

Becoming

(formerly The Connection)

Jan. & Feb. 2012

The Voice and Connection of the East Michigan Conference - Free Methodist Church USA

Helping us to **Become** a powerhouse in building and reproducing healthy, holy pastors and churches in East Michigan and Beyond.

From the Superintendent



Kingdom Expansion

Superintendent Paul A. Castle

Men fight wars and die to spread earthly kingdoms that soon end. They do so to spread various types of governments and ideologies, and for peace and economics. It is estimated that 40 million people died globally during WWII. This war was caused by one man, determined to shape the world the way he felt it should be. Even today wars are fought and people are killed daily to spread a way of thinking or to try and protect a kingdom we now enjoy.

In the Bible we read about a different type of Kingdom. As Jesus put it - a Kingdom not of this world. According to the Bible, His followers were also commanded to spread this Kingdom. This Kingdom was much different. According to Jesus, you had to become like a child to enter it. He told one man that because of how kind and caring he was that he was not far from the Kingdom. This Kingdom had and has no beginning and no end, and had no earthly leader. It was and is the realm of God our Creator. This Kingdom is the Kingdom that all other kingdoms exist within. The Kingdom of God is God, the heavens and earth, and contains all of time. To us it is faith, life, our behavior, our hopes, and our eternity.

God sent Jesus to pave a clear path to God, to provide the way of our redemption and to make the path to God easy to understand. To enter and dwell in God's Kingdom, one must have faith in God and His Son, and obey the teachings and example of Christ. Those teachings are to love others, to be kind, caring and forgiving, to live moral lives, and to help others to also come to this faith. It is not complicated at all, yet to not belong to God's Kingdom is to lose everything in the end. Jesus told us how to enter the Kingdom and that not all would be there. It's a choice.

When we consider our lives and the brief time spent on this earth, we long to have had our lives count for something. Some give their entire lives to spread kingdoms that will end someday. Some spend their lives building their own personal kingdom of wealth. Our mission as the church is to expand God's Kingdom. That IS our mission. Our mission has never changed. Sometimes we forget why we are here as a church and what we are doing. But that is because we get busy doing other things and the true mission becomes blurred.

WE ARE CALLED AND COMMANDED TO EXPAND GOD'S KINGDOM.

All that we do is to that end. So as a Free Methodist Church, what are you doing to accomplish this? If you are not busy expanding the Kingdom ... wow ... according to Jesus you are like salt that has lost its flavor ... worthless and not fit for the Kingdom ... and like worthless salt you will be thrown out of the house into the dirt.

So we are expected to expand our Lord's Kingdom. This is not an option for those who claim to be followers of Christ.

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In the New Testament we see the model for this. And that involves sharing the message of the life, teachings, death, resurrection, and coming of Jesus Christ. And as people believe and accept this message they are to be baptized. Following this they fellowship, worship, and grow in their understanding of Christ's teaching and learn to live the way He taught us to live.

Yes, there is an expectation to grow the church. John Wesley said that a church not growing was a backslidden church. Why would he say such a thing? Well, think about it...if we are not expanding God's Kingdom we are in direct disobedience to what Christ taught His disciples and what we read throughout all of the New Testament. Something is terribly wrong if a pastor or church has no desire to expand God's Kingdom.

We MUST be about the Master's business!

Kingdom expansion takes sacrifice. It takes a total dedication to the cause of Christ.

This is our mission.

This is our focus.

This is our passion.

This is our cause.

It's not about us ... it's about the Kingdom!

"BUILDING AND REPRODUCING HEALTHY, HOLY PASTORS"

P-K Day

On Saturday, May 5, we will be having a special day for our Pastor's kids (P-K's) in kindergarten through high school, at Kokomo's in Saginaw. This will be our first PK Day!! There will be more information about this event sent to our pastoral families as well as in the next issue of "Becoming".

United in prayer that God would help us to build and reproduce healthy, holy pastors and churches in East Michigan and beyond.

Please pray and intercede for these pastors and their families – for protection, wisdom, health, and to be filled with the Spirit.

Ordained Elders

(those currently active and appointed at a church/ministry)

Michael Alexander	Ron Frederick	Scott Palmiter
Sue Alvera	Rich George	Nate Perkins
Mike Anderson	Kyle Gerrild	Eddie Phillips
Paul Armstrong	Chris Hale	George Richards
Dan Baldermann	Brandon Hempel	Jeff Rolfe
Dale Bigger	Phil Hortop	Wayne Russell
Steve Bowker	Chris Horvath	Tom Saunders
Doug Bradshaw	Chuck Hubbert	Rick Schmidt
Brad Button	John James	Mike Schneider
Lyle Calkins	Dave Kessler	David Stevens
Paul Castle	Mark Kincaid	Mel Stevenson
Keith Childerhose	Dave Krueger	Jerry Sutton
Roger Cleeton	Bruce Lawton	Amy Thompson
Bob Coen	Brad Lockwood	Jim Thompson
David Coleman	Bob Marshall	Steve Tungate
Carol Corbishley	Doug McGeorge	John Waldo
Bruce Cromwell	Patrick McNeal	Linda Waldo
Mindi Greiser-Cromwell	Bob Mohr	Jim Watt
Neil Davis	Rob Mohr	Jamie Wiklanski
Doyle Dennings	Bill Moull	Tom Wilson
Joanna DeWolf	Gary Mulholland	Eric Wing
Gordon Evoy	Don O'Dell	Larry Wittcock
Steve Evoy	Larry Osweiler	Adam Wolfgang
David Flowers	Phil Owen	Dale Woods

Deacons/Conference Ministerial

Candidates/serving in a supply role

Loyd Ayres	Shawn Hopkins
Michel Back	Rob Keyes
Carla Bell	Sherri King
James Benjamin	Jason Kotarski
Tony Chick	Erik Kreh
Matt Cleveland	Lisa Lahring
Jim Davis	Colleen Landino
Lori Dowdy	Bev Maier
Henry Dufour	David Mossner
Mark Dusseau	James Perry
Jay Evans	Zach Rohde
Jon Fruytier	Scott Wheeler
Kelly Gallagher	Nate Yerian
Tom Hoose	

"Building and Reproducing Healthy, Holy Churches"

Spooling Up!



The East Michigan Conference is spooling up for take-off!

When a jet is preparing for take-off, thousands of rotor blades inside the engine begin the process of spinning, faster and faster until the air is compressed and ignited with fuel. There is so much thrust that if a semi-truck were to drive behind the jet, it would be flipped over on its' side!

We are in the process now of engine run up.

My driving mission for East Michigan is "Building & Reproducing Healthy, Holy Pastors and churches in East Michigan and Beyond." Nothing but God removing me from this position, or death itself, will make me flinch in regards to this focus.

In time, everything we do as a conference will come into alignment with this mission: "Building & Reproducing Healthy, Holy Pastors and Churches in East Michigan and Beyond".

Our pastors must be healthy and holy. Meaning: emotional and physical health, having love for others, balance in their lives, and walking the talk. Pastors must be loved, affirmed, and prayed for. I will do everything within my power to ensure this is happening.

Our churches must also be healthy and holy. Meaning: openness for all people, a desire to truly worship, have an environment of love, and a balance in evangelism and discipleship.



"Building & Reproducing Healthy, Holy Pastors and Churches in East Michigan and Beyond."

We are just beginning the process of spooling up. It will be exciting to see how far we go together!
P.A.C.

How to NOT Grow a Church

- * Grumbling
- * Lack of prayer
- * Lack of Bible preaching and teaching
- * Guilt
- * Manipulation
- * Music led by an attention starved narcissist
- * Hiring staff
- * Saying only men can speak in the church
- * Building a building
- * Over spending "by faith"
- * Running the pastor down
- * Loud mouthed, opinionated, critical, mean-spirited people allowed to run the church
- * Never speaking about stewardship and involvement

How to GROW a Church

- † Love and kindness
- † Openness to hurting, dysfunctional people
- † Leadership unity
- † Prayer for pastor and congregation
- † Intentionally inviting people to church
- † Building buildings or hiring staff when it's needed and after God has provided the finances
- † Bible preaching and using the Bible for discipleship
- † Music that honors and exalts Christ and appeals to all because it is Christ-focused
- † Spirit-filled people, unified, overseeing the church
- † Caring about all age groups
- † Teaching on what the Bible says about the stewardship of time, talents and resources

P.A.C.

Clarity of Thought

The focus is NOT to grow the Church.
The focus is to do what's right so that the church can grow!

P.A.C.

So You Want To Plant A Church

~Adam Wolfgang, Pastor at Gaylord Family Fellowship



I would stop you right at the title of this article if you were talking to me about planting a church. You may “want” to plant a church but I would tell you to wait until God “tells” you to plant a church. For Stephanie and me, it started back in August of 1986, when I heard a message at my first annual conference as a pastor serving at Roscommon. The sermon was given by the late Bishop Foster, talking about church planting that was happening out west. I was so intrigued by it that I bought the cassette tape and brought it home for Stephanie to hear. I just thought all we had, as far as churches, was what we already had and we needed to work with that. The cassette tape was played many times.

Next came 3 churches over the next 11 years. It really wasn’t the number of churches, but rather the experiences that I needed to live that God took me through, that was preparing us for what was ahead. Sure, I read a lot of books and took in anything on the subject and attended many conferences. They usually had a workshop or two about church planting, but I really think it was more about the living within the existing community that I was in that was teaching me what to do.

When the “push” by God was getting stronger within us an offering was given by the conference to attend a church planter’s assessment event held in Spring Arbor that gave us some outside affirmation that we were walking in the right direction. We were also given the opportunity to attend a boot camp in Colorado that helped us start to solidify some of the foundational steps we were about to take. Needless to say, if God is “telling” you to plant a church, He will also give you others who are credible that will confirm it. I would not move until you get that.

If I go on “wanting” to plant a church rather than God “telling” me to plant a church, I set myself up for motives that won’t last the duration. You may “want” to plant a church because you are dissatisfied with where you are or people you are with, or the way things are run, or a chance to try “your” ideas without accountability or review, but all those things will end very quickly. You need something much deeper than your “want” to sustain what is ahead of you. You need God “telling” you to go forward, knowing He is leading you every step of the way.

New Covenant Donates to Whaley House

The ladies of New Covenant Free Methodist Church found a need for some quilts for the children of Whaley House in Flint. Fabric was donated by many people; ladies chose fabrics and made tops for the quilts. A generous lady opened her home to be a point of fabric collection and also for tying quilts. Most Thursday evenings throughout the summer, many ladies met to work on the quilts.



On Sunday, November 13, forty-two quilts were presented for Pastor Phil to bless, that the 42 children receiving them might feel the LOVE they were made with. They were delivered to Whaley House the following week.

Bible Quiz Schedule

Bible Quizzing is a great way to help instill the promises and instruction of the scripture to our teens in 6th-12th grade. If you are interested in quizzing and would like to get involved, feel free to attend any of the quizzes listed below. For more information, please contact Lyle or Dawn McCoon at lmccoon@ameritech.net.

February 12 – Clarkston FMC
March 10 – Holland, Ohio FMC
April 21 – Spring Arbor FMC
May 6 – West Morris Street, Indiana FMC
June 25-30 – Seattle Pacific University, WA – Nationals

Free Methodist Bible Quizzing
... God's Word in the Hearts of Teens!

IT'S ALL ABOUT SPORTS

~Pastor Doug Bradshaw, Sr. Pastor, Williamston FMC

When a certain professional quarterback kneels on a football field it becomes a topic of conversation on ESPN and every radio sports show. When a college quarterback gives a speech at the Big Ten pre-season meetings, he is lauded as a great role model. Both of these men are being used by God, and I believe, witness the growing hunger in our world to see and hear the things of God. When I first felt my heart warming to share the love of Christ with people, I remember hearing something about how people were more willing to hear the message than most God-followers were to share it. I felt that was a little harsh, but sadly I have come to realize there is a great deal of truth in it. So, naturally I ask why? What would cause one who has come to know the love of God to not be comfortable in sharing that love? This is a bigger question than I can hope to answer but I would like to offer some food for thought.



Sports are life to many people. When sports stars like Tim Tebow and Kirk Cousins use the gifts God has given them, they are modeling one of the first and most basic ideas about evangelism. That basic idea is for us to take what God has given us, (interests, gifts, personality) and use them to share the love of God. What God has given you and I, (interests, gifts, personality) is the bridge to carry the love of God across to a seeker. Don't make sharing your faith more than that. Through the love of education, a teacher shares the love of God with other teachers and students. Through the love of the outdoors, an outdoorsman shares the love of God with those who share his love. Through the love of reading, a reader shares the love of God with those who live to read. Do you get it? God has not only given you His love, but a way to share it. Don't make this too difficult. Be who you are, doing what you love, and God will provide the audience. In short, do all that you can do and let God do what only He can do.

Today I will go to a basketball game with the girl's varsity team here in Williamston. I was asked to be an assistant coach this year by the head coach. When I look at those faded newspaper clippings my mom saved for me, I see a younger me in short shorts and high socks caught in the moment of playing the game I loved. Today when I go to the game with my team I am not dreaming about playing again, but using the love of the game of basketball to share the love of God. Is that too hard to understand?

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

With the cold weather, operating expenses at My Brother's Keeper are higher than normal. If you would like to share a special monetary gift to help feed and give shelter to the homeless at this time, it would be very helpful.

Please mail any contributions to:

East Michigan Conference

PO Box 28

Clio, MI 48420

***Designate for MBK.**

Thank you!



Teens for Christ Ministries

The first Teens for Christ Mission trip in decades will be happening March 30 – April 7, 2012. We are taking 21 TFC'ers plus staff to Pike County, Indiana, to spend a week of intensive ministry and relationship building with other like-minded teens from Pike County.

We have already started to build relationships with local churches in Pike County. Our plan is to start our week there by gathering the local youth groups together and inviting them to join us in our week of evangelism, relationship building, and serving the community. The message is this: God has called TFC's to a weeklong "mission field" here among you, but God has called you that live here all the time – and your call is to see people how Jesus sees them!

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Covenant Hills Camp



Kids Scholarship Fund

In preparing for this issue of Becoming I asked Angel for a couple of stories she had from parents, kids or counselors. She gave me the two below.

We have an older couple that give faithfully to the scholarship fund because when their kids were young they needed financial help to get their kids to camp. Camp solidified the things of faith in Christ that their church was teaching and challenged them to go deeper. We believed as parents that camp was a great eternal experience but we didn't have the extra money at that time to send them. Now that our children are grown we do have the money to support camp ministry and so we give not only because someone provided this valuable experience for our children, but because it is an irreplaceable experience. We believe camp is a valuable eternal investment and in these hard times for young families they can use all the help they can get. **(Parents)**

My favorite memory was the progress I saw in one of my kids during Recco's week. The first thing he told me was that he was a rapper. He spit a few bars for me and the rhyme was filled with sex, drugs and robbing people, which was reflective of the lifestyle he lived. On Thursday during our waterfront time he didn't want to swim so he asked if he could borrow my notebook and pencil. At dinner time he showed me the new song he had written. I don't remember all the words, but the beginning went like this: "I'm a changed life, I'm living life different, put my sin in the past, make it so distant". The rest of the song was completely worth all the hard work and fatigue. I have no idea how this kid is doing now, but I still pray that he is trying to live life differently. **(CHC Counselor)**

This is what Covenant Hills Camp is all about. I too can identify with these parents. When my kids were camp age it was tough to come up with registrations for all five, but since they have all become adults it is easier for me to give to the scholarship fund to help others come to camp. You see I believe in what we see happening, not just because I am the director, but because I am a parent. Kids like the one above from Recco's group who had a different rap song when he left. God is doing something in these boys and girls lives. It's a different environment. They are with counselors that they believe care about them. That's why we get calls before camp asking if a certain counselor is coming back and if he or she is, can I be in their cabin. Your contribution is an investment in lives we expect to be changed. Maybe you didn't have the money when your kids were camp age. I hope someone else helped you. But even if they didn't you can start the chain of helping someone else or a grandchild and perhaps they will help someone in the next generation. You can send your gift in one lump sum or monthly to Covenant Hills Camp, marked scholarship. 10359 E Farrand Rd, Otisville, MI 48463.

Thank you for caring.

~Doyle Dennings - Director

Teen Camp Inn – February 17-18, 2012

This event will be totally inside our huge heated gym. We will hang out and play games at the picnic tables and gather to have s'mores around the campfire. This is an awesome opportunity for your youth group to bond together as well as meet with and be encouraged by other Christian teens.

Who: Students in grades 7th-12th

Time: The event will start Friday @ 7:00pm and go until Saturday @ 3:00pm

Cost: \$40 per Student & \$10 per Chaperone

Go to our website www.covenanthills.org for more information and registration form or call the camp office at **810-631-4531**.

Scrap Booking Weekend March 9-11, 2012

Come rest, relax and get creative. This weekend is an opportunity to do all three without having to cook, clean or put your stuff away for two days. This weekend is designed to build friendships and provide opportunities to enjoy spending time with friends.

Cost: 1 night & 3 meals = \$85/person
2 nights & 4 meals = \$95/person
1 day & 2 meals = \$40/person

Great Prizes and Awesome Goodies!



Feel free to call the camp office at **810-631-4531** or check out our website www.covenanthills.org for more details and a registration form.

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We are also pursuing a way to get into the high school (we're asking for prayers, that we might gain favor with the school district). Pike Central High is the school for all of Pike County, which gives us a great opportunity to reach a lot of students in one place. We believe they will allow us to come in to promote a "volunteerism day" that we will be sponsoring while we are there. This will open our reach into the entire public school, help the community with physical needs, and give us a place to start connection and relationship building with students that do not yet know Christ.

There's far more to share about the amazing things God is putting together for this mission trip experience. God is bringing all of these details together! I'm excited to see how this will stretch our students to become involved in ministry in new ways. I believe God will use students in ways they never thought they could be used...and that He will call them to do things they never thought they could do!

If you are interested, more information can be found on our website at: www.tfchome.org/mission-trip

~Dan Baldermann

TFC Director

balderdan@gmail.com

Teens For Christ Schedule

Feb 19 (Sun) – CORE Day – Blue Water FMC (Kimball)

Feb 25 – Porter FMC

Mar 3 – CORE Day – Green Oak FMC (Brighton)

Mar 17 – Countryside FMC (Sandusky)

Mar 24 – Gladwin FMC (overnighter)

Mar 25 (Sun) – Grayling FMC (10:30 a.m.)

Mar 25 (Sun) – Houghton Lake Wesleyan (6 p.m.)

All concerts are at 7pm unless otherwise noted.

CORE Day: On these dates, there will be no concert, but time will be spent in discipleship, training, small group/mentoring, and equipping activities.

Please pray for these churches in East Michigan and beyond. Pray for deliverance from evil and divisive people, for unity, a common vision, financial health, convert growth, baptisms, and consistent intentional discipleship.

Sonshine Schedule

Feb 12 – Countryside FM (Sandusky)

Feb 26 – Lapeer FM

Mar 18 – Green Oak FMC (Brighton)

Apr 15 – Grand River Community (Leslie)

Apr 22 – Mt. Morris FMC

All concerts are at 6pm unless otherwise noted.

East Michigan

Churches

Alpena
Bad Axe
Blue Water
Cedarway
Central
Clarkston
Conway
Cornerstone
Countryside
Dansville
Davison
Durand
Faith
Fenton
Gaylord
Gladwin
Grayling
Green Oak
Harbor Beach
Heritage Hills
Hillman
Lapeer
Light & Life
Lighthouse

Churches

Linden
Living Promise
Melita
Memphis
Midland
Mt. Morris
New Covenant
Ogemaw Hills
Owosso
Oxford
Pleasant Valley
Pleasant View
Porter
Racy
Roscommon
Saginaw
St. Johns
Standish
Westwood Heights
Wheeler
Wildwind
Williamston
Wolverine

Church Plants

Bethel Park
Calvary Haitian
Freedom Ministries
Living Grace
Real Faith

Ministries

Alpena Camp
Clawson Manor
Covenant Hills Camp
Hemans Camp
My Brother's Keeper
Teens for Christ
Training Institute

And Beyond

Outside EMC Borders

(ministries/churches directly started and/or sustained through the churches and ministries of EMC)

Nepal – Wolverine FMC (60 FM Churches)
For information on Nepal, please contact Rev. Steve Evoy, Sr. Pastor at Wolverine FMC. pastorsteve@wolverinefmc.com

Swaziland – New Covenant FMC

Our Missionaries

Mark & Lena
Becca
Brian & Laurie



NEWS OF SIGNIFICANCE FROM AROUND THE CONFERENCE...

Sympathy...

B. Marcella Gundlach, 80, member of the Memphis FMC, passed away September 17, 2011. Services were held September 24, 2011, officiated by Rev. Steve Tungate.

Doris Gingrich, member of the Bad Axe FMC, passed away November 5, 2011. Funeral services were held on November 8, officiated by Rev. Jerry Sutton.

Myrtle Diem, of the Blue Water FMC, passed away on November 24, 2011. Services were held November 28, 2011.

Rev. Fred Singer, retired minister, went to be with the Lord on Wednesday, December 21, 2011. A Celebration of Life was held in his honor at Willow Vale Free Methodist Church in San Jose, California on January 1. With his wife, Lila, Rev. Singer pastored the following EMC churches: Mayville & Rich, Pleasant View, Countryside, and Light & Life of Grand Blanc.

Rev. Carl Koerner, retired minister, went to be with the Lord on November 19, 2011, at the age of 96. Services were held on Friday, November 25. Rev. Koerner served at the following EMC churches: Highwood & Mt. Forest, Highwood, South Lansing, Wilmot & Evergreen, Memphis, Roosevelt Avenue (Flint), Pontiac First, Alpena & Wilson. He was also a District Superintendent, and Conference Superintendent. Carl also served on the Clawson Manor board for 25 years.

Winston Dorman, 97, of Faith FMC, passed away December 4, 2011. Funeral services were held December 8, officiated by Rev. Dale Woods Sr. and Dr. Dale A. Woods II.

George W. Castle, 79, member of the New Covenant FMC, passed away December 6, 2011. Services were held on December 10, officiated by Supt. Paul A. Castle. Our condolences to Supt. Paul & Kristy Castle on the passing of Paul's father.

Terrance Ray, member of the Blue Water FMC, passed away December 31, 2011. Services were held at the church on January 5.

Congratulations & Welcome to...



Rev. Rob & Becky Mohr (Sr. Pastor at Heritage Hills), on the birth of their first child, **Michaela Mohr**, born November 10. Michaela weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz., and was 18 1/2 inches long at birth.



Pastor Mark & Liz Dusseau (Worship Pastor at New Covenant), on the birth of their first child, **Lilah Ann**, born December 10. Lila weighed 6 pounds even, and was 19 inches long at birth.

Congratulations to the Mohr & Dusseau families and welcome to Michaela & Lilah!

Thank you ...

Thank you to the East Michigan Conference, The many cards and calls from people of the East Michigan Conference have been a blessing and comfort to me following the passing of my father, Carl W. Koerner. The donation by the conference to the Retired Minister's Fund in memory of Dad is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your kindness.

~Carol Koerner

We are so blessed with so many who have expressed their condolences in such a variety of ways. Whether you sent a card, gave a memorial gift, brought food to the home, visited us at the funeral home or came to the memorial service, we want you to know how much we appreciate your support at this time of our loss.

~The family of George W. Castle

To all of our dear friends in East Michigan, We deeply appreciate the many expressions of love and kindness shown to our family with the home-going of our beloved father, George Castle.

~Supt. Paul & Kristy Castle