

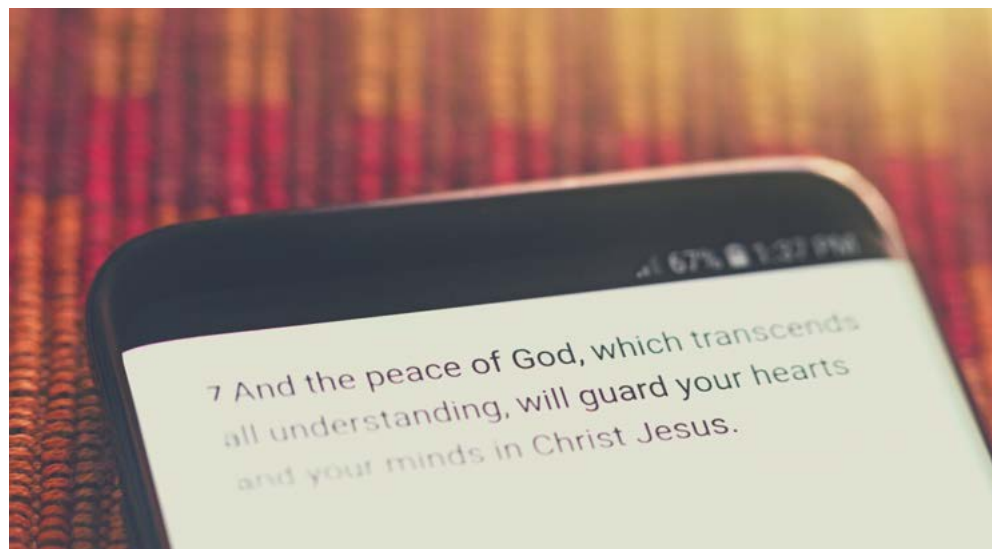


From the desk of Bishop Bruce Hill

One of the things I've heard recently is people declaring they are tired of the pandemic and how it has impacted our lives. Why can't we just go back to the way it used to be? The "good old days" are now defined as before we had a personal experience with the word "pandemic."

I've also heard Christians talk about the "good old days" of the early church; before 21st century church problems. The believers in the book of Acts didn't have to deal with styles of worship, since they were making it up as they went. They didn't argue over the use and cost of technology, computers, projectors, whether the sound was too loud, etc. They didn't quarrel about remodeling the church building; they met in houses. And, I guess, the face mask hadn't been invented. Yet a careful reading of Scripture reveals that followers of Jesus have always struggled with issues. Should Gentile believers obey the Hebrew traditions? How does a local fellowship ensure everyone is properly cared for?

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From the desk....

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How does the church relate to the Roman Empire? The church in Corinth was being divided over the issue of who was the better servant of God - Paul or Apollos [1 Corinthians 3:1-4]. It was so bad in the Galatian church that Paul described them as "biting and devouring one another." [Galatians 5:15]

James asks a simple question, "What causes the quarrels and fights among you [Christians]?" And, just as quickly, he answers his own question with a question: "Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you?" [James 4:1] In order to avoid the battles that we fight with others, we must win the battle that wages within our own heart. Peace must win the day.

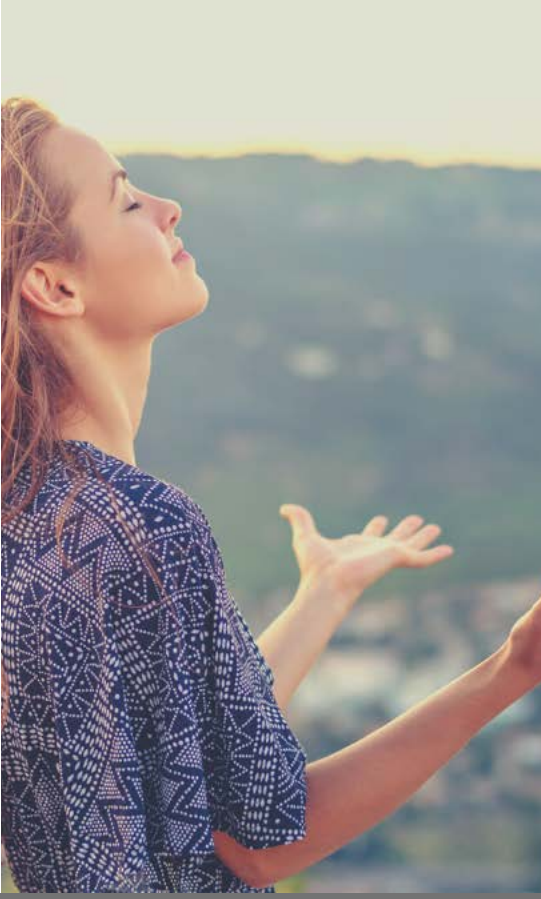
The Christian life is not exempt from temptation or the concerns of life. We're real people; we live in the real world. Jesus said that his followers would have trouble living in this sinful world. We have a different set of morals, and a different view of life and eternity. He said, "I am sending you out as lambs among wolves." [Luke 10:3] Wolves eat lambs. Yet we are called to live out the peace that Jesus gives in real and practical ways. That is true in our relationship with each other and the culture around us.

David wrote, "Work hard at living in peace with others." [Psalm 34:14] The Lord said, "...work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I send you into exile." [Jeremiah 29:7] Paul wrote, "Do your part to live in peace with everyone, as much as possible." [Romans 12:18] What is more precious than peace in our church, in our family, in our heart and mind? To know Jesus is to know peace; peace with God and peace within your own heart. Satan still tries to disturb us, but we must trust God and his peace. This is to be the experience of the church. May that be true for each of us today and in the days to come.

In Christ's service,



What is more precious than peace in our church, in our family, in our heart and mind?
-Bruce Hill



National Conference 2021

By now, you know there will be a National Conference this May.

The theme is

“Know Him Better, Love Him More.”

How do you handle stress? That’s something we’ve all been dealing with for the last year and, I’m afraid to say, we’ll continue to deal with as the pandemic and its effects continue. According to a popular website, “Research shows that stress spills over into our relationships, causing a wide range of problems. When people are under a lot of stress, they become distracted, withdrawn and less affectionate.” How does the stress you’ve been under effect your relationship with Jesus? In the course of one day, Job lost everything that was precious to him. In the overwhelming stress of loss, when everything was different and lost, and only God remained, the question was; was God enough? All the stress we have been experiencing will do one of two things in our relationship with Jesus: it will cause us to withdraw and become less affectionate; or it will cause us to want to “Know Him Better, Love Him More.”

The BIG question continues to be – will National Conference be in-person or virtual? Our plan is that the members of the National Ministry Team will meet on March 18 and make the big National Conference decision: in-person or virtual. Our hope and prayer is that we will be able to meet face-to-face and enjoy the fellowship that is part of conferencing and is so vital to the life of our connectional denomination.

Pastors and Lay Delegates will receive an email announcing the decision. National Conference registration will then go “live” on our website (www.eccenter.com) the following week. Please keep our leaders in prayer as they make this critical decision and watch your email and our website for the announcement and registration information.





The Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise

- 1 ASK THE LORD TO CLEARLY LEAD OUR NATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM AS FINAL DECISIONS ARE MADE CONCERNING NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021.
- 2 PRAY FOR SAFETY AS I TRAVEL TO OHIO AND ILLINOIS TO PREACH AND VISIT PASTORS AND CHURCHES.
- 3 JOIN ME IN PRAYING FOR OUR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AS THEY TOO CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC IN THEIR COUNTRIES.
- 4 PRAY FOR LOCAL PASTORS AND LEADERS AS PLANS ARE FINALIZED FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER CELEBRATIONS.
- 5 ASK THE LORD TO BLESS THE WORK OF OUR CAMPS (CAMP ECCO, ROCK RIVER, AND TWIN PINES) AS THEY PREPARE FOR THE SUMMER CAMPING SEASON.
- 6 PRAY FOR THE CONTINUING WORK OF THE STATIONING COMMITTEE AND PRAISE THE LORD FOR THE PROGRESS MADE SO FAR.
- 7 THANK THE LORD THAT OUR FAMILY WILL ALL BE TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE OUR TWIN SONS' 40TH BIRTHDAY! (HOW DID THEY GET THAT OLD?)
- 8 PRAISE THE LORD FOR THE WAY THE PASTORS IN OUR 13 DISTRICTS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN FELLOWSHIP, PRAYER, AND MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES.
- 9 THANK GOD THAT THROUGH THE WEEKS OF LENT WE CAN WORSHIP AND EVEN CELEBRATE A SUFFERING SAVIOR WHO GAVE HIS ALL THAT WE MAY HAVE LIFE IN ITS FULLNESS.
- 10 PRAISE THE LORD THAT EVEN THOUGH SO MANY PARTS OF OUR COUNTRY HAVE EXPERIENCED A COLD AND SNOWY WINTER WE TURN THE CLOCKS AHEAD (MARCH 13) AND...

1 JOHN 2:3,5

Spring
IS ON THE WAY!



News from Executive Director

Due Dates

January 15

Annual Disability Premium

January 25

2020 4th Quarter Report
2020 Annual Statistical Report

If you have not already done so, please forward these to office@eccenter.com.

March 1

2021 Church Questionnaire
Worker's Compensation Audit Form

April 15

Benefit Corporation
Administrative Fee

Worker's Compensation Audit Forms:

Thanks to everyone who has returned the Worker's Compensation Audit form in a timely manner. The return rate for the second year in a row is very good. It is important that we receive all the salary information to obtain an accurate worker's compensation billing. Missing information will be estimated and most likely estimated higher than actual, resulting in a higher bill. Please help yourself and other EC Churches by returning the Worker's Compensation Audit form.

Annual Disability Premium:

The annual disability premium, \$100, was due January 15 and the Benefits Corporation administrative fee, \$125, is due by April 15, 2020. 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 in a timely manner and a few have submitted the administrative fee and we thank you for your diligence and hard work.

2021 Ministry Funds Form:

Treasurers, please begin using the 2021 Ministry Fund forms for 2021 offerings. Offerings collected in December 2020 should be remitted on the 2020 Ministry Fund form.

Pastoral Compensation Forms:

To date only about 50% of pastoral compensation forms have been returned. 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.

Health Insurance:

Pastors and churches are permitted to obtain health insurance outside of the denominational sponsored plan. If you have obtained health insurance outside of the denominational plan, please be aware of the possible tax consequences and be diligent in the compliance requirements.

Please contact Kevin Henry or David King with any questions.

Kevin Henry
Executive Director
khenry@eccenter.com

David King
Benefits Administrator
dking@eccenter.com

Kingdom Extension Community News



Cash for Missional Coaching

Remember the last training event you attended? No? That is not unusual. That probably also means the training did not stick long enough to become a new ministry adventure. That is also not unusual. Perhaps you are now hesitant to attend another workshop or teaching-learning experience. Don't be!

The Kingdom Extension Community (KEC) would like to partner with you (pastor) or your leadership team or congregation to make sure your next learning experience becomes ministry. The KEC would like to help pay for up to six months of coaching attached to training and ministry that is missional or Kingdom-focused. That is, we would like to pay for coaching designed to help you make use of new learning that moves you and your church family out of the building to develop a ministry not attached to what happens in your sanctuary.

What might that look like? A church plant. A dinner church. A fresh expression of church. This is about creating a ministry where one wasn't before, to people who were not ministered to before. Interested? Let's talk.

Powerful Leadership & Prepared Members

It's a great feeling to know that your leadership positions are all filled. It is equally satisfying to know your people want to make a difference. It's a different reality, however, knowing the right person is in the right role for the right reason.

God empowers his Church through spiritual gifts, holy enablements given to each believer. Identifying and developing our spiritual gifts are steps toward impactful ministry. We can do the best we can do, or we can thrive as we effectively serve out of our gifting.

A Leadership Grip workshop (Live or Zoom) would provide insights on building a better church leadership team, as well as, help you equip your congregation for powerful ministries. And, maybe save someone from burnout!

Let's talk about how this workshop might fit the needs of your church family and when a workshop would fit your schedule.



KEC CONTACT

Rev. Les Cool / 717-951-8433 / revlescool@gmail.com

Kingdom Extension Community News

The Art of Neighboring: Connecting with our Local Communities

This hands-on workshop is designed to help you explore how to identify points of intersection between the DNA of your church and that of the surrounding community. With these insights, participants will examine ways to build missional “bridges” between church and community.

The aim of the interactive sessions will be for each church represented to generate action steps to build relationships and ministries with your neighbors.

Three teaching sessions (Who are we? Who are they? What bridges can be created between us?) are followed by hands-on workshops (church teams actually processing the material that was shared).

The final session is designed to leave each church team with solid plans and action steps toward missional connections with their communities.

Let’s talk about how this workshop might fit the needs of your church family and when a workshop would fit your schedule.



The Art of Conversation Conversation!

When was the last time you started a conversation? With a stranger? Smooth? Awkward? When was the last time a conversation included Jesus?

As Christians, we get to talk about Jesus. Sharing Jesus usually starts with a conversation and a relationship and trust. Consider developing new conversational skills.

This 2- or 3-hour workshop is a conversation about conversations. There is an art to making space for conversations. Discover resources, develop ideas, and practice the art of moving from “hello” to something deeper, even gospel focused.

Deciding to be prepared usually guarantees they will happen. Resources and ideas will address starting conversations, redirecting conversations, and leaving space for future conversations.

Let’s talk about how this workshop might fit the needs of your church family and when a workshop would fit your schedule.



KEC CONTACT

Rev. Les Cool / 717-951-8433 / revlescool@gmail.com

Global Ministries Community

Our Missionary Family News



- **New 2021 Missions Directories** are available. Please contact Church Center if you would like one emailed to you, either as a PDF or Word document. If you need a print copy, one will be mailed to you. We do not put the directory on our website since some of our missionaries assist those in restricted access countries.

- **Jamie and Anita Farr:** We currently are walking through an insurance battle to cover the cost of repairing our roof which has a couple of leaks in it. We are trying to get the roof repaired. Pray for schooling for the four kids as they each face different challenges in education and schooling options during this season. Pray for Anita as she moderates and manages the schooling and many of the unique challenges that result with running the social engagements during a pandemic. Jamie leads a number of teams as VP of Planning, Staffing and Development for Wycliffe USA. His teams are going through a comprehensive review process to determine how to better serve internal and external customers. Leading and sending people in a COVID world requires both receiving partners and those preparing for service to adjust. Pray for wisdom on both sides of this challenging pandemic.

- **Beth Grimm:** pray for the missionary kid (MK) families who have struggling students who are not receiving the type of intervention they need in their MK schools due to well-trained staff shortages.

- **Prayer for travel:** for missionary families who are trying to travel to and from the field with many of their normal travel routes closed due to COVID restrictions and/or testing/vaccination requirements.

- **Ed and Valerie Schubert:** COVID-19 has brought wide-spread hunger to Honduras. Double hurricanes, Eta and Iota, brought further devastation and desperation when they slammed into Honduras in November. To combat malnutrition and starvation, we are currently heavily engaged in Food Distribution Outreaches to infants, children, teens, families and elderly members of our community who are at risk for hunger. Between March 30th and December 18th of 2020, we provided generous amounts of emergency food provisions for 14,374 hungry people! We continue to provide these emergency food staples and hurricane relief. Prayer for continued and increased support to continue to meet this overwhelming demand.

- **Missionary Speaking Engagements:** With travel restrictions many plans for international missionaries to be on furlough in the states are tentative. But, many are very eager to share and speak - and are coming up with very creative ways to do so. Reach out to them directly or contact the GMC office for more information.



*Facilitating Mission Workers
Empowering National Churches
Engaging the Local Church*

Rev. Ted Rathman
GMC Associate

Dee Jaramillo
GMC Admin Assistant

ecglobal@eccenter.com
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Ministerial Development Community News

The Institute for Church Leadership

In cooperation with Evangelical Seminary's School of Lifelong Learning, our EC Institute for Church Leadership offers a series of courses in Bible, theology, spiritual disciplines, evangelism, church history, missions, counseling, and more. Anyone can benefit from these opportunities for spiritual enrichment and leadership development.

Pastors, would you please encourage the people in your congregation to consider signing up? Even people living at a distance can participate because the courses are currently entirely on Zoom. Once in-person classes resume, we will still have an online option. These non-credit courses are open to all, without any educational prerequisites. They are not seminary level courses and do not earn credit from Evangelical Seminary. The cost per course is \$230.

Those who wish to enroll can apply online:
<https://evangelical.edu/icl-application-form/>

or contact:

Joel Kime

joel.kime@evangelical.edu

New Testament Survey.

March 30 - May 11 on Tuesdays, 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.

This course will guide the student to explore the unifying message of the New Testament books, the central message of each book, and the underlying concerns of each New Testament author.

Attention will also be given to the background, setting, and major themes of the New Testament as a whole. The course will serve as a general introduction to this part of Scripture, and provide a list of suggested resources for further study.

<https://mdc.eccenter.com>

Rev. Jeff Byerly, MDC Associate
jgbyerly@eccenter.com

Helping
Leaders to
Fit &
Flourish



Spring Happenings at Twin Pines Camp



Spring Craft Retreat - March 18-24

Enjoy a laid-back weekend of fellowship and Bible study while working on your own crafts. There will also be a special craft for all to learn.



Spring Fling

Children's Retreat - April 23-25

A weekend retreat focused for those currently in grades 3-5. Come enjoy Twin Pines in the spring and get ready for the summer. Participating groups must provide chaperones for the weekend. Register by April 6 to receive a free t-shirt for each participant!



Spring Spruce Up - May 4-6

Volunteer during a mid-week to help the ministry "spruce-up" camp and prepare for summer ministry! Projects include both indoor and outdoor sprucing-up. There are always tasks for volunteers of any skill level!



For Ladies Only Retreat - May 11-13

An exciting mid-week retreat "for ladies only." Come enjoy fellowship, worship, and in-depth Bible learning as the retreat looks at what it means to be a woman of God.

New for 2021

Plan Your Own Work Retreat



It is difficult for groups to plan their usual summer service trips due to the pandemic. At the same time, Twin Pines Camp has a lot of work to maintain such a facility. These two become a match and can assist each other's ministry.

Contact Twin Pines and speak with Shawn about bringing a group to help the camp and its ministry. You get to choose how many days and program elements, and Twin Pines provides meals and housing. It's a great combination.

All skill levels are welcome. People may even learn something new.

F.Y.R.E.

Fall Youth Retreat Experience -

November 7-9, 2021



A weekend of experiences for youth groups and individuals to grow in their faith and enjoy a fall retreat. Just like Winter Thaw, F.Y.R.E. will have all of the programming done so as a group leader you can focus on ministering to your group.

Reserve the dates in your Fall calendar now. Space will fill up quickly.



MARCH



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Ministry Fund to: E.C. Church Center 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	Insurance Payment: Benefits Corporation 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	1	2	3	4	5
					<i>Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church</i>	6
7 THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT <i>Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension</i> Violet	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT <i>Self-Denial Offering</i> <i>Daylight Savings Begins</i> Violet	15 Health Insurance Due	16 Loan & Investment Comm. Mtg.	17 Conference Network Team Mtg.	18 National Ministry Team Mtg.	19	20 EC Leader deadline
				Twin Pines Craft Retreat		
21 PASSION SUNDAY Violet Twin Pines Craft Retreat	22	23	24	25	26	27 Camp ECCO's Fundraising Event @ Wedgewood Park
					Twin Pines Men's Retreat	
28 PALM SUNDAY Violet Twin Pines Men's Retreat	29	30	31	Self-Denial Offering: E.C. Church Center 100 W. Park Avenue (designate--Self-Denial Offering)		

APRIL



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Ministry Fund to: E.C. Church 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067	Insurance Payment to: Benefits Corporation 100 W. Park Ave. Myerstown, PA 17067			1 MAUNDY THURSDAY	2 GOOD FRIDAY Church Center Closed Day of Prayer for the E.C. Church	3
4 EASTER SUNDAY Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extensions White	5 Church Center Closed	6	7	8	9	10
11 White	12	13	14	15 Health Insurance Due	16	17 Camp ECCO OPEN UP Workday
18 White	19	20 StoneRidge Board Mtg. EC Leader deadline	21	22	23	24 Twin Pines Spring Fling: Children's Retreat
25 Twin Pines Spring Fling: Children's Retreat White	26	27	28	29	30	

EC LEADER



EC Center Staff and Associates

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- Rev. Jeffrey Byerly - Ministerial Development: jgbyerly@bethesdaec.org
- Rev. Leslie Cool - Kingdom Extension: revlescool@gmail.com



Who We Are

"you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light."
1 Peter 2:9



Contributors

- Bishop Bruce Hill
- Kevin Henry
- Rev. Les Cool
- Rev. Joel Kime
- Rev. Ted Rathman
- Rev. Dr. Sam Yeager

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