

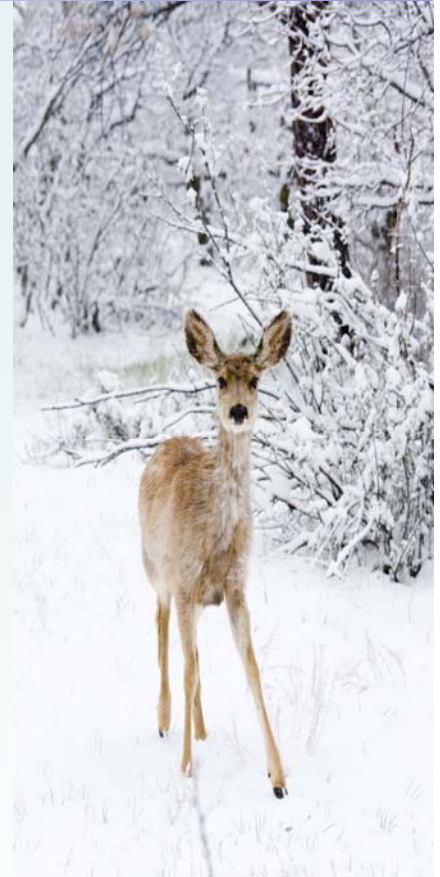
E.C. Leader

Dance to the Rhythms

Welcome to January 2012! Yikes, I can't believe it (and in reality you're getting this issue of the EC Leader while it is still 2011) but the truth is the new year is just about here. This is the time for resolutions and all that stuff. We look back at the old year and make promises to ourselves about the things we're going to change in the new year. Sure... One of my resolutions is to learn how to dance. You see I can't dance very well. Now before you think the bishop's lost his mind completely and start impeachment hearings, let me explain myself. I was recently reading an article in Corporate & Incentive Travel magazine. (You may ask why the bishop's reading that and I wonder that too but it comes to the office for free, so why not?) Anyway, an article called 'The Myth of Work-Life Balance' by Jon Gordon caught my eye. We've all heard a lot about balancing the demands of ministry and family life. You've read the articles and books too. They say things like: balance the urgent with the important; set limits on time; set and protect boundaries; schedule family time; and take time for yourself. I've read them, but I admit I don't do them too well. Maybe that's why an article touting the myth of work-life balance caught my eye.

In his article, Mr. Gordon writes "...the dance between work and life is more about rhythm than balance. I compare the rhythms of work and life to the rhythms of nature: There's a time and a season for everything." See there it is—I need to learn how to dance to the rhythms of work and life. He suggests seeing the work-life, or in our case the ministry-life, blend as a whole. There are seasons in ministry. I used to think that somewhere during the year we'd get to the slow season. Now I see it more as very-busy season and not-too-busy times. As you look back at the past year and look ahead at the new

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year, when are those seasons? We have individual seasons, family seasons, and ministry seasons.

Maybe what we need to do is to see our responsibilities more intentionally according to the flow of those seasons. There are times in ministry when I have to push really hard and put in a lot of hours; but there are some seasons when I can be more available to my family. Am I aware of those realities, those seasons, or do I just do whatever I think needs to be done that day, that moment? I think most churches understand there are times when their pastor needs to work lots of hours to lead the church effectively. But I also believe most people in our churches understand and want their pastor to be fully invested in his wife and children's lives. That is the rhythm of life that many of us (me included) need to learn.

One last thought as we leave one year and welcome a new one: As a pastor/leader, do I understand that there is a difference between my ministry, my vocation, and my relationship with God? One of the great temptations for us who lead churches is to equate our ministry/work in the church to our relationship with God. They aren't necessarily the same. The one constant that will see you through all the seasons and rhythms of life is your relationship with Him. Follow the mission Jesus entrusts to you. Do all that you can to develop an intimate relationship with Him. Love Him completely. And I know He will give you the wisdom you need to stay close to Him as you dance to the rhythm of ministry and life in 2012.



Hello from Rev. Lance and Carol Mills in Kansas,

How I would love to sit and write to each of you, but that of course, is impossible. We have spent the past three months adjusting to a tiny 3 room apartment and I have claustrophobia!! God is good as always, and He has helped us both to adjust. He also made it possible for us to be on the 2nd floor, right near the elevator. We have been enjoying going to Christmas programs that Janey's 4 children are in. The first time to be with them for any programs. Janey and Nathan have been such a help to us.

As I ponder the meaning of Jesus coming as a baby to die for me so that I might be with Him in heaven, it gives me more of a desire to be with Him even now. But, that is not His play yet, so we continue on doing what He wants us to do. God bless each one of you and may you truly have a blessed, holy, Christmas .

Love, Carol and Lance

Editor's Note: Rev. Lance is a retired pastor that has moved to Kansas to be closer to family. They asked us relate this message.



The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

1. Continue to pray for our pastoral families and congregations who have recently suffered the death of loved ones: Cindy Brooks & family (Rev. Howard Brooks), Keith Mong & family (Cheryl Mong), Cheryl Lefever & family (Rev. Ken Lefever).
2. Pray for important strategic planning meetings/retreats which are scheduled in early 2012: Global Ministries Commission Task Force and a meeting to continue development of our denomination's Transformational Strategic Plan.
3. Pray that the Holy Spirit moves in powerful ways in our lives, in our churches, and in our denomination during 2012.
4. Pray for me to be able to deal with the urgent issues that so often cross my desk while having wisdom to focus on the important things that must be accomplished as we build the Kingdom together.
5. Pray for a positive response this month from the United Methodist University Senate concerning Evangelical Seminary's inclusion on their list of approved seminaries.
6. Praise the Lord for the safe travel and the warm welcome our Global Ministries Commission team experienced during their recent trip to our EC Churches in Nepal.
7. Praise God for individuals who willingly and faithfully respond to the need for volunteers on a local level as well as within the work of the denomination.
8. What a wonderful experience to travel to churches and see young and old joining together to worship our Savior. Praise the Lord!
9. Praise God for dedicated Conference Ministers, Gary Brown, Gordy Lewis, and Gary Kuehner, who lovingly and authentically care for our pastors and churches. They really do care; and I praise God for that.
10. Praise God for evidence of His work in the Evangelical Congregational Church. He is moving in hearts and minds to build His Kingdom and bring glory to His name!



SAVE THE DATE **Fresh Expressions** **Vision Day** **Thursday, May 3, 2012**

The Church Planting Commission will be co-sponsoring A Fresh Expressions Vision Day on Thursday, May 3, 2012 in the York area. Fresh Expressions resources churches regarding missional (intentional) ministries to the community. "A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church." a Vision Day is designed to inspire and encourage, display models of fresh expressions and answer questions. The day is for anyone interested in renewal within an established congregation, or building relationships and serving the communities in which they live or work. Speakers touch those who have real questions about fresh expressions and mission-shaped church and/or who have started something new and need some practical help. Pastors, leadership team members and ministry representatives are all sure to benefit from a Vision Day.

Missionary Prayer Partners for 2012

The following missionaries will be participating in the Missionary Prayer Partners program (formerly known as Spend-A-Day) for 2012:

Randy & Chris Amberman
Chris & Deb Bowers
Dave & Celia Dick
Daniel Dixon
Marcia Hopley
Jeremy & Kristin Kunkel
Nick & Lisa Lakatos
Kitty Miller
Robert & Bettina Schaeffer
Ed & Val Schubert
Ken Sears
Jim & Janet Stahl
BJ & Rachel Whitaker
Dan & MaryLynne Wills
Jonathan & Kathy Wilson

You can sign up on our website by going to www.ecglobal.org and clicking on the Missionary Prayer Partners tab on the left. Click on the 2012 calendar to see what months are still available for the missionary(ies) you want to partner with in prayer. You can also call the Global Ministries office and ask for Carla Sizemore (1-800-866-7584). Generally Carla is in the office on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 8 am until noon.



News from Global Ministries

1. Mission Minded Kids Rally:

There will be a spring Mission Minded Kids Rally for the Delaware/Susquehanna Regions on **Saturday, March 3rd, 2012**. The rally will be held at Trinity E.C. Church, Boyertown. There will be missionary speakers, games, crafts, and curios for the children to purchase. Information will be sent out early next year, but mark this date on your calendars and plan on being at one of the most exciting and lively events on the E.C. calendar!



2. Window on the World:

Check out the latest issue of Window on the World (Fall 2011) for an updated map of where our missionaries are serving and the GMC Giving Catalog.

3. GMC Task Force:

Please pray for a special task force appointed by Bishop Hill to review the breadth and scope of the Global Ministries Commission's ministry with special regard to its funding in order to assess its viability under the current structure and to propose any strategic changes that would facilitate a long-term sustainable structure. This Task Force is scheduled to meet on December 13, 2011; January 12, 2012 and February 8, 2012.

4. Nepal Trip Follow-Up:

Many thanks to all who were praying for the team that visited the 3rd Annual Conference of the E.C. Church of Nepal! We are working on producing a 5 minute DVD of the highlights that will be on our website and available to churches. During the Conference we baptized 15 new believers, ordained 11 ministers, forged a new partnership between the E.C.




A new church plant in Nepal.


Churches of Nepal and Japan and received a \$500 love offering from the E.C. Church of Nepal for the E.C. Church of Liberia! You can see many photos of the trip on Randy Sizemore's Facebook page.




News from Evangelical Seminary



 Winterim courses run January 3-23, with two weekend modular classes (Vision, Change, and Conflict and Culture, Context, and Mission) open to all. The spring schedule is also available on the Evangelical website (www.evangelical.edu) and it's not too late to register. Remember, E.C. pastors and Evangelical alumni may audit a course for only \$50.

 Spring Semester officially opens with Convocation in Dech Chapel on Tuesday, January 31, at 1:30 p.m. Dr. Laurie Mellinger will be installed as Dean of Academic Programs, and Rev. Craig Smith, Atlantic Northeast District Executive Minister of the Church of the Brethren, will bring the address. Refreshments will follow the service, and all friends of Evangelical are welcome!



 The Center for Leadership Impact has announced that the spring course offerings for Leadership Contact are Theology II (Seeing God at Work), Mar. 13-Apr.24 and Preaching II, Jan. 24-Mar. 6. Information will be posted on the website (www.center4li.org), and brochures with complete information will be available shortly.



News from the Evangelism & Discipleship Commission



Last year a number of our congregations used the "Seek God For The City" devotional guide during Lent and found it to be very helpful. The WayMakers have updated it for this year appropriately titled it "**Seek God For The City 2012, Forty Days to Palm Sunday.**" While the title might make you think it is only for the city, it is actually a very helpful guide of prayers toward long-standing biblical promises of what God wants to bring forth in their communities. In fact, we think the very practical suggestions on co-working with God in the story of His love found at the end of the booklet will encourage people in your church to combine action with prayer.

The dates suggested for use with this resource are February 22-April 1, 2012. That will be here before you know it, and if you would like to distribute the booklets to the people of your church on February 12 or 19,

you'll need to order them soon. Complete ordering information can be found at www.waymakers.org or calling 800.264.5214. Bulk discounts are available and many churches ask their people to donate a dollar or two as they pick up their copy, which helps defray the cost as well as increasing the value of the booklet for everyone. New for 2012 will be a "**Seek God For The City**" iPhone and iPad app.

All through history the Lord has been unfolding His plan. We stand at a crucial point in His story. Let's join together in prayer with great passion for our churches and our communities to be open to the Lord's leading and blessing.

News from Benefits/Compensation

- * How quickly a new year is upon us. As of the writing of this report, our legislatures in Washington, D.C. are still discussing the extension of the payroll tax holiday. Please refer to Publication 15, Circular E, Employer's Tax Guide at www.irs.gov before issuing your first paychecks in 2012 for the approved employee Social Security tax rate.
- * Reimbursement for business miles will remain the same at \$.555/mile on January 1, 2012.
- * The January 2012 health insurance payment at the new rates is due December 15, 2011. Please refer to the www.eccenter.com for the 2012 rates.
- * Church contributions to the 403(b) pension plan increased on January 1 to \$170 for full time pastors and \$85 for part time pastors.
- * W-2s and 1099-MISC forms are due to the recipients by January 31, 2012 and the respective Federal, State or Local taxing authorities by February 29 or March 31. Please refer to the specific taxing authority regulations for due dates. **All full time and part time Pastors should receive a W-2 form from their church.**
- * **PA Churches**—The earned income tax (local tax) withholding and remittance regulations are changing January 1, 2012 due to the passing of PA Act 32. Information from your local taxing authority should be arriving in your mailboxes. Please read it carefully. Remittance due dates and remittance forms and locations may be changing. PA Act 32 is attempting to standardize the collection and reporting of earned income tax across Pennsylvania which should increase the amount collected and also increase the enforcement of nonpayment and slow payment.
- * Due Dates: Disability Payment \$100.00 due Jan. 15
Annual Statistical Reports due Jan. 25
Workers Compensation Insurance information due 30 days after receipt
- * Please see the 2012 Treasurer's Guide located on www.eccenter.com, for additional due dates, current amounts due and ministry fund and camp funding percentage.
- * As always please contact David King, Benefits Administrator and Human Resources Coordinator, dking@eccenter.com or myself khenry@eccenter.com with any questions, 1-800-866-7581.

Kevin Henry
Controller

David King
Benefits Administrator

