

networker

Winter 2012

...working the nets for kingdom advancement



A Message From the Rev. Jim Barnes, National Minister

Caring for Your Clergy

A friend of mine, who is an insurance broker, once shared an interesting piece of information with me. He said that purchasing disability insurance for a minister is nearly as expensive as buying it for someone who routinely rides a motorcycle or practices skydiving. Of course, after he shared this, I asked why pastors are rated as such risky candidates for insurance, and he went on to say that ministers have one of the highest rates of claims against disability insurance policies for nervous breakdowns and other mental health problems!

Having served for more than two decades as a full time member of the clergy, I am glad that I have not become one of those insurance statistics. Unfortunately, I know plenty of ministers who have found themselves in the midst of a mental collapse. Studies have shown that clergy these days are under incredible stress as many deal with the expectations of parishioners that they should be able to “do it all” with “doing it all” meaning more than just preaching, teaching and visiting the sick. These days, many pastors are expected to do all that and also be effective evangelists, administrators, marketing experts, church growth strategists, long term planning professionals, counselors, conflict resolution specialists and the list goes on. The result is a clergy population in this country filled with broken and bruised men and women, some of whom have left ministry altogether and others who feel lonely, depressed and uncertain about their future.

One of the things I hope churches in the Evangelical Association will remember is that being an “independent” church does not give a congregation an excuse not to care for their pastor. Many denominations have programs and policies in place that are designed to help ministers receive adequate salary and benefits as well as opportunities for growth, collegial fellowship and continuing education. While many of the churches in our association were once “denominational,” quite a few are now “non-denominational” or independent, and as a result, decisions about how to care best for ministers now fall squarely on the shoulders of local church leadership. Lay leaders in every congregation need to take the time necessary to investigate the best ways to make certain each local church is doing everything possible to create a healthy environment in which both the pastor and church members can grow and thrive in their relationship with the Lord.

Along those lines, I would like to share with you that one of our own EA pastors and his wife have recently retired and purchased some land in New Hampshire where they have opened up a tiny retreat center specifically designed for pastors and Christian workers (see page 2 for pictures of retreat). If you would like to learn more about this place where ministers can get away for rest and reflection, contact:

Rev. Randy Thompson

Forest Haven Retreat, 29 Hogg Hill Rd., Bradford, NH 03221

603-938-2964; revrandy3795@sbcglobal.net

You can also visit the retreat center on Facebook by searching “Forest Haven Retreat New Hampshire.”

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PRINT DEADLINES FOR THE NETWORKER

Spring 2012 Edition:
April 15, 2012
Summer 2012 Edition:
July 15, 2012
Fall 2012 Edition:
October 15, 2012
Winter 2013 Edition:
January 15, 2013

GREETINGS FROM THE EA PRESIDENT

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



The Board of Directors will be meeting in New Braunfels, TX on Monday and Tuesday, March 5th & 6th. Please pray for wisdom and direction for the Board. We will be discussing the future of our annual Convocations and the increasing necessity for a greater emphasis on regional gatherings. We will be looking over the year-end financial reports and all other matters pertaining to the EA.

We have a very dedicated group of men and women of the EA from coast to coast who meet at least twice a year to review the activities of our association. The members take their responsibilities very seriously and give freely of their time, talents and treasure to keep our organization functioning well.

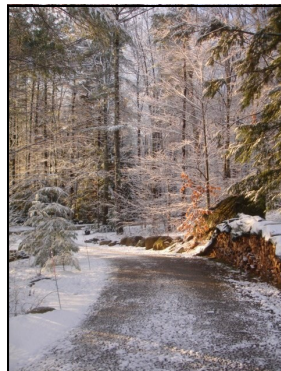
It's my privilege to serve as the President of the Board along with the other officers and members. Again keep us in your prayers as we deliberate in March.


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WE ARE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOUR CHURCH IS DOING!

The webmaster for the EA website would like to receive your church newsletters to look for news and inspirational stories to post on the EA website. Please add Rev. Ron Shifley, the webmaster, to your newsletter mailing list. You can mail (*see notation below*) your newsletter directly to him or send it via e-mail to the following address ~

Rev. Ron Shifley
1030 Third Street, PO Box 393
Scotland, SD 57059
shifleyron@yahoo.com

We look forward to reading about what's going on at your church!!

Rev. Ron moved to South Dakota in the Spring of 2011—for those of you who are already mailing him your newsletter—please make sure you have the correct mailing address.

Letters

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

Send letters to:

EMAIL:

natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

POSTAL:

The Evangelical Association
9051 Watson Road #241
St. Louis, MO 63126
Attn: networker

Unsigned letters will not be accepted. Receipt of letter does not guarantee publication. Letters are edited for clarity and space.

EA Membership Renewal

It is time to renew your EA membership. Individual and church renewal forms can be found on the EA website:

www.evangelicalassociation.org

Once the completed renewal form and payment of dues has been received, individual credentials and/or a certificate of recognition for your church will be issued.

Please return all renewals by February 15, 2012 to~

Evangelical Association
9051 Watson Road #241
St. Louis, MO 63126

If you have questions, contact **Jim Barnes, National Minister** at **877-424-1472** or e-mail **natmin@evangelicalassociation.org**

Receive Your Networker Via E-Mail!

To sign-up, all you need to do is e-mail your name and e-mail address to~

**natmin@
evangelicalassociation.org**

You will begin receiving your *Networker* via e-mail with the next edition this spring.

BULK COPIES OF THE NETWORKER ARE NOW AVAILABLE

If you would like a bulk shipment of ten copies of each edition of the *Networker* to make available to the members of your church, just contact the national office at~

**natmin@
evangelicalassociation.org**

or toll free at
877-424-1472

BIBLES NEEDED

The First Congregational Church of Torrington, CT is looking to purchase pew Bibles. They would like the Bibles to match the Bibles they are currently using which are:

NIV - Large Print Pew Bible - Navy - published in 1984

The current Bibles originally came from the International Bible Society which is now Biblica—but they are out and will not be reprinting.

Please contact Pastor Steve at (860) 482-4705 if you know of a church that is switching over to the newer translation and has some, or if you know of a place that sells them. We need about 24 more. Thank you!

LIVING IN THE PLACE BY HIM

The Rev. Steve Disher, Newton, North Carolina

After boarding a plane recently, I had become comfortable having an empty seat beside me. As more people filed onto the plane, I noticed a man in line was having trouble negotiating the narrow aisle with his small carryon bags. He had obviously been drinking. I thought, "Please don't sit beside me."

That hope faded quickly as he opened the storage bin above my head and attempted to stuff a bag into the small compartment. The bag fell on my head.

Apologizing, he crawled over me to the window seat and immediately ordered a gin and tonic from the flight attendant.

My new traveling buddy introduced himself as Tom, a business man with a family in a nearby state. He asked what I did. When I said, "I'm a pastor," he held up both hands in surrender and announced, "I'm a believer!"

We talked.

Life is like a succession of rooms, without hallways, one room leading into the next. The contents of the room in which you now stand can be clearly seen but the next room is somewhat darkened. God's light has not shone there. Light and understanding has been given for you to live in the room you now occupy. It is in this room, with its particular, sometimes peculiar, circumstances that you live. You cannot go back and re-enter the room you once inhabited.

It is in today's room that the Lord inserts people to affect change in your life or to receive influence through you. With never-ending cause and effect, the Master Designer and Lover of your soul draws you and those around you persistently toward Himself in a divine display of power, intent and redemption.

Standing in Athen's Areopagus, Paul proclaimed that God had "made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, for 'In him we live and move and have our being'" (Acts 17.26-28a ESV).

God is purposeful in all that He does. As you live according to His purpose, by knowing and loving Him, you begin to discover the release from burdens

and fear. Walking in the newfound freedom of an ever-moving, ever-creating God, there is change. Change is inevitable.

God's purpose is lived out through relationship. The Christian faith and life, with its ever-changing components, is about relationship. Moses had an extraordinary relationship with God. It is written that, "*The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend...*" (Exodus 33.11).

Utterly astounding. How could anyone hope to attain such a privileged place in the presence of Almighty God? Even many Christians cower in fear from approaching the Lord because of feelings, apathy and ignorance.

But Moses, speaking face to face with the Lord, boldly asked, "*Please, show me Your glory.*" (Exodus 33.18).

As Moses approached the Lord in faith and humility, he expressed the desire of his heart. Moses wanted to know God more; he wanted to experience God's undeserved favor; Moses wanted to be so intimately connected with God the Father that he yearned for and asked to see God's glory!

But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock..." (Exodus 33.20-21)

How beautifully intimate and loving!

The invitation is for you, as well. Are you seeking meaning and purpose? Are you seeking your place in this world? In this life? The Father is saying, "Here is a place next to Me; you shall stand on the rock for your foundation." That rock is Jesus.

After landing, I waited for Tom in the terminal. When he reached me, I told him I wanted to pray for him. With arms around each other I prayed and asked God's blessing on him and his family. When I finished, Tom kissed me on the cheek. I had not expected that.

As you stand on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ, share with others the amazing grace you have found in Him. Your life relationship with Christ will be expressed, it must be expressed, in a life relationship of love with those around you. As you watch the transforming power of divine love at work in others, your life will never be the same.

EA PASTOR INSTALLED IN UCC CHURCH

Following a lengthy process utilizing the resources provided by their denomination, the pastoral search committee at Scotland UCC in Scotland, South Dakota had come up empty. Although they had received many resumes from denominational pastors, virtually all were being sent by people who were advocating liberal theology and lifestyles which simply would not be a good match for the conservative members of this historic Reformed and German Congregational church located in a rural community nearly one hundred miles from Sioux Falls.



Late in the search process, a member of the pulpit committee contacted the Evangelical Association to ask for help in finding a suitable pastor. After the word went out to the 170 plus pastors who have recognition with the EARCCC, the people of Scotland UCC connected with Rev. Ron Shifley, an EA pastor from Ohio. A few months later, Ron and his wife Deanna were packing up for South Dakota to begin their new ministry! The Rev. Jim Barnes, National Minister of the EA participated in the installation service for Pastor Ron on Reformation Sunday. Also present was the Rev. David Felton, Interim Conference Minister for the South Dakota UCC in an “unofficial” capacity since Pastor Ron’s ordination is recognized by the Evangelical Association but not the United Church of Christ.

MONDAY THOUGHTS ON BEING A PASTOR

The Rev. Ed Briggeman, Holgate, Ohio

Being a pastor in a local congregation is a lot like being a Jekyll and a Hyde. It can be both a source of joy and fulfillment on the one hand, and a source of frustration and discouragement on the other. It’s a life of highs, lows, and in-betweens.

Yet through it all, being a pastor still remains a call on a life by an Almighty God. It doesn’t seem to matter whether you’re a lead, youth or an associate pastor. None is immune from the ups and downs of pastoral life. If we don’t like it, what are we going to do? Run? Like Jonah? And there’s only one person who will listen to us. And what’s He going to tell us? Many, if not all of us, have experienced this scenario. My advice: do what God’s called you to do, and get over it. Do you think you would get much sympathy from the likes of Jeremiah or Paul?

However, what if things are going well and you’re actually enjoying ministry where you are but God decides it’s time for a change. Not you . . . not the Elder Board . . . not the congregation. God decides. As if He is saying, “You’ve led this congregation as far as you are able. Well done. But now it is time to make room for another.”

What is it like to have a ministry totally submitted to God? To not see ourselves as indispensable or irreplaceable? At the Spirit’s prompting to be able to say in our hearts, “I believe I’ve done all I can do. God will supply someone with a new perspective that this congregation needs to move further into the future.” Having the humility to place our ministry, our call, into the hands of a sovereign God is a bit unnerving, even frightening, because it has to do with our future. But I see it to be the key to a truly fulfilling ministry, from God’s perspective. Easy? Are you kidding?!

I received a bit of advice from an older pastor friend of mine early in my ministry. He said, “Obedience is the key to blessing.” Sadly, I haven’t always heeded it. Tomorrow is Tuesday.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ACROSS THE EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION

HOW GOD'S WORKING AT THE LIVING WATER CHURCH OF TRUTH

The Rev. John Smead, Ft. Wayne, Indiana

On October 1, 2011 Living Water Church of Truth began its first food drive collecting non-perishable food, paper and cleaning products for the Beacon Heights Church of the Brethren in Fort Wayne, Indiana. They are part of the Fort Wayne Associated Churches Neighborhood Food Network. Mary Whitehead and Lois Guess joined our service and explained what the Associated Churches Neighborhood Food Network was all about. We gathered four large boxes of canned food and other miscellaneous items (weighing 98lbs). Additionally, we raised \$120 in donations for the food bank. On Sunday, November 13, 2011, we presented the Beacon Church Community Food Bank representatives with the food and monetary donations praising the Lord through-out the entire service!



What a wonderful blessing to know that our group at the Living Water Church of Truth, myself associated with E.A., are putting food on the tables of those who so desperately need help! I promised Mary and Lois we would start a month earlier next year that being September 1, 2012. Perhaps we could get others involved in our Food Drive. If your church would like to contribute, please let me know at (260) 387-7080. Additionally, both Harley Davidson dealerships here in Fort Wayne have expressed interest in participating in this very worthwhile and rewarding food drive. Also, for 2012 we would like to contact some of the local supermarkets to see if they would be interested in becoming a part of our food drive to help feed the

hungry as the word of God tells us to do. Praise the Lord with thanksgiving!

For years I've been striving to have children memorize "10" verses from God's word. I think it is so important that children know the scriptures, so that the spiritual seed can be planted and provide them the knowledge of Jesus. Previously, most children expressed excitement and interest in the memorization and reciting of scriptures, but seem to lose interest very quickly. I truly believe that we as parents must become committed to planting the seed and knowledge in knowing God's word! In the past, most kids started out well, but never finished. I might add that it takes a commitment from parents to help them learn and feel that sense of accomplishment.

This is a real praise the Lord! At Living Water, once a child has learned all "10" verses, they are presented with a Certificate of Accomplishment and a new Bible. Colin Andrews and Lauren Hartley are the very first two young people to memorize and recite all "10" bible verses. Colin received his on November 20, 2011 and Lauren received hers on December 4, 2011. Each of them are very young, but very determined and they love hearing about God. We are all very proud of them both! Currently, we have 1 more child working to memorize those "10" verses, and I think he will do it! As an added note, Lauren is doing our Sunday Worship Scripture reading and Colin will be serving bread during Communion! **Praise the Lord!** We want to take this opportunity to thank the grandparents of Colin and Lauren for helping them, as well as their commitment to planting the seed of Christ and His holy word the Bible! **CONGRATULATIONS & WAY TO GO COLIN and LAUREN!**



Pastor John & Linda with Colin (above) and Lauren (below)



Tell us what is happening in your ministry!!!

E-mail articles to ~ natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ALABAMA - FULL TIME SENIOR PASTOR - St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church, Cullman, Alabama is seeking a highly qualified individual for the position of Senior Pastor. Said applicant should have the skills, energy, and vision to combine traditional liturgical and blended services. Our church offers the opportunity to work with an outstanding staff, a vibrant mid-sized congregation in a newly completed facility. Cullman is located in North Alabama and boasts an excellent quality of life, a low crime rate, and outstanding school systems. Applicant should be a community minded person with outstanding Bible teaching skills, a strong presence in the pulpit with a desire for growth and outreach. Prior ministerial experience is preferred with a graduate degree from an accredited theological seminary. Interested applicants should contact Karen Hassell at 256-734-0344 or khassell@stjohnscullman.com. Please visit our website at www.sjepc.com.

OHIO - DIRECTOR OF FAMILY LIFE MINISTRIES - Jerusalem Church (New Philadelphia, Ohio) is looking for an individual who loves children and youth and has a desire to introduce, lead and disciple them in their relationship to Jesus. This is a full-time position. Please check out our web-page for information about the church and the ministries at www.jerusalem-church.org . If interested please contact and/or send resumes to: attn: Search Committee at Jerusalem Church, 1417 Stonecreek Rd. SW, New Philadelphia, OH 44663 or info@jerusalem-church.org.

PENNSYLVANIA - SENIOR PASTOR NEEDED - Old Goshenhoppen Reformed Church of Woxall, Pa. is seeking a Senior Pastor. We are located in a rural setting one hour north of Philadelphia. One of the first Reformed Churches in Pennsylvania, we are steeped in history, yet our bucolic setting belies the proximity to all that a major metropolitan area can offer. We are a faithful, Bible-based, inter-generational, congregation with a positive spirit and value our traditions while seeking ways to reach beyond our doors. We are prayerfully anticipating an enthusiastic leader who will be a beacon of Christ's love and ministry within the church and throughout the community. Please visit our website at: www.ogrc.org Interested candidates may contact our search committee chairperson: Greg Landis at gregorylandis@comcast.net or 215-783-8820 or our church secretary: Lou Ann Pullen at rtpullen@aol.com or 610-287-7600 for a detailed church profile and job description.

TEXAS - PART TIME WORSHIP LEADER - St. Paul Evangelical Church in Cibolo, Texas (part of the fast-growing I-35 corridor just northeast of San Antonio) is seeking a part-time worship leader for our acoustic contemporary/blended service. A track record of having grown a worship ministry and a commitment to Reformation theology preferred. No phone calls please. Please visit our website at: www.stpaulcibolo.com. Send resumes with references to Pastor Brett Becker at brett@stpaulcibolo.com.

TEXAS - SENIOR PASTOR - Grace Memorial Church of New Braunfels Texas is searching for a new Senior Pastor. This is a nondenominational/inter-denominational congregation in a growing area between New Braunfels and Seguin and is located in Guadalupe County on the I-35 and I-10 corridors in one of the fastest growing areas of the country. Grace Memorial is a 12 year old congregation that has grown to 400+ members. We are looking for an experienced, educated spiritual leader who loves the Lord. The church is a Christ centered, Bible based independent evangelical church. In all aspects of the life, mission, and worship of the church they seek to blend all of the great Christ centered traditions of our faith. Send inquiries and/or resumes to Grace Memorial Church, 3240 FM725 New Braunfels, Texas. 78130, or send e-mail to office@gracememorialchurchnb.org, Attention: Ms. Betty Dunkin, Administrative Assistant.

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2012 Evangelical Association Convocation

September 14-16, 2012
Bethel-St. Paul Church, Louisville, KY

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The Kentucky Derby Museum/
Churchill Downs;
The Louisville Slugger Bat
Factory & Museum;
The Fraizer International
History Museum;
The Speed Art Museum;
The Louisville Zoo;



The Belle of Louisville
Steamboat Excursion;
The Louisville Science Center
& IMAX Theatre;
Muhammad Ali Center;
Waterfront Park; Golfing;
Historic Sites;
& Much More!



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