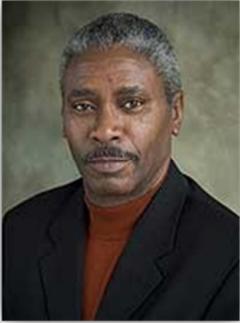




central conference of the evangelical covenant church

September 2015

From the Superintendent: WHEN THINGS GO WRONG



In the 40th chapter of the book of Isaiah, the prophet's vision shifts from the despair of the children of Judah's exile in Babylon. Despair and discouragement had overtaken them and they had given up hope that God was going to return them to their homeland. And that God had abandoned them because of their sins. They felt that things had gone wrong for them.

After God had established the fact of His transcendence over nations, graven images, rulers and gods, the prophet reveals the other characteristics of God in verses 27-31. Many in Judah felt that God had forgotten them and that He was not treating them justly. But there were many things they themselves failed to understand. Seated on His throne in the heavens, God sees all, knows all, and takes everything into consideration. He weighs

carefully every factor, the past as well as, the present and the future. There is nothing that He fails to consider. No detail escapes His notice. Whatever He does is wise, right, just and good. We should never feel that we are being neglected or treated unjustly by God.

What would you do if you lost your job and can't find another one? Or the doctor tells you that you have an incurable disease? What will you do when things just go wrong in your life? Do you panic? Do you go into a state of paralysis? Do you withdraw from the situation in fear and trembling? Do you protest and shake your fist in rage and say, Why does this happen to me? Or do you pray? Do you do what the psalmist did who wrote, "When I was in trouble, I called on the Lord and He heard me."

I would say that you should pray, but first I recommend that you say to yourself the following four things.

- There is nothing that can happen to me that has not happened to thousands of other people. I know I am unique but my trouble is not unique. I have to shed the idea that I have been selected for life's worst blows.
- Then say this: I knew ahead of time that as a human being I ran the risk of something like this. I should not be completely surprised that anything like this could happen. Life means exposure to all sorts of things, and among other things, it means exposure to all the four winds of misfortune. Which are disappointment, disease, defeat, and death. The adverse winds are part of life. You can never ready yourself for them; you are never waiting to welcome them; but you can certainly prepare yourself for the possibility that they may one day or another strike you.
- Then go further and say to yourself. There are people who did their greatest work when they were blown by one or all of the four winds at once.
- Then the last thing you say to yourself is this: I do not know how I am going to handle this, but I know that I can. I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me. And believe what Isaiah says in verse 31, "But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength, They will soar high on wings like eagles, They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint."

By: Rev. Jerome Nelson



central conference of the evangelical covenant church

September 2015

CONVICTIONS & CULTURE



LIFE TOGETHER IN THE
CENTRAL CONFERENCE
OF THE ECC

During the Central Conference meeting [a brief video](#) was shown to highlight an upcoming collection of twelve articles with corresponding Bible studies called *Convictions and Culture: Life Together in the Central Conference of the ECC*. The resource collects the denomination's six theological affirmations (our convictions) along with six aspects of our distinct identity in the Central Conference (our culture). Twelve contributors from around the conference have written engaging articles and very useful Bible studies that can be used in a variety of ways in our local churches. Please watch for a special edition of this newsletter in a couple of weeks that will deliver the entire *Convictions and Culture* resource to you and your church.



central conference of the evangelical covenant church

September 2015

Develop a Deborah



Develop a Deborah continues to be supported and encouraged at the Fellowship Christian Church in Oak Park. On Sunday, August 23rd, Rev. Karen Brewer Pastor of Atonement Covenant Church preached from Matthew 7:13-14. The sermon title was "Don't be a Fan, Be a Follower of Christ!" She shared that as a fan the gate looks wide but it is truly narrow. But as a follower of Christ the gate is narrow and it is.

The members were grateful for her message and appreciated how she formed her sermon to include parts of her own life. Ms. Connie shared that she really loved how she made the Scripture come alive in sharing her own story. Our time together ended in "Food Fellowship" and Dr. Carl Spight and the youth provided beautiful drumming and singing.



For information on how your church can support "Develop a Deborah", contact the conference office at 773-367-3060 or contact the Commission on Biblical Gender and Equality at Covenant Offices.

By: Rev. Debbie Griffith Samuels



central conference of the evangelical covenant church

September 2015

Covenant Agreement



On Saturday, August 1st, Superintendent Jerome Nelson and Director of Church Planting David Swanson joined the Iglesia del Pacto Jerusalem launch team in Streamwood, IL to sign a Covenant Agreement with pastor Alberto Galvan.



After a brief worship service, Superintendent Nelson challenged the new church to remain faithful to God's call, keeping their eyes on the goal of God's kingdom.

Iglesia del Pacto is our newest church plant and is currently meeting in a Lutheran church facility on Sunday mornings. Please keep Pastor Galvan, his wife Erica, new son Santiago, and the entire launch team in your prayers.



By: Rev. David Swanson



central conference of the evangelical covenant church

September 2015

Hispanic Ministry of the Central Conference



On August 9th, the Hispanic Ministry of the Central Conference held their annual Baptismal Sunday! It is a blessing to be able to have such service held at Covenant Harbor Bible Camp in Lake Geneva, WI.

We would like to thank the churches that participated at this year's service: Albany Park, Belen, Grace, Peniel, & Vida Plena Covenant Church. We were able to fellowship, see God's glory & His fidelity in our Hispanic Congregations. This annual service has become a wonderful tradition; it is also a very healthy tradition.



We renew the missionary work of the Covenant Church; by discipling and leading new believers to the waters to get baptized. As always, fellowship is an essential part of our identity in Christ.

We would also like to thank Covenant Harbor staff, Director Ray Warren who has always welcomed us with open arms. They made us feel loved & welcomed.

Rev. Sergio Gonzalez

Hispanic Ministries Coordinator of the Central Conference

