

# E.C. Leader

## The Whole Gospel

**W**hen we hear the word ‘gospel’ many of us immediately think of John 3:16, “For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” Is that the Gospel, the Good News? Yes, but there’s so much more to it than that one verse. Someone recently said to me, after I had preached, that they were surprised that I had preached from the Old Testament and that it was a Gospel message. It was almost like in their mind the Gospel had nothing to do with the first half of the Bible. Maybe you’ve heard people express the thought that since the coming of Jesus and the start of the church we don’t care about the old ways in the Old Testament. The 21st Century American mind says “that’s all history and who likes history?” “We want something for today.”

I’m afraid that as followers of Jesus we have, too often, read the Bible in a fragmented way; never really connecting the entire story of Good News. I remember, as a pastor, talking with a young adult who had never put together that the baby Moses in the bulrushes was the very same Moses in the Exodus “let my people go” story. To her these were enjoyable but separate Bible stories. If that’s one person’s experience just with Moses, what’s the view of many other faithful church attendees? Do any of the hundreds of Bible stories connect and make sense as one overarching story of the Good News, of God’s deep desire to live in relationship with humanity?

Recently, I have watched with interest a growing conversation about the Gospel. Years ago Billy Graham called for a diverse congress to re-frame Christian mission in a world of social, political,

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*For God so loved  
the world that he  
gave his one and  
only Son....*

JOHN 3:16, NIV

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economic, and religious upheaval. The Church, he believed, had to apply the Gospel to the contemporary world, and to work to understand the ideas and values behind rapid changes in society. In July 1974 some 2,700 participants and guests from over 150 nations gathered in Lausanne, Switzerland. The result of that historic gathering was the Lausanne Covenant. One of the lines of that Covenant was that we must take "...the whole Gospel to the whole world." I like that phrase, "the whole Gospel." The whole Bible is the whole Gospel. The Good News started in Genesis with the reality that God wanted to live in relationship with his creation (that's us) and that is not *a* story, it is *the* story. It is the story of a God of grace; the God who speaks; the God who acts; the God who listens; the God who loves; the God who atones. What is perhaps even more amazing is that that same God is doing all those things today! He continues to seek relationship with humanity. Scot McKnight in his book *The King Jesus Gospel* states, "The Gospel is to declare something about a Person, about God in his revelation in Jesus Christ and about what God has done in Jesus Christ." In embracing the Gospel we must embrace the whole story.

In Christ's service,

PASSION

*"You must  
love the LORD  
your God with all your  
heart, all your soul, all your  
mind, and all your strength...  
Love your neighbor as  
yourself."*

-MATTHEW 22:37-39

## 2012 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Wed. May 23 to Fri. May 25

Messiah College

Grantham, PA

Registration forms are available on the EC  
website ([www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com))

- Registration at Messiah College begins at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 23
- Holy Communion will be held at 1:00 p.m. at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church
- Rev. Larry Cook from New Church Specialties will be the seminar leader in sessions on Wednesday evening and Thursday afternoon.

## The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Be in prayer for Randy Sizemore and the team going to visit our Mission Conference in Mexico.
2. Pray for the team (Bruce Hill, Randy Sizemore, Gordy Lewis, and Dave Swift) going to India to participate in the EC Church of India's General Conference. The trip will be April 17-26.
3. Pray for the Lord's leading in the Indian General Conference as they choose a new General Director to lead the EC Church of India.
4. Join me in prayer that the Lord would visit our sessions of our National Conference in a special way as we meet at Messiah College, May 23-25.
5. Continue to pray for the work of the Stationing Committee as they seek God's will for churches and pastors. Pray that the Lord would show us clear opportunities for men and churches to "fit and flourish."
6. Praise the Lord for the wonderful news that Evangelical Seminary has been re-approved by the United Methodist University Senate for the education of their ministerial candidates.
7. Praise and thank God for the increasing number of people who are being missional in reaching outside their churches to their neighbors and communities.
8. Thank the Lord for the growth a number of our churches are experiencing!
9. Thank the Lord for all the individuals who remind me that they are praying for me. I depend on it! (Don't quit now.)
10. Thank God for the gifted and dedicated staff that serve our denomination: Conference Ministers, Global Ministries staff, Business Office staff, and administrative staff. They are a gift from the Lord.



## News from Global Ministries



### Available Speaking Dates:

Randy would love to visit with your congregation to share the exciting things God is doing through the EC Church around the globe. He can share with your church on a Sunday morning in worship or Sunday school or both. He is also willing to come at other times that may suit your situation. Carla is always willing to share a mission oriented junior church program.

Randy has the following Sundays available in the spring/summer: March 25; June 10; July 15; August 12, 19, 26; September 2.

Other dates are also available throughout the remainder of the year. Contact Randy at [rsizemore@eccenter.com](mailto:rsizemore@eccenter.com) or call the GMC office, 717-866-7583.

### PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL EC CHURCH CONFERENCE VISITS:

- **Mexico—April 10-15, 2012.** DGM Rev. Randy Sizemore will be traveling with GMC members Rev. John Friedlund, Nancie Young & Lucille Putt to the EC Church of Mexico for their annual conference. The highlight of this conference will be the transition of the now part-time Field Superintendent to a full-time Director in the next stage of ECCM's development of becoming a National Conference.



- **India—April 17-26, 2012.** DGM Rev. Randy Sizemore will be traveling with Bishop Bruce Hill, Dr. Gordon Lewis and India/Nepal Committee Chair, Rev. David Swift to the General Conference sessions of the EC Church of India. The highlight of this conference will be the election of the next General Director (Bishop) of the ECCI since Rev. Lalrosiem Songate's 8 year term is completed.

### Short Term Mission Representative added to GMC:

Mr. Tim King, from Mohn's Hill EC, was added to the Commission as the Short Term Missions Representative. Tim's 11 years of experience serving as Director of Ministries for a local youth discipleship and evangelism ministry, called DRAMA Ministry ([www.dramateam.org](http://www.dramateam.org)) and his extensive experience leading both international and national short term mission trips will be a great resource to the GMC and our local churches as we continue to help create global-minded Christians by exposing them to short term mission opportunities both at home and abroad.

### Mission Minded Kids Rally Update:

The spring MMK Rally was held at Boyertown Trinity EC with 82 children, 79 adults and 14 teens who were given a hands-on mission project in the local community. The VBS lessons for 2012-2013 and the VBS mission moments will focus on our EC Church of India. The VBS project will be to help replace the dilapidated security fence around the ECCI campus.



**Mission Minded  
KIDS**

### The Mission Conference in Costa Rica comes to an end on June 1, 2012:

After a three year comprehensive evaluation of the work in Costa Rica in consultation with the Latin America Committee, previous GMC Directors and Bishop Hill, the GMC has made the decision to discontinue the work in Costa Rica effective June 1, 2012. We would encourage those who were faithfully supporting the work to consider re-allocating their financial and prayer support to one of the other international EC church mission conferences. Please feel free to contact

Randy Sizemore for more information about the decision about Costa Rica or for more information about supporting another mission conference.

### The GMC Task Force findings:

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:



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 meet 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.

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## News from Benefits/Compensation

We're just around the corner from the National Conference. It is a wonderful opportunity to get some face to face time with the people involved in providing and maintaining your benefits. 2011 had some notable changes taking effect mostly in 2012, and with change comes questions. While a lot of effort has been made to anticipate those questions and provide the information up front, it is not possible to foresee all of the variables in a group such as ours. The Healthy Pastors Task Force, Power Kunkle (our new benefits consultants), Prudential Securities and the Benefits Corporation will be in attendance at National Conference. Please stop by their tables in the exhibit area.

Worker's Compensation invoices have been mailed to the churches that participate in the program, with payment due on July 1, 2012. The EC Benefits Corp. services fee is due from all churches with an assigned pastor(s) (active or superannuated) by April 15, 2012.





## News from Evangelical Seminary



**PRAISE THE LORD** for Evangelical's reinstatement as an approved seminary for preparation of United Methodist ministerial candidates! We're also rejoicing in a very positive re-accreditation by ATS and anticipating final notification of Middle States approval after a brief site visit in April.



### **EVANGELICAL IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE TWO NEW PROGRAMS FOR THIS FALL!**

Pending approval, the seminary will offer a five-year long cohort-based (classed on Mondays 4-10 p.m.) M.Div. program. The location is Messiah College's Harrisburg Institute, 28 Dewberry Street, where an explanatory Open House will be held on April 23, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Back in Myerstown, pending approval, a new Master of Arts in Christian Leadership (MACL) will be offered in hybrid format, with both on-campus and online components. Check the website for more information.



**WESLEY FORUM 2012 is set for March 26.** Dr. William Abraham of Perkins School of Theology will discuss "John Wesley and Apologetics for the 21st Century." Check [www.evangelical.edu](http://www.evangelical.edu) for details and online registration or call the seminary (717-866-5775) by March 22.



**"GRAB A CUP OF COFFEE"** with Ralph and Carol Honderd of Friendship Ministries on April 3 at 11:00 a.m. in Zinn Commons. The Honderds will discuss ways for churches to share God's love with and include those experiencing intellectual impairment, autism, or developmental disabilities. No charge or advance registrations is needed for this informal session.



**A COMMUNITY SEDER** exploring Jewish and Christian aspects of Passover will be held in Zinn Commons on Wednesday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m. Open to the public, the event includes a buffet dinner and Seder hosted by Rabbi Louis Zivic and Evangelical's Tom Maiello. There is a charge, and registration is due by March 27. Contact Tom Maiello at 800-532-5775 to reserve your place.



**ALUMNI ARE INVITED TO AN EVENING WITH PRESIDENT BLAIR** at Messiah College's Harrisburg Institute, 28 Dewberry Street, on April 10, at 7:00 p.m. Evangelical grads can connect with old friends, find out about campus happenings, and learn about the seminary's new Harrisburg M.Div. and upcoming MACL programs. Contact [Admissions@evangelical.edu](mailto:Admissions@evangelical.edu) to save your seat.



**SPRING OPEN HOUSE** on campus is Thursday, April 12, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity for prospective students to attend a class, meet faculty and current students, and get to know all about Evangelical. Advance registration to [Admissions@evangelical.edu](mailto:Admissions@evangelical.edu) is helpful.



**LOOKING AHEAD: MAY 3**—Faith in the Marketplace Breakfast (7:00-8:30 a.m.) and Seminar (9:00-Noon) with Buck Jacobs of the C12 Group. May 17-27th Evangelical Golf Tournament at Fairview Golf Course, Lebanon. Check the website for complete details and registration ([www.evangelical.edu](http://www.evangelical.edu)).