



Evangelical Congregational Church E.C. National News

Winter, 2018

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New Zion celebrates 120th Anniversary

The congregation of New Zion Evangelical Congregational Church, Emlenton, PA celebrated their 120th anniversary on Sunday, January 7. The day commemorated the dedication of their building as New Zion United Evangelical Church on January 2, 1898. Rev. W.W. Elrick was the pastor of New Zion and other churches in the Venango Charge. Sixty-five charter members were present. Bishop Stafford and Presiding Elder Feitt conducted the service with the pastor.

New Zion's roots can be traced to 1825 when German Lutherans, Andrew and Catherine Weaver, migrated from Centre to Venango County. They soon joined the Evangelical Association class meeting movement. Circuits were formed and served by itinerant preachers. By 1834, the Weaver's group was meeting in a schoolhouse they called "The Log Place of Worship." Their son, Samuel, was class leader. The movement spread, becoming a cluster of churches, known as the Venango Charge.

In 1835, a group in southern Richland Township was meeting in the home of their leader, Samuel King. Preacher Samuel Altamous encouraged the meetings to become Evangelical Association Churches. By 1844, the group was organized as such, and had completed, "The Old Black Church." In 1876, Zion Evangelical Association Church dedicated a new building.

In 1891, a denominational

split led to divisions in the Venango churches. Part of the argument was whether congregations or the denomination own church property. EA Churches continued, but the side known as "The Minority", lost property rights and formed new congregations. They aligned themselves with the United Evangelical Church, organized in 1894 at a General Conference in Naperville, Illinois. This change led to the emergence of four new churches: Fern Trinity near Kossuth, Bethany Crossroads near Nickleville, Grace in Ninevah, and New Zion.

The Minority, who were part of Zion, officially lost property rights in 1896. "New Zion" met in a schoolhouse; a home, known as "The Red House;" and a grove. Two years later, construction of the present building began within sight of the parent church. It became "Old Zion" and continues as a United Methodist congregation.

In 1922, most United Evangelical Conferences re-joined the Evangelical Association, but eastern PA churches continued as UE's. In 1927, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Eastern Conference churches' right to own their properties. However, they had to drop their name, because United Evangelicals had merged with the Evangelical Association, forming The Evangelical Church. The following year, The Evangelical Congregational Church was established.

From 1946 to 1953, New



Zion sponsored a church plant in downtown Emlenton. Rev. Richard Osberg, Sr. served both churches from 1950 to 1953. The two merged to become Emlenton-New Zion E.C. Church.

The pastor with the longest tenure is Rev. Charles Campbell, now at Delightful E.C., Southington, Ohio, who served from 1988 to 2014. Bob McGinnis is Lay Delegate to National Conference.

Rev. Gary Brown brought the message, "The Fourth Forty: A Renewed Zion." A luncheon-open house followed the morning service. Special guests were Rev. Gene Lenk and wife, Melanie, from Old Zion. Bishop Bruce Hill and wife, Gloria, paid a special visit on December 31.

Source: *A Brief History of the Venango Charge 1825 to 2000*. Charles E. Cotherman, 2011. (Charlie grew up at Grace E.C. church and a church planter of The Vineyard in Oil City.)

Anthracite churches come together

On Sunday, July 23, churches of the Anthracite District, located in the “coal region” of Pennsylvania, dismissed their usual services to worship together at Herndon Campmeeting. The service was part of Herndon’s annual family campmeeting.

District Field Director, Pastor Brad Hatter, explains, “This was something that was born out of our district pastors’ meetings. We sensed that God was calling us to get our congregations together. All the pastors participated and pushed it in their congregations, and God was faithful as He always is.”

Nearly 300 attended the 10:00 a.m. service. Most were from Anthracite churches, with some from the area, as well as Herndon cottage dwellers. Bishop Bruce Hill brought the message, and communion was served.

Brad serves the Seibert Church in Herndon. Other district churches are Gratz, Mandata, Pitman, Shamokin, Sunbury, Trevorton, Williams Valley, and Williamstown.



“Underdogs” are invited to conference

“Rooting for the Underdog” is a support and learning experience for pastors and leaders of small churches. The conference will take place from 9:00 to 3:30 on Saturday, March 17 at New Life Community Church in Carlisle, PA. It is to be “a day of storytelling, teaching, and mutual encouragement.”

Presenters are Les Cool, Grace E.C., Akron, PA; Ryan Brown, New Life Community; and Ryan Braught, Veritas Church, Lancaster.

Cost is \$35. Register at

www.evangelical.edu/underdog.

Kingdom Extension offers learning opportunities

Fresh Expressions’ National Conference will be held Friday and Saturday, March 16 and 17 at Heritage Fellowship Church in Reston, Virginia. Theme is “From the Steeple to the Street: Leadership in a New Mission Era.” Attendees will be challenged to “fling open the doors and step out into the streets.”

For more information, visit

www.freshexpressionssus.org/FXNG2018, or contact Les Cool at revcool@ptd.net or 717-951-8433.

Exponential East 2018 is offering a live stream conference from Orlando on Tuesday, February 27. Gathering place is Community E.C. Church, Sinking Spring, PA. Hours are 11:00 to 5:30. “Hero Maker” is this year’s theme. To register, contact Les Cool by February 19.



Women plan retreat

“Chosen to Reign” is the theme for the Allegheny-Buckeye Women’s Retreat set for Friday through Sunday, April 13 to 15. Location is Life Ministries “The Castle” near Franklin, PA.

Sandy Phillips, pastor of Oak River Church in Solon, Ohio will be sharing for the third time. Cost is \$110, with limited scholarships available. Contact is Karen Howell, 724-372-0058, poppahowell4@gmail.com



Hymn sings announced

Wedgewood Park E.C. Church is announcing “An Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing” on Sunday, March 11 at 4:30 p.m. The Bell Choir from Lakeside Church in PA will be featured. Contact is Pastor Jim Hansen, 330-757-1934.

Clark’s Valley Zion E.C.

Church is hosting a hymn sing, “Lift Hymn Up!” at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, March 18 sponsored by Twin Pines Camp. Contact cvzoffice@cvzec.org or 717-921-8153.



Calling all crafters

Crafters are invited to a retreat at Twin Pines Camp, Stroudsburg, PA Friday through Sunday, April 6 to 8. Participants bring their own projects and enjoy fellowship while working. For details, visit www.twinpines.org or call 570-629-2411.



ECCO fundraiser announced

ECCO’s Got Talent, a fundraiser for Camp ECCO, Carrollton, Ohio, will be held at Grace E.C. Church, Knox, PA at 5:30 p.m., Saturday, March 24. A meal will be served for \$5.00, and a silent auction will be included. Money raised will purchase picnic tables for the pavilion. If planning to attend, contact Annette Campbell by March 14. To enter the talent contest, contact her by March 19. Phone is 330-727-8171.



FAMILY NEWS

Ordinations

David Julian, Worship Pastor at Grace Community Church, Willow Street, PA, was ordained a Deacon at Grace on October 8. Message was by Rev. Michael Sigman, Lead Pastor. Bishop Bruce Hill presided. Music was provided by David’s wife, Jessica; Shannon Boether; Alyssa Mayersky; and the Grace praise band. Other participants were Don Julian, father; Randy Horner, father-in-law; Rev. Jeffrey Schell; and friends, Pat Baker, Armand Weller, and Adam Swift.

Ordinations



Rev. Gene Stevenson was ordained at Zion E.C. Church, Myerstown on October 15. Gene and wife, Bethanie, have the ministry, Pastoral Support and Ser-

vices. They reside in Palmyra. Message was by Dr. James Ehrman of Evangelical Seminary, Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly, Ministerial Development Associate, presided. Gene's brother, Bryan, and Bethanie brought special music. Other participants were Dr. Tony Blair and Dr. Douglas Buckwalter of Evangelical, Rev. Gary Brown, and Rev. Charles Walker.

Rev. Andrew Carr, pastor at Wedgewood Park E.C. Church, Youngstown, Ohio was ordained in his church on October 22. Andrew's wife is Amber. Rev. Gary Brown brought the message. Rev. James Hansen and the Carr family provided music. Andrew's father, Rev. David Carr of Afolkey, Illinois led in Scripture reading and prayer. Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly conducted the ceremony.

Rev. Jeffrey Stansbury, pastor at Bethany E.C. Church, Lehigh-ton, PA, was ordained at First Church of Palmyra on January 28. Jeff's wife is Vickie. Rev. Charles Walker was host pastor. Message was by Dr. Kenneth Miller of Rothsville St. Paul's. Bishop Bruce Hill and Rev. Jeff Byerly presided. Other participants were Dr. Paul Miller; United Brethren in Christ pastors, Rev. Ron Cook and Rev. Stuart Johns; and Jim Roberts of Christian Residential Opportunities and Social Services. Music was provided by Rev. Rob Valentine and Palmyra's praise band; organist, Gloria Smith; and the Stansbury children, Janae, Jeremy, and Jason.

Welcome Baby

Yoriyoshi and Emiko Abe, church planters in Ebina City, Japan, have a new daughter, **Kanae**, born December 26. The name means "to praise God's grace."



Retirement

Roy and Sue Haglund retired on December 15 after 42 years of service with Mission Aviation Fellowship. They began in Honduras as a pilot and radio operator. Most of their career was at MAF headquarters in Nampa, Idaho.

Recognition

Bob McGinnis, Lay Delegate for Emlenton, PA New Zion was recently recognized by the Pennsylvania School Board Association for 28 years of service to the Allegheny-Clarion Valley School District. Bob is currently board president.



Remembering loved ones...

Rev. Scott Shaffer, 87, of Greenville, PA passed away on October 10. He came to us from the United Methodist Church. He was founding pastor of Lakeside Church in Hermitage. Scott served in the U.S. Navy. Before entering ministry, he worked at a bakery, owned a gas station, and worked in sales and insurance. He is survived by wife, Ann; daughter, Judith; and son, David.

Rev. Gordon Straube, 87, of Boyertown, PA passed away on October 10. He served Bethany Church in

Pleasantville for 35 years. Gordon serviced in the U.S. Army, specializing in woodworking. He built the table used for the signing of the Korean War Armistice. He continued work as a cabinet maker. He is survived by wife, Betty, and daughters, Lisa and Lori.

Ruth Friedlund, 89, wife of the late Rev. Maurice Friedlund, passed away on October 30. She was a resident of Shipperville, PA. She came from Chicago, where she worked in the Youth for Christ office for Rev. Billy Graham. Ruth assisted Maurice in the founding of Riverhill Church. She loved coaching Bible quiz teams. She is survived by daughter, Susan, and sons, James, Robert, and John (pastor at Boyertown Trinity). She was preceded in death by daughter, Karen, and son, David.

Jeannette Inman, 55, of Willow Street, PA passed away on November 11. As a former pastor's wife, she ministered in the congregations of Canyon Falls, Kentucky and Conestoga, PA Bethel, which she adopted as her home church. She worked as a nurse and was an accomplished artist. She is survived by daughters, Angela, Christina, and Bethany; and sons, Joshua, Andrew, Stephen and Josiah.

Rev. Robert Daneke, Sr., 78, of Allentown, PA passed away on November 18. He served four churches in PA and was Superintendent of the Eastern District of the Eastern Conference from 1986 to 1994. Bob was founding pastor of Hope Community Church in Fogelsville, where he completed 50 years of ministry. He is survived by wife, Barbara; daughter, Laurie; and sons, James and Robert, Jr. (pastor at Horizon Church in Allentown).

Rev. Major John Gordon, 74, of Palmyra, PA passed away on December 4. He served for 30 years in the National Guard. John worked



with adolescents and seniors at the Elmira Psychiatric Center in New York. He was also Director of Adult Daycare for Lebanon County. As a Local Preacher, he served Immanuel Church in Dreherstown and was a Lay Pastor at First Church in Palmyra. He is survived by wife, Judith; son, Jeffrey; and daughter, Jessica.

Missionary Kathryn Kunkel, 79, of Meridian, Idaho passed away on December 6. She was a science teacher and worked in special education at Meridian High School. She served with her husband, Donald, in Village Missions for 50 years. She is survived by her husband and son, Don. She was preceded in death by son, Jon.

Rev. Kenneth Weaver, 96, of New Holland, PA passed away on December 11. He was a chaplain for The Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers. Ken served six churches, was a Conference Evangelist, and a Director of Twin Pines Camp. He was also an Aflac Insurance representative. He was preceded in death by wife, Doris. He is survived by daughters, Nancy, Caroline, and Angela and son, James.

Beverly Osberg, 89, wife of the late Rev. Richard Osberg, Sr., passed away on December 21. She lived in Ninevah (rural Knox), PA. Beverly grew up in Monroe, Michigan. She taught elementary school in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. She is survived by sons, Richard, Jr. (pastor at Grace Church in Knox), and Dennis.

Rev. Robert Zetterberg, 88, of Loveland, Ohio passed away on December 22. He was a native of Chicago. He served with the U.S. Marine Corps in Korea. He pastored churches in Illinois and Ohio and was Western Conference Superintendent for 8 years. Bob loved singing and was Conference song leader for many years. He is survived by wife, Evelyn; daughters, Sandra and Kari; and sons, Robert, Jr. and William. He was pre-

ceded in death by son, Curtis, and grandchildren, Joshua and Kristin.

Rev. Richard Kern, 77, of York and Dallastown, PA passed away on January 16. He served 7 churches in PA and New Jersey. Richard was also a chaplain at the Colonial Manor and Heatherbank nursing homes. He was a member of Arlington E.C. Church in Red Lion. He is survived by wife, Phyllis; daughter, Sharon; and sons, Mark and David.

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