoral Compensation Forms Due

JANUARY 2026

Thursday, January 1

Deadline to Submit Written Requests for Pastoral Changes

New Year's Day

EC Church Center Closed

Sunday, January 4

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension

Liturgical Color - White

Monday, January 5

EC Church Center Closed

Tuesday - Thursday, January 6 - 8

Pastoral Assessment Center (PAC)

Tuesday, January 6

Epiphany

Wednesday, January 7

Day of Prayer and Fasting for the EC Church

Sunday, January 11

Liturgical Color - Green

Thursday, January 15

Disability Fee Due

Sunday, January 18

Liturgical Color - Green

Monday, January 19

Martin Luther King Day

Friday, January 23

Episcopacy Committee Meeting

Sunday, January 25

2025 Annual Reports Due

Liturgical Color - Green

Ministry Funds, Insurance & Benefits and GMC Christmas Missions Offering

Mail to:

EC Church Center

100 W. Park Ave.

Myerstown, PA 17067

** If you are sending a personal gift to a missionary
and they reside in the United States,
please send your gift directly to the missionary.*

*Save
The
Date*

**National Conference 2026 will
be held May 20 - 22, 2026 at
Messiah University**



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

Evangelical Congregational Church Center
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717-866-7581

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Office Hours: Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



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December 2025 Edition - Editor/Art Design

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