

National Conference Digest 2026

Wednesday

The 23rd National Conference opened at 1:30 pm with a communion service at Hostetter Chapel. Bishop Emeritus Michael Sigman opened with the annual Memorial Report, remembering those who have gone to be with Jesus and on whose shoulders we stand. Rev. Paul Weitzel, the Associate Pastor at Grace Community Church, preached on the wilderness of perspective and the wilderness of confrontation from Mark 1. After the message, Bishop Randy Sizemore led the conference in Holy Communion. The service concluded with the singing of “And Can It Be.”

Following the communion service, members of conference joined once again at Brubaker Auditorium, opening our business sessions with the housekeeping items needed. National Conference has moved from a three-day conference as in years past to a two-day conference this year.

The first order of business was the Episcopal election where Bishop Randy Sizemore was elected for his second term of office. Bishop Emeritus Bruce Hill prayed for Bishop Randy Sizemore. After the election, the Episcopal Address was given by Bishop Randy Sizemore with the message focused on the theme “Built to Move.” He gave a realistic state of our denomination but also a message of hope for us as we move forward as the Evangelical Congregational Church. The challenge focused on GDP: gospel, discipleship and prayer. As a dynamic movement of God, we are better together, like a car with many parts. Our enemy seeks to divide and isolate, but we were created to do life together.

The National Conference Secretary’s report was given by Rev. Brad Hatter. Afterward, the National Conference Treasurer’s report was given by Mr. Carl Butler, Jr., sharing that the denomination had a strong financial year. The Conference Network Team’s report was shared by Bishop Sizemore. The Conference Support

Team’s report was presented by Executive Director, Kevin Henry. He went over action steps for churches, other ministries and conference support teams to take for compliance with the new IRS Group Exemption rules.

Three resolutions were presented: the disaffiliation of Williams Township Christ Church of Easton in PA, as well as the closures of Countryside Church of Clarks Mills, PA, and Delightful Church of Southington in Ohio.

After dinner, a time of worship through music was led by Deacon Denise Jaramillo and the message was given by our conference speaker, Rev. Rich Stevenson on our conference theme, “Built to Move.” He inspired us to come and see, go and tell.

The evening concluded with an ice cream social that honored Bishop Emeritus Bruce Hill’s 50 years of credentials with the EC Church. Pictures of his years of service were shown, and there was fellowship enjoyed by all.

Thursday

National Conference reconvened Thursday morning with singing led by Chris Lehigh and the morning message by our conference speaker, Rev. Rich Stevenson, who spoke on resilience and persistence.

The annual meeting of the ECC Benefits Cooperation, where the conference approved various business items, was led by Rev. Frank Schock. 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 2027 Budget and Compensation reports were approved.

Changes to the Rules of Conference were presented by Executive Director Kevin Henry. These proposed rule changes dealt primarily with the disposition of closed church assets and the election of Stationing Elders. All these

changes were adopted, and the report was approved. Rev. Brett Kindig presented the Amendments to the Discipline that focused on Stationing Elders and our historical partners, which were also approved.

Stationing Elder elections for each region were cast by ballot. After this report, the election results were given, and those elected were as follows: Rev. Robert Klersy from the Delaware Region; Rev. Lewie Bennett and Rev. Robert Dunbar from the Great Lakes Region; Rev. Daniel Blank and Rev. Kenneth Ogden from the Susquehanna Region. Rev. Brad Hatter gave the Stationing Committee report.

Following the election of the Stationing Elders, The BEDAS, which consist of the senior leadership team of our denomination: the Bishop, Executive Director and Associates, came forward for a lightning round discussion. This time gave pastors and lay delegates an opportunity to hear the hearts of our leaders as they seek to give direction toward the vision of being a dynamic movement of God.

After this time of sharing, the ballot for the Trial Court and Triers of Appeals were cast and the results were shared. The following were elected to the Trial Court: Rev. Gary Brown, Rev. Bryan Dever, Rev. Wayne Houck, Rev. Dr. Robert Mavis, Rev. Keith Miller, Rev. Kenneth Miller, Rev. Ralph Owens, Rev. Frank Schock and Rev. Robert Shuey. The following were elected to the Triers of Appeals: Rev. Frederick Moury, Rev. Kevin Roberts, Rev. Michael Sigman, Rev. Bruce Sellers and Rev. N. Patrick Teaford.

Military and civilian chaplains were recognized for their exceptional service, and Rev. Joel Copeland, our chaplain endorser, spoke about our chaplains and the chaplaincy committee. Chaplain Travis Barrino offered the prayer for lunch.

Our afternoon session began with a report by Twin Pines Executive Director, Tony Lea, who introduced himself, presented his priorities and

his optimism for the future of the camp. The Episcopacy report was given by Rev. Keith Blank, and the Statistician Report was given by Executive Director Kevin Henry.

The afternoon session continued with singing, led by Chris Lehigh, and another inspiring message by our conference speaker Rev. Rich Stevenson. This was followed by a time of honoring our retirees: Rev. Paul Barber, Rev. Kirk Marks, Rev. Paul Miller, Rev. Bruce Sellers and Rev. Robert Shuey.

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

In closed executive session, the following credentials were approved:

National Itinerant Elder: Terence Brosius, Thaddaeus Hughes, Douglas Shuey; **Local Itinerant Elder:** Michael Lewis.

In open session, the following individuals were approved for various statuses of credentials:

Approved Pastor: Glen Cathers; **National**

Candidate: Hunter Grant, Kevin Lance;

National Pastor: Heath Lewis; **Local**

Candidate: Andrew Potts; **Certified Lay**

Preacher: Christopher Rojahn; **Superannuated**

classification: Paul Barber, Kirk Marks, Paul Miller, Bruce Sellers and Robert Shuey;

Supernumerary classification: Joel Kime.

An offering for the Andrew Fund, which helps pastors who are experiencing financial hardship, was taken in the amount of \$2,051. At the conclusion of conference, a word of thanks was given by Bishop Randy Sizemore. The Conference concluded with “Wonderful Grace of Jesus” and was adjourned.