

EC LEADER

A PUBLICATION OF EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 2017

ANGER; it seems to be the key word in our culture and world today. Everyone seems to be angry about something. In fact, it almost seems to be a requirement: you have to pick a side and be angry. If you're not angry with someone or about something the assumption is that something's wrong with your. We watch the ceaseless flow of news and opinions coming out of Washington, DC; protests that move from city to city and region to region; protestors and counter-protestors; acts of domestic and international terrorism. I'm not sure who's angrier—the hate groups or the anti-hate groups. We are expected and even, at times challenged to pick a side, get angry, and join the cancony of opinions on Facebook. Twitter, or wherever you can stir up more anger.

We live in a fallen world. Sin is real. We see injustice, suffering, prejudice, racism, hatred, bigotry, and a whole list of other sins every day. So how is the follower of Jesus to respond? If we're truly following Jesus the

answer is that we should respond as Jesus did. It is the right answer but it's not an easy answer. As I read the account of Jesus' time on earth I see him identifying with the "least of these." He saw people for who they are—created in the image of God—people who were lost and hurt. Jesus had compassion for them, reached out to them, extended grace to them.



In a culture that is as lost as our, it's easy to think the church should simply withdraw and take care of our own. But the reality is that it is the church, and by the church I mean individual Christians, who must step into our culture and provide moral and spiritual leadership in whatever ways we can. Let me suggest a few things we can do every day as Christians:

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- Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your heart from giving in to the spirit of anger which so easily invades our hearts and minds and tempts us to join in a battle that seeks only to hurt and destroy others.
- Be open to all the opportunities to engage people in meaningful spiritual conversation as they try to make some sense out of a world that has lost its collective mind.



- Chose to live and speak as a healthy positive influence and advocate for justice and a biblically moral society.
- Seek out settings in which you can actively and intentionally foster healing and reconciliation as a minister of Godly grace.

In Christ's service,

Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise List

1. Join me in praying for our nation and our leaders; national, state, and local.
2. Pray for all the students and teachers, including those at Evangelical Seminary, who are beginning another year of school.
3. Ask for the Lord's direction as the Stationing Committee deals with a few situations that have come to light since our time together at National Conference. Pray for the pastors and congregations involved.
4. Pray for all our congregations as they make final preparations for a very busy and full fall season of ministry.
5. Pray for our brothers and sisters in the EC Church of Nepal who have been impacted by the recent flood.
6. Praise the Lord for the faithful work done by our denominational leaders, communities, and committees.
7. Thank the Lord for the great response to the need of a vehicle for Lalrosiem Songate in Northeast India.
8. Praise God for all the congregations who continue to faithfully support the work of the denomination in prayer and with their giving through Ministry Funds.
9. Praise the Lord for the reports I am receiving from churches and individuals who spent time this summer intentionally connecting with the people living in their neighborhoods and communities.
10. Praise the Lord that we were able to get away for some end of summer family vacation time!



Ordination Services



The ordination of **Rev. Wayne T. Houck**
Trinity Evangelical Congregational
Church
Royersford, Pennsylvania
Sunday, September 10, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **David M. Julian**
Grace Community Church
Willow Street, Pennsylvania
Sunday, October 8, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Gene L. Stevenson**
Zion Evangelical Congregational Church
Myerstown, Pennsylvania
Sunday, October 15, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Andrew D. Carr**
Wedgewood Park Evangelical
Congregational Church
Youngstown, Ohio
Sunday, October 22, 4:00 p.m.

The ordination of **Rev. Jeffrey S.
Stansbury**
First Evangelical Congregational Church
Palmyra, Pennsylvania
Sunday, January 28, 4:00 p.m.



Global Ministries Community

Evangelical College of Theology Vehicle Project:

Thanks to your generous support we were able to help Rev. Dr. Lalrosiem Songate purchase a vehicle for Evangelical College of Theology. Not only will this vehicle help the college with partnership development, our willingness to help them purchase it also serves as a great encouragement to all the members of the EC Church in India.



Liberia Literacy: VBS Project Update:

Our VBS project this year is a project to help our EC Church of Liberia fund a literacy project that will focus on teaching our many illiterate members how to read the Basa translation of the Bible. This will greatly increase our ability to do dis-



cipliship, evangelism and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our goal is set at \$10,000. As of August 8 we have received \$5,952. We would like to be able to send the funds by October 1 so that this program can begin during their dry season when travel is much easier. If your VBS has not yet sent in their offerings, please remind your treasurers to do so. AND if individuals, groups or congregations would like to donate to this project just make your donation payable to GMC, clearly marked "Liberia Literacy Project."



October GMC lunch & brunch

- Friday, October 20—Pastors & Wives lunch at Evangelical Seminary (11:30 am)
- Saturday, October 21—Mission Brunch at Country Fare, Myerstown (10:00 am)
- Monday, October 23—Mission Brunch at Wedgewood Park EC, Youngstown, Ohio (10:00 am)

** watch your mail to learn more about these events and how to participate



October is when we celebrate **Pastor Appreciation Month**. What a wonderful thing to celebrate and thank God for—the life and ministry of your pastor(s)! It's a great idea and we hope that every E.C. congregation will make a special effort to appreciate and celebrate their pastor(s) sometime during the month, or maybe even all month long! One translation of the Bible tells us they are worthy of “double honor.” (1 Timothy 5:17) Your pastor notices when someone takes the time to appreciate a particular message or act of service. Set aside a special time of recognition, honor, and celebration during this Pastor Appreciation Month. It will be a big encouragement to your pastor to know the congregation actually notices what he does and cares about him. So celebrate your pastor this month!



The Power of Music



You would probably agree that music is indeed powerful. It has the power to transport us mentally and emotionally to another time and place completely change our mood. It is also used as a therapeutic aid to help reach residents, accelerate the healing process and calm anxieties. StoneRidge Retirement Living* uses music to enhance the lives of our residents. Pictured here is resident Dorothy Kinzer playing her harmonica and singing along with Tess Warner (l), activity assistant who is also a graduate student studying music therapy playing along on her guitar, and Heather Nelson ®, activity assistant who is playing her flute. Look for an article on music therapy in the upcoming summer issue of *StoneRidge Living*. If you are not presently re-

ceiving *StoneRidge Living*, you can request a copy by sending an email to StoneRidgeLiving@StoneRidgeRetirement.com.

*StoneRidge Retirement Living Communities is comprised of four retirement communities in South Central Pennsylvania. Locations include StoneRidge Poplar Run and StoneRidge Towne Centre both in Myerstown and Church of God Home in Carlisle and Schoolyard Square in Pine Grove. For more information about options available for you or a loved one, visit us online at www.StoneRidgeRetirement.com or call us at 717-866-3553. StoneRidge Retirement Living is about just that—Living!



The Bishop's preaching/speaking calendar is full for 2017 and a few dates have already been booked for 2018. If you are interested in having Bishop Hill speak at your church, now is the time to start thinking about it. No church is too big or too small for him to schedule a Sunday but it is first-come-first-served and you need to invite him. So as you plan your congregation's 2018 church service schedule see when it would be good to have the Bishop come preach. He enjoys meeting new friends, is a pretty good preacher, and is even willing to wear socks and a tie if necessary. If you'd like to schedule a date please email your requested date(s) to his Administrative Assistant, Jodi Earhart, jearhart@eccenter.com, and she will work with him in developing his schedule for 2018. He hopes to see you soon!

Kingdom Extension Community

Resources for the Local Church

Big Idea Resources... is offering two free “all church” programs—Starting Over and Finding Your Way Back, including sermons, lessons, graphics, etc. (Check them out at <http://bigidearesources.com/>) If nothing else, you might be inspired to think about new ideas. While there, take a look at Big Idea.

Exponential Publications... check out and download Bobby Harrington’s new book, *Becoming a Disciple Maker* (<https://exponential.org/resource-ebooks/>). While you’re at the site, check out the many other books that have been sponsored (for free!) by Exponential.

New Small Church... is a website dedicated to “encouraging, connecting & equipping innovative small church leaders.” (Find it at... <http://newsmallchurch.com/start-here/read-these-first/>) There is something for everyone, even stuff we might not need or want...today. Maybe tomorrow.



Training for the Local Church

Peers in Ministry,

We know that discipleship is fundamental to healthy spiritual lives, for our own lives, as well as for the lives of those we seek to influence for Jesus. We also know that discipleship doesn’t just happen. You need to plan. Do you have a plan? Is your plan working.

There may be many models for doing discipleship. But there are only a few basic elements of effective discipleship. 3DM has mastered the art of discipling, focusing mission, and training others to do the same.

A 3DM Discipleship and Mission Workshop is being held in our area, October 16 & 17 at the Middletown First Church of God (245 West High Street; Middletown, PA 17057).

More information is available at: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/3dm-discipleship-and-mission-harrisburg-pa-tickets-35763220756?mc_eid=8d44bd7fee&mc_cid=b5b7d0f17d

During this two-day event you will:

- Explore the dynamics of making disciples of Jesus who can join God in his mission.
- Discover the principles of going from having a ministry to leading a movement: reproducing disciples instead of just recruiting more volunteers, multiplying communities instead of just adding more people.

A 3DM Discipleship and Mission workshop is a chance to taste and experience:

- Teaching that will help frame discipleship and mission in a new light.
- Training with your team to help you apply principles contextually.
- Effective vehicles for discipleship and mission, such as huddles and missional communities.
- What it’s like to be part of a 3DM Learning Community (two-year journey of culture change).

If the dates for this workshop do not work for you, just keep watch. Other dates and locations are in the works. We will keep you posted.

Les Cool

for the Kingdom Extension Community

717-951-8433

Save the Date: Kingdom Extension Invitation

*Dinner Church Encounter: Sinking Spring, PA
Saturday, October 28, 2017*

This Dinner Church Encounter is a 1-day training event, beginning with the rich theological history of the dinner church vision, and progressing throughout the day toward more practical insights that would enable a leader or group to imagine hosting a Dinner Church in their town. The training day includes light refreshments in the morning, lunch and light refreshments in the afternoon. Check out: <https://freshexpressionsus.org/event/dinner-church-encounter/>

Evangelical Congregational Church

100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
717-866-7581
www.eccenter.com



News from the Executive Director:

The active pastor's health insurance renewal negotiations are no different than previous years. The renewal rates from Capital Blue Cross are a double digit rate increase and there is a possibility that we may switch insurance carriers. However, with the healthy cushion in the HRA I anticipate rate increases to the churches to be around 7%-10%. The EC Benefits Trustees are meeting in early September and the new rates will be announced shortly after the meeting.

As we are currently in our open enrollment period, 60 days before the start of the new plan year of October 1, you can make changes to your coverage, join the plan, add dependents, etc. outside of change of life events. Please contact Dave King if changes to your health insurance coverage are needed.

Please remember to submit all of your deductible and co-insurance claims to PrimePay on a timely basis. PrimePay will track all of your covered out of pocket healthcare expenses, including the first \$500 in covered medical expenses and the first \$1,800 in prescription co-pays and outpatient therapy visits

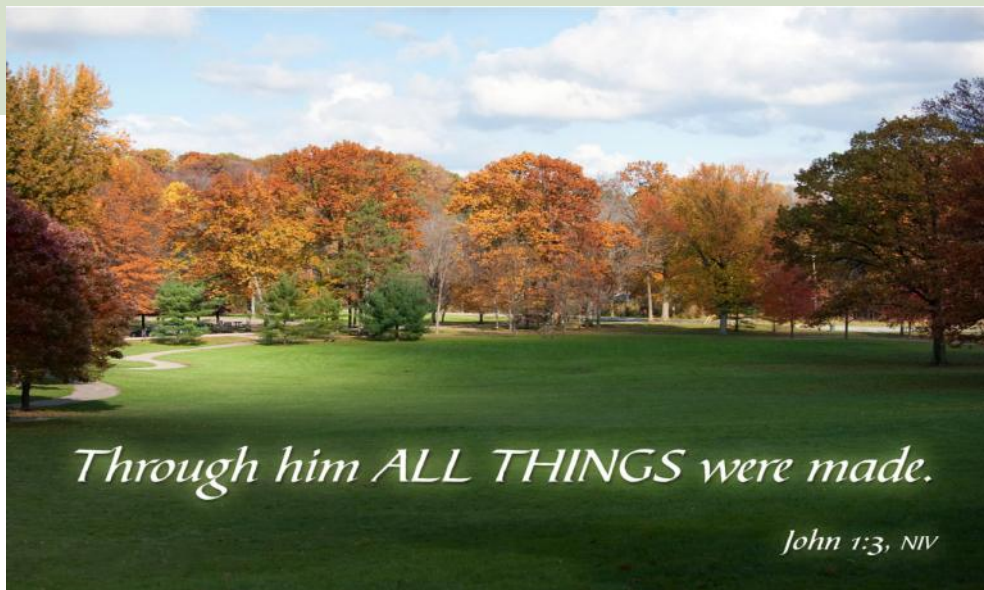
(speech, physical, occupational and respiratory therapy) that are the responsibility of the pastor. Timely submission of claims helps EC Benefits monitor and assess the cost efficiency of the health insurance plan. Also, covered deductible and co-insurance claims must be incurred by September 30, 2017 and submitted to PrimePay for reimbursement ninety (90) days from the end of the plan year which is December 29, 2017. Contact Dave King or Kevin Henry with any question on submitting claims to PrimePay.

There are a number of churches that have not remitted the \$100/yr disability insurance premium for each assigned pastor. If the disability premium is not received for the year the pastor is not covered. The disability premium is listed in the treasurer's guide on the EC website and is due by January 15 of every year.

Please contact Dave King, dking@eccenter.com or Kevin Henry, khenry@eccenter.com with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry
Controller

David King
Benefits Administrator



SEPTEMBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3 Day of Prayer for Church Planting	4 LABOR DAY Church Center closed	5	6	7 Benefits Corp. Mtg.	8 1 Day of Prayer for the EC Church Church Center closed	9
10 Rev. Wayne T. Houck Ordination	11 Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	12	13	14 Conference Network Team Mtg.	15 Ch Pension Contrib Due Health Ins Prem Due Est Tax Pmt. Due	16
17 CAMP ECCO WOMEN'S RETREAT	18 OCTOBER info due for EC Leader	19	20	21	22 CAMP ECCO WOMEN'S RETREAT	23
24	25	26	27 Church Health Community Mtg.	28 Conference Network Team Mtg.	29	30 CAMP ECCO MEN'S RETREAT

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

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

OCTOBER 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 WORLD WIDE COMMUNION Kingdom Extension Offering Day of Prayer for Church Planting	2	3	4	5 Evangelical Seminary Board Mtg.	6 Day of Prayer for the EC Church	7
8 David Julian Ordination	9 COLUMBUS DAY Prayer Mobilization Team Mtg.	10 Ministerial Development Community Mtg. Episcopal Committee Mtg.	11	12 Conference Network Team Mtg.	13	14
15 Church Pension Contribution Due Health Insurance	16	17 Global Ministries Community Mtg.	18 Conference Network Team Mtg.	19 National Ministry Team Mtg.	20	21
22 Andrew Carr Ordination Pastors' Wives Retreat—Twin Pines	23 Info for NOVEMBER EC Leader due	24	25	26 Conference Network Team Mtg.	27 Pastors' Wives Retreat—Twin Pines	28
29 REFORMATION SUNDAY	30	31		Pastors' Conference—Twin Pines		

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

Home Missions Offering to:
E.C. Church Center
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067
(designated—Home Missions Offering)

Insurance/Pension Payments to:
Benefits Corp.
100 West Park Avenue
Myerstown, PA 17067