

CONFERENCE NETWORK

The Conference Network Team is made up of the Bishop (chair), National Conference Secretary, Associates (4), and District Field Directors (13). They are:

- Bishop Hill, Chair.
- Kirk Marks, Secretary
- Gary Brown
- Jeff Byerly
- Chuck Campbell
- David Carr
- Les Cool
- Brad Hatter
- Kevin Henry
- Gary Kuehner
- Marlin Lafferty
- Gordy Lewis
- Keith Miller
- Paul Miller
- Ralph Owens
- Jim Price
- Ted Rathman
- Jeff Schell
- Sterling Trimmer

The regular schedule of meetings includes:

1. A Daily Check-In, a five minute “stand-up meeting” between the Bishop and Executive Director.
2. All the members of the CNT will participate in a 45 minute teleconference twice a month.
3. The BEDAS Group (Bishop, Executive Director, Associates and NC Secretary) holds a two-hour meeting once a month.
4. The entire CNT membership meets at least twice a year in a Strategic Meeting format.

The District Field Directors (DFDs) continue to be the vital connecting link between the National Conference and our pastors and lay leaders. I have described them as having the fingers of one hand on the pulse of the National Conference and the fingers of the other hand on the pulse of the churches in their district. While our DFDs are gifted men, they are not to have all the answers; but they are to connect pastors and congregations with the appropriate Associates and resources to help them be more effective in building the Kingdom. I believe that after two and a half years of ministry the District Field Directors and Associates are now more clearly understanding their roles within our new denominational structure.

The EC Church is made up of many smaller churches. They may be smaller churches but they are doing important ministries. Praise the Lord for the ways in which our congregations are meeting needs in the church and out in their communities. Some of our congregations, though, are in need of revitalization. Our DFDs are doing what they can to help those pastors and lay leaders connect with revitalization resources as well as facilitating further conversation into how we can be the church God calls us to be. During the past National Conference year the DFDs have been key to the effort to continue the dialogue which began during the NC2018 Kingdom & Community Experience relating to being “ALL IN.”

Our Strategic Evaluation has been a significant additional responsibility of both our District Field Directors and our Associates since October 2018. Each District Field Director completed a personal evaluation of their work as a DFD. In addition, each DFD facilitated a Strategic Evaluation conversation within their district. Similarly, each Associate completed a personal evaluation as well as facilitated an evaluation of their respective community by their community members. Their work in leading these discussions has been vital to the Strategic Evaluation process.

We are pleased that as the Conference Network Team meets, we continue to hear stories of more pastors and churches becoming involved in district gatherings. Of concern is how to more deeply involve bi-vocational pastors in the life of the districts. They already have overflowing schedules and involvement in one more thing is a challenge. The DFDs are sensitive to this and continue to look for creative ways to involve everyone in the life of the district. The good news is growing number of pastors who are attending are experiencing a greater sense of team with their brothers in the district. In addition, the churches of our districts are more often coming together to reach out to those in need, particularly when there is a need with the pastoral family. Praise the Lord for local leaders who see ministry with a Kingdom point of view!

The work of leading a district as well as the participation of the DFDs in both the CNT Tactical and CNT Strategic meetings helps us to break down “silos” and fosters greater sense of community and cooperation within their district and across district boundaries. I am thankful to report the DFDs and Associates are working well together facilitating conversations and providing opportunities for the Associates and communities to consult with local congregations. I pray these heart conversations will result in even greater Kingdom ministry all around the Evangelical Congregational Church.

It is my joy to chair the Conference Network Team. We, as a denomination are blessed to have these men lead our denomination as they follow Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Bruce D, Hill
For the Conference Network Team