

E.C. Leader



Evangelical
Congregational
Church

Our Vision

The Evangelical Congregational Church will be a dynamic movement of God that is led by pastors and laity who have a burning passion for God and a missionary zeal to reach the lost.

We will creatively obey the Great Commission by transforming plateaued and declining churches into healthy, disciple-making churches that are committed to evangelizing the communities to which God has called them. Healthy churches will reproduce themselves by planting churches in least-reached communities. Interdependence will be the distinguishing mark of the Evangelical Congregational Church as local churches network with one another and ministries beyond the E.C. family to proclaim the Gospel to the world.

Christmas Reminders

by Linda J. Gilden

CBN.com—Christmas has become extremely commercialized. Everywhere we look we see Christmas trees, lights, presents, signs enticing us to buy this or that for the people on our lists. But let's try to keep our thoughts focused on the real meaning of the season.

When we see a wreath, let's remember that God's love is never ending.

When we see the lights, let's remember that Jesus is the light of the world.

When we see candles, let's remember that our lights, however small, shine brightly enough to spread to those around us.

When we see presents, let's remember that God gave us the greatest gift of all in His Son, Jesus Christ.

When we see a Christmas tree, let's remember a tree on top of a hill call Calvary.

When we see snow, let's remember the One who cleanses our sins in a way that makes them pure white.

When we sing carols, let's remember the importance of making a joyful noise unto the Lord.

When we sit down to Christmas dinner, let's remember that Jesus is the bread of life.

When we see all those around us in need, whether physically, financially, emotionally, or spiritually, let's remember that Christmas really shouldn't be limited to one season of the year.

God's gift was for all seasons. And, every time we share that gift, it's Christmas!

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Keep
in **Christ**
Christmas

Leadership Notes

- The Conference Ministers are appointed to the Finance Committee as ADVISORY members.



Work Trip

The Red Rose District is sponsoring a work trip to Past Christian, Mississippi. The dates are to depart March 28th and return April 5th. A bus has been reserved at a cost of approximately \$100 per person. Room and board at the camp is a recommended \$10 a day for meals and lodging. Both male and female help is needed for a variety of jobs requiring all skill levels. Please consider joining us for a great experience in showing our love for a community devastated by Hurricane Katrina. For more details contact Dean Baker at 1-717-872-4560.

TAKE NOTE

All National Conference information (registration, reports, etc.) will be web-based. This means you will find all information on our website www.eccenter.com. If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the EC Church Center to have the information mailed to you.

Doctrine Course

The Evangelical Theological Seminary is offering a Doctrine Course on Thursday mornings in the Spring Semester, 8:15-11:00 am. Contact ETS for more information.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

DON'T FORGET!?!?!? The Christian Education Committee maintains a resource library at the EC Church Center that is accessible through the denominational web page. Utilize these resources for Bible studies, Sunday school classes, children's and youth ministries, as well as teaching training. If questions — call Pat Wolfe at 1-800-866-7581.

ALSO, do you have unused video/DVD curriculum laying around the church, in the church library, in your office? Do not hesitate to donate it to the resource library. Again, contact Pat Wolfe at the Church Center or Mike Snedeker at Community Evangelical Church, Sinking Spring.



Bishop's Travels January 2008

1-2	Vacation
6	Slatington, Trinity
9-10	DGM Nominating Committee
13	Emmaus, St. Matthew's
14	National Ministry Team
15-16	Stationing Committee Retreat, Myerstown
17-20	Pastoral Assessment Center
27	Lititz, Trinity
29	ECCRV Board of Trustees



News from the Benefits Corporation & Compensation Committee . . .

2007 Manna Fund:

The Benefits Corporation is pleased to announce that we received over \$24,000 from churches and individuals for the Manna Fund to help supplement the income of retired pastors and widows. We distributed about \$12,500 and were able to provide 100% of the needed amount for our retirees. THANK YOU to all who gave so generously to allow us to assist our retirees. The Benefits Corporation does not plan to solicit funds in 2008 unless the balance in the fund is insufficient to meet the 2008 needs.

Attention Church Treasurers:

- Please remember to identify whatever payments are included in any check that is remitted to the Benefits Corporation or National Conference.
- Please do not mix payments to the Benefits Corporation and National Conference on the same check.
- Payments for health insurance, personal (employee) pension contribution, church (employer) pension contribution, worker's compensation and disability are to be paid to the Benefits Corporation.
- See the 2008 Treasurer's Guide, available on the EC Church website (www.eccenter.com), click ECC Resources and then click forms.

2008 Standard Business Mileage Rate has been released by the IRS. It is 50.5 cents/mile. This is the rate to be used for travel reimbursement on the 2008 Statement of Pastor's Compensation.

2008 Pastors' Compensation forms due by Jan. 15: Copies of all the compensation forms are due by Jan. 15th to Rev. Ken Wiest, Benefits-Compensation Administrator

Disability Fund premium due by Jan. 15: The 2008 Disability Fund premium is due to the Benefits Corporation by Jan. 15th.

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The Internet Evangelism Coalition

As you read this article countless individuals around the world are learning about Jesus Christ for the first time. They are not reading about him through traditional print material such as books or newsletters. They are reading about him online — on home computers, in Internet cafes, in university settings, on laptops while traveling, on their cell phones. Some people, desiring only to surf the Internet for games or news, accidentally stumbled upon an evangelistic website and now find themselves captivated by the message of the gospel. Others, in an effort to hide their deliberate attempt to learn about the Jesus of the Christian faith, anxiously glance around for fear that someone who despises Christians will get a glimpse of the word “Jesus,” “Christ” or “gospel.” Still others, new to the Christian faith, find themselves bombarded by loved ones with questions regarding their new passion: Who is Jesus? Why should I care? What do you mean by “born again?”

History of Internet Evangelism Coalition

With individuals such as these in mind, the Internet Evangelism Coalition (IEC) was created in 1997 out of a meeting called by the Billy Graham Center (BGC) that brought together nearly one hundred people from churches, denominations and ministries who were interested in or already doing Internet evangelism. Under the leadership of Dr. Sterling Huston, the



newly developed IEC asked the BGC to set up and manage the office. Two years later, the IEC held its first international conference to focus on networking equipping and mobilizing those involved in sharing the gospel message online.

Today, the IEC acts as a service association for individuals, organizations and churches who have (1) a passion for winning people to Christ and (2) a desire to use the Internet to do this. “The purpose of the IEC is to put people with these two desires in touch with each other,” says Naomi Frizzell, IEC communications director. “Technological advances are happening at a rapid pace. The IEC is a place where leaders with similar passions can learn from each other and be encouraged that they’re not the only ones using the Internet to share Christ online.”

In addition to annual conferences and meetings, the IEC has: (1) developed a website (www.webevangelism.com) which serves as a hub of information and connections for Internet evangelism worldwide and (2) developed websites to assist those involved in Internet evangelism. These include:

- Now Try God (www.nowtrygod.com), a

seeker-sensitive evangelistic website;

- Evangelism Toolbox (www.evangelism.com), a comprehensive listing of evangelism tools and resources; and
- Online Training for Online Evangelists (<http://bgc.gospelcom.net/iec/otoe/index/php>), a resource to help people share their faith effectively online.

Future of Internet Evangelism Coalition

In the past, the IEC has emphasized membership by individuals, denominations, churches and ministries; however, this focus is being redefined. “We’re transitioning our member structure,” Frizzell explains. “It’s our desire to especially serve churches, denominations and ministries.” However, Frizzell encourages individuals with a passion for evangelism and the Internet to stay in touch with what IEC is doing to encourage their church or denomination to become an IEC member. The IEC offers a free monthly e-newsletter to anyone interested in Internet Evangelism (subscribe online at www.webevangelism.com). She also encourages people to learn more about Internet Evangel-



Internet Evangelism Coalition

(continued)

ism Day, a day held each spring in which churches can equip and educate their members concerning sharing Christ online — how to do it, where to do it, cautions, etc. The day is designed to help churches evaluate the use of their own websites for evangelism. Resources such as PowerPoint presentations, video clips, drama scripts and handouts are downloadable from www.InternetEvangelismDay.com

While many of the websites developed by IEC members are in English, Frizzell says the number of evangelistic websites focused on non-English speakers is growing. She adds that the IEC has developed a relationship with the Global Use of Internet and Digital Evangelism (GUIDE) Network (previously called the International Internet Evangelism Network) to support and network both English and non-English evangelistic websites.

The goal of the IEC is to encourage the use of technology to reach the entire world with the gospel of Christ. As Christianity shifts to the global South (Asia, Africa and Latin America), so too does the need arise to support non-Western, non-English websites designed to bring the good news to a world in darkness. Frizzell explains, “It’s our desire that the gospel of Christ be proclaimed through every available means because ‘if our gospel be hid, it is hid to those that are lost’ [2 Cor. 4:3].”



2008 Pastors' In-Service Day

SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Location</u>
Jan 17 (Thurs) Emmanuel	Northeast/Lehigh	Bethlehem
Jan 18 (Fri) Trinity	Berks/Penn Jersey	Boyertown
Jan 31 (Thurs) Ebenezer	Conestoga/Red Rose	Brownstown
Feb 4 (Mon) James	Illinois	Dixon St.
Feb 6 (Wed) Feb 7 (Thurs)	Susquehanna/Capitol-Lebanon Anthracite/Schuylkill	Lewisberry Williamstown
Feb 12 (Tues)	Allegheny/Buckeye	Delightful

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

9:30 am—2:00 pm

Session 1	9:30-10:45	“I Want to Hear Your Heart” Dialogue with the Bishop Elect
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Benefits & Compensation continued from page 3

Reminder—2007 Charitable Gifts: The IRS has changed the charitable giving rules, for a contribution to count as a charitable gift in 2007, it must be given to the church in 2007 or it must be mailed to the church in 2007, even though it may not be received until after the New Year. The date of postmark determines the year in which you receive credit for the contribution. On the other hand, on the first Sunday in January, you cannot date your check for December in hopes of getting credit for 2007.

2008 Forms: ALL 2008 forms (2008 Ministerial Quarterly, 2008 Annual, 2008 Monthly Ministry Funds, etc.) will be available for use on or before January 1, 2008. Please do not use any 2007 forms as they have been revised.