

EC LEADER

A publication of the Evangelical Congregational Church



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FROM THE DESK

Bishop Randy Sizemore

Practicing Christians

"How do we not grow weary in well doing especially in this hot mess in which we live?... practice, practice, practice!"



Click [HERE](#) for the Bishop's September video message



Speaking Schedule for 2024

Bishop Randy is now scheduling his 2024 preaching schedule.

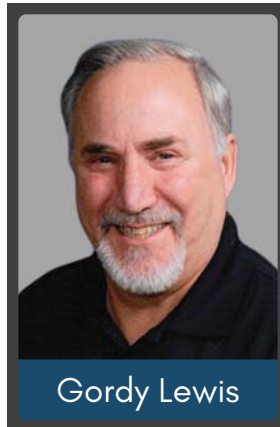
If you would like to schedule him at your church, please contact Bishop Randy directly at rsizemore@eccenter.com.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS

Celebrating Ministry Milestones

Please join me in a hearty, "well done!" to the following pastors marking significant milestones in their ministries. We thank God for your faithful service!

Celebrating 50 years of EC Credentials

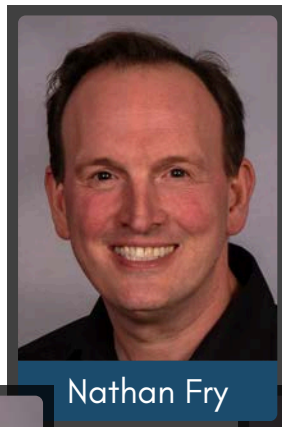


Gordy Lewis

Celebrating 25 years of EC Credentials



Noel Blancaflor



Nathan Fry



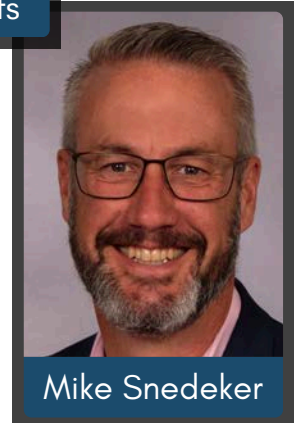
Kevin Roberts



Chuck Campbell



Dave Long



Mike Snedeker

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS KEVIN HENRY

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Kevin Henry
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with any questions
or call
717-866-7581

Are you tired of the hassle and costs associated with paper checks? It's time to streamline your payment process and join the growing number of churches that have switched to electronic payments. Thirty EC Churches are saving the cost of a paper check, envelope and stamp by remitting their ministry funds electronically. Electronic payments save time, reduce errors and are safer than a paper check by reducing the risk of fraud and theft. Here is a short video (5 min), [Online Ministry Fund Processing](#), to review the online ministry fund remittance process. To get started processing ministry fund payments electronically, please contact Kevin Henry, khenry@eccenter.com.

Additionally, electronic remittance processes are available for Global Ministries contributions, Kingdom Extension Community contributions, Loan Payments and EC Benefits premiums. Contact Kevin Henry, khenry@eccenter.com, to begin utilizing electronic payment processing.

The projections for the 2025 Social Security COLA are in the 2% to 3% range, most likely less than the 2024 increase of 3.2%. The official release of the Social Security COLA is normally in October but also seems to be

released later and later every year. The Pastoral Compensation Committee annual report approved at the May 2024 National Conference continued the recommendation of awarding pastor salary increases at the Social Security COLA increase. Most likely there will also be a moderate increase in health insurance premiums effective January 2025. We will not have the 2025 health insurance renewal until October.

There are several churches that have not remitted the \$100/yr disability insurance premium and the \$125/yr benefit services fee. If the disability premium is not received for the year, the pastor is not covered by disability insurance. The disability premium is listed in the treasurer's guide on the EC website and is due by **January 15** every year. The \$125/yr benefit services fee is due **April 15** every year and is due from every church with an assigned pastor.

Please contact Kevin Henry, khenry@eccenter.com, or Bethany White, bwhite@eccenter.com, with any questions or problems.

Kevin Henry
Executive Director

Bethany White
Benefits Specialist

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS

Semi-Annual Reports, covering the time period from January 1 to June 30, 2024, were due on **July 25, 2024**. Thank you to all who have submitted their reports!

If you have not yet submitted your semi-annual report, you may do so [online](#) (Be sure to click on the **submit** button after entering all of your information!) or by filling in the [pdf](#) version of the form and either mailing it to EC Church Center or saving and attaching it to an email to office@eccenter.com.

As always, we are here to help. If you need assistance accessing or completing the form, please call the office at 717.866.7581.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NEWS KEVIN HENRY

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 or call
717-866-7581

Free Money Is Going Fast -

~~\$10,000~~ ~~\$8,000~~ ~~\$6,000~~ ~~\$5,500~~ ~~\$4,000~~

Did you know that financial stress is one of the leading causes of workplace distraction and decreased productivity? It's true. When employees are worried about money, it can impact their focus, job performance and overall well-being. That is why we are excited to offer you the opportunity to improve your financial health and earn some extra cash at the same time. Our online financial health training program is designed to equip you with the knowledge and tools you need to make informed financial decisions. From budgeting and saving to investing and retirement planning, you will learn practical strategies to help you reach your financial goals.

To encourage you to prioritize your financial well-being, we are offering a \$250 cash gift to all pastors who complete the online financial health training by **December 31, 2024**. That's right – you can get paid to learn how to manage your money better. We have once again partnered with the

National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) to offer Pastoral Financial Health and Church Generosity training. The EC Church was awarded a grant of \$10,000 with \$6,000 previously awarded to thirteen EC pastors, leaving \$4,000 available for additional grants. The training is open to all paid pastoral or ministerial individuals employed by an EC Church. The pastor/minister may be full-time or part-time (no minimum hours); serve as the lead, senior, associate, assistant, youth pastor or serve in outreach or in a music ministry. If you have completed the financial health training previously (2019 – 2021), you are not eligible to receive a second cash gift. The cash gifts are made available by the generosity, vision and ministry of the Lilly Endowment in partnership with the NAE.


To receive a \$250 cash gift, a pastor must complete one of the Pastoral Financial Health modules at <https://naefinancialhealth.online/>. Scroll down the page and select "Create Account". On the next page, enter your information and from the drop-down box of participating denominations, select us, Evangelical Congregational Church. On the next page select one module from the six session Personal Finances Course. Once the module is completed, I will receive an email that the class was completed and send the registered participant the financial gift.

A second \$250 grant will be awarded for the completion of a second module in the Personal Financial Health course. A maximum of \$500 in grants will be awarded per participant. Each training can be completed in 60 to 90 minutes, and these grants are tax-free.

This is a fantastic opportunity to enhance your financial literacy and boost your bank account. So, what are you waiting for? Enroll in the financial health training today and start your journey to financial freedom.

Please contact Kevin Henry, Executive Director, with any questions at (717) 628-2171 or khenny@eccenter.com.





Church Health
Community News
FROM THE DESK
Rev. Wayne Houck, CHC Associate

“Just Do It!”

Jesus made disciples of large crowds, of His smaller group and within His inner circle. We see that many of our churches have small groups, maybe a Sunday School class or Bible study beyond their Sunday morning services. But there is difficulty getting people involved in one-to-one discipleship. We all know the Great Commission: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20, NASB95) But the problem remains; we preach and teach the principle, but our churches are full of people who have never been discipled sitting next to people who have never made a disciple. As a result, churches are not as healthy as they could be. The spiritual growth of the congregation is limited. As the author of Hebrews wrote, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.” (Hebrews 5:12, NASB95) So, how do we get people involved in discipleship?

There may be a culture shift needed in the church. When a congregation is accustomed to being an audience, they are not in the habit of giving their time and energy to each other to help make disciples. Chelsea Kight (CRU.org) offers a simple description of “the ask”:

“To disciple someone is to spend dedicated time with, pray for, build a friendship with and intentionally teach them how to grow in their faith. Typically, a discipling relationship will have one person who has been a Christian for a longer time mentoring someone who has been a Christian for a shorter time. It’s a strategy God created to help humans build relationships with Him. He knows that we need community to grow; we cannot do that on our own.”

It seems, most often, that the needed shift begins with the pastor and perhaps a select few church leaders. Imagine that the pastor and one key women’s leader each invite someone to do a six-month, one-to-one discipleship study. At the end of six months, each of those involved then repeats the process. From the two who took the initiative, there would be eight disciple makers in the church after one year. Multiply that for several years, and the disciple-making culture of the church can be transformed. In some cases, a work of great Kingdom value can be established that will last beyond our own church or ministry. How we long to hear the affirmation of our Savior, “Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” (Matthew 25:23, NASB95)

Church Health Community News

FROM THE DESK

Rev. Wayne Houck, CHC Associate
continued...

“Just Do It!”

continued...

We all remember the old Nike ad campaign which stated we should, “Just do it!” The same simplicity might be applied to getting started in making disciples. As many of our churches seek to gain traction, we sometimes just need to get started. A quick Google search for discipleship materials can be overwhelming so the Church Health Community would be happy to make recommendations if you would like. That is not to suggest that there is a single, best resource, but sometimes we have to just get moving. We are here to help you get started and to recommend resources if that would be helpful. Several of our churches have begun the journey of making disciples who make more disciples, and it is exciting to see. We would love to hear your disciple-making stories. And if we can help you get started in making disciples who multiply themselves, please feel free to email, call or text.

Be blessed today,

Wayne

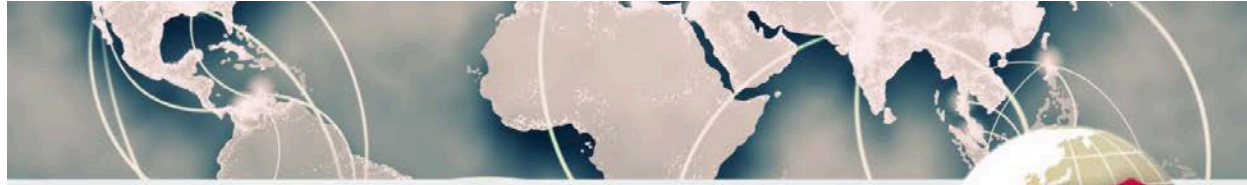


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Global Ministries Community of the Evangelical Congregational Church



We're getting there!

Evangelical Leadership Training Center - Nepal



The EC Church of Nepal is excited to continue to see its vision for the construction of a leadership training center come to fruition.

Thank you to all who have already contributed and your partnership in seeing this facility completed and soon to be filled with ministry and teaching, equipping and releasing.

We're just about there! Would your church prayerfully consider helping our brothers and sisters there complete the project?

A local EC USA church has graciously and generously offered to match up to \$15,000 in donations! What a gift!


Donations can be mailed to EC Center and marked "ELTC Nepal."



\$15K matching funds for the construction of ELTC from a local congregation in EC USA



EC Church of Nepal



Global Ministries Community

Kingdom Extension Community News

FROM THE DESK

Rev. Mike Snedeker, KEC Associate

Church Planter Prayer Cards

Every month in the KEC section of the EC Leader, there is a prayer list for our church planters. This list is kept up to date with some changes each month. This information is shared to help you pray well-informed prayers as well as give you the most up-to-date information about where these church plants are headed. Our church planters need your prayers. Please feel free to share this information with your church and ask them to pray as well.

In August, the KEC worked on “Prayer Cards” for our church planters. These will be distributed to our pastors and churches in the coming months. If you would like to “adopt” a church planter and would like a supply of prayer cards, please contact [Mike Snedeker](#), and we would be happy to supply you with however many you need.

Discipleship Cohorts

The last issue of the EC Leader highlighted Discipleship Multiplication Cohorts that will begin this fall. There was a good response of churches and pastors who desire to participate. If you would still like to get involved, please contact [Mike Snedeker](#) for more information.

Mike



Kingdom Extension Community News



Please continue to pray this month for the following new church planting opportunities that God is raising up:

Cheziare and Laurel Dominique – The Dominiques have been meeting with a leadership team to pray and seek God’s vision for a Haitian church. God has provided a great ministry partner out of Grace Community Church, Willow Street, named Martial, who is also Haitian and is passionate about helping with this church plant. El Shaddai Community has begun to meet at Trinity EC Church in Lancaster, PA on Saturday evenings (**NOTE:** This is a correction from the last EC Leader that incorrectly noted that El Shaddai was meeting at Faith EC Church in Lancaster). They are starting with a Bible study and seeking to build a solid base that will become the foundation of this church plant. Please pray as God continues to gather the planting team that He gives them a specific vision for the future and energizes them for this task.

Manuel and Luz Arias – In Lexington, South Carolina, the Arias family is starting a new EC Church. Manuel and Luz are developing a team for ministry, as well as strategizing ways to share the Gospel in tangible ways. Please pray that God would provide a location for this church to use for worship gatherings. Pray also for wisdom, strength and renewed energy for this couple. Manuel and Luz have especially asked for prayer for their family as they consider potential changes that would allow them to devote more time to the church. Pray for wisdom for them and their family.

Tim and Pam Ream – The Reams moved to Thorn Hill, Tennessee. They are pursuing the opportunity to engage in planting an EC Church in their new community. Pray that God would begin preparing that community to be receptive to His glorious presence. Pray also for the Reams as they begin building relationships and engaging in discipleship relationships through inviting people into their home and engaging individuals in their community.

Mike Coulson and People’s EC Church – Echo, the name of this church that is meeting in the Virtual Space, is reaching people with the Gospel and making disciples. Pray that the team will continue to develop and grow. People’s is also beginning a micro church that will meet at Confessions Bar in Nesquehoning. Pray for this open door to be a Gospel presence where people who need Jesus hang out!

Zach and Kelsey Van Dyke – Zach and Kelsey have begun planting a network of house churches in and around Davenport, Iowa. They are currently meeting with a group in their own home weekly and seeking God’s plan for their future. They are developing a vision for raising up house church shepherds and developing a discipleship and multiplication strategy. Please pray for Zach and Kelsey that God would give them wisdom as their time shepherding the Hooppole, Illinois EC Church comes to an end. Also pray for wisdom as they work on developing their 2025 church budget.

Ministerial Development Community News

FROM THE DESK

Rev. Matt Hill, MDC Associate



Non scholae sed vitae discimus

“We do not learn for school, but for life”

It was dark outside when I shook our kids awake; 6:05am to be precise. Tuesday, August 20 ushered in a new school year for the Cocalico School District. The months of June, July and August seemed to have flown by, and now our kids have returned to another school year. Like many families, my wife Emily and I help prepare the kids for a new year. Emily takes them shopping for new clothing and shoes; new backpacks, binder, pencils and other school supplies are purchased.

The night before school starts, we traditionally eat dinner together and try to treat the kids to ice cream or something fun. Inevitably, the night comes to an end and during prayers and saying good night, the same question arises each year. “Why do I have to go back to school?”

Let’s be honest; learning is essential for life. As the Ministerial Development Community, we have committed ourselves to the idea of being “lifelong learners.” We believe that learning never stops. Whether you have been in ministry for two years or twenty, learning is an essential activity in the life of a shepherd. Reading books, listening to podcasts or attending conferences are all part of the learning process. But what if there was something a little more focused? What if you could learn and retool some things in your current ministry setting?

Beginning this fall, the Institute for Church Leadership is offering a practical course on worship and ministry. Entitled “Healthy Worship and Ministry,” this course is designed to explore our theology of worship and help students of every level learn how to minister in their current context. Students will look at how our worship theology impacts the current order of worship and learn how to conduct services such as weddings, funerals, baptisms and Sunday morning worship.

If you are looking to rethink your worship service or just looking to for new ideas and ways to lead your congregation, consider enrolling in the Healthy Worship and Ministry course this fall. For more information on this course and the ICL, please visit the [MDC](#) website.

Matt



Ministerial Development Community News

CHAPLAINCY CORNER

Rev. W. Joel Copeland, Jr., Chaplaincy Committee Chair

Prayer Focus on our Heroes - Our Chaplains

As we continue the prayer focus and introduction of our EC chaplains and their ministry, we feature another EC pastor who is now serving in a community hospice. The Rev. Glenn Lambert previously served as pastor in Kutztown and Hatfield and as a per diem trauma chaplain at Penn Presbyterian Hospital in Philadelphia. On July 8th, Glenn began a new ministry at St. Luke's Hospice & Home Health as a hospice chaplain. In this position, he will be ministering to both in-patient and outpatient terminally ill patients, offering them and their families spiritual support and comfort. He will also be serving on the treatment teams, conducting support groups, documenting his activities and conducting occasional services as needed. Since any hospice position is a high stress position, there is a lot of physical and emotional burnout in the hospice staff. This presents many opportunities for hospice chaplains to minister to the staff.

Glenn is married to Pamela, and they have three children, Isaac, Cassi and Caleb. As you pray for Glenn and the rest of the EC Chaplains, here are a few suggestions for you to focus your prayers:



Pray for:

1. The adjustments Glenn will be making with a new work schedule and dealing with the stresses and changes of working with terminally ill patients and their families.
2. Pamela, who recently returned to work after being off work for a while due to a horse-riding accident for her continued healing and the financial stress that this has placed on the family.
3. Glenn in his hospice ministry, especially during orientation as he learns about the protocols of the hospice, the various software programs the hospice uses and the other information he must know.
4. The patients and their families that Glenn will be ministering to spiritually at the end of their lives, especially as they make decisions affecting their eternal destiny and for Glenn in his interactions with the staff and his ministry to them.
5. All our EC Chaplains in their various areas of service.



Ministerial Development Community News

CHAPLAINCY CORNER

Rev. W. Joel Copeland, Jr., Chaplaincy Committee Chair

Prayer Focus on our Heroes - Our Chaplains

What does a chaplain for an ambulance service do? Rev. Charles Walker has already introduced us to some of the things a fire company chaplain would do, but this month we want to introduce another E C chaplain who also serves a fire company/ambulance service. The Rev. Todd Wolfe is that person. Todd is our pastor at the EC churches in Pitman, but he also is the on-call chaplain for the community fire department/ambulance service. He is married to Heather and is father to three children.

Many of Todd's duties as chaplain are what Rev. Walker already has indicated and what you would expect them to be, but the atmosphere in which he does them is more stressful and more critical and also includes a few additional duties such as offering prayer at ceremonies, dedications of new vehicles and personnel and the support and counseling of department staff for personal, professional and trauma-related issues. Todd also is requested to conduct funerals for staff and at times for those who are recipients of the services of the department. He also has the opportunity and privilege to minister to those who have faced tragedy and loss and those who are in need of medical assistance. He said one of the hard and unique parts of his work is breaking bad news to families who have just experienced tragedy.



As is evident, such a chaplaincy position offers many opportunities but also presents many challenges and can become stressful to the one facing these responsibilities.

This month let us remember in prayer the Wolfe family and especially Todd as he serves the Lord not only through the church but also through the community work he does. Especially remember Todd and pray that as he serves the Lord will use him in each crises in which he ministers. Pray that he might have divine wisdom and bring comfort in those times when he needs to share tragic news with a family or conduct a funeral.





TWIN PINES

CAMP, CONFERENCE & RETREAT CENTER

Twin Pines Update:

Saturday, November 16, 2024

Twin Pines 60th Anniversary Gala

Doors open at 6:00 pm
Dinner at 6:30 pm

R.S.V.P. by November 4 2024
570-629-2411 or banquet@twinpines.org
Suggested \$30 per person donation



An evening of celebration for
60 years of ministry
at Twin Pines.

Weaver's Banquet Facility
2610 N. Reading Road
Denver, PA

Register for Fall Women's Weekend!

Happening September 27th - 29th, and featuring speaker Debbi Silverman, you will not want to miss Fall Women's Weekend! Registrations are due by September 20th. Register and learn more today at www.TwinPines.org or call 570-629-2411!

We want to work with You!

Would you like us to come present at your church?
Would you like materials to include in your Sunday bulletins or in your church newsletter? Reach out to us and let us know!

Email: Shawn@twinpines.org or call the office 570-629-2411



CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2024

Sunday, September 1

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension
Liturgical Color - Green

Monday, September 2

Labor Day
EC Church Center Closed

Wednesday, September 4

Day of Prayer for the EC Church

Sunday, September 8

Liturgical Color - Green

Sunday, September 15

Liturgical Color - Green

Sunday, September 22

Liturgical Color - Green

Tuesday, September 24

Finance Committee Meeting
Loan and Investment Committee Meeting

Sunday, September 29

Liturgical Color - Green

OCTOBER 2024

Wednesday, October 2

Day of Prayer for the EC Church

Sunday, October 6

Day of Prayer for Kingdom Extension
Kingdom Extension Offering*
World Communion Sunday
Liturgical Color - Green

Friday and Saturday, October 11-12

EC Ethos Class

Sunday, October 13

Liturgical Color - Green

Thursday, October 17

National Ministry Team Meeting

Sunday, October 20

Liturgical Color - Green

Sunday, October 27

Liturgical Color - Green

**Ministry Funds, Insurance & Benefits and
*Kingdom Extension Offering**

Mail to:

**EC Church Center
100 W. Park Ave.
Myerstown, PA 17067**





Changing the World with Jesus

“Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)

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8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.



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