

Eastern Regional Association



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SUPERINTENDENTS ANNUAL REPORT DELEGATE BODY REPORT - ERA CONVENTION 2018

VISION/PURPOSE STATEMENT

To be a Growing Network of Healthy Churches

Over the past year, I have worked with the Regional Board to listen to the needs of our leaders and have intentionally spent less time on Church Revitalization, Administration, and Church Planting to focus more of my time on Connecting relationally with our Pastors and Leadership Development. This has been a huge challenge for me as I have stepped back from many things that I hold dear and I just have difficulty saying “no” to ministry opportunities in general. I realize that this is a pathway that will need to be followed for several years before much of this is felt, especially since this past year was both a busy year and a transition in ministry emphasis. Please continue to pray for me and for the Regional Board as we try to listen and make the changes necessary to meet the greatest needs in our Region with the limited time and resources we have at our disposal.

SABBATICAL

I was blessed to receive the opportunity to take a 3-month leave of absence for a Sabbatical during March-April-May of 2018. As a result of my time away I was able to achieve the following goals, read many books, and had many thoughts that I shared with the Board.

A report on my time:

- I traveled with BICS to Israel for a two-week study of the Holy Land
- I spent a week with my wife celebrating 20 years of marriage and preparing for the next 20.
- I spent a week with my entire family at Ernest Carl’s cottage at Big Lake
- I spent the equivalent of a week in silent retreat with the Lord and **David Alves** (mentor).
- I spent a week just sleeping.
- Finally, I spent about 6 weeks completing a Certificate in “Church Compliance” through Start Church University and writing papers for 5 courses in my Master’s Degree Program for Antioch School.
- I unplugged and read about 16 books.
- The Lord worked with me on some personal Character Issues
- I reflected a great deal on my life and ministry

PASTORAL CARE

Following my Sabbatical, I launched myself into Camp and Summer Ministry Team work. I made many contacts while traveling to various camps and some churches over the summer months. Since the summer, I have been playing catch up with many of our Leaders. I am

trying to keep a log of the calls and contacts I have been making. On average, I have been making 10+ contacts per week. These include phone calls, and face-to-face.

CHURCHES SEEKING

I am currently working with the following churches who are in various stages of pastoral transition:

Dunntown, ME	They have an interim (Josh Cheney) and we are considering some possibilities.
Castle Hill, ME	They have speakers filling in. We are prayerfully considering options.
Sunshine, ME	Pastor David Davis has resigned after 17 years, and I am assisting them with their search.
Melrose, MA	Pastor Andy Rice has gone to BICS as the new President. I am working with their search Committee. Josh Duncan and John Jones will be preaching.
Charlton, MA	I have met with some leaders from Charlton. The Oversight ministry has concluded. I am helping them to search for a PT minister.
Norwalk, CT	Norwalk has a Spanish church renting space, which has allowed them to remain open. We are considering their options.
Simonds, NB	We have not been able to find a Pastor to serve in this Canadian Church. They have not had a Pastor for 4-5 years. I would like to find someone to go there as a “missionary to Canada”.

CHURCH PLANTING

In the Spring of 2018 CityChurch, Rochester sent out a group to begin a new work at the home of **Randy & Donna DeTrude** in Northwood, NH. This group has seen some steady growth since then and they have held their first baptism. We are excited to see how God will continue to grow this family of churches.

REVITALIZATION

The Westfield AC Church is the only one that is currently under “Oversight.” This church has probably had the most fruitful experience with having an oversight committee. The Church has grown, sold their old building and moved to rented space on Main Street. The finances are in order, a new Constitution and By Laws are being written, and an Elder team is being developed to replace the Oversight Committee. I believe that this will be a solid church for many years to come, due to the good foundation that has been established there through **Merle and Jean Beal’s** sacrificial service.

FINANCES

Dawn Rutan is predicting a 2% decrease in giving for 2019 based on past trends. We have not had as much income this year from financial investments, since we lost the interest payments from the Baptist church. The good news is that we will be investing these funds along with the funds from the sale of our next-door property, and we will no longer have to pay property tax or insurance. Our board is pro-actively seeking new ways to invest funds, raise money, and do things differently so that we can improve our financial standing.

The work was done on the water pump and filter system. Investment funds (75%) from **LaChapelle** were withdrawn and deposited to be used in this years income. Bank accounts and designated signees were all updated in recent months. **Howie** has been a huge help

with both his understanding of how finances work and his understanding of ministry. He has had many good ideas that we have implemented already and he has proven to have good counsel for our Board of Directors.

ORDINATIONS

I am pleased to announce that **Erik Reynolds** (Oak Hill Bible Church, MA), **Jacob Clement** (Bangor AC Church, ME), and **Nate Hasty** (State Street Church, NH) will all be Credentialed this Fall.

SMT

The Summer Ministry Team had an excellent time of serving the Lord this past summer. We ministered in 7 different camps and three service projects over 9 weeks. Besides working as counselors, we painted the dining hall at Camp Big Lake that also serves as the Church building for the Sunrise Church, pastored by Ernest Carl. Some of the students worked at the Regional Office painting the trim and assisting **Tanya** during a slow week. Another pair of students went to East Norwalk and helped to clean up the church from water damage that required many hours of cleaning and cataloging materials.

Unfortunately, we had a shortfall financially this summer. We are still finalizing income and expenses, but it looks like we will be about \$2500 short due to a couple of weeks when we didn't have a paying ministry opportunity. We are still raising money so that we don't have this short fall negatively affect the budget.

For 6 years we have been doing our training with Camp Dixie. This is a great time to connect with students and leaders from other Regions, but it also takes a lot of time and money and they get out of school earlier, so they want to hold their training earlier in the summer than we want to. After talking with **Matt Larkin** and **Lori Ellis**, we developed a possible plan for doing our own training here in the Region. However, I didn't want to do it just for our SMT staff. So we will be inviting all of the AC camps to bring their staff for this training. We believe that this will help to improve all of our camping ministries across the Region. We are planning to hold this next June at the Mechanic Falls Campground, and pass on the expense to those who attend, which will be primarily for food.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

I have met with **Matt Larkin**, **Darren Bantz** and **Lori Ellis**, all of whom will be assisting in the area of Leadership Development within the Region going forward. We have a lot of ideas for ways that we can connect with High School, College, and Young Adult leaders to help them explore any potential calling as well as offering ways for everyone to grow in their ministry training and leadership skills. We hope to continue investing heavily in people and young leaders in particular so that we may have the key people in place to lead our churches, plant new works, and be sent out to various mission fields both here and abroad.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I chose the Theme of "**ESTABLISHING**" this year as I felt that it was a theme that Paul repeats often throughout almost all of his letters. He regularly emphasizes the idea of laying a good foundation in the life of Believers, in Leaders, and in the various Churches. It seemed to me that it may be time for us to do some self evaluation and compare ourselves to Paul's ideal. Mission creep has sunk many a Christian organization as they get away from the

ideals they first started with. Also, our American culture is an enemy of the church that has a huge impact on us as we begin following our traditions over and above the principles we find in scripture. May this year's messages be the reminder we all need to lay a strong foundation with roots that go down deep to keep us strong during the challenges of life.

I'd like to thank my staff who have really stepped up this year, especially in my absence and took care of many details so I could enjoy an uninterrupted Sabbatical this year. **Ed** has been faithful in generating reports and coming in whenever needed for many years. **Tanya** has really come to the point of feeling comfortable behind her desk and knowing who people are and what is going on. I really appreciate both of them and their contributions.

I am deeply indebted to **President Karl** and **Vice-President John Tate** for covering for me while I was away for my Sabbatical. They answered many calls and filled in whenever needed with much wisdom and sage advice. I would like to thank **my family** who is always there to assist me in ministry. From mowing lawns, to traveling to churches, to serving on the SMT or setting up for Convention, they are a great asset.

Finally, I would like to thank **each of you** who I work to serve. It is a joy to be in relationship with each of you. We are truly a family of families on a large scale here in the Eastern Region. Sometimes families disagree, sometimes we show up and offer each other encouragement, sometimes we even need some correction. Whatever it is, I'd rather be in relationship with you, than have to go through life and ministry without you! The whole point of the church is that we are God's family, and this is the beginning of an eternity spent with one another. I'm glad to know each of you and look forward to all that God will bring our way in 2019, or until He returns. Lord, Jesus, please, COME QUICKLY! MARANATHA!