

networker

fall 2009

...working the nets for kingdom advancement

WE WELCOME OUR NEW NATIONAL MINISTER



The Evangelical Association Board of Directors has called Rev. Jim Barnes to serve half-time as the new national minister of the EA, effective October 15, 2009. Pastor Jim will continue in his role as the Senior Pastor of Bethesda Evangelical Church in St. Louis (an EA member congregation) having been authorized by the congregation of Bethesda on September 27 to devote half of his full-time schedule to the tasks related to administering the national office of the EA and fulfilling the revised duties of the national minister approved by the Board in June.

Although this is a change to the current configuration of the national minister position, both the Board and Pastor Jim believe there are some unique advantages to the new arrangement which will give the national minister the opportunity to maintain a strong relationship with a local EA church. "I believe in the importance of seeing the 'net' work when it comes to the EA," stated Rev. Barnes. "What makes our association strong is our unwavering confidence in the effectiveness of local churches and ministers. As one who continues to serve as a local church pastor, I know that we have extremely gifted and talented lay people and clergy serving in EA churches and ministries. I see the job of the national minister as one of helping people throughout our association connect with each other as together we do the work of ministry to which we have been called by the Lord."

The EA Board has determined that the National Minister should be a person who seeks to connect churches, pastors, and individuals within the EA while also looking to identify and facilitate organic networks for missional outreach among EA churches and pastors. According to Pastor Jim, "This means that my job is (paraphrasing Reggie McNeal) to serve as a 'journalist,' who discovers and then reports on the exciting movements of God occurring in the local ministries of the EA. By fostering effective communication among our membership, local churches and pastors may then be inspired to enter into creative partnerships with one another to engage in Kingdom advancing ministries."

As Pastor Jim begins his service to the EA, much of his time will be devoted to transferring the national office to St. Louis from Lebanon, Pennsylvania where the Rev. Rich Dubbs has been assisting with the transition during this interim period. Rich will meet with Pastor Jim to help him learn the administrative details involved in running the national office.

Rev. Jim Barnes is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary where he received his Master of Divinity degree. He was ordained in 1988 and served St. Luke's Christian Community Church (formerly U.C.C.) in the Chicago area before becoming pastor of Bethesda Evangelical Church (formerly U.C.C.) eighteen years ago. His wife, Patti is the manager of assessment at the St. Louis Community College. They have three children: Matt, a student at the University of Missouri, Mollie, a junior in high school and Aaron who is in middle school.

networker

summer 2009
Publishing Staff

Editor: Pastor Jeff Siems
Design Editor: Leslie Spanyer

networker is published quarterly as the official newsletter of the Evangelical Association of Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches. Inclusion of an article or advertisement does not indicate endorsement by the Evangelical Association.

Subscription:
networker is a free publication. To receive a copy of the *networker*, e-mail circulation at:

office@bethelstpaul.org

Printed in the United States.

To reprint any *networker* content, contact the editorial office by e-mail:

office@bethelstpaul.org

Letters:

Please send comments to:

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PRINT DEADLINES FOR THE NETWORKER

Winter 2009 Edition:
December 1, 2009

Spring 2010 Edition:
March 1, 2010

Summer 2010 Edition:
June 1, 2010

Fall 2010 Edition:
September 1, 2010

A MESSAGE FROM THE EA PRESIDENT

The Rev. Bill Miller, President of the Board of Directors



Greetings to the EA fellowship! Many of you were in attendance at the 11th Annual Convocation at Bethel-St. Paul Church in Louisville last month. What a gathering! Everyone there was blessed through the fellowship, worship, workshops and hospitality. It was truly the “place to be”! With our theme “To Whom Shall We Go?”, it was obvious that by being in Louisville we were in the right place to experience the Lord.

Prior to the opening of Convocation, the EA Board of Directors met and enjoyed a great time of planning and fellowship. We heard reports from our committees & officers and set in place a new budget for 2010. The Board recognized the efforts of our Secretary, Rich Dubbs, and Treasurer, Cliff Poirot, for their efforts in maintaining the office of the Association while we seek a new National Minister. Two new Board members were added: Rev. Lin Smalec and Rev. Darrell Weber. Lin is a newcomer and Darrell is returning after a brief hiatus. Bill Miller, President; Rich Dubbs, Secretary; and Cliff Poirot, Treasurer will continue in their offices. Coslow Holt did not seek re-election as Vice President, so Jeff Siems accepted this position. The next meeting of the Board will be February 1 & 2 in Texas.

Over the next several months Pastors’ groups and regional gatherings will be taking place throughout the country. If these events are in your area, make every effort to attend and enjoy the “networking” that makes us who we are.

BLESSINGS!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TREASURER

The Rev. Cliff Poirot, EA Treasurer



By now almost all of you should have heard the good news that we now have a new National Minister, the Rev. Jim Barnes. We have entered into a contractual agreement with Jim’s church, whereby we pay a fixed amount directly to the church for his services to the EA. We have never done this before. This new procedure does cut down on the paperwork involved, however, the expenses do not decrease.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and myself I wish to thank all of our EA members for their support during this transitional period. Funding for the National Minister’s Fund through September 2009 is running at less than fifty percent for the total amount budgeted. Fortunately we had reserves to cover this shortfall, but now our reserves have been serious depleted. Our hope is that those who had been supporting this fund in the past will continue to do so now that we have hired a new National Minister.

It is important for all our friends to prayerfully consider how you might help with support for the National Minister's Fund. Remember to mail all contributions to: EA Treasurer. P.O. Box 307, Lacey Spring, VA 22833. All contributions are tax deductible. Thank you again!

BIKER SUNDAY AT BROADWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Pastor John Smead, Associate Pastor

On August 16, 2009 we had our 3rd Biker Sunday Event at Broadway Christian Church in Kimmel, IN. Even though attendance was down, it was still a great success. There were about 16—20 motorcycles that showed up, some with 2 riders. We served a continental breakfast followed by a worship service. Brother Richard Adair led us in the Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge to the Christian Flag. I then welcomed all the bikers with some humor and real down home fellowship. I also shared some special words with Scripture. The Simon Peter Band played great Christian rock music.



Two band members and the bikers at the worship service.



Pastor Rensner checking out Ron Ellot's Harley.

Biker Sunday was established to raise money for the Noble County Food Bank. Terry Wilkinson from the food bank spoke during the service about their mission and all the families they help feed. Pastor Richard Rensner concluded the service with some special words and a closing prayer.

After the service all attendees were invited to enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by members of our congregation. Door prizes were awarded and then we all went on a wonderful ride together. Ron Elliot, a member and rider planned a great ride through the countryside. We really did have a fantastic time.

Biker Sunday is a combined effort of church members, family, friends and motorcycle dealerships. We raised a total of \$600.00 and donated lots of canned goods to the food bank. Biker Sunday is a great fund raiser to help those in need and it is also a great outreach program to tell others about Jesus.

After the service all attendees were invited to enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by members of our congregation. Door prizes were awarded and then we all went on a wonderful ride together. Ron Elliot, a member and rider planned a great ride through the countryside. We really did have a fantastic time.



Terry Wilkerson accepting the donation from Pastor Smead.

AN EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION REGIONAL MEETING!

Emanuel Reformed Church
Thomasville, North Carolina
Saturday, October 17, 2009
The Rev. Rickey Payne, Host Pastor
Church Office: (336) 475-7590

Letters

We want to hear from our readers concerning the articles within the *networker*.

Send letters to:

EMAIL:
Office@bethelstpaul.org

POSTAL:
The Evangelical Association
c/o Bethel-St. Paul Church
4004 Shelbyville Road
Louisville, KY 40207
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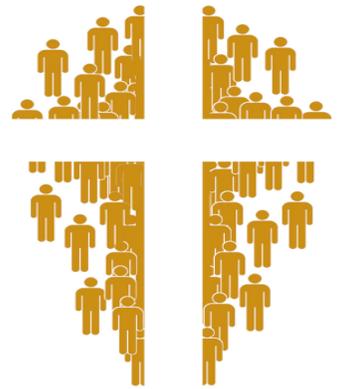
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THE 2009 CONVOCATION OF THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION



**BETHEL
ST. PAUL**

WELCOME
EA
REPRESENTATIVES

Traditional Worship - 9:00 A.M.
Sunday School - 10:00 A.M.
Contemporary Worship - 11:00 A.M.

4004



To
Whom
shall we
go?

Bethel-St. Paul Church Louisville, KY September 18-20, 2009



WHAT YOU HAD TO SAY ABOUT CONVOCATION 2009

- * I liked the ample selection of workshops. To me, each workshop provided pastors and lay people an opportunity to hear about concerns facing our churches. I will walk away with a set of tools to keep pressing on.
- * Worship services and fellowship were the best. The food was great. It is obvious that you worked and prayed a lot and we appreciate it.
- * Casual, well organized, easy to locate rooms—knowledgeable speakers—excellent workshop speakers—good source for contacts for guest speakers.
- * It was all great—the worship was very uplifting—the speakers were anointed—maybe a special treat was the ministry of Patrick Hughes. The food was great also.
- * I liked the inspiration and encouragement of Pastors and lay leaders—the warm hospitality of the Bethel-St. Paul folks—the wonderful food—the opportunity to meet other EA people.
- * I liked the Saturday afternoon workshops. Your speakers were outstanding. Your music leaders were outstanding.
- * Oh Wow! This is difficult—you were awesome. I guess the attention to detail, the entire convocation was so well organized and right on time—worship services, meals, workshops, signs, instructions, speakers, meals, hospitality—all organized.
- * Speakers and workshop leaders were great—drama team and cardboard testimonies were very moving—would have purchased a shirt to go with the bag if available—beautiful design.
- * I really enjoyed the worship services this past weekend. The workshops were very helpful and the information presented can be used at our own local churches. I also enjoyed the food and hospitality of the kitchen staff—excellent!
- * The goodie bags were awesome—dinner was excellent—evening service by all who participated was the bestest ever!! Educational session was informative—Ken & Polly and Dr. Jones very informative and inspirational.
- * I enjoyed Pastor Jeff, his staff, the congregation and those wonderful workers that prepared and served that great southern cooking and desserts. The music, the skits and great entertainment were special. The worship services were special and you could feel God's presence with us.
- * It truly was all great. I came tired and weary and had my battery charged. The speakers, workshops and all were great. I loved the humorous break on Saturday. The food was great—I loved the "Taste of Kentucky"!
- * You can't improve perfection. The wife and I have attended quite a few convocations and no disrespect to any of the others (they were all good) this was one we will never forget. It was great being with the great pastors, guests and all the hugs.

Thank You For Your Feedback!

“A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER”

EA Convocation ~ Everything We Prayed It Would Be

Pastor Jeff Siems, Editor

Host Pastor for Convocation 2009 & EA Board Member



Our lives are a tapestry of ups and downs—ins and outs—over and unders. Whenever we pause and look back, we can identify significant moments and events in our lives that left a lasting impression. For me, I recently added a new significant event.

That event was the Evangelical Association Convocation 2009. Based on what many of you shared with us, that feeling might include many others as well.

For nine months our Convocation Planning Team planned and worked. A significant portion of that preparation time was devoted to prayer. We fully realized that without prayer, the convocation would be nothing more than just another religious gathering. We desired more than that—we wanted to experience a powerful move of God.

Shortly after the association asked us to host the convocation, the Lord gave me a vision of the people who would be coming: they were weary, discouraged, and defeated. The theme that was established by the EA Board of Directors, “To Whom Shall We Go?”, also provided confirmation of that vision. The entire weekend was designed to minister to those who were struggling in their lives and ministries—clergy and lay people alike. Designing is one function—bringing the design to life is quite another. We acknowledged that without the Lord’s blessing, this event would crash rather than soar.

On two consecutive Wednesday nights prior to convocation, a small group of Bethel-St. Paul intercessors gathered to pray (we were also made aware that EA churches across the country were praying as well!). On the second Wednesday, our “prayer group” did a “prayer walk”. We began by

walking the perimeter of our building. Then we went inside and moved through the entire building, stopping to pray as we went for each dimension of the gathering. I can tell you that I have been involved in many prayer meetings in the past, but none of them was greater than that night. I felt that power and presence of God growing with each stop on our prayer walk. By the end of that one-hour gathering, I felt assured that the weekend of convocation was going to be very special.

I was not disappointed.

As a result of the Lord’s intervention and blessing, Convocation 2009 became an uncommon gathering. The keynote speakers, Bob Russell and Ken Davis, spoke to our hearts. The BSP worship band ministered by leading us to the throne of grace throughout the weekend—the organ and piano did the same on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Patrick Henry Hughes and Jeff Johnson touched us with their music. The drama ministry inspired and moved us. The workshop leaders informed and equipped us. The food crew fed us (what a feast!). The volunteers served us in every way imaginable. But most importantly, the move of God that we prayed for and anticipated occurred, and for that we are deeply grateful.

There was, however, one more dimension that would have made Convocation 2009 extra special—**YOU!** If you stayed home, please know that we missed you. Early in the year, we planned for a gathering of 250-300 people. Unfortunately, only 120 registered. We fully realize that numbers do not make or break an event, but the numbers are still important. If 300+ people were present, it would have certainly added to the excitement and energy that was already there.

Our annual convocation is an important event in the life of the Evangelical Association. It

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Evangelical Association

Contact Information:

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Evangelical Association

of the Reformed and Congregational
Christian Churches

*Until the transfer of the national
office is complete, the way to reach
Pastor Jim Barnes is ~*

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Email: office@bethelstpaul.org

Web

www.evangelicalassociation.org

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provides an opportunity to gather and to do what we do all year long through phone calls and e-mails: **network**. “Networking” provides important answers to frequently asked questions: *What are you doing? How did you accomplish that? Do you have any recommendations to improve our ministry and mission?* Through convocation and regional events, we attempt to answer those questions through worship/keynote speakers, workshop leaders, exhibits, resources, and personal interaction. The strength of our association is the network, but we can’t network unless we gather.

Allow me to make two suggestions. First, to the EA Board of Directors: continue to work closely with each host church in an effort to encourage that convocation to be the best it can be. The Board should also secure host locations for several years in advance to assist churches and

members in their future travel planning. Second, to all EA churches and members: begin planning now to attend the next EA Convocation on September 17-19, 2010 at a location to be announced. Begin setting aside some funds for travel, lodging, and conference expenses. Engage your pastor in recruiting others, but also take it upon yourself to encourage fellow members to attend. Let’s resolve together to strengthen this event through what is offered and how it is supported.

September 18-20th was special—God was here. We sang. We prayed. We embraced. We learned. We ate. We networked. We laughed. We encouraged one another. We looked into the face of Jesus. It was a very special weekend—a “high water” mark—a weekend to remember. By the grace of God, we are believing the same for next year and all the years to come.