

## From the Bishop

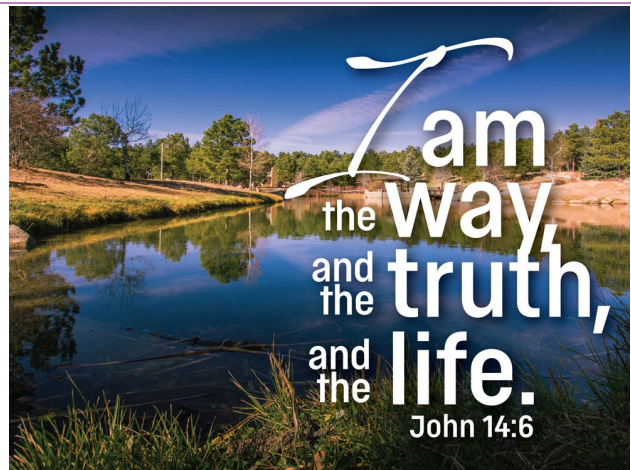
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We don't know a lot about the woman named Martha in the New Testament, but it seems clear that she was a woman who loved and believe in Jesus. She lived in the town of Bethany with her sister Mary and their brother Lazarus. Luke tells us that Martha was the practical sister who loved Jesus but also saw all the work that needed to be done; she was the hostess of the family.

The Bible tells us Lazarus became ill and died. Four days later the traditional Jewish grieving process was in full force with relatives, friends, and people from nearby Jerusalem gathered to mourn his death.

When Jesus arrived at the home and nearby tomb Martha went out to meet him. The conversation between Jesus and Martha is instructive. First she addresses him as



“Lord”; recognizing his authority and power. Then she witnesses to her belief in his power saying, “If only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Martha believed in the healing power of Jesus. Then goes on stating she knows Jesus is a powerful man of God; that God “will give you whatever you ask.” Jesus responds with a word of comfort, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha responds, “Yes, he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” Martha took Jesus statement that Lazarus would rise again as words of

comfort; Jesus meant them to describe what he would do. Then the conversation of comfort takes a strange turn as Jesus states, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Jesus takes a doctrine she believes and turns it into faith in a person—in him. Jesus could have said “I can raise Lazarus from the dead” and then did it and Martha would have been very happy. But what he said was “I am the resurrection.” Jesus could have said that he could give life. But instead he said, “I am...the life.”

*(continued on page 2)*



## Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

1. Join with me in praying for the EC Church of India's Annual Leaders' Conference which will be held April 21-23 with the theme "We Are Ambassadors for Christ."
2. Be in prayer for the pastors who are retiring this year as they prepare to enter a new chapter in their lives.
3. Pray for the Board of Examiners as they interview candidates seeking various EC credentials.
4. Pray that the Lord would speak to the hearts of those who will be attending the special Easter season services and that their hearts would be open to hear him.
5. Ask the Lord to grant safety and good health to Kevin Henry, Mark Draper, and Ralph Owens who will be riding their bicycles from Huntington, IN to Myerstown, PA (639 miles) to support the mission of Evangelical Seminary.
6. Praise the Lord for the progress we're making in preparations for National Conference 2017! There's still a lot to do, but we're on schedule!
7. Thank the Lord for spring and increasing opportunities to get outside to enjoy fresh air and sunshine.
8. Praise the Lord for the people who continue to assure me that they pray for the Bishop regularly. I depend on that!
9. Praise God for the men and women who volunteer their time and talents to serve on our affiliate ministries' boards: Benefits Corp., Camp ECCO, Evangelical Seminary, Rock River Bible Camp, StoneRidge Retirement Living, and Twin Pines Camp.
10. Praise God that Jesus is risen and alive!



*(continued from page 1)*

According to God's Word there have been others who have raised dead people to life: Elijah (1 Kings 17), Elisha (2 Kings 4), Peter (Acts 9), and Paul (Acts 20). So what's the difference with Jesus? Jesus is saying that he alone is the embodiment of the power over death and life and he proved that when he rose from the grave that first Easter Sunday morning. No one needed to be there; Jesus conquered death and lives today.

Because Jesus is the resurrection and the life, anyone who believes in him has eternal life that transcends physical death. Jesus said, "Everyone

who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die." Finally, Jesus asks Martha, "Do you believe this?"

Easter is more than a holiday, more than a holy day. Faith, to be real, must be personal. It must be my heart's relationship with a personal Savior, Jesus who is himself God, who is himself the resurrection and the life. Do you believe this?

In Christ's service,



# News from STONERIDGE



## April Events at StoneRidge Towne Centre\* and StoneRidge Poplar Run\*

### April 1 Easter Fun Event

In celebration of the Easter season, StoneRidge Towne Centre will host an Easter Fun Event for children of all ages on Saturday, April 1 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 7 West Park Avenue in Myerstown. Team members and the community are invited to come out for a visit with the Easter bunny, plenty of games, Easter crafts and refreshments. The event will take place in the garden, and is open to the public.



### April 10 Lunch and Learn—Heart Health

On Monday, April 10, at 11:00 a.m., StoneRidge Poplar Run, located at 440 East Lincoln Avenue in Myerstown, will offer another in its popular series of Lunch and Learn events. Stephanie Andreozzi, director of cardiovascular services at Wellspan Good Samaritan Hospital, will be the featured presenter. Enjoy lunch in the Meier Room, and learn what to look for and do to

keep your heart healthy. Seating is limited, and an RSVP is required by April 6. Call Stacia Dial at 717-866-3553 for more information, and to reserve your seat.

### April 20 Lunch and Learn—A Therapeutic Start to Spring

On Thursday, April 20, at 11:00 a.m., StoneRidge Poplar Run, 440 East Lincoln Avenue, Myerstown, will present A Therapeutic Start to Spring with Lynne Wooten, market program director of Rehab Care. Enjoy lunch and learn how to therapeutically prepare your body for the chores and activities of spring and summer. Seating is limited, and an RSVP is required by April 17. Call Stacia Dial at 717-866-3553 for more information, and to reserve a seat.

*\*StoneRidge Poplar Run is one of four retirement communities comprising StoneRidge Retirement Living. Locations include StoneRidge Towne Centre and StoneRidge Poplar Run both in Myerstown, Church of God Home in Carlisle and Schoolyard Square in Pine Grove. For more information about options available for you or a loved one, please call 717-866-3553. StoneRidge Retirement Living is all about just that—Living!*



2016 issue of the DISCIPLINE—\$23.00

Inserts only—\$13.00

8 1/2 X 11 size—\$10.00

2016 issue of the ABRIDGED DISCIPLINE—  
\$3.25

2016 PICTORIAL DIRECTORY—\$5.00

Contact the EC Church Center to get these new publications!

## News from BENEFITS CORPORATION

**Thanks** to almost everyone for completing the **workers compensation** forms on a timely basis. The workers compensation audit is scheduled and the invoices will be sent to the churches by mid April. Early estimates indicate there will be decrease to the workers compensation premiums and all churches in the group workers compensation program will see a decrease in their premiums.

Churches not included in the denominational workers compensation group policy; Ohio, Illinois and Kentucky churches, however your individual state mandates workers compensation coverage. Please confirm that all employees of the church are covered by workers compensation insurance. Per EC Benefits Corporation policy H.3.b, churches not covered by the denomination group workers compensation policy shall submit proof of workers compensation coverage to:

EC Benefits  
100 West Park Avenue  
Myerstown, PA 17067  
OR Fax 717-866-7553 or email [dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com)

The **annual disability premium** was due January 15 and the Benefit Corporation administrative fee is due by April 15, 2017, **retirees are not subject to the administrative fee**. Both of these fees are listed in the Treasurer's Guide available on the EC website. Many have remitted the disability fee timely and a few have submitted the administrative fee and we thank you for your diligence and hard work.

Treasurers please confirm that you are remitting your **ministry fund** payments on the correct monthly form. In 2017 the ministry fund percentage decreased to 7.33%.

To date only about 70% of the **pastoral compensation forms** have been returned. Thanks to all the churches that have responded. We will be reminding non compliant churches to complete and submit their pastoral compensation forms. Please save Dave King some work by submitting your pastoral compensation forms as soon as possible.

As always, please contact David King, Benefits Administrator, [dking@eccenter.com](mailto:dking@eccenter.com) or myself [khenry@eccenter.com](mailto:khenry@eccenter.com) with any questions or problems, 1-800-866-7581.

Kevin Henry  
Executive Director

David King  
Benefits Administrator



## News from MINISTERIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Over the past decade, the leadership of the EC Church has been learning some valuable and critical lessons about how to move forward with ministry in our current cultural climate. Our theological framework is mining new depths that are surrounded by some resurging biblical concepts—discipleship, missionality, gospel, kingdom, ecclesiology, etc. These terms carry definitions that are helpful to ministry in our present circumstances, and they are not going away.

Our whole system from denominational leadership to pastor to congregation is working through a significant learning curve. Some might be inclined to tune out the dissonance caused by the arrival of these terms and their developing understandings. Some have wondered what is so significant about these concepts. Others may have wondered if there will ever be a place to explore these and move in the same direction that the EC Church is going.

The Ministerial Development Community is working with Evangelical Seminary to develop a Center for EC Studies. The primary focus for this center is to help new applicants for ministry and transfers from other denominations receive an orientation in things that are a part of this ongoing EC conversation. The good news is that each offering will be open to anyone seeking to understand, catch up, or refine his or her understandings about our EC culture and language.



This Center for EC Studies will offer brief educational units for understanding such things as Bible interpretation, worldview, mission, Christian posture, the Gospel, Arminian theology, ecclesiology, covenant theology, and eschatology taught from a basic EC perspective. Our hope is to start providing offerings at a reasonable cost this Fall in a classroom setting at Evangelical Seminary with the capability of online viewing and interaction. Each offering will be uniquely designed—such as involvement over one or two weekends of intensive study and dialogue, or stretching over a few weeks with reading assignments and classroom discussion, or involving a panel discussion among theologians for a few hours.

Stay tuned for these upcoming offerings. For suggestions or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [jgbyerly@eccenter.com](mailto:jgbyerly@eccenter.com).

Blessings,  
Jeff Byerly

## News from GLOBAL MINISTRIES

### **Congratulations to Lalrosiem Songate,**

Principal of the Evangelical College of Theology in North East India, on the successful completion of his doctoral dissertation (PhD) at Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Pray for Dr. Songate as he returns to India to provide leadership for the School of Theology and the EC Church of India.

### **EC Mexico to become a National Conference.**

Join the GMC in giving thanks to God for the forward progress of the EC Church in Mexico over these past four years as they have matured to the point of being recognized as a self-governing, self-supporting & self-propagating National Conference! We appreciate your prayers as plans are being made to bring a delegation from Mexico to our National Conference sessions at Messiah College to recognize their new status.



### **Missionary News & Updates:**

Keep **John and Carolyn Miller** in prayer as John continues to receive chemo treatments for prostate cancer. He has been doing well and is over half way through the treatments. The Millers are retired and living in Houghton, NY.

**David & Conce Roof** give praise that the necessary funds were available to put windows into the third floor of their church building, which is still under construction. The building has been enclosed and each floor was used as it was finished, but the plan was always to add more floors as needed. The third

floor concrete was poured and interior walls finished, but without windows and the rainy season starting, a lot of that work could have been damaged. So the windows were a necessity and a blessing. Another praise is for the couple currently staying in Brazil with the Roofs and helping with their ministry; the husband with construction and the wife with Conce in children's ministry.

**Jim and Janet Stahl** have spent the first quarter of the year traveling to South Asia and northeastern Africa to conduct training sessions for Bible story tellers. The idea is to train people how to tell the stories of the Bible to those who either can't read or don't have the scriptures in their heart language. The hope is that eventually their language group will have translated scriptures, and then be able to read the stories. In the mean time, many have come to the Lord by hearing the spoken Word, just as in New Testament times.

**Ed and Val Schubert** give praise that they were able to expand the work of Casa de Luz to a second campus in their hometown of Zambrano in Honduras. They are operating four days a week, with three full-time Honduran employees leading the program. Their three missionary interns assist, and a full time Honduran Christian psychologist divides her time between the two campuses.

**Rev. Ron and Brenda Anderson** spent the last half of March and will spend most of this month (April) with their daughter Jenny and her family in northwestern USA. Jenny was due with grandchild #5.

# News from KINGDOM EXTENSION COMMUNITY

## Exponential 2017 Live Stream Event

### EXPONENTIAL<sup>7</sup>

- Tuesday, April 25, 2017 ... 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (\$10/person; includes lunch)
- Community EC Church, Sinking Spring, PA
- Register by contacting Les Cool (717-951-8433 or [revcool@ptd.net](mailto:revcool@ptd.net))

Exponential is a growing community of leaders committed to accelerating the multiplication of healthy, reproducing faith communities. They champion church multiplication and equip church multipliers as they seek to help move the needle on multiplication from less than 1% of churches actively reproducing to greater than 10%!

Exponential East 2017 is the next event, a gathering of thousands of church planting leaders in Orlando. But you don't have to go to Orlando to experience some of the event, and enjoy serious conversation that just might change your life and the life of your church.

As we have in the past, we will gather more locally (Community EC in Sinking Spring and, hopefully, in other places) to watch live streamed sessions, as well as videos of past sessions, AND discuss what we might do next.

*“Dream Big* is the theme for Exponential 2017. Jesus Challenged us with a big dream. If He had sketched out His big dream for His Church, we think it would be something like, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes up on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8). The dream that Jesus gave His followers was the dream of a movement. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the ends of the earth—that is a very big dream! We are here because of that dream. As Christ followers and leaders of His church, Jesus is asking us to also dream big.” (by Exponential)

We invite you to join us as we join Exponential East 2017 and begin conversations that focus on “what it looks like to dream big for our churches—and the Kingdom.”

## AWAKENINGS



- April 27-29, 2017
- Alfred Street Baptist Church, Alexandria, VA

### The Holy Spirit.

Promised by Jesus in the Gospel accounts, progressively demonstrated throughout the book of Acts, and at the very core of Paul's own message and ministry, **the Holy Spirit is the presence and power of God at work among us unto the redemption, reconciliation, and recreation of all things.** As those joined to Christ *by the Holy Spirit*, the Church lives as the community *of the Holy Spirit* and thus the means through which God is furthering his mission in the world *through the Holy Spirit*.

Unfortunately, over the last hundred years in Western Protestantism, the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit has either been relegated to obscurity or confined to a handful of streams of the Church. The result is that much of the Church operates without a practical theology of the Holy Spirit for the whole of life.

**However, in this new era of mission after Christendom, we observe that many are experiencing different kinds of “awakenings,” which call our attention back to the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God among us. It's not surprising that the predominant interaction of the early church with the Spirit was for mission. Ours should be the same.**

*Join us, at Missio Alliance's Third North American Gathering, as for a fresh engagement with the person and work of the Holy Spirit and explore how such an engagement might advance the mission of God among our congregations, through our ministries, and in our own lives.*

For more information and to register...

<http://www.awakenings.missioalliance.org>

# 2017 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

## Press n

“I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14



May 24-26, 2017  
Messiah College, Grantham, PA

REGISTRATION FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

[WWW.ECCENTER.COM](http://WWW.ECCENTER.COM)

Deadline for registration is: April 21st.

### FEATURES:

- Rev Run 5K Run/Walk/Bike  
Morning, Wednesday, May 24
- First Time Lay Delegate Orientation  
Morning, Wednesday, May 24
  - Holy Communion  
1:00 pm, Wednesday, May 24
- Welcoming EC Church of Mexico  
Evening, Wednesday, May 24
- “Kingdom & Community Experience”  
Afternoon, Thursday, May 25
  - Credentialing  
Morning, Friday, May 26

### WOMENS' PROGRAM:

- Wednesday Afternoon  
Tina Kidd Johnson, pastor's wife at Canyon Falls, KY will be the speaker.
- Thursday Morning  
Tim Bell, Director of Regional Ministries for One Mission Society
- Friday Morning  
Beth Grimm, Wycliffe Bible Translators

Scheduling has been planned so the ladies can join the Conference for the Episcopal Address, worship services, and the Thursday afternoon “Kingdom & Community Experience.”



## From Waymakers:

### 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World May 27—June 25, 2017

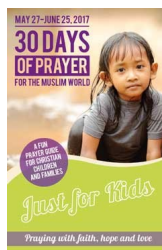
The prayer guide deepens awareness of Muslim families and peoples in an easy-to-understand way. By praying with informed hope, instead of sinking into apprehensive dread. Christians can grow in confidence in the work and purpose of Christ. Please consider inviting some of your fellow Christ-followers to extend themselves in the simplest act of Christ's love for Muslim people: to pray with biblical truth and late-breaking facts about what God is doing.



The timing is perfect: Since Muslims world over observe the 30-day season of “Ramadan” as a time to pray and to seek God, that makes these particular days (May 27-June 25) a significant time to be praying for them.

Bulk pricing makes is affordable to equip people in your church to pray together. Since the season begins this year in late May, now is the time to begin planning how you and your people will be a part of this great work of prayer. Check out details and ordering information at this website: [www.waymakers.org/pray/30days](http://www.waymakers.org/pray/30days).

A kid’s version is also available with many fun and informative activities that are age appropriate. Many adults also enjoy using this version.



## Twin Pines Ladies Only Retreat May 16-18, 2017

### Sue Duffield, Speaker



Sue loves to make people laugh with her off-the-wall Jersey logic and sacred sarcasm. Not surprising, Sue has found it’s a style of humor that resonates with audiences everywhere. This singer/songwriter and former radio personality tours with her own comedy and musical concerts since 1974.

See more information about Sue Duffield at:

<http://www.sueduffield.com/#sthash.Vy60ladK.dpuf>

This retreat begins on Tuesday, May 16th with supper at 5:00 p.m. and concludes Thursday, May 18th with the noon meal.

Registration Deadline is: April 22, 2017

Register online: [https://for\\_ladies\\_only\\_2017.eventbrite.com](https://for_ladies_only_2017.eventbrite.com)

OR get registration form at:

[http://twinpines.org/images/ladies\\_retreat/LadiesOnly\\_2017-beach-pic.pdf](http://twinpines.org/images/ladies_retreat/LadiesOnly_2017-beach-pic.pdf)



**Evangelical Congregational  
Church**

100 West Park Avenue

Myerstown, PA

717-866-7581

[www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com)

[eccenter@eccenter.com](mailto:eccenter@eccenter.com)

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“For there is **one** body and **one** Spirit, just as you have all been called to **one** glorious hope for the future.

There is **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, and **one** God and Father, who is over all and in all and living through all!”

EPHESIANS 4: 4-6

**Mountain Men 2017 is coming April 21-22**

Join other guys for a weekend of worship, great speakers and (of course) food, fire and throwing weapons.

Stand Firm as men, on Faith, on the Word, in Purity and in Prayer.

Speakers include Bishop Bruce Hill, Rev. Gary Kuehner, Rev. Wayne Houck, Rev. Nathan Kennedy and Geoffrey Clow. Worship will be led by Andy Whittemore.

To register go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-mountain-men-retreat-registration-31517116544>

**Mountain Men 2017**  
April 21-22  
Twin Pines Camp, Stroudsburg PA

**Mountain Men**  
The Men's Ministry of the Evangelical Congregational Church

# STAND FIRM

An awesome time for guys to get together. Featuring Bishop Bruce Hill, Rev. Gary Kuehner and others. Worship by Andy Whittemore. Recreation and good food. Don't miss it!

Register online at  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-mountain-men-retreat-registration-31517116544>



# APRIL 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Passion Sunday Day of Prayer for Church Planting	3	4	5	6 Wesley Forum--ETS	7 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	1 8
9 <b>Palm Sunday</b>	10 Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	11	12	13 Maundy Thursday	14 <b>Good Friday</b> Church Center Closed	15 Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due Estimated Tax
16 <b>EASTER Sunday</b>	17 Church Center Closed	18 EC Leader Info Due	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 StoneRidge Retirement Bd Mtg. Exponential Live	26	27 Evangelical Seminary Bd. Mtg	28	29
30					Mountain Men Retreat	

**Ministry Funds to:**  
E.C. Church  
100 West Park Avenue  
Myerstown, PA 17067

**Medical/Insurance/Pension Payments to:**  
Benefits Corporation  
100 West Park Avenue  
Myerstown, PA 17067

# MAY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 National Day of Prayer	5 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	6
7	8 Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	9	10	11	12	13
14 <b>Mother's Day</b>	15 Church Pension Contribution due <u>Health Insurance Premium due</u>	16	17	18 ETS Golf Tournament	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 <b>Memorial Day</b> Church Center Closed	30	31	<b>NATIONAL CONFERENCE—MESSIAH COLLEGE</b>		

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