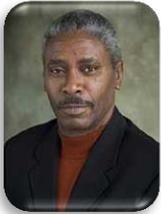




# central conference of the evangelical covenant church

May 2015

## From the Superintendent: WITH JESUS ON THE JOURNEY



Contrary to the belief of some, Christianity is not a set of principles waiting to be discovered. It is not even a set or collection of proverbial wisdoms waiting to be discovered. Christianity is being on a journey with Jesus. Christianity is having an encounter with Jesus. This encounter may initially be disruptive, disorienting and maybe even unwelcomed. But, thankfully, it turns your life in a whole new direction, with a whole new purpose.

Jesus meets you on the journey. He invites you to take His yoke. He offers to give you peace. He intercedes for you. He saves, justifies, builds up, makes acceptable, forgives, redeems, bestows an inheritance, gives standing, provides a throne to which we may come boldly for mercy and help, teaches us how to live and gives us a blessed hope!

Jesus meets us in the Scriptures. We are living in a time that is being called "postmodern." It is characterized as the refusal to accept the existence of objective truth. The historic faith of the Christian Church counters this attitude by anchoring its access to truth in an objective standard—the witness of Scripture. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church, but access to His authority comes through the Holy Spirit speaking in and through the Scriptures. The Bible is not just a record of revelation. It is itself a part of that revelation. I believe that the decline of confidence in the authority of Scripture has had a corrosive effect on the Christian Church. Through His earthly ministry Jesus directed his followers to view the Bible with the confidence that what Scripture says, God says.

Jesus meets us in the breaking of the bread and the encounter with water. The one who was mighty in both word and deed reveals himself not only through the words of Scripture but also in the acts of the Church. In the Baptism of water, we have the rite of Christian beginnings. And in the Lord's Supper we have the rite of Christian growth. Both the baptism and the Lord's Supper are rooted in the historical fact of the Resurrection. The broken bread declares the cross of Christ to be not an accident or misfortunate but the climatic event in the human redemption. The Supper of the Lord speaks not only of Jesus' sacrificial death but also of His continuing life and relationship with us.

Our baptism should be the initiating mark of commitment to discipleship. It should be the watermark of our obedience to Christ. Water baptism is held by different churches to mean different things. For some it means the beginning of salvation. For others it means the entry into the church or a seal of the covenant. Also, some see it as a symbol of the rebirth. Regardless of whatever view you embrace, the Bible tells us that the symbolism of baptism declares that three things happen to believers who are baptized: (1) they die with Christ to their old self; (2) they rise with Christ to become a new creature; and (3) they are incorporated in their new life with a living community which looks for the coming of the Lord.

I thank God that Jesus walks with us in the course of the journey of our life, He opens the Scriptures for us and He gathers with us around the tokens of His broken body, shed blood, and present reign.

By: Rev. Jerome Nelson



# Start & Strengthen Churches

129<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church

- ◆ Breakout Sessions focused on **"The Kingdom is not Color-blind"** by David Swanson, Michelle Dodson, & Won Kim, **"Coworkers in God's Global Mission"** by Prajakta David, **"Building a Collaborative Approach to Youth Ministry"** by Josh Hiben, and **"The Bi-Vocational Church & Ministry"** by Min Song and Peter Sjoblom.

- ◆ The following **representatives** gave reports: **Paul Hawkinson** from the Evangelical Covenant Church, **Emily Bourne** from North Park Theological Seminary, **Rob Hall** from National Covenant Properties and **Robert Olson** from Board of Nominations.

- ◆ The **2015 Compassion Mercy and Justice award** was presented to **Mary Davis** from New Zion Covenant Church, Dolton, IL.

- ◆ On Friday evening worship service,

**Rev. Efreem Smith** preached on **"Dying to Live"** Galatians 2:20 and encouraged the church to die to those things that keep us from living fully for the Lord. Iglesia Del Pacto Evangelico Peniel's Praise Team and Community Covenant Church, Calumet Park, IL choir lead praise and worship.

A brief **Litany of Affirmation and Prayer** was given for the following candidates for Commissioning and Ordination from the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church:

**Ordination to Word and Service:** Sergio Gonzalez, (Iglesia Del Pacto Ev. Vida Plena, Oak Park, IL), Gregory P. Johnson (Evangelical Covenant Church, Elgin, IL), Una Lucey-Lee (InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Madison, WI), Alicia Vela (DeerGrove Covenant Church, Palatine, IL), and Kimberly Crawford (Covenant World Mission & Serving Globally of the ECC, Chicago, IL: Not present).

**Ordination to Word and Service:** Martha J. Morey (Evangelical Covenant Church, Hinsdale, IL).

**Commissioning:** Mark Peterson (Northwest Covenant Church, Mount Prospect, IL).

- ◆ **121 attendees** which includes **72 delegates** from the conference churches, spanning five states.
- ◆ Elected to the **Executive Board:** Daniel Teefey (Riverside Covenant Church: Officer Chair, West Lafayette,) IN, Rebecca Nakamura: Officer Vice-Chair (Parkwood Community Church, Villa Park, IL), Carl Hammer (Mission Covenant Church, Foster City, MI), Cherie Harris (City of Truth, Chicago Heights, IL), Cheryl Ek (Covenant Church, Galesburg, IL), and Deanie Jordan (Community Covenant Church, Calumet Park, IL). Elected to the **Harbor Point Ministries:** Erik Brorson, Sarah Snow and

Brian Zahasky.

- ◆ **Treasurer's Report 2014** stated that the actual income for the year was \$551,791 vs. expenses of \$666,475 for a net deficit of \$114,684. This included a \$100,000 write down of value of a foreclosed church.

- ◆ The Revised 2015 Budget was approved for an income amount of \$664,723 vs. expenses of \$705,063 for a net deficit of \$40,340.

- ◆ The 2016 Budget was approved for an income amount of \$664,723 vs. expenses of \$710,613 for a net deficit of \$45,890.

- ◆ Closed Cross Fellowship, Inc., Chicago, IL and St. Luke Covenant Church, Morton Grove, IL.

- ◆ Welcomed formerly a fellowship group, now a church plant, **City of Hope Covenant Church, Bolingbrook, IL**, and **Berean Covenant Church, Champaign, IL** is being received into membership.

- ◆ Welcomed newly adopted **The Rock Covenant Church, DeKalb, IL**, **The Ninth Hour Covenant Church, Chicago, IL** and **Centro Cristiano El Poder Del Amor, Berwyn, IL**.



- ◆ **Rev. Daniel Teefey** and **Rev. Michael DeLong** were elected to be **delegates** from the Central Conference to the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Churches.

- ◆ **Superintendent** and **staff highlights** for Future Ministry Initiatives: **Bi-Vocational Ministry**, **Developing, Deborahs, Collaborative Youth Ministry** (Video presentation), **Conviction & Culture, Church Planting:** Encouraged churches to **parent and partner with church plants**. Prayed for unreached areas throughout the Central Conference of the ECC.

- ◆ Proposed By-Law Changes and ECC Resolution on Cean Water were approved

- ◆ **Cheryl Borgeson, Patricia Adaranijo and Mae Hong** were recognized for having completed their terms on the Executive Board.

- ◆ **First Evangelical Covenant Church, Iron Mountain, MI** will host the **130th Annual Meeting of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church** on April 28-30, 2016.



# central conference of the evangelical covenant church

May 2015

## Free Week of Camp at Covenant Point!

Congratulations to Rev. Dan Teefey, who won a free week of camp at Covenant Point during the recent Central Conference Annual Meeting! Among the many delegates and pastors who tried to guess the correct number of rocks in the CPBC water bottle, Dan's guess of 291 rocks was not only the winning guess, but it was a perfect guess! Thanks to all who participated, and for your enthusiasm for camping ministries in the Central Conference!

By: Rev. Erik Strom

## Covenant Children's Ministry



The Covenant Children's Ministry Board, formerly the Covenant Children's Home and Family Services, is receiving applications from post high school college or trade school students who qualify. Guideline and application forms can be downloaded from the Covenant Children's Ministry website... [www.ccmprinceton.org](http://www.ccmprinceton.org).

Deadline for receipt of applications in our Princeton, IL office is June 10th.

By: Paul Bengtson

## Harvest Covenant Church's Sidewalk Sunday School

We are very excited about Sidewalk Sunday School this year. We are believing for a great Harvest of people coming out and receiving the love of God. We purpose to build new relationships and strengthen the existing one that are already established. The theme for this summer is "Bible Stories". We are instructed to teach the encouraging faith filled Bible truths to help the next generation to become encouraged and strong in their walk with the Lord.

Sidewalk Sunday School starts the week of May 16th and concludes the last week of July. The sites of Sidewalk Sunday School 2015 includes Butterfly Park (38th North Ave.), Long Island Dr.(21st Silver Spring) and the Woodlands (91st Brown Deer). **Join us in Prayer.**

By: Pastor Darnell Robinson