

networker

Summer 2012

...working the nets for kingdom advancement



*A Message From
The Rev. Jim Barnes, National Minister*

Time To Be Full-Time

On Sunday, June 10th, I announced to the people of Bethesda Evangelical Church in St. Louis that I was stepping down from my position as their Senior Pastor after twenty-one years of ministry to the congregation. It was an emotional moment as an audible gasp of surprise was heard in the sanctuary and as a lump formed in my own throat and tears welled up in my eyes.

How does a pastor make a decision to accept the call of God to a new ministry when he/she has been in the same place for so long? Answer: Not easily!

In March of this year, the Evangelical Association Board of Directors decided to enter into a time of prayer and fasting which would conclude on Pentecost seeking the Lord's will and direction for the EARCCC. Following that significant time of pressing forward in prayer, the Board unanimously determined that the position of National Minister could be filled most effectively if I would be able to serve full-time in the role. Throughout the months leading up to Pentecost, I too believe God began opening doors and showing me that the time had come to take a step of faith and accept this call upon my life.

While the idea of leaving the church where I have spent almost a quarter of a century and raised all three of my children is a bit daunting, I am excited about the work God is doing in churches across the country that are part of the Evangelical Association. Congregations and pastors continue to take a stand for orthodox Christian theology in a time when it is often easier to surrender to relativism and the passing fancies of our culture.

As full-time national minister, I plan to devote greater energy to the task of enhancing the lines of communication that will make our network more effective and efficient. While there is exciting ministry being done all across the EA, the ties that connect us need to become more "user friendly" so that we can find ways to work together and tap into the resources and ideas that we can share with each other as local church pastors and congregations.

Having served a local church for the last twenty-four years, I know exactly what the needs and concerns of clergy and congregations are as they face the challenges of doing ministry in this day and age. In a society that is becoming more unchurched with each passing decade, evangelical Christians need to stick together as we face a culture that is becoming increasingly hostile toward those who hold fast to biblical faith. My hope is that the Evangelical Association will continue to be a vital network through which our churches and clergy can stand **together** as we stand **up** for Jesus!

networker

Summer 2012 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:

natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Printed in the United States.

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

natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Letters:

Please send comments to:

natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

Order:

To order back-issues or additional copies of the *networker* e-mail:

natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Board Officers:

Rev. Bill Miller, President

Rev. Jeff Siems, Vice President

Rev. Rich Dubbs, Secretary

Rev. Cliff Poirot, Treasurer

Rev. Daryl Higgins, Representative of the Corporate Member

PRINT DEADLINES FOR THE NETWORKER

Fall 2012 Edition:

October 15, 2012

Winter 2013 Edition:

January 15, 2013

Spring 2013 Edition:

April 15, 2013

Summer 2013 Edition:

July 15, 2013

GREETINGS FROM THE EA PRESIDENT

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



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Evangelical Association, it is my great privilege to announce that our part-time National Minister, the Rev. Jim Barnes, will become full-time as of September 15, 2012. The Board unanimously voted to extend this call for full-time ministry to Jim on May 30, 2012.

On June 10, Jim notified the congregation of Bethesda Evangelical Church in St. Louis of this decision and gave his notice to resign. Jim has served Bethesda for twenty-one years during which time they voted out of the U.C.C. and became affiliated with the E.A.R.C.C.C. On behalf of the Board, I ask that you keep the people of Bethesda in your prayers as they go through this time of transition.

At this point, the Board has approved Jim's "Terms of Call", a new job description and a salary and benefits package. The effective date of September 15th comes while we are at Convocation in Louisville, Kentucky. What great timing to begin this new phase in the life of the EA! **This is a giant step of faith for both the EA and the Barnes Family.** We covet your prayers and support as we seek to raise the necessary funding to cover the expenses of a full-time staff person. **Our hope is that many of you will consider contributing to the "National Minister Support Fund" and bring it to your budget committees for possible addition in 2013.** Tax deductible donations to this fund can be sent to the Evangelical Association office and are deeply appreciated!

DESK CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE

The Evangelical Association 2012-2013 Desk Calendar is the official desk calendar of the Evangelical Association. The 16 month calendar (September 2012 through December 2013) 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 exclusive access to our downloadable digital desk calendar powered by BibleGateway.com for use on personal computers, iPhone, iPad 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. Prices include packing/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 calendars shipped. No advance payment is required. We will enclose an invoice with your order from which to pay - we trust you!

KNOTS IN THE NET

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

First Congregational Church—Torrington, Connecticut



Rev. Steve Darr

First Congregational Church was organized on October 21, 1741 as the founding church of Torrington, Connecticut when Indian raids were still prevalent in the area. At the time of its formation, community life not only centered around the church, but citizenship depended upon church membership.

Throughout its 272 year history, First Congregational has continued to play a vital role in the community. In the late eighteenth century, the Rev. Lemuel Hayes (the first

pastor of African descent ordained in America) served the church. In the early nineteenth century, John Brown, the well known abolitionist whose raid in Harper's Ferry is often said to have been one of the sparks that ignited Civil War, was baptized in the church at Torrington.

Today, First Congregational is a growing, energetic congregation currently in the process of building a new addition to the existing historic church building to house offices and Sunday School rooms. Following their departure from a liberal denomination a few years ago, the people of First Congregational Church continue to network with their fellow Christians across the country through the Evangelical Association under the leadership of their current pastor, the Rev. Steve Darr.



First Congregational Church
Torrington, CT

The Rev. Bob Kurtz, "Golf's Ironman"—Cullman, Alabama



Bob Kurtz Guinness

Bob Kurtz recently retired as Senior Pastor of St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church in Cullman, Alabama where he had served for nineteen years. Although retired from the church, he is not retired from ministry and continues to serve God on the golf course! While that might sound like a typical "pastor joke" (that preachers only work on Sundays and spend the rest of the week playing golf), for Pastor Bob, golfing is serious business.

For the past several years, Bob has proven himself to be "Golf's Ironman" by playing several marathon rounds of golf to raise money for various charitable ministries. In 2008 he broke the world record of 401 holes played without rest by completing 405 holes. In 2009 he expanded that record by playing 500 consecutive holes, 2,044 strokes, without rest over a period of 40 hours using glow balls at night.

In 2011 Bob was officially entered into the *Guinness Book of World Records* by shooting 1,850 holes in one week. For more information on Bob's golfing ministry or to have him speak at your church, visit his website at www.golfsironman.com

Pastor Bob served as the president of the Evangelical Association Board of Directors for several years and currently resides with his wife, Pat, in Cullman, Alabama.



Bob Kurtz

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.

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 fall.

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

CROWN HIM

Mid-Atlantic and North Carolina Regional

In gatherings at St. Paul's Reformed Church in Beavertown, Pennsylvania on April 28 and First Reformed enjoy worship and fellowship and a time of exalting the name of Jesus with fellow believers from across their the host pastor of the North Carolina gathering. Choirs sang, puppets spoke, pastors preached and the people



Celebrating the Lords Supper at North Carolina Regional



Praise & Worship at North Carolina Regional



Dishing up the BBQ at the North Carolina Regional

Worship Team First Reformed Church, Landis, NC (picture to the right)



Preaching the Word Rev. Coslow Holt (picture above)

Rev. David Franks & Rev. Lee Evans (picture to the right)



LORD OF ALL

Gatherings Held in April and May

Church of Landis, North Carolina on May 12, Christians gathered on beautiful Saturdays this past Spring to regions. The meeting in Pennsylvania was hosted by the Rev. Carl Bergerson and the Rev. David Franks was praised.....



St Paul's Reformed, Beavertown, PA



*Choir at St Paul's Reformed
Beavertown, PA*



*Rev. Carl Bergerson,
Host Pastor
(picture to the left)*

*Puppet Ministry
(picture to the right)*



*MidAtlantic
Regional
2012
(picture to the left)*

A 20 YEAR JOURNEY

The Rev. Patrick Novak, Santa Clara, California

Church of the Valley in Santa Clara, CA has been on an exciting journey for 20 years.

Twenty years ago, as we examined our obedience to the Great Commission, we were convicted: convicted that there was **no** personal evangelism going on by our members; convicted that we gave **no** money for the world wide expansion of the church; convicted that COV had **never** planted a church; convicted that COV had **never** raised up, commissioned, and sent out a missionary; convicted that our Missions Committee met once a year.

Slowly, we changed. We tried to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. First, we revamped our budget. Ten percent of total receipts would be given to missions. One half of our missions budget would go for international missions, one half for local missions. Those halves were split in two with half going to church planting/evangelism, and one half to social causes like food, poverty, pregnancy clinics. In local missions, money had to follow people; if our people were not involved, we did not support.

We picked up the support of two foreign missionaries. We started an outreach to a local elementary school. Sounds easy, but you should have been at the discussions!

Still, we had a long way to go—we were only four years into this journey. Our church was called to be one of the founding churches of the Evangelical Association and have been a major supporter of its ministry and mission from the beginning.

Then, one day, a pastor walked into our Senior Pastor's office and stated, "The Lord told me to come and talk to you. You are going to give us space and support to start a new church." OK. The church planter did not know that God had spoken to the Senior Pastor in a dream two nights earlier that he was sending someone to us to plant a church. The planter did not know that our leadership had summarily turned down all requests for space over the last ten years.

But, knowing this was from God, the Senior Pastor presented the request to the Trustees. Five minutes of discussion later, the Trustees said, "Amen" and voted unanimously to give the space for free. One week later, the Church Council took ten minutes, and then voted unanimously to give the space for free! Our Moderator at the time stated that if we were not in shape to plant a church ourselves, then God could use us to midwife a church

plant.

Six years later, when the Church had grown from the original three to over 300 we held a joyous joint celebration of our congregations as we helped the congregation move to their new property on the other side of the valley. That was five years ago. We now have three congregations using our space varying in size from 20 to 150. Two are getting a free ride as they make their initial growth. One pays \$500 a month which we will return to them when they move on to their own property; it is our way of fulfilling the Great Commission.

There have been problems! Running into each other. Kitchen wars. Schedules in conflict. But there are greater issues – like millions of people in this valley who do not know the love of God, and who will spend an eternity separated from Him if they do not respond to His call. So we smile, pray, and encourage one another in the mission of fulfilling the Great Commission.

And now, Church of the Valley is in the process of training its own church planters! Three couples have been identified by our leadership as the ones to be sent out. They are committing ten hours a week in training, fasting, and worship. Our goal is to commission them in late October, pray for an anointing of the Holy Spirit, sending them out to start new congregations in their neighborhoods! They are already walking their neighborhoods in prayer asking God to raise up workers and sending them to the "man of peace" (Luke 10).

Oh, and our leadership has identified the first missionary couple to be sent out to Turkey. They are being trained and discipled. Our prayer is that Church of the Valley will send them out within the next year.

What a ride! God has been good, even while we have been slow and hesitant. But the joy of the Lord has been an ongoing presence in our midst. We praise Him that He has not forgotten us, and that even at this late date, some 65 years after our own planting, we are given the chance to obey what Jesus commanded: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* (Mt 28.18-20)

Tell us what is happening in your ministry!!!

E-mail articles to ~ natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

2012 National Convocation in Louisville, Kentucky
Registration Deadline ~ August 22, 2012

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PENNSYLVANIA - Part time Youth Development Coordinator at St Peter's Church in Seven Valleys, PA (an EA affiliated church). Applicants must have a passion to develop, manage and lead a comprehensive education fellowship and service ministry for the children and youth of our church. This is to be accomplished through Biblically sound teaching of God's Word and practical application in the lives of our children and youth through community service, outreach activities, group events and mission projects. Duties include planning, organizing and managing the children and youth ministries of our church. This includes Sunday School, Wednesday night Youth Groups and other child/youth ministries. This person will also identify and equip adults to lead various youth ministries within the church and will work closely with the pastors and consistory to facilitate a healthy and safe environment that fosters spiritual growth within the lives of our children and youth. This position is part-time, requiring 20 plus hours per week including Wednesday nights and weekends / Sunday morning services. For more information, please visit our website at www.preparingyouforeternity.org and click on the banner for Youth Coordinator.

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.

WISCONSIN - Full-time pastor needed for Peace Church in Browntown, WI. We are a Christ-centered, Bible-based, conservative, evangelical church, holding fast to traditional Christian beliefs and creeds. We are looking for an educated, experienced, spiritual leader who loves the Lord, a Godly and gifted pastor, someone with vision and enthusiasm who will minister to the needs of our members and outreach to the community and beyond. Musical ability a plus. May consider student working toward his M Div. Please send resume or inquiry to: janet_medinger@yahoo.com



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!!

**Evangelical
Association**

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 5
Masonic Home, KY

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
07/27

Contact Information:
National Minister

Evangelical Association
of Reformed and Congregational
Christian Churches

**9051 Watson Road #241
St. Louis, MO 63126**

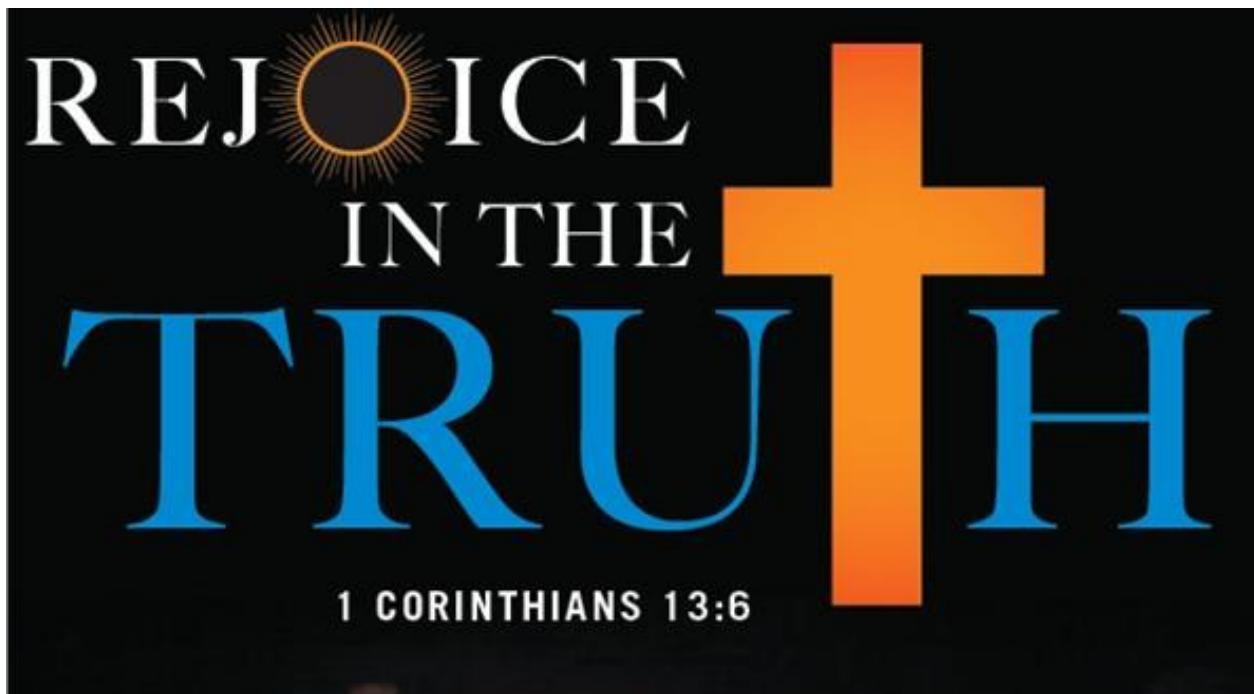
E-mail:
natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Web
www.evangelicalassociation.org

Toll Free Number
877-424-1472

If you are no longer interested in
receiving the Networker Newsletter,
please tear off this
address page and return it to:

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



2012 National Convocation

September 14-16, 2012 | Louisville, KY