

# networker

.....WORKING THE NETS FOR KINGDOM ADVANCEMENT



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

## **Will You Do What You Do Not Want To Do If God Wants You To Do It?**

This year the theme of our Evangelical Association National Gathering was *Merge With Jesus* based on Mark 8:34 where Jesus says, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” As I reflected on that verse, I was reminded that **as believers in Jesus**, God frequently calls us **not** to “get what we want” but **rather** to “do what we do not want to do” when it is for the glory of God. Yet this way of thinking is in stark contrast to the way many Christians approach their faith these days.

We live in a consumer culture where many Christians ask not “what can I do for the Lord and His church?” but rather, we ask “what can the Lord and His church do for me?” Many Christians these days are more than willing to devote their time, energy and resources to doing God’s work as long as God is asking them to do things they already want to do - we’re not so keen on denying ourselves and taking up crosses.

The problem is: many times God asks us to do things that we **do not want to do**. In John 21:18-19, the resurrected Jesus is speaking to His disciple Peter and He says, “*I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.*” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then He said to him, ‘Follow me!’”

**What an invitation!** Jesus basically tells Peter that there will come a day when he will be persecuted, arrested and eventually executed for his faith - and then Jesus wraps up the invitation by saying to Peter, “Follow me!” How many modern day Christians would appreciate such an invitation from Jesus?

## **Welcome to the Association!**

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

**Rev. Dr. Peter J. Carter**  
*Wellington, Colorado*

**Rev. Bai Edward Fornah**  
*Chambersburg, Pennsylvania*

**Rev. Stanley Newton**  
*Fogelsville, Pennsylvania*

**Rev. Ryan Hicks**  
*Shelbyville, Indiana*



# Networker

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## Invite A Missionary to Your Church

*by Stephanie Ford, EAMN Team Leader*

As a member of St. Paul Evangelical Church in Cibolo, Texas, I joined the Evangelical Association Mission Network (EAMN) volunteer team a while back because I love the work our missionaries are doing here and abroad. After getting involved with the EAMN committee however, I realized that I didn't know much about missions at all. I know, from my experience, that connecting our congregations to missions can be exciting, but it is also challenging, especially when you feel ill-equipped!

In the past, our church has promoted a few EA missionaries and mission projects with table displays or special collections, however, this September, we invited Randy and Tammy Smith (EA missionaries serving with CTEN in Asia) to come and speak at our church before the EA Convocation. They shared their story with our Sunday School class and Randy preached during the worship service. We had a special brunch so folks in our church could meet and greet the missionaries. It was a special time to hear about how the gospel is being shared overseas, and I found their story encouraged my own ministry.

I would urge the leadership of all EA churches to find a way to host a missionary in person. It was so meaningful to have the congregation hear directly from them about their ministry. If the timing isn't right to host, start off with a table promoting one of our missionaries or mission projects and start corresponding with them. The contact information for all our missionaries and projects is in the EA calendar. I can guarantee that you'll form a fast friendship with them, and you will learn about their mission. Soon you'll want to host a missionary at your church, too! Thanks to all EA churches and pastors supporting our missionaries and mission projects that are part of the EAMN.

### EMAIL CORRECTION:

Please correct the email in the EA Calendar, Mission Projects' page, for Rev. Elvis Sado, Director of Grace Children's Ministries in Myanmar, to [sadoelvis@yahoo.com](mailto:sadoelvis@yahoo.com). There are many needs in that area of the world due to earthquakes, floods, and civil wars, so please keep them in your prayers for safety and provision, especially for the orphans who receive their daily needs at the GCM residential facility and school.

# Missionary Prayer Requests

*Romans 10:14* How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

## **For our Missionary Couple in the Swahili region of Africa:**

Pray for the people in the remote areas of Africa, as the missionaries are seeing a move of the Holy Spirit with almost 50 baptisms taken place and more villages wanting to be taught about baptism and the Holy Spirit.

As explained in their newsletter, the believers, new and old, were baptized in a hand-dug pit lined with a tarp. The water was carried from 7 miles away in 5-gallon buckets on the backs of donkeys. Most of these Africans have never experienced being submerged in water because water is scarce and bathing is a matter of carrying a bucket of water home from a water source and washing yourself one cup full at a time.

Also, pray for their ministry among the Swahili people, as they have purchased land and are looking to build a place where they can begin reaching out to the children in the village. They have been welcomed into this area that is primarily Muslim.

Pray for this missionary family that they will be strengthened by God to carry out His plans as they move out into more unreached areas.



*Baptism in hand-dug pit, water carried 7 miles.*

## **From Brian & Melody Whitaker in Dearborn, MI:**

Now that school is back in session, the Whitakers have returned to teaching English two days a week and will begin a Citizenship class for interested students, along with a brief Bible lesson once a week using the parables. Brian is now joining friends to share the Gospel with college students weekly at UM Dearborn. Brian and Melody were so excited to host a Missions Team from NC at the end of October. The goal, whenever they host a Missions Team, is that when they leave Dearborn, they are full of love and compassion for Muslim friends, that they have a deeper knowledge about what Muslims believe and have a few more tools to use in reaching out to them to share the Gospel.

Please pray for the city of Dearborn and their leaders, churches, and residents, for peace, and for open doors to share the Gospel. The ultimate goal is to see revival, an Awakening, that would spread all across Michigan and our nation, and to the whole world (Matthew 28:19-20), making disciples of all nations --- including the nations represented in Dearborn from Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, among others.

The Whitakers are thankful to all who are partnering with them, and to the Lord for all that He is doing in and through them, believing for a Great Harvest of Souls (John 4:35). To God Be the Glory!

## **From Bob Bertels, African Vision of Hope, in Zambia, Africa:**

Founder and Director, Bob Bertels, reports that AVOH has 5 safe homes in Zambia that are providing loving care and bringing hope to girls who have faced loss, abuse, and hopelessness. There are many more girls waiting for a safe home, a loving family, and a chance to dream again.

One such girl, Mary, had tragedy strike multiple times until she found herself alone and without siblings or parents. When she heard about African Vision of Hope's women's ministries, a spark of hope returned. She enrolled in Grade 8 and moved into a rescue home, which gave her a safe place to live and learn among a loving family. Today, she serves as a cook on one of the campuses and serves much more than food through her warm smile and kind words of encouragement. Mary's life was transformed because someone believed she was worth saving!

African Vision of Hope teams are working on some new projects and need 5-10 more churches to begin monthly support. Prayers are appreciated because there is much more kingdom work to be done.

# “Merge with Jesus”

## Evangelical Association Convocation 2025

*“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” Mark 8:34*

This past September, pastors and church members from across the country gathered at Immanuel Evangelical Church in Needville, Texas for the annual convocation of the Evangelical Association. The theme of the event was “Merge with Jesus” as the keynote speaker and many of the workshops focused on the importance of aligning our lives with Jesus and His purposes.

The weekend began with the annual “Company Retreat” on Friday morning during which pastors and church leaders spent time worshipping and having small group discussions on topics related to doing the work of ministry in the local church. On Friday afternoon, several workshops were offered in conjunction with ongoing registration.

Opening worship followed Friday dinner and was headlined by the “Houston Tidelanders,” a men’s a-cappella singing group who performed Gospel favorites. Pastor Tom Hammell who serves as discipleship pastor at The Gathering in Surprise, Arizona was the primary speaker for the weekend with EA pastor Andrew Keuer leading Saturday evening worship. Throughout the event, participants enjoyed fellowship with one another and had several learning opportunities in workshops that were offered on a variety of topics including Christ-centered preaching, missions, youth, church health, understanding the Apocrypha and biblical archaeology.



*Host pastor Ron Shifley welcomes participants.*

On Saturday evening, participants viewed a slide show of many of the EA churches across the country that came out of the German Reformed heritage. This was shown in honor of the 300th Tricentennial celebration of the formation of the German Reformed Church which started in Pennsylvania and spread through the land.

Host pastor Ron Shifley and the people of Immanuel Church provided hospitality and meals for everyone throughout the weekend and even served up homemade ice cream and a massive dessert bar during after hours events. Additional special music was provided by the Needville High School Jazz Band.

Convocation concluded with a message from Jason Ford, vice president of the EA board of directors on Sunday morning.

# “Merge with Jesus” Evangelical Association Convocation 2025



*Praising the Lord during convocation worship.*



*EA Pastor Phil Brown shares information about church safety training.*



*Dr. Scott Stripling workshop on biblical archeology.*



*Keynote speaker Tom Hammel leads morning worship.*



*Houston Tidelanders acapella chorus sings Friday night.*

Cont. from page 1 - "Will You Do What You Do Not Want To Do If God Wants You To Do It?"

If the Lord said to you, "There will come a day when you will have to do things you do not want to do, go places you do not want to go and eventually give up your life for me - follow me," how would you respond? Would you be willing to do what you do not want to do if the Lord wants you to do it, **or, are you only willing to serve God when He asks you to do things that you already want to do?**

The only acceptable answer for a faithful Christian is to submit to God's call on our lives **even when He calls us out of our comfort zones.** We cannot say to God, "I'll serve you as long as you assign me tasks that I already want to do."

Instead, we must say to God, "**I will serve you in whatever way you call me to serve.**" Consider the following liturgy which concludes with an eighteenth century prayer of John Wesley (revised in modern English):

Commit yourselves to Christ as His servants. Give yourselves to Him, that you may belong to Him.

Christ has many services to be done. Some may be more easy and honorable, others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both.

In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.

It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ. Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

I am no longer my own, but Yours.

Put me to do what You will, rank me with whom You will.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be used by You or laid aside by You, exalted for You or brought low for You.

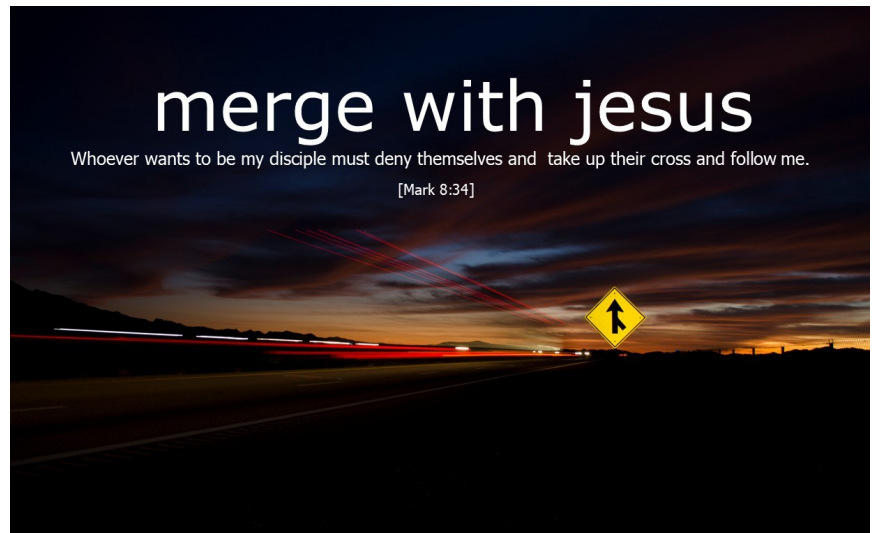
Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, You are mine, and I am Yours. So be it.

And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.



## Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming EA Gatherings

(detailed information will come later)

- **North Carolina Regional Gathering** of the Evangelical Association will be held on Saturday, **April 25, 2026** at Eagle Rock Christian Church in Wendell, North Carolina.
- **Mid Atlantic Regional Gathering** of the Evangelical Association will be held on Saturday, **May 16, 2026** at The Heart of Christ Church in Jonestown, Pennsylvania.
- **National Gathering** of the Evangelical Association will be held Friday, **September 18 through Sunday, September 20, 2026** at Jerusalem Church in New Philadelphia, Ohio.

# Ministry & Employment Opportunities

*These churches and organizations are seeking to fill the following positions:*

## **Sharon Congregational Church**

Sharon, CT

Music Director

[PastorDawson06@yahoo.com](mailto:PastorDawson06@yahoo.com)

## **Sherman Church**

Sherman, CT

Full Time Pastor

[www.shermanchurch.org/applicant-page](http://www.shermanchurch.org/applicant-page)

## **Eden Church**

Edwardsville, IL

Part-time Family Ministry Coordinator

[www.edenchurch-edw.org](http://www.edenchurch-edw.org)

## **First Reformed Church**

Bluffton, IN

Full-time Senior Pastor

[firstref@adamswells.com](mailto:firstref@adamswells.com)

## **Trinity United Church of Christ**

Thurmont, MD

Part-time Pastor

<https://www.trinityuccthurmont.org>

## **St. John Evangelical Church**

Florence, MO

Part-time Pastor

[starkevl@gmail.com](mailto:starkevl@gmail.com)

## **Rowland Chapel Christian Church**

Henderson, NC

Pastor

[www.rowlandchapel.org/](http://www.rowlandchapel.org/)

<https://forms.gle/63bBQeVj6vp2YFRCA>

## **Lyerly Evangelical Church**

Rockwell, NC

Part-time Music & Worship Leader

[www.graceintruth.org/applications](http://www.graceintruth.org/applications)

## **Salem Church of Rough & Ready**

Klingerstown, PA

Pastor

<https://www.churchstaffing.com/job/283070/lead-pastor/salem-church-of-rough-ready/>

## **St. Stephen's Christian Fellowship Church**

North of Lebanon, PA (25 min from Hershey, PA)

Full-time Pastor

[ststephenscfc@gmail.com](mailto:ststephenscfc@gmail.com)

## **St. John - Hill Church**

Boyertown, PA

Part-time Youth Ministries Director

[pastordave@stjohnhillucc.org](mailto:pastordave@stjohnhillucc.org)

## **St. John's Church at New Chester**

Gettysburg, PA

Full-time Pastor

[stjohnsjobs1863@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsjobs1863@gmail.com)

## **St. Thomas Church**

Bernville, PA

Senior Pastor

[stthomaschurchsearch@gmail.com](mailto:stthomaschurchsearch@gmail.com)

## **Cross Church**

Seguin, Texas

Youth Minister

[revjimp@yahoo.com](mailto:revjimp@yahoo.com) or [mboelter@satx.rr.com](mailto:mboelter@satx.rr.com)

## **Friedens Church of Washington**

TX, 15 min east of Brenham & 50 min nw of Houston

Full-time Pastor

[friedenschurchofwashington@gmail.com](mailto:friedenschurchofwashington@gmail.com)

To learn more about the following ministry  
& employment opportunities,  
please visit our website: [evangelicalassociation.org](http://evangelicalassociation.org)



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## New Desk Calendars Now Available

The *Evangelical Association 2025-2026 Desk Calendar & Ministry Planner* is the official desk calendar of the Evangelical Association. The 17 month calendar (August 2025 through December 2026) 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 *EA Mission 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.**

The calendars are priced as follows:

\$18.00 each for 1-2

\$16.00 each for 3-5

\$14.00 each for 6 or more

(Prices include packing and shipping at no extra charge)

**You can order the EA Desk Calendar(s) by:**

1. Visiting the store on our website at <https://evangelicalassociation.org/store/>  
There you can place your order making a secure payment with a credit/debit card and we will then send the calendar(s) to you.
2. Sending an email to [natmin@evangelicalassociation.org](mailto:natmin@evangelicalassociation.org) or by calling 314-347-9994. 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!



[www.evangelicalassociation.org](http://www.evangelicalassociation.org)

Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of the German Reformed Church Heritage