

networker

.....WORKING THE NETS FOR KINGDOM ADVANCEMENT



God's Clarion Call to Missions

A Message from The Rev. Jim Barnes, National Minister

In the year 1868, Oscar Lohr and his family arrived in Bombay from the United States. Lohr was a missionary sent out by the German Evangelical Synod of North America (one of the four predecessor denominations out of which many churches in the Evangelical Association have come). Following their arrival in Bombay, Lohr proceeded to move, with his wife, two sons (ages 12 and 8) and his daughter (age 2) to the town of Raipur, India in order to minister to a group of low, outcast people who were living in complete ignorance of the Gospel. During his stay in India, Lohr experienced sorrow as well as joy. In 1887 his eldest son was killed by a tiger. Three years later his wife died. In 1904 his second son died. Yet in spite of it all, and although converts came slowly, Lohr continued his faithful service as a missionary for thirty-six years. (Evangelical Pioneers by John Fluke, published in 1931)



Missionary Oscar Lohr

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Inspired To Advance The Kingdom

Reflections on Convocation 2014 adapted from an article by Roberta Seaton in the newsletter of Loyal Evangelical Church, Loyal, Oklahoma



Ann Graham Lotz speaks on the first chapter of Revelation

Early on a Thursday morning we set out on the 1160 mile drive from Loyal, Oklahoma to Landis, North Carolina. Last year's convocation in Indiana had been so refreshing and inspirational, we were ready for more.

Although they were not in attendance at the Friday morning seminar for church leaders, it was reported that the speakers were the

Benham brothers, two successful Christians whose real estate business was going to be highlighted in a new show on HGTV starting this Fall. After liberal

activists discovered that the brothers had spoken publically in favor of traditional marriage and family values, a campaign was started to pressure HGTV to cancel their contract. The network caved in to the pressure and stopped the show. The Benham brothers now speak to Christians all over reminding us that following Jesus and standing up for truth often requires us to pay the price.

For us, convocation began on Friday evening as we arrived just in time to be greeted by the friendly people of First Reformed Church with southern



David and Jason Benham challenge us to accept the cost of discipleship

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God's Clarion Call To Missions

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**“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial,
because when he has stood the test,
he will receive the crown of life that
God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12**

This year the theme we have chosen for the Evangelical Association is “Advancing the Kingdom” based on Jesus’ Great Commission in Matthew 28. At Convocation a few weeks ago, we had numerous workshop leaders who challenged us to pursue the task of reaching those who do not know Christ with the Gospel message.

Although this is the call God gives us, in many local churches the focus of congregational activity is often on “taking care of things here at home.” As a result, there are many churches that really have no vision for fulfilling Jesus’ command to take the Gospel to all people in all nations of the world.

My hope is that in congregations of the Evangelical Association, this inwardly focused attitude will disappear wherever it still exists. In fact, it would be incredibly exciting to see churches, no matter how large or small, become so passionate about fulfilling Jesus’ Great Commission, that every local church would view engaging in global missions as a major part of their congregation’s purpose.

- What if every EA congregation was supporting individual missionaries who are serving around the world?
- What if every EA congregation was regularly praying for missionaries in the *Mission Renewal Network*? (Those listed in the EA Desk Calendar each year)
- What if every EA congregation was focused on seeing churches planted globally?
- What if every EA congregation was sending members on short term mission trips?
- What if every EA congregation was praying that the Lord would raise up a full-time missionary from within their own church?

Back when Oscar Lohr and his family traveled to India to proclaim the Gospel, full-time missionary service might typically involve the thirty-six year commitment he and his family made. Furthermore, when the Lohrs moved to India, I expect they were only very rarely if ever able to return home given the methods and modes of travel back then.

These days however, things are quite different. In fact, many modern full-time missionaries sign up for terms of three or four years which may then be renewed. And although missionary service can still be dangerous in certain parts of the world, current methods of communication and travel have made it much more likely that career missionaries will be able to keep in touch with family and friends back home.

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There have been times in the past when presidents have called upon Americans to “volunteer” to serve their country. In His Great Commission, the King of Kings called His followers to be His missionaries who will take His message of hope and salvation to all nations!

Could the Lord be calling you?

Spring Regional Gatherings

Experience the joy that comes through fellowship with sisters and brothers across the Evangelical Association by gathering for a day of worship, prayer, celebration and spiritual growth. There are three regional gatherings already planned for 2015 in various parts of the country. These events are usually about six hours long giving you time to drive to and from the gathering in the same day to keep costs down. It's a great opportunity to introduce people in your church to the ministry of the Evangelical Association!

Saturday - April 18 North Carolina Regional

Pleasant Ridge Christian Church - Greensboro, North Carolina

Saturday - April 25 Mid-Atlantic Regional

St. Thomas Church - Bernville, Pennsylvania

Saturday - May 9 Upper Midwest Regional

Cross Church - Berne, Indiana

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 winter.

*Wishing you and your family
the Blessings of the Season!*

Is It Time for You (or your Church) to Join the Evangelical Association?

Affiliation with the EA is open to entire congregations as well as to individual pastors, students and lay people. Perhaps you've been reading and hearing about the EARCCC for a while, but you've never stepped across the line to actually affiliate with the association and become a part of the network. The EA is only as strong as those who choose to affiliate with us each year, so if you have never signed on, please visit our web site (www.evangelicalassociation.org) where you can download and print an application form. If you need to know more about the EA or if your church would like to have an informational presentation, please contact the national minister's office at natmin@evangelicalassociation.org or 877-424-1472.

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

Inspired To Advance The Kingdom

hospitality and BBQ for dinner. The evening worship service with filled to capacity as we were inspired by the music ministry of Tiffany Richter, the bell choir of the host church, and the sermon by Rev. C.E. Holt entitled, "Joy After A Beating." Rev. Holt asked us to consider if we would be able to celebrate after being in the situation Paul and Silas found themselves in as they were imprisoned for the Lord. The choir from Green Level Christian church also sang.

Saturday morning we were eager to hear Gary Chapman who is a well known author who grew up in Landis. He has written numerous books on the



Reflecting on the words of Dr. Gary Chapman

subject of marriage, family and relationships. His best known book, *The Five Love Languages*, has sold over 9 million copies and been translated into numerous languages. Dr. Chapman challenged us to advance the Kingdom, starting in our families. In the mini-van on the way back to Oklahoma we spent time reading and deciding what each of our personal love languages were. This may become the study for our Women's Fellowship this year.

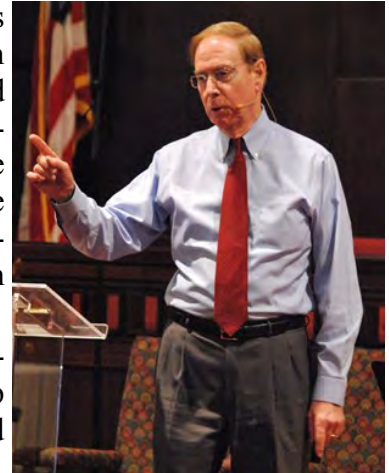
The rest of the morning and afternoon was spent attending as many of twenty workshops that we could. I attended a choir workshop and also a workshop on reaching different generations through worship music. Others in our group attended workshops on ministry to Muslims and



Gospel Quartet from First Reformed Church

the Jewish people as well as how to plan mission trips and dealing with poverty. We were inspired to "advance the Kingdom" beginning in our own small church.

Saturday evening, the fellowship hall was packed with about 500 people who gathered to be blessed



Dr. Gary Chapman speaks about "The Five Love Languages"

by the ministry of Anne Graham Lotz, the daughter of Billy Graham. She spoke with deep conviction on the first chapter of the book of Revelation and encouraged us to always be ready for the return of Christ. We were challenged to pray as John did on the island of Patmos and to recognize that God may call each of us to have our own "Patmos experience" through which we are called to suffer for the Lord.

Sunday morning we were encouraged by our national minister, Jim Barnes to not only advance the Kingdom in our own communities, but



Tiffany Richter leads praise

to pray and support those who were going to the "ends of the earth" to preach the Gospel. Following the Sunday morning worship, we were sent on our way with a full breakfast, grits included. One of the members of the host church even followed us to our car and prayed with us for a safe trip home.

After a long trip back home, filled with several detours for shopping, visiting and the offer to eat boiled peanuts, we vowed to make the trip to Pennsylvania next year for Convocation 2015. **Join us. You won't regret it!**

CONVOCATION 2014



Checking in at registration



Leslie Franks serves popcorn during break time

Green Level Church choir sings praise



Ministry and Employment Opportunities

ALABAMA – St. John’s Evangelical Protestant Church in Cullman, Alabama is seeking a full-time youth minister to use his/her skills to bring organizational and visionary leadership for youth ministry within the dual context of family life and the church’s larger ministry. For more information contact Rev. Dr. John Richter at john_richter@sjepc.com or at 256-734-0344.

OHIO – We are an EA church seeking a part-time director of Music Ministry at Jerusalem Church in New Philadelphia, Ohio. We hold 2 services (Contemporary and Traditional). At the Contemporary Service the responsibility is as Worship Leader. At the Traditional Service the responsibilities are Adult and Children Choirs. Please send resumes to the ATTN: Search Committee via email jerusalemchurch12@yahoo.com or via mail: Jerusalem Church, 1417 Stonecreek Rd SW, New Philadelphia, OH 44663.

NORTH CAROLINA – Boger Reformed Church is seeking a full-time pastor who will passionately teach/preach the Word of God and present the Gospel. Interested applicants should email questions and resumes to mike@tridenteng.us

NORTH DAKOTA – Beulah Congregational church is seeking a full time pastor. We are a reformational and evangelical church. We uphold key reformational beliefs such as the inspiration and authority of the Bible, salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We observe two sacraments-Holy Baptism (including infant baptism) and Holy Communion. We are a family church. To obtain a full profile of the church or to submit an application, please contact Marvin Suthemer, Box 242, Zap, N.D. 58580, Phone (701)948-2805, or msuthemer@yahoo.com. Our Church website is www.beulahcongregational.com

PENNSYLVANIA – Grace Church, 12 Dromgold Road, Shermans Dale, PA is seeking a part-time pastor (perhaps a retired pastor who lives in our area). Our web site is www.graceatdromgold.org Exact duties and time could be determined after discussion and would depend on your desires and our ability to pay. Initial contact can be made to Dr. Bob Gasull at 717-582-8671 or bgasull@embarqmail.com

PENNSYLVANIA – Salem Evangelical & Reformed Church (an Evangelical Association affiliated congregation) in Reamstown, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is seeking a full-time Senior Pastor. Interested candidates should visit the church website at www.salemchurchreamstown.org to view our church statement of faith and mission statement. Should you be in agreement with these foundational doctrines, please send your resume and introductory letter to: Salem Evangelical & Reformed Church, Attn. Carl Haberman, PO Box D, Reamstown PA 17567 or email to cychaberman@dejazzd.com

PENNSYLVANIA – Swamp Christian Fellowship of Reinholds, PA www.swampcf.org is seeking a part-time Music Director to lead worship through music in blended services. Please contact Ted Reimel at 717-203-8620 or tedreimel@gmail.com

TEXAS – St. Paul Evangelical located in Cibolo, Texas is actively searching for the new full-time pastor whom God has prepared to guide us into the future. For additional information regarding the responsibilities and involvement of our Pastor within the church and community, visit our website at: www.stpaulcibolo.com Interested applicants should send a cover letter and a resume to: stpaulsearchcommittee@gmail.com

TEXAS – First Protestant Church of New Braunfels, Texas . We are looking for a Director of Children’s Ministry. This is a full-time position (32+ hours/week). For more information, please send a letter of interest and resume’ to pbrown@firstprotestant.com Resume’s will be accepted until November 30, 2014. Initial contact with candidates the church is interested in will begin on October 31, 2014.

WEST VIRGINIA – Timber Ridge Christian Church of High View, West Virginia is seeking a permanent part-time pastor. To obtain a full profile of the church or to submit an application, please contact Alan Brill, Search Committee Chair, PO Box 66, High View, WV 26808, phone (304) 856-3635, or timber-ridgechristianchurch@gmail.com

WEST VIRGINIA – St. John’s Evangelical Church in Wheeling, West Virginia is looking for a part-time assisting the semi-retired pastor in our downtown area church as Associate Pastor of Family Life. If the Spirit leads you, please contact Dave Holloway at dhollowaywv@comcast.net or (304) 280-6704 evenings and weekends.

**FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THESE MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES,
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT evangelicalassociation.org**

New Life for Old Churches Seminar Coming to KY, MI & PA

Is there hope for the church that needs to experience a turnaround? Can a church that has started to stagnate begin to experience new life and be revitalized to meet the intense ministry demands of the 21st century?



The answer is “yes,” but such a transformation will rarely be easy. EA National Minister Jim Barnes has put together a seminar to help participants consider the blessings of becoming a turnaround church while also looking carefully at the barriers that easily stop a church in its tracks from ever moving forward.

Upcoming seminar dates and locations are:

Louisville, Kentucky — Saturday, January 24

Bernville, Pennsylvania — Saturday, April 25

Wolverine, Michigan — Saturday, May 2

Welcome to the Association!

During the past few months the following churches, pastors and missionaries have chosen to become new affiliates of the Evangelical Association:

Rev. Ricky Allen

Raleigh, North Carolina

Rev. David Meckley

Loysburg, Pennsylvania

Rev. Rick Swaim

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

New Gilead Reformed Church

Concord, North Carolina

Rev. Todd Davis

Mount Pleasant, North Carolina

Rev. Brian Secor

Roanoke, Indiana

Rev. William Meredith

Advance, North Carolina

Rev. Barbara Meredith

Advance, North Carolina

Jon and Carol Shaneyfelt

Waxhaw, North Carolina

Ken Hollingsworth

Duncanville, Texas

Rev. David Bitler

Kannapolis, North Carolina

The EA is now on Facebook!

Want to connect with other EA members around the country? Check out the EA's “Group” and “Fan” pages on Facebook. Just search for ~

Evangelical Association of Reformed & Congregational Christian Churches

And check us out!!

KNOTS IN THE NET

Getting to know the Congregations, Clergy and Laity of the Evangelical Association

No Skunks In the Parsonage

Wolverine Congregational Church – The Rev. Dr. Michael Sanders - Wolverine, Michigan



The church was established in 1883 when Wolverine, Michigan was a bustling logging town. Although many churches were planted in those days, few remained after Northern Michigan was logged out and most of the logging business moved elsewhere during the early 20th century.

Wolverine Congregational Church has continued its ministry through times of growth and decline in the surrounding community. Like most congregations, it has its unique stories, one of which was a persistent problem with skunks moving into the parsonage (no reflection on the quality of their pastors of course!) Evidently in years past, it was not uncommon for the poor pastor of the church to arrive home only to find skunks taking up residence in the basement of the pastoral residence.

In recent years, the congregation has been experiencing a time of revitalization which has included an increasing emphasis on local mission work as well as spiritual renewal. The current pastor, Michael Sanders,

has taken the congregation through the *Experiencing God Bible* study by Henry Blackaby as well as a study on the book of Acts and a course which asks the question “How can we be a church with an open door?” that challenged church members to consider why people visit a church for the first time and what it is that causes them to come back a second time.

Pastor Mike has been in ministry for 43 years and accepted the call to Wolverine in 2011 following the retirement of their previous minister. He had been doing interim work in another church nearby and was also serving as coach of the freshman basketball team at the local high school. The parent of one of his players was a member of the church and approached Mike to ask if he would consider coming to serve as their next pastor. It was God’s plan, and the very next year, in 2012, the congregation voted to depart from the United Church of Christ and became affiliated with the Evangelical Association.

The Wolverine Congregational Church is currently the northernmost congregation in the Evangelical Association. They are used to short summers and long, snowy winters. Pastor Mike and his wife Kathy love the weather and the people of Northern Michigan and reside, not in the parsonage, but in a log home nearby. Pastor Mike enjoys writing and is the author of several devotional books: *Avocados for Breakfast* and *A Feast of Wild Blackberries* published by Saintwinter Press and *The Pastor’s Unauthorized Instruction Book* published by Abingdon.



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Desk and Digital Calendars Now Available

The Evangelical Association 2014-2015 Desk Calendar is the official desk calendar of the Evangelical Association. The 16 month calendar (September 2014 through December 2015) features useful tools to enhance your church's ministry including lectionary readings for Sundays and major Christian holidays, liturgical colors, a pictorial listing of missionaries in the Mission Renewal Network, a listing of valuable ministry resources, along with contact information to connect you with EA officers and ministries. The EA Calendar is a great ministry tool not only for pastors but also for church council leaders, mission committees and worship planning teams. Make sure you order enough copies for all of the ministry team leaders in your congregation. Those who purchase the printed calendar also receive access to our downloadable digital desk calendar powered by BibleGateway.com for use on personal computers, tablets and other mobile devices.

The calendars are priced as follows: \$15.00 each for 1-2, \$13.00 each for 3-5 and \$12.00 each for 6 or more. The "digital only" version is \$10.00. Prices include packing and shipping at no extra charge. To order the EA Desk Calendar, send an email to natmin@evangelicalassociation.org or phone toll free 877-424-1472. Be sure to indicate quantity and the address to which you want the calendar(s) shipped. No advance payment is required. We will enclose an invoice with your order from which to pay – we trust you!

If you wish to pay with a credit/debit card, we invite you to visit the new "online store" found on our website evangelicalassociation.org. There you can place your order making a secure payment through PayPal and we will then send the calendar(s) to you and/or you will receive the required link to download your digital copy.

Evangelical Association
2014-2015 Desk Calendar



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