

Summer ~ 2013

networker

.....WORKING THE NETS FOR KINGDOM ADVANCEMENT



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

The Light Has Come.... Don't Reach for Your Sunglasses!

This coming year, beginning with our annual convocation in September, the theme for the Evangelical Association will be ***The Light Has Come***, based on John 3:19a. Now in the Bible, the image of "light" coming usually signifies the knowledge of God breaking forth into the life of a person or community. In John 3, Jesus gives the phrase even greater significance as He states unequivocally that He is the Light. In other words, God has decisively revealed Himself to us and given us knowledge of Himself through the incarnation of the Son of God.

The question that now confronts

every human being is this: ***What will I do when I encounter the Light who is Jesus Christ?***

If you read the rest of John 3:19-21, Jesus makes it clear that some people will "love" it and some people will "hate" it when they are confronted with God's truth in Him. The full passage reads, "*This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that*

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Eastern North Carolina Churches Come Together to "Stay the Course"

According to the Rev. John Highsmith, the theme will be "Stay the Course" based on Luke 10:62 as Christian churches of Eastern North Carolina gather for a convocation on Saturday, October 5. The meeting will be held at New Bethel Christian Church, 4307 Old Poole Rd., Raleigh, NC 27610 and will run from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. The Rev. Tracy Bell will

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Welcome to the Association!

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

Rev. Bob Silling
Grottoes, Virginia

St. Paul's Church
Trail Run
Sardis, Ohio

St. Paul's Evangelical Church
Marietta, Ohio

Rev. Russell Hepler
Ashland, Pennsylvania

Pilgrim Rest Christian Church
Havelock, North Carolina

Broadway Christian Church
Kimmell, Indiana

Mrs. Jean Huling
Madison, Ohio

St. Paul's Church
Quarryville, Pennsylvania

**Living Water
Church of Truth**
Fort Wayne, Indiana

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PRINT DEADLINES FOR THE NETWORKER

Fall 2013 Edition:
October 15, 2013

Winter 2014 Edition:
January 15, 2014

Spring 2014 Edition:
April 15, 2014

Summer 2014 Edition:
July 15, 2014

Consider Charitable Giving From An IRA

Local churches and ministries like the Evangelical Association rely on the **generosity of donors** in order to carry on their work. While most people know that giving to a church or qualified 501c3 organization like the EA is tax deductible, **many older people no longer itemize their deductions** when filing their tax return and thus do not benefit from the charitable deduction.

There is a **solution allowed by the IRS** for older people called an "IRA Direct Rollover." Since many IRA owners must take a minimum distribution each year, they can meet this requirement by having all or part of their required minimum distribution (up to a certain defined limit) go straight to a qualified charity. That way **the distribution is not counted as taxable income to the IRA owner**. This is a particularly useful way to give for those who own a traditional IRA because much of the money in these accounts is eventually taxable.

If you would like to make this type of contribution to the Evangelical Association or any other charitable group, contact your financial advisor to learn more. **Contributions to the EA can be sent directly to the national office** and may be designated for the General Fund or the National Minister Support Fund.

DESK CALENDARS NOW AVAILABLE

The Evangelical Association 2013-2014 Desk Calendar is the official desk calendar of the Evangelical Association. The 16 month calendar (September 2013 through December 2014) 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 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 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

Independent All the Way

The Rev. Herb Bergsma and Rev. Dick Rensner - Broadway Christian Chapel - Kimmell, Indiana



Rev. Herb Bergsma and Rev. Richard Rensner

and never became part of the United Church of Christ when the Congregational Christian denomination merged with the Evangelical and Reformed in the late 1950's.

A few years ago, the church was in the midst of a pastoral transition, so they contacted Pastor Dick Rensner, a licensed minister in the UCC to help fill the pulpit in the interim. Eight years later, Dick was still “filling in” for the congregation of Broadway Christian. This past year, Pastor Rensner made the decision to retire, and it just so happened that another “retired” pastor, the Rev. Herb Bergsma had recently moved from Michigan to Indiana to be closer to family. Pastor Bergsma began attending Broadway, and is now regularly preaching and ministering to the congregation and community.

Having served as a Navy chaplain from 1962 until 1992 (including 23 months in an active combat zone in Vietnam) followed by church work in Michigan, Pastor Bergsma brings a wealth of ministry experience to the people of Broadway Christian. Rev. Herb Bergsma is a charter member of the Evangelical Association, having attended the first meeting of the EA in New Braunfels, Texas in 1998. Pastor Dick Rensner affiliated with the EA in 2007 and the people of Broadway voted to become a part of the network this Summer.

This independent Christian church was founded more than a hundred years ago in rural Indiana. The country road leading to the building is surrounded by fields and farmhouses, but in the days before automobiles, it was actually a busy thoroughfare regularly filled with large numbers of carts and pedestrians. A man who had moved to the area from the East remarked that the road, “Looks like Broadway,” and that became the name that stuck!

In the 1930's when the Congregational and Christian churches merged to form a new denomination, the people of Broadway Christian elected not to participate in the merger. By virtue of that decision, they remained completely independent

Broadway



Chapel

Christian



Mid-Atlantic and North Carolina Regionals Held in April



*Salem Evangelical & Reformed Church Choir
Reamstown, PA*

On two sunny Saturdays in April, believers gathered for worship, food and fellowship at regional gatherings of the Evangelical Association held at Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church in Reamstown, Pennsylvania and St. Paul's Reformed Church in Newton, North Carolina.

Mid-Atlantic Regional host pastor the Rev. Steve Hollinger welcomed guests to the church where they were served such Pennsylvania Dutch foods as pot pie and warm pretzels. Opening worship was followed by moving testimonies by students from the nearby Teen Challenge Training Center and EA National Minister, the Rev. Jim Barnes gave the keynote address. A unique highlight of the day was a panel discussion of the "Young Earth/Old Earth" debate among Christians who believe in God as the Creator.



Enjoying the food at the Mid-Atlantic Regional.



Rev. Al Yudt shares a Scripture reading at Mid-Atlantic Regional.



Rev. Steve Hollinger of Salem E & R Church welcomes guests to Mid-Atlantic Regional.



Pastors Charles and Mary Chappell of Virginia join the congregational singing at the Mid-Atlantic Regional.



Praising the Lord at the Mid-Atlantic Regional.

Tell us what is happening in your ministry!!!

E-mail articles to ~ natmin@evangelicalassociation.org

Mid-Atlantic and North Carolina Regionals Held in April

Representatives holding to both positions each gave presentations and then discussion followed.

In North Carolina, the meeting began with Gospel singing and included a day of worship, fellowship and good food. There were discussions about church planting as well as workshops on topics such as forgiveness, youth ministry, outreach and spiritual gifts. The choir of the Green Level Christian Church offered an uplifting ministry of music and the gathering ended with a message by the Rev. C.E. Holt and a corporate communion service in the sanctuary of St. Paul's. Excellent hospitality was provided by host Pastor John Bigelow and the people of St. Paul's Reformed Church in Newton.



North Carolina Regional Fellowship.



North Carolina Regional Fellowship opens with Gospel favorites.



Rev. John Bigelow welcomes guests to NC Regional Fellowship at St. Paul's Reformed Church Newton, NC



Rev. Dr. Pat Novak speaks about church planting at the North Carolina Regional Fellowship



Rev. Rickey Payne leads workshop on forgiveness at NC Regional.



Kendal Alley praising the Lord at the North Carolina Regional Fellowship.

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.

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@](mailto:natmin@evangelicalassociation.org)

evangelicalassociation.org

or toll free at

877-424-1472

The Light Has Come....Don't Reach for Your Sunglasses! *(cont. from page 1)*

what he has done has been done through God." Certainly throughout history, we have seen examples of people who **embrace Jesus** and His truth as well as those who vehemently **reject Him** and everything He represents.

What I would suggest however, is that there is a third response that has become increasingly popular. In a society like ours where Christianity has been a dominant religious viewpoint for quite some time, many people will **neither embrace nor completely reject Christ**, instead, when they are confronted by His light, they will simply **reach for their sunglasses!**

Think about it - when we put on a pair of sunglasses, we do it to reduce the intensity of the sunlight as we go about our day to day activities. In a similar way, there are many people in our society today who **do not want to completely toss Jesus OUT of their lives**, instead, they **want to reduce the intensity of His influence ON their lives.**

One of the biggest problems facing the church in the United States today is nominal Christianity. Our congregations often include many who call themselves Christian and who would even give the correct doctrinal responses when asked what it means to be a Christian, yet when it comes to actually following Christ and submitting to His Lordship, they have little interest. Surveys of self-identified Christians in America repeatedly show a discrepancy between what orthodox Christianity teaches and what is actually believed and practiced by many church going people. It is not uncommon to hear people who say they are Christians also advocating and supporting things that violate the clear teaching of Scripture.

Of course the problem with putting on spiritual sunglasses in an attempt to reduce Christ's influence on our lives is that **He will have none of it!** In fact, when it comes to the influence of God's truth on us, Jesus makes it pretty clear that He prefers the "all or nothing" approach. To attempt to reduce His influence on our lives is tantamount to rejecting His influence all together.

Nominal Christianity is actually nothing new. In fact, the Risen Lord addresses the problem in Revelation 3:14-20 when He issues a warning to the Christians at Laodicea saying, *"These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent."*

My friends, as we celebrate the fact that **The Light Has Come**, let's make certain that we do not reach for our sunglasses. Instead, may we, as God's people, continue to love the Light as He challenges us, forgives us and pours out His love upon us. May we be those who then reflect the light of His grace and mercy back toward those who are still living in the darkness.

MMBB Cancels Health Insurance Program

“The participation level in the Minister’s and Missionaries Benefit Board health insurance has been dropping rapidly as rates increase,” states Jim Cook of the MMBB. This fact, combined with the new federal health care laws set to take effect January 1, 2014 have caused the MMBB to terminate its health insurance program effective December 31 of this year. The MMBB has been advised that most pastors and church employees who need insurance will be better off seeking a policy through the new “insurance exchanges” that are legally required to be up and running by the end of this year. Since insurance companies will be prohibited from rejecting applicants due to pre-existing medical conditions, the expectation is that options will be available even for those who previously had difficulty obtaining a policy. Those who are currently using the MMBB medical plan should contact the MMBB directly if they have additional questions.

Ministry Opportunities

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

NORTH CAROLINA ~ Beck’s Reformed Church, located in the Piedmont-Triad Region (Lexington) North Carolina is seeking a full-time Senior Pastor. Beck’s believes the Bible is the inerrant, infallible, and inspired Word of God and Christ Jesus is heralded as Lord and Savior. Beck’s is seeking leadership that will Biblically direct and assist the congregation as it continues to build its vision as a community of faith and service. The church staff includes a full time Youth-Director, part-time Music Director, and a secretary. Beck’s provides a traditional and a non-traditional service, while offering scheduled programs for children through senior citizen. For more information and an application, go to www.beckschurch.com or contact the church secretary at 336-357-2369.

ALABAMA ~ St. John’s Evangelical Protestant Church, Cullman Alabama is seeking a full-time Senior Pastor who has a heart for serving our Lord. If you base your messages on Scripture, have a heart for ministering to the lost and hurting, teaching and providing for the spiritual growth of His children, then submit your application. We are seeking a dynamic Senior Pastor with a minimum of five years experience, an accredited seminary degree and a testimony of personal faith in Jesus Christ who places a priority on evangelism and missions. Our normal attendance revolves around 500 in three services on Sunday. Cullman is a city of 15,000 with an outstanding school system, award winning park facilities and an ideal environment for raising children. We are located on I-65, one hour from Birmingham or Huntsville. Compensation will be commensurate with experience. Interested applicants can check our website ~ www.sjepc.com.

For more information please contact Karen Hassell at 256-734-0344 or by e-mail at karen.hassell@sjepc.com

OHIO ~ St. Paul's Church, Trail Run, 43936 Joe Frobish Road, Sardis, Ohio 43946 is searching for a permanent part-time pastor. We have a small rural church and on a good Sunday we have 40-45 people present. We also have a 3 bedroom parsonage for the pastor and family with all utilities paid. For a complete church profile including salary package, please contact Marcia Stalder at mmyers1@hotmail.com or 740-483-1236.



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Eastern North Carolina Churches Come Together to “Stay the Course” *(cont. from page 1)*

be the host pastor.

“There is a unique connection among the Christian churches with an African American heritage that predates the U.C.C. and this convocation provides an opportunity for congregations that share this historic connection to come together for worship and fellowship,” states event facilitator, the Rev. Lee Evans. It will be a busy day with two worship services and a meeting in between. Event planners hope this will just be the beginning of many networking opportunities for the Christian churches in the region from Burlington all the way to the North Carolina coastline. For more information, please contact the Rev. John Highsmith at 919-828-4939.

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And check us out!!