



Perfect?

Perhaps, like me you've been following the news coverage on all the real and potential candidates for President. In some ways it seems almost impossible to ignore. Each person is examined. What does s/he say about this? What's their position on this topic? What would they do in this situation? There are days when I think the potential candidates are not examined as much as they are dissected. We look for the perfect person to be the perfect candidate and then the perfect President. It reminds me of comments I've heard people make about the pastor. I'm sure you've heard the stories of churches who demand the denomination send them the perfect pastor. The comment has been made that some churches wouldn't even be satisfied if the Apostle Paul was their pastor. (After all he couldn't remember who he even baptized.) Then there are the pastors who will only go to the perfect situation, the perfect church. They don't want to have to deal with the previous pastor's mistakes or problems. They want a church that's perfectly happy and healthy.

Sometimes I wonder why we are so preoccupied with and demanding of perfection when none of us are.



Oh sure, we all like to pretend we're perfect, but we know the truth whether we want to admit it or not. Paul wrote to Timothy "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" - and I am the worst of them all." (1 Timothy 1:15 NLTse) You see, Jesus didn't come in to the world to save perfect people; he came to save sinners like you and me.

One of the greatest gifts I ever received as a person and as a pastor was when Bridgeville E.C. Church did an evaluation of our church and ministries. We used an outside firm to walk through it with us. One of the things they evaluated was the pastor (me!). What I discovered was that the people really did know me. They knew both my strengths and weaknesses; they knew the things I could do and the things I couldn't do. And amazingly they loved me and still wanted me to be their pastor! It is a gift I will never stop giving thanks for. God's love for us is unconditional but we don't see that too much here on earth. How often do I practice it in my life? Do I unconditionally

(continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Bishop's Top Ten Prayer & Praise	2
Stationing Notes	2
News From Global Ministries	3
News from Benefits & Compensation	4
News from Evangelical Seminary	5


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love the people the Lord brings into my life and my church? I'm not perfect so why should I expect them to be? Perhaps what I should be doing is coming along side them and helping them. I can help do the thing they are weak in. That's really the picture of marriage. It's the picture of the church. It is the picture of life. During this Thanksgiving season give thanks for *all* the people in your life. Give thanks for your church; the lay leaders and pastors. Give thanks that they give you an opportunity to practice unconditional love; chances to extend

mercy and grace; a chance to use your strengths in concert with their weakness as they share their strength in your weakness. The truth is none of us are perfect; we are all sinners saved by grace.

In Christ's service,



The Bishop's TOP TEN Prayer & Praise Items

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| <p>1. Begin to pray now for National Conference 2012 (May 23-25). Ask the Lord to lead in the planning and to be present as we gather together.</p> <p>2. Pray for those who are beginning the process of preparation for our annual Pastoral Assessment Center which will be held in January.</p> <p>3. I guess Thanksgiving officially kicks off our holiday season. Remember to pray for those who are away from home during this time of the year: missionaries and service men and women (including our EC Chaplains).</p> <p>4. A good friend says "People are messy." Ask the Lord to help</p> | <p>us all to be compassionate and loving as we deal with messy people.</p> <p>5. We all pray for revival in the E.C. Church and in America. Ask the Lord to begin that revival in your own heart (after all we are the church).</p> <p>6. Thank the Lord for his leading as we continue to deal with mid-year stationing issues.</p> <p>7. Praise the Lord for the fellowship that is part of the EC Churches' DNA. Gloria and I</p> | <p>are being warmly welcomed as we visit our churches. Thank you!</p> <p>8. Praise the Lord that Gloria and I are awaiting the birth of grandchild #6 in April 2012. (Yes we are that old though she doesn't look it.)</p> <p>9. Thank the Lord for his many blessings. Even in these times of economic turmoil, we are blessed beyond most of the world's understanding.</p> <p>10. Praise the Lord for the reports of good things happening in many of our churches; for growth and health.</p> |
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Stationing Notes

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| <p>1. Brian Bestwick became the pastor at Trinity EC, Shamokin and Bethany, EC Sunbury as of October 1, 2011.</p> | <p>2. Rev. Mark James is the new interim pastor at Community, Evangelical, Sinking Spring. He comes to us from New Church Specialties.</p> | <p>3. Rev. Nathanael Kennedy will leave St. Matthew's EC, Emmaus to pastor at Ebenezer EC, Jim Thorpe beginning December 1st.</p> |
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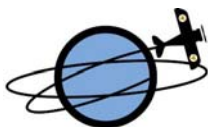
News from Global Ministries

Thanks to Maureen Logan for designing the new GMC logo which incorporates the globe and the EC Shield communicating clearly that while we are global, we are indeed the Evangelical Congregational Church!



Nepal Trip:

Please pray for the GMC trip to interact with the EC Church of Nepal during their Annual Conference, November 27-December 8, 2011. Randy & Carla Sizemore; Dr. David Brock and Rev. Paul Barber from the USA will be joined by Rev. Nobuo Abe, Director of the E.C. Church of Japan and Rev. Lalrosiem Songate, Bishop of the E.C. Church of India, making this another opportunity to strengthen and develop the global E.C. Church!



Prayer and Power:

The “*EC Global Scene*” monthly prayer calendar has been re-named the “*EC Global Prayer Guide*” to better describe what it is and how we would like it to be used. Imagine if we could encourage just 10% of the ECer’s who attend the Sunday morning worship services in the USA to pray for the same request on the same day—over 1,000 people would be bringing the same missional prayer request before our Father’s throne! What power! Contact the GMC office to find out how your congregation can best utilize this powerful tool.

Child Sponsorships Available at El Retiro:

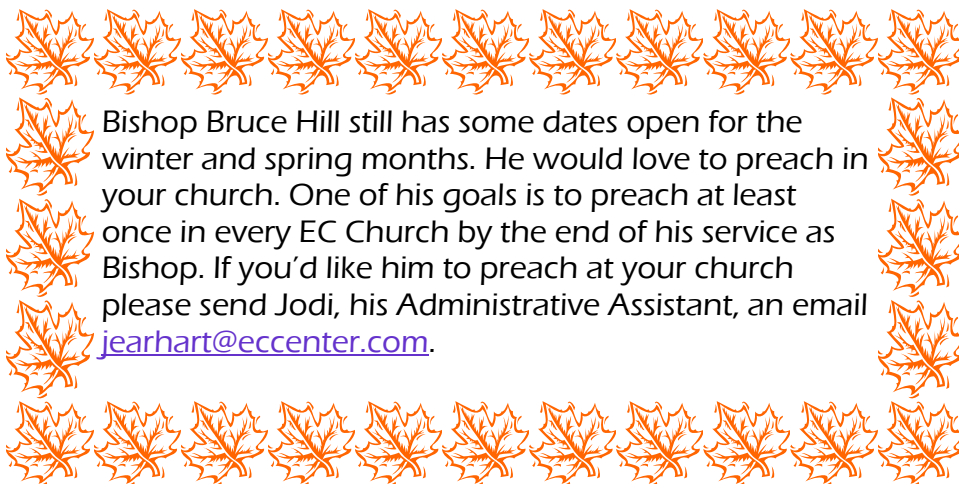
Through our partnership with Back2Back ministries in Mexico, we are able to offer a limited number of individual child sponsorships for the EC children at El Retiro Children’s Home in Mexico. These sponsorships

partner a specific child with a sponsor and include photos and letters. Each child sponsorship is \$100/month and can be taken by individuals, Sunday Schools, congregations or small groups. Contact Carla Sizemore at csizemore@eccenter.com



Available Speaking Dates:

I would love to share what God is doing through the global EC Church with your congregation, Sunday school, mid-week group or small group. I have some available Sunday mornings in December and in the new year or we could schedule another time that would best meet your schedule. Contact me at rsizemore@eccenter.com



Bishop Bruce Hill still has some dates open for the winter and spring months. He would love to preach in your church. One of his goals is to preach at least once in every EC Church by the end of his service as Bishop. If you’d like him to preach at your church please send Jodi, his Administrative Assistant, an email jeahart@eccenter.com.

News from Benefits & Compensation

The transition to **Capital Blue Cross** (CBC) had a few minor glitches and I want to thank those that experienced those glitches for your patience and understanding.

The most frequent issues were with filling prescriptions and hopefully soon, if not already, the CBC and CVS/Caremark computer systems will be in sync. If you do experience problems with your CBC coverage or have any coverage



questions, prescriptions or otherwise, your first point of contact will be Nicole Mengel our account manager with PowerKunkle (PowerKunkle is our insurance broker). Nicole (Nikki) can be reached at 1-610-685-1790 or 1-866-685-1790 or nmengel@pkbenefits.com. Please remember that if you are a member on the CBC health insurance plan you were automatically enrolled in the Value Dental Plan, unless you upgraded to the Basic Dental plan. You will receive one ID card from CBC for health insurance and dental.

PrimePay will be administering our Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) that is coupled with our CBC health insurance. The HRA will pay for members covered expenses after the \$500 deductible is met by the member. Always send in your EOB (explanations of benefits) to PrimePay for any covered service, even if you have not met your \$500 deductible. PrimePay will track the \$500 deductible for you and notify you if you are responsible for all or a portion of a covered expense. A PrimePay claim form is available on www.eccenter.com, please download a copy for yourself. Contact us if you need a paper copy mailed to you.



The HRA does not replace the FSA (flex spending account). **FSA funds** can be used to pay the members \$500 deductible responsibility. The same FSA rules apply, if the pastor contributes at least \$100 toward his FSA the church is required to supply \$500 in FSA funds.

The new health insurance rates take effect on January 1, 2012 payable on December 15, 2011. The new rates are available on the EC website.

The **pastoral compensation package**, including housing allowances, must be approved before January 1, 2012 by the local conference. It is the discretion of the pastor how much of his salary is allocated toward housing allowance. The local church board or local conference responsibility is only to assure the amount is reasonable based upon area housing costs. The IRS regulations impose a ceiling on the amount of housing allowance a pastor can claim on his personal income tax return. After approval please send Pastoral Compensation forms to David King, Benefits Administrator, at the EC Church Center.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving holiday,

Kevin Henry
Controller

Dave King
Benefits Administrator



CALLING ALL....



Parents and Youth Work-

ers... Evangelical's November 1 Fall Forum on "Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture" is a powerful source for parents or youth workers seeking deeper understanding of the

challenges facing today's young people. The presenter, Dr. Walt Mueller, is founder and president of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding as well as an author, media commentator, and recognized authority on youth culture and family issues. The day's schedule begins with registration at 8:30 a.m., includes three presentations and lunch, and ends at 2:30 p.m. Complete details, costs, and online registration are available at www.evangelical.edu by October 25.



Pastors... Does your preaching need some R&R (as in Refreshment and Retooling)? Don't miss the 2011 Ritter-Moyer Lecture on November 10, when Dr. Michael Quicke, C.W. Koller Professor of

Preaching at Northern Seminary in Lombard, IL, and author of *Preaching as Worship*, will discuss "Preaching in a Post-Everything Culture" and "What's Next for 21st Century Preaching?" The program runs from 9:30 a.m. until noon and is free of charge, unless attendees want CEU's (\$10 registration cost at the door).



Prospective Students... Fall Open House on Thursday, November 10, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. provides a wonderful opportunity for anyone interested in finding out how Evangelical can help prepare

them for God's calling. Guests can sit in on a class, get to know the campus, and confer with faculty

and alums. Reserve your seat by calling 800.532.5775 or emailing admissions@evangelical.edu.



Business People... Our November 17 Faith in the Marketplace breakfast from 7:00-8:30 a.m. features a panel of business leaders discussing "Integrity...When Making the Hard Choices in Business." Roger North

will moderate a panel consisting of Lu Laysen, co-owner of Laysen's Flowers, Myerstown; Greg Leshner, president of Leshner Mack Sales and Service, Lebanon; Dr. Bruce Sensenig, superintendent of Cocalico School District, Denver; and Kevin Zimmerman, president of Z&G Partners, Ephrata. Cost is \$20. Register by November 10 at www.evangelical.edu or call Miriam Moury at 717.866.5775.



All EC's... Check out Evangelical's newly designed website at www.evangelical.edu for all the latest news, academic information, and first-hand testimonies from your seminary!

