

EC Leader



December 2013

Special points of interest:

- Great Lakes Special Meeting
- MinistryLINQ
- 2014 National Prayer Summits

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From the Bishop

I don't know if you've ever had to write an article for a newsletter like the EC LEADER or maybe a report for school, but there's that moment when you realize you can't put it off any longer and you have to write something. People used to talk about sitting and staring at that blank piece of white paper in the type-writer; today I sit and stare at a white rectangle on my computer screen. I'm in an introspective mood. You see, it has occurred to me that I am at the half-way point of my term as bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church.



Serving as bishop gives me a unique perspective of church life. The longer I serve as bishop the more disconnected Gloria and I become from our home church because of the responsibilities of being bishop. We read articles and news items about ministries going on at church, we see new names, and, when we get there, we see new faces. Those are all good things, but they remind us that we're not very ac-

tively involved in that local congregation any more. Now before you go to feeling badly for the bishop and his wife let me share another perspective.

Being bishop for two and a half years means that we have had the opportunity to meet with many of the local congregations who make up the EC Church family. By my count I have preached and/or visited in 72 of our congregations here in the USA. (If I haven't been at your church yet, you might as well call Church Center and invite me before I invite myself.) While Gloria comes along

on most trips in the USA, she's missed out on joining me in the worship experiences in Northeast India and Liberia. So what have we discovered? We've found that our churches are very much the same while also being very different. We've met lots of babies, children, teens, young couples, middle aged couples and older folks. Yes, the EC Church has them all. We participated in services that

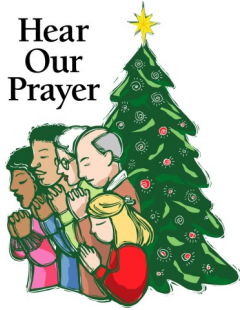
were in English, in services that were in Spanish, and in services that were a combination of the two. We have congregations in big fancy buildings and in simple facilities. We even have congregations who don't have buildings of their own. There are churches that sing traditional hymns, some use contemporary music, and some blend the two. We've been to locations where most people wore dresses or coats and ties, and to places where jeans and shorts were in the majority. While many of us are aware of our denomination's Pennsylvania German heritage the EC Church of the 21st Century is made up of many colors and cultures. We are a diverse group of people who are all following Jesus!

You know, that's why Jesus came to earth. Jesus came to offer life to the world; every language, every color, people of every age. Christmas is a time for family, our natural family and

(continued on page 3)



Hear Our Prayer



Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

1. Pray for the Global Ministries team who will be traveling to Nepal in early December; pray for safe travels, good health and effective ministry.
2. Pray for Randy and Carla Sizemore as they move to Dixon, Illinois as Randy assumes a new shared ministry position as pastor of Bethel EC Church and our Director of Global Ministries.
3. During this time of Christmas busyness ask the Lord to help you to remember the really Good News; that a Savior, Jesus, came to earth for us.
4. Pray that the many visitors to the special Christmas programs and services held throughout the EC Church will be touched with the Truth of Christmas and turn to faith in Jesus.
5. Pray for the Lord's leading as the Great Lakes Region prepares to elect a new Conference Minister at a special meeting scheduled for January 11, 2014.
6. Thank the Lord for the ministry of Gary Brown, the outgoing Great Lakes Conference Minister, and pray for the Lord's clear leading as he and his wife, Ann, prepare for their next adventure in ministry.
7. Praise the Lord for all the noise of families coming together at Christmas, and pray for those families who are missing that special someone from their table this year.
8. Praise God for the joy that comes with knowing Jesus! The demands of the Christmas season so often lead to frustration! This year let your friends and neighbors see the joy that knowing Jesus brings you!
9. Join me in praising the Lord for the wonderful opportunities to meet with the many members of the EC Church family. What a joy it is for Gloria and I to greet people of all ages and colors who are the EC family.
10. Praise God for the wonderful gift he has given us in his One and only Son Jesus, our Savior!

MinistryLINQ offering to our churches



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Due to the relationship between the National Conference and MinistryLINQ, MinistryLINQ has offered special pricing to EC Churches that would like to offer web based electronic giving to their congregations. MinistryLINQ has two pricing tiers to meet the needs of most churches. Please contact Tim Neary at Minis-

tryLINQ for details.

There are many web based electronic giving providers all offering the same basic service although different pricing structures and

unique features. If your church is interested in electronic giving please review multiple providers before making a decision. I am available for any general questions on electronic giving, 717-628-2171 or

khenry@eccenter.com.

Kevin Henry
Controller



Evangelical Seminary is hosting the first annual 4 mile **Four Chaplains Scholarship Run** and 1.5 mile fun run/walk on February 8, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. The run honors the four U.S. military chaplains who perished when the USAT Dorchester sank on February 3, 1943 after being torpedoed by a German submarine. Registration and more information is available under events at www.evangelical.edu and www.pretzelcitysports.com

Great Lakes Region Meeting

Please remember: the special meeting of the Great Lakes Region to elect a new Conference Minister is scheduled for Saturday, January 11, 2014 beginning promptly at 10:00 a.m. (Eastern); 9:00 a.m. (Central). The special meeting will actually take place in two locations: Lakeside E.C. Church, Transfer, PA and Bethel E.C. Church, Dixon, IL. Members of the National Conference from the Great Lakes Region must be present at one of the two locations in order to cast a ballot. Our Rules of Conference and the DISCIPLINE both allow for electronic meetings so while the majority of delegates will gather in Transfer there will be a live video feed to those gathered in Dixon. Ballots will be provided at both locations at the same time. The ballot will be pub-

lished at the beginning of December and more specific information will be distributed closer to the special meeting.

Two names will be on the ballot: Rev. Charles (Chuck) Campbell, pastor of New Zion EC Church, Emlenton, PA and Rev. Scott Carr, pastor of First EC Church, Akron, OH. Church Center will soon distribute resumes and other pertinent information provided by the candidates.

While only those members of National Conference from the Great Lakes Region can cast a ballot, we're asking the entire EC Church family to join in prayer for the Lord's leading as we approach this important day



in the life of our denomination. Please be in prayer for these men and their families as they honestly and humbly seek the Lord's will for their ministry. Thank you!

Bishop's Speaking Schedule

Earlier in this issue of the EC LEADER you read Bishop Hill's comment about inviting him to come preach at your church. If you didn't read that yet, go back and start this issue from the beginning. The bishop is planning his preaching/speaking calendar for 2014. If you need to invite him in order to spare him of having to invite himself, now is the best time to contact Church Center. No church is too big or too small for him to schedule a Sunday but it is first come-first served. So as you plan your congregation's 2014 church service schedule see when it would be good to have the bishop come preach. If you'd like to schedule a date please email your requested date(s) to his Administrative Assistant, jeanhart@eccenter.com and she will work with him in developing his schedule for 2014. He hopes to see you soon!

(From the Bishop, continued from page 1)

our family of faith. Take the time to look around the table or the services you attend this season and thank God for his great love. Join us in praising him for allowing us to be a part of his family. It's a BIG family. We may not all look or sound the same on the outside, but on the inside there is a definite family resemblance; we are our father's children through the gift of Jesus!

In Christ's service,



A special invitation for you:
Blue Christmas Service
A service of Comfort and Hope
Sunday, December 15, 2013
4 o'clock pm
Speaker: Mr. Stephen R. Hesse
"Gold Bike, Silver Star, Blue Christmas!"
 Community Evangelical Church
 51 Green Valley Road, Sinking Spring, PA
 Phone: 610-670-1942



News from Global Ministries

International EC Conferences in India & Nepal

Randy will be traveling to India November 26-December 4 to participate in a Church Leaders' Training Seminar co-hosted by the GMC and the EC Church of India. Following this conference Randy and Rev. Angam, Director of EC India will travel to Delhi on December 5 to meet up with Rev. Elias Martinez, Director of EC Mexico and others to travel to Dhahran, Nepal and attend the Annual Conference and 10 year celebration of the EC Church of Nepal. Please pray for the entire GMC Team:

Rev. Randy Sizemore, GMC Director

Rev. L.B. Angam, EC India Director

Rev. Elias Martinez, EC Mexico Director

Rev. Th. Janga, EC Nepal Director

Dr. David Dick, EC/OMS Missionary

Rev. Carlos Kelly, translator for Rev. Elias

Rev. Ted Rathman, GMC member



Christmas Missionary Offering

Watch your mail for the 2014 bulletin inserts and envelopes for the GMC Christmas Offering. This is one of the two "required" offerings that the GMC uses for the operation of the home office. Please help us continue the mission work of the EC Church by putting the inserts in your bulletin and by encouraging your church to give generously. Thanks!

Randy's Shared Ministry Position With Bethel EC, Dixon, IL

By now you have been informed of the shared ministry position between the GMC and Dixon Bethel EC Church. Randy and Carla will move to Dixon the week of December 16th and Randy will begin as lead pastor on January 1, 2014 and continue as Director of GMC. Randy and Pat Strain are available to help you and/or your church with your mission needs.

After December 16, 2013 you can contact Randy at:

rsizemore@eccenter.com
(same email)

717-602-7085 (same cell)

815-284-3849 (church office)

815-677-9069 (home)

Home address:
123 North Court Street,
Dixon, IL 61021

Available Speaking Dates: 2014

Randy will be traveling back to Pennsylvania a few times in 2014 and currently has the following dates open for speaking:

March 2: pm

March 9: am & pm

March 12 (Wednesday): anytime

May 18: am & pm

May 25: am & pm

September 7: am

October 19: am & pm

Please contact Randy (rsizemore@eccenter.com) to schedule him at your church or event.

Missionary Christmas Gifts:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAILING GIFTS/MONEY TO MISSIONARIES:

- If the missionary is currently serving in the USA or is in the USA on furlough, you can send your gift, check and card directly to them. Contact the GMC office if you need a current address.
- If the missionary is serving overseas, please send the check to the Global Ministries office made payable to EC Church with a note in the memo line or a note detailing which missionary(ies) are to receive funds and the amounts. You can mail a Christmas card directly to the missionary; again, contact us if you need to check an address.
- **DO NOT** include a check in a Christmas card and mail it to GMC; we cannot forward Christmas cards overseas. **DO NOT** mail a check directly overseas unless a missionary has specifically instructed you to do so; it usually costs quite a bit to cash checks overseas, and there are many check-altering schemes that could wind up emptying your bank account.
- Many countries will charge customs duty on any packages sent, so check with the missionary first to see if they want or can use what you intend to send.
- If you have any questions, call or email the GMC office. Our toll free number is 1-800-866-7584, and our email is ecglobal@eccenter.com.



News from StoneRidge Retirement Living



EVERY DAY is CHRISTMAS DAY

At certain times in life you realize what you are doing or what you are involved in is bigger than what you see in front of you. That is the case at StoneRidge Retirement Living in Myerstown, a Continuing Care Retirement Community. With just about 350 residents residing at the two campuses in Myerstown, we feel very responsible for those who have chosen to come to live on these campuses and for those entrusted to our care by family members.

Christmas is just around the corner. It will be a time of great celebration as we mark the birth of our Savior. There will be Christmas carol singing and tree lighting. There will be

presents wrapped in pretty paper. There will be a vast selection of delicious Christmas treats all around us. What a blessed people we are. At StoneRidge, the other 364 days are filled with just as much joy, maybe on a slightly more personal basis.

When Mary "graduates" from eight weeks of rehab therapy and can return home, it's a celebration. When Helen is successfully placed in Nursing Care where she can receive all the attention and care she needs in a secure environment, it's a celebration. When Ralph moves from another city feeling tentative but in just a couple weeks makes new friends and enjoys the freedom of living in community with his peers, it's a celebration. When Tom and Nancy finally decorate their

own cottage on campus and realize they don't have to worry about shoveling snow or fixing the roof or replacing the old furnace because all their maintenance needs are now going to be taken care of, it's a celebration. This list could go on but let it suffice to say, "doing life" with the residents at StoneRidge is a celebration of living, of loving, of LIFE!

From the Staff and Residents of StoneRidge Retirement Living, we wish you a blessed Christmas season and a Happy 2014!!



The Prayer Mobilization Team is Announcing to Pastors the **2014 National Prayer Summits**

Delaware Region
March 14 & 15
Twin Pines Camp

Susquehanna Region
March 28 & 29
Camp Swatara

Great Lakes Region
Date & location is yet to be determined.

Details of the above National Prayer Summits will be available in January.



News from Evangelical



Get to know Evangelical by attending our OPEN HOUSE on

Saturday, December 7 beginning at 9:00 am. The morning starts with a delicious breakfast, followed by informative and engaging events for prospective students and their families. Meet the president, tour the buildings, experience two partial classes, meet the registrar and learn about financial aid, tour the Pense Museum, hear about special schol-

arship incentives, and try to win our great give-aways! Register online at www.evangelical.edu or call George Davis, Director of Enrollment Management, at 717-866-5775, ext. 2109.

We're so thankful to God for the prayerful and financial support of so many friends of the seminary, and as 2013 draws to a close, we encourage you to remember Evangelical in your year-end giving. Our goal between now and December 31 is to raise \$117,000 for



the Annual Fund for Transformational Leadership. Any help you can give will be deeply appreciated!

MERRY CHRISTMAS from the entire Evangelical Family! May the joy of Christ's coming, the peace of His abiding presence, and the anticipation of His return encourage your hearts now and throughout the new year!



BUSINESS NAME

E.C. Church Center
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067

Phone: 717-866-7581

E-mail:

eccenter@eccenter.com

We're on the Web
www.eccenter.com

We've attached calendars for December and January and will attach subsequent calendars in the future issues so you can keep up-to-date with what is happening in the EC denomination. These calendars are also available on the EC website

www.eccenter.com.

If there is an event you would like to have included on the calendar please contact Brenda at blong@eccenter.com or call 717-866-7581.



News from Benefits Corporation

A couple of end of the year reminders:

- Pastor Compensation Forms should be returned to David King, Benefits Administrator, along with a copy to the Conference Minister by January 15, 2014.
- Annual Statistical Report due to Rev. Ken Wiest, Statistician, EC Church Center, 100 West Park Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067 by January 25, 2014.
- W-2 forms for employees (incl. pastors) and 1099-MISC forms for independent contractors are due by January 31 to the recipient and February 28 to the respective government agency or March 31 if filed electronically.

The aggregate cost of all applicable employer provided health insurance is to be reported on 2013 W-2s issued in January 2014. EC Benefits will provide the amounts to report on 2013 W-2s. The cost of employer provided

health insurance is not a taxable benefit. This is informational reporting only.

Pastors are employees of the local church and should receive a W-2 with federal, state and local taxes withheld from every paycheck.

- The rates for the active pastor health insurance plan will increase on January 1, 2014. The new rates are payable on December 15, 2013. The new health insurance rates are:

Family	\$1,800
Employee w/child(ren)	\$1,160
Couple	\$1,390
Single	\$ 660

Please see the website, www.eccenter.com for additional information.

- HRA reimbursements under the active pastors Highmark Blue Shield plan are due to PrimePay by December 29, 2013 for covered healthcare expenses incurred by September 30, 2013. This is an HRA rule regardless of the insurance carrier.

Reimbursements not received by December 29 will not be paid. No exceptions.

- There will be an increase in the cost of the retiree Medicare supplemental plan, Highmark Freedom Blue, of \$17 per month to \$188 per month. There are no changes to benefit levels. Your invoices for January 2014 will reflect the increase in premium cost.

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

Kevin Henry, Controller
 David King, Benefits Admin.



News from Twin Pines

We are excited to announce that 2014 will commemorate 50 years of ministry for the camp. Several events will be held throughout the year. We are hoping you will help spread the word of these events. In a few days you will be receiving some bulletin announcements and a cover letter explaining things in more detail.

If you have any questions, or do not receive your letter in the next few days, please contact the camp at 570-629-2411; or email marketing@twinpines.org.

We thank you for all the prayers and support you have shown to the camp over the years and hope they will continue as we look forward to the wonderful blessings God will shower on Twin Pines Camp.



December 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT <i>Day of Prayer for Church Planting</i>	2 Church Center In-Service Day Church Center closed	3	4	5	6 <i>Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church</i>	7 ETS Open House
8 SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT	9 Church Planting Commission mtg.	10	11	12	13 Supervisory Retreat (13-15)	14
15 THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT	16 Loan & Investment Committee Mtg.	17	18	19	20 Church Center Christmas Party	21
22 FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT <i>Christmas Missions Offering</i>	23 Church Center closed	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Church Center closed	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church Center closed	26 Church Center closed	27	28
29	30 NEW YEAR'S EVE Church Center closed	31				

Medical Pension Payment to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067
(designate Church-4th Quarter/Pastor)

Christmas Missions Offering to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067
(designate—Christmas Missions Offering)

Ministry Funds to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

January 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Church Center closed	2	3 Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church	4 Anniversary Party, Twin Pines
5 EPIPHANY	6	7 Evangelism & Discipleship Commission mtg.	8	9	10	11 Great Lakes Region Special mtg. Bethel, Dixon, IL Lakeside, Transfer,
<i>Day of Prayer for</i>			15 Estimated Tax due Stationing Requests due Annual Disability Pmt. Due Church Pension Contribution due Health Insurance Premium due	16	17	18 Berks District mtg., Leesport
12	13	14			PASTORAL ASSESSMENT CENTER	
19	20 Leadership Commission mtg.	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Spring Convocation—ETS	29	30	31	

Ministry Funds to:
E.C. Church
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067

Disability payment to:
Benefits Corporation
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067