

# 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.

## LET THE CHURCH BE THE CHURCH

Dear fellow EC leaders,

For five years, we have been earnestly praying for a peaceful end to the war in Iraq and, ultimately, the war on terror. We've prayed for our troops and their commanders. We've prayed for the chaplains who preach Christ especially remembering our own Chaplains Noel Blancaflor, Steve Kosylo and Josh Metz. We've prayed for our president and his advisors that they might discern and obey God's will and direction.

I am increasingly burdened to expand my prayer list and become more diligent in prayer for the nation of Iraq. Putting all politics aside, Iraq will not change apart from the miraculous intervention of Almighty God. Only God truly understands the challenges of culture. He alone is able to transform the hearts of people as well as "the heart" of the nation of Iraq.

Will you join me in regular, fervent prayer for Iraq? Don't stop praying for our armed forces and government leaders. Expand your prayer list by adding Iraq. As I was seeking the Lord for specific prayer requests, an e-mail from the National Prayer Committee arrived. It included a call to "diligent daily prayer for Iraq" arising along five prayer points. I offer these prayer points as the E.C. call to prayer for Iraq:

1. That Iraq not descend deeper and deeper into violence.
2. That the perpetrators of daily violence and evil be caught and brought to justice.
3. That peace, righteousness, and stability may spread throughout this land.
4. That the redemption of the people of Iraq—their transformation by Christ — may accelerate.
5. To sum up: We pray for a stable environment in which Christ's body might flourish.

For the Kingdom,

Michael W. Sigman, Bishop

Leadership Notes	2
2007 New Appointments	2
Change in Church Center Staff	2
Bishop's Travels	3
News from the Compensation Commission and Benefits Corpora-	3
An Amendment a Day....	4
Miscellaneous	4
2007 Pre-N C Regional Meetings	5
Discipling Others Seminar	5
Opportunity-Adoption	6
Opportunity-Change is the Word	6
Could I Be a Church Planter	6



## Leadership Notes

- **William Rupp** (Lancaster Tapestry) has been appointed to the Church Planting Commission.
- **Rev. John Friedlund** (Kutztown Grace) has been appointed to the Leadership Commission
- **Rev. Todd Bussett**, retired National Commander of the Salvation Army, has been appointed Executive Director of the National Association of Evangelicals.

## 2007 New Appointments (effective July 1, 2007)

- **Robert W. Zetterberg**  
From Rock Falls, IL to Retirement
- **David F. Wood**  
From Cressona, Bethany Christian Fellowship to Leesport, Bethany
- **Dennis W. Snyder**  
From Ashland, Bethany, Assistant to Cressona, Bethany Christian Fellowship
- **Michael G. Knapp**  
To Clark's Valley Zion
- **Dennis V. Buss**  
From Assistant, Cedarville IL Emmanuel to Part-time, Rock Falls, IL



## Change in Church Center Staff



We are both pleased and disappointed to announce that Lori Lehman, Benefits Clerk for the Benefits Corporation, has accepted a full-time position with the Human Resources Department of the ECC Retirement Village. We are pleased that she will remain in the EC family, but disappointed to lose her at Church Center. We take this moment to express our gratitude for Lori's years of excellent service and work in the Corporation, and to its constituents.

In order to meet the extant and evolving needs of the Corporation and its constituents, the denomination has established the position of Compensation/Benefits Administrator. This position will be responsible to administer all matters relating to compensation and benefits for the E.C. Church. Rev. Ken Wiest has been hired to fill this position. All questions relating to these matters should be directed to him at the E.C. Church Center Finance Office. We are pleased to have Ken fill this position, and believe he will be a valuable resource for the needs of the Corporation and its constituents.



Eric Bender, Controller

## Bishop's Travels—April

April	1-2	Miami, FL, Clinica del Alma
	6	Lehigh Valley Good Friday service at Allentown, Boulevard
	8	Easter Celebration with the family
	12	Evangelism & Discipleship Commission
	15	Baltimore, MD, Rosedale Community
	17-23	National Conference, India
	24-26	European Christian Mission biennial conference, London
	28	WORD Day
	29	Emlenton, New Zion



## News from the Compensation Committee & the Benefits Corporation

### “God, Government and Me—Clergy Taxes Made Simple” DVD

Order by sending a \$5.00 check (includes shipping and handling) to:  
Benefits Board, P.O. Box 4608, Cleveland, Tennessee 37320-4608

*We apologize for the address error in the February EC Leader*

### FAQ of the Benefits Corporation:

March Question: The 2004 National Conference passed the Retiree Health Insurance Phase-Out Plan, how does this affect our pastors?

Pastors and their spouses who retired in 2005 or before 2005 will receive 100% of their health insurance paid by the National Conference, if not serving a church. Churches assigned a retired pastor for full-time service will be required to pay 100% of the pastor and his spouse's health insurance premiums and for part-time service the church shall provide 50% of their health insurance premiums.

Pastors who reach their 'Medicare Eligibility Year' in 2006, 2007, or 2008 will receive a percentage of their health insurance premiums paid by National Conference. By Social Security regulation, you are eligible for Medicare on the 1st of the month of your 65th birthday.

Under the Phase-Out Plan as approved by the 2004 National Conference, if a pastor turned 65 in 2006, then his 'Medicare Eligibility Year' is 2006 and he qualifies for 75% of his and his spouse's health insurance premiums to be paid by the National Conference when he retires. If the pastor turns 65 in 2007, he is eligible for 50% paid when he retires. For those turning 65 in 2008, they will be eligible for 25% of their health insurance premiums paid by National Conference when he retires. Upon retirement, the pastor is personally responsible for both his and his spouse's premium on the other part not paid by National Conference. For the purposes of this plan, a spouse's eligibility is based on her husband's Medicare Eligibility Year. If the retired pastor and/or his spouse have outside employment, they will not be covered by our plan if their employer offers health care coverage. Failure of full disclosure will require full repayment and termination for our health insurance plan.

During the 3 phase-out years (2006, 2007, 2008) only, eligible pastors retiring in those years may apply for a supplement towards the percentage of their health insurance that they now must pay. This supplement will be based on the pastor's last cash salary plus housing allowance or rental value and utilities from the church

## News from the Compensation Committee & the Benefits Corporation

(Continued from page 3)

he last served before retiring. This supplement is based on a sliding salary scale and may be requested from the Benefits Corporation. The intent of this supplement was that these men did not have adequate time to prepare to pay a portion of their retiree health insurance during the short time between the passage of the Phase-out plan and their actual retirement.

Pastors whose 'Medicare Eligibility Year' occurs in 2009 or thereafter, will not be eligible for any retiree health insurance coverage through the Benefits Corporation or the National Conference. [This applies to all pastors born in 1944 or later.]

For any questions, please call Becky Reigle (815-284-2677)

April question: What is the Manna Fund?

## An Amendment A Day...

The proposed amendments to the EC Discipline will be reviewed by the National Ministry Team on March 29th and should be in the mail to you by early April. We want you to read them before the pre-NC regional meetings. There are many, many amendments but they represent some exciting developments in EC ministry and leadership.



## Miscellaneous

- **Vida Nueva E.C. Church in Reading** is looking for a saxophone player and a trumpet player to join their worship band. It is only for their services on Sundays, 12:30—2:00 p.m. Please contact Pastor Mendez if you are interested [pastormendez@mividanueva.com](mailto:pastormendez@mividanueva.com) or (610)921-3737/ (610)375-8344.
- **Boyertown Trinity** is holding unique fund raiser that other churches might attend and/or could use for their own fund raising activity. On March 30th & 31st, they are holding a Mystery Dinner Fund Raiser. The cost is \$15 per person. The Trinity Youth Group presents "The Mystery of the Missing Michael Gailbraith." Enjoy a four course meal and help solve the mystery. Money supports the youth's participation at PACE work camp helping flood victims in central PA. Doors open at 5:45, dinner served at 6:00. Call to reserve seats: 610-369-1507.
- **St. John's E.C. Church, Steelstown** (Lebanon County) is looking for a serviceman (any branch, any rank) in the Susquehanna or Delaware Regions who has served in Iraq since 2003, and is a strong Christian, to share his Iraq experiences as the speaker at our Men's Day on Saturday, June 2, 2007. Plans include a Men's Prayer Breakfast in Palmyra followed by an installation tour of Fort Indiantown Gap & the PA National Guard Museum. We will then return to St. John's Church for a luncheon and program (including the speaker.) If you know of someone out there, EC or not, please share this info with him. Replies may be made by contacting: Rev. Bill McEllroy, [steelstown@earthlink.net](mailto:steelstown@earthlink.net); (717)838-1171 or (717)228-2071

## 2007 Pre-National Conference Regional Meetings

7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

For pastors, delegates and other interested E.C. laity

Great Lakes	Dixon, St. James	Monday, May 7th
Great Lakes	Canton	Monday, May 14th
Great Lakes	Clarks Mills	Tuesday, May 15th
Delaware	Royersford	Tuesday, May 8th
Delaware	Tamaqua	Thursday, May 24th
Susquehanna	Willow Street	Tuesday, May 22nd
Susquehanna	Clarks Valley	Thursday, May 17th

Have  
that thought?  
yourself in-



you ever had  
Do you find  
trigued by the

## Discipling Others Seminar

May 5, 2007

Boyertown Trinity E.C. Church, 250 Swinehart Road, Boyertown, PA

9:00 am to 4:30 pm

Registration deadline—April 26, 2007

Cost: \$30/person

To register for this seminar, send the enclosed completed form and check (payable to Boyertown EC Church) to:  
Boyertown Trinity E.C. Church, Attn: DOS, 250 Swinehart Road, Boyertown, PA 19512 by April 26, 2007.

### Discipling Others Seminar (DOS)

Rev.  Dr.  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Church attending \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ DOS Alumni? \*Yes  No

Brief summary of my discipling experience:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* DOS Alumni come free if accompanied by a least one guest.

## Opportunity—Three Rivers Adoption Council

Currently 2000 children in Pennsylvania await permanent adoptive families. These children range in age from 0-18 and are from all racial backgrounds. Upon reaching 18, the children not adopted “age out” of the foster care system and are released into our streets. Over 25,000 children “age out” every year.

Recently SWAN (Statewide Adoption Network) gave the council a grant to expand into 9 counties. They are: Dauphin, Cumberland, York, Lancaster, Lebanon, Berks, Lehigh, Northampton and Monroe. These 9 counties are in addition to the 9 counties they already served: Lawrence, Butler, Armstrong, Beaver, Allegheny, Westmoreland, Washington, Greene, and Fayette.

Since the Three Rivers Adoption Council contract with county agencies, there are only minimal upfront costs to adoptive families. In fact, many agencies will not charge you for their services if the children are from the child welfare system.

The goal of Brian Miller, a family case worker with Three Rivers Adoption Council, is to see these children placed in Christ-centered homes.

If you would like to dialogue on how to best disseminate this information to your churches, or to speak in person about these children contact Brian at: (717)813-2495; (717)865-2810 or [www.3riversadopt.org](http://www.3riversadopt.org)

## Opportunity—Change is the Word

There is a constant need for change at the E.C. Church Center. There is also a need, as with your own home, to keep it looking nice. We are a representative of our whole denomination.

We are looking for people to help with painting, minor construction, flooring, and touch-up work.

If you have a talent and time you want to share with us, please contact Brenda at 800-866-7581 or [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com)



## Could I Be a Church Planter?

Have you ever had that thought? Do you find yourself intrigued by the idea of pioneering a church? Have you sensed a “tug” in that direction? If so, I want to invite you to lunch and a conversation about becoming a church planter. There are no strings attached. Just call me and say, “Mike, I’ve been thinking about church planting and wonder whether God could use me as a church planter.” We’ll set a lunch date and talk. And if your wife wants to join in the conversation, I’d be happy to get a table for three!

E.C. church planting rises and falls with leadership. Simply put, we need potential church planters and the first step in recruitment is a conversation where you can explore the exciting world of church planting. The conversation will be confidential and it will always end with a covenant to pray that God’s will be done in your life and the life of E.C. Church Planting. Call me at 1-800-866-7581 or email me at [msigman@eccenter.com](mailto:msigman@eccenter.com).

—- Bishop Mike Sigman