

The Seventh National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church

2009 National Conference Theme

Breakthrough—Embracing the Turnaround

Tuesday

Tuesday afternoon featured three optional seminars conducted in the School for Lay Delegates and a boot camp for first time pastors.

The Conference opened Tuesday evening with a service of the Lord's Supper. The preacher for this service was Rev. Ramon "Emilio" Mendez, who spoke stirringly about the prophetic imagery from Ezekiel 37 and the importance of passion and heart within the ministry of the church. Pastors were called forward to stand as agents of renewed passion in their congregations.

A number of ministries were represented in the display area of Conference.

Wednesday

Wednesday began with a devotional time which featured praise led by Revs. Nathan

Fry and Daniel Moury followed by the preaching of Dr. Gene Wood who spoke about *Facing the Facts about the Church in the USA*.

Following the devotional time the National Conference cared for the parliamentary procedural items necessary to open the business sessions.

Bishop Leibensperger delivered the Episcopal address, which was based on Philipians 3:8-16 and focused on understanding our barriers to turnaround and the initiatives for creating momentum for turnaround.

Copies of this message were made available to conference delegates, who were encouraged to make this address available to their congregations.

The Living Hope Lighthouse Church of Palmerton, PA was received as a charter congregation.

Phillip Bartelt, Robert Burkey, Jacqueline Iatesta, Gary Morrell, Brook Selby, and Richard Sergi answered the disciplinary questions.

The Conference Ministers—Rev. Gary Brown, Dr. Fred Moury, and Rev. B. Bruce Wagner made personal comments and were available to respond to questions in reference to their reports.

Mrs. Debra Patterson, treasurer, presented a statement of the Conference finances.

Elections were held for the Regional Conference Relations Committees. Rev. Al Giles (DR), Rev. Mark Micklos (GLR), and Rev. Randy Sizemore (SR) were elected.

Although Jim Shields was not present due to health concerns with his wife, Naomi, the Conference recognized his 36 years of service to Twin Pines Camp.

The afternoon reconvened with devotions of exercise led by Parish Nurse Margie Miller.

Rev. Jeffrey Byerly presented the report of the National Conference Relations Committee. Robert Shuey and Michael Snedeker were approved for the Itinerancy. Mark Brownson was granted Itinerant Elder's orders.

Keith Blank, Andrew Miller, Kyle Roth, Charles Walker, and Todd Wolfe were granted Traveling Licentiate status. Gary Morrell, Angel Rosado and Richard Sergi were granted Traveling Local Preacher in Training status. Mark Inman was granted the Traveling Local Preacher status. Brook Selby was granted Probationer status. Robert Burkey was employed under the Conference Minister. Phillip Bartelt was granted Approved Candidate status. Jacqueline Iatesta was granted the Alternatives to Pastoral Ministry in the area of Parish Nursing.

Ronald Heim was transferred to the Superannuated status. Michael Soltis and Kirk Wolfe were transferred to the Supernumerary status.

The field for Franklin Schock was changed to Geriatric Care Manager in the Minister in Related Fields classification. Daniel Moury and Douglas O'Brien were transferred to the Minister in Related Fields—not

in the Itinerancy classification. Brian Butz and Mark Meister were transferred to Traveling Licentiate—Subject to Annual Renewal classification. The credentials of Lonnie Sellers were transferred to the Mennonite Church.

All annual renewals of credentials were granted. Timothy Hart, Jeffrey McEvoy, and Andrew Schleicher were removed from our ministerial rolls.

The partial report of the National CRC Leadership Team was approved to bring the language of the rules in conformity to the former actions of the Conference pertaining to joint application for Elders Orders and Itinerancy.

Rev. Gordy Lewis presented the report of the Stationing Committee. Rev. Gregory Dimick presented the Memorial Report. Rev. Kirk Marks reported for the National Ministry Team and National Executive Committee. Rev. Gary Brown, the Conference Historian presented his report. Rev. Richard Reigle presented the Delaware Region Conference Minister Evaluation report. Rev. Bruce Hill presented a report for the Episcopacy Committee, and noted appreciation to the Bishop for his transparency. The Conference approved the moving, nominating, and stewardship reports.

The evening session began with a praise experience by Salem Worship Team of Lenhartsville.

Dr. Gene Wood presented a message focused on the *Obstacles to Turnaround* by talking about the bucket-brigades in churches.

Rev. B. Bruce Wagner reported for the Church Health Commission by highlighting some of the negative spiritual health issues of pastors. Rev. Les Cool provided additional positive highlights for the healthy pastor team.

Rev. Bruce Wagner then presented the report for the Supervisory Committee.

Thursday

The morning began with a devotional time which featured praise led by Rev. Bruce Sellers and featured a presentation from Dr. Gene Wood about *Power Struggles and How They Strangle Us*.

Rev. Kirk Marks presented the report of the Nominating Committee for Susquehanna Region Conference Minister. The Conference prayed, a ballot was cast, and Rev. Gordon Lewis was elected.

President Michael Sigman introduced the leadership team for the Evangelical Theological Seminary, which presented highlights from their designated areas of responsibility.

Mr. Steve Reiter presented the report for the E.C.C. Retirement Village, highlighting the new name—*New Dawn Christian Community Services*—in conjunction with a new building project.

Becky Reigle presented the report for the Benefits Corporation, and conducted its annual meeting. Kevin Henry reported for the Health Insurance Task Force. A ballot for ministerial and lay trustees was presented. Martin Brown, Jeff Gehman, Dori Markley, and Revs. Gary Kuehner and Frank Schock were elected.

Revs. Scott and David Carr and Mr. Shawn Fetterhoff presented reports on behalf of their respective camps.

Rev. Franklin Schock reported for the Loan and Investment Committee.

The afternoon reconvened with devotions of exercise led by Parish Nurse Jackie Iatesta.

Actions were taken to adopt the resolutions for the closures of Shaw Station, IL, Galloway Amity Roads, OH, and Easton First, PA, the disaffiliation of Highland Park, IL and the validation of an action to disaffiliate for Leavittsburg, OH.

Rev. Les Cool reported for the Church Planting Commission and spoke specifical-

ly about gains and losses in the area of church planting.

Rev. Ryan Taylor presented the report for the Evangelism and Discipleship Commission and gave several examples of disciple-making efforts.

The evening session began with a continuation of reporting. Rev. Terry Jacobs reported for the Prayer Mobilization Team. Rev. Mark Brooks reported for the Christian Education Committee about guidelines for children's ministry protection policies within our churches. Rev. Stephen Holubec reported for the youth network.

A praise experience was led by Revs. Dan Blank and Carlos Kelly. Dr. Gene Wood presented a message focused on *Building Consensus Necessary for a Turnaround*. by talking about the resources of facilities, programs and staff.

Director Rev. Randy Sizemore reported for the Global Ministries Commission and the several challenges that have accumulated.

Rev. Harry Dow presented the Leadership Commission report. Rev. Bill McElroy introduced Chaplain Joshua Metz who reported for the Chaplaincy Committee by describing his ministry in Afghanistan.

Friday

The morning began with a devotional time which featured praise led by a pastoral praise team followed by a concert of prayer led by the Prayer Mobilization Team.

A ballot for Trial Court was presented. Rev. Robert Marvis was elected.

The Compensation Committee Report was presented by Rick Glauthier. The report included the following items:

- The base 2009 pastoral salaries were established to be increased by 1.0%, but if possible are encouraged to grant larger increases.
- Items of information focused on establishing Conference salaries, pension figures, honorariums, moving regulations, housing, vacation schedules, and ministry leaves.

The following reports were presented and approved: Historical Society, PCAP, Editing and Publishing of the Discipline, Faith & Doctrine, Audit, Property Committee, Statistical, Finance, Rules & Content, Conference Services and Stewardship.

The budget was approved with a Ministry Fund calculation of 8.7% plus camp funds.

The Conference adjourned by singing *Wonderful Grace of Jesus* and with prayer.

