



AEA Ministry *Spotlight*

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FEBRUARY 2018



Kerry L. Fink,
President

President's Letter

Such a great delight to welcome you in to 2018! We are believing God that there are some amazing things around the corner as we collectively "Launch into the Deep!"

Those who joined us in December, for the American Evangelistic Association and Refuge of Hope Disciple Center Christmas Celebration, enjoyed an additional Blessing – a visit to the recently opened *Museum of the Bible* in Washington, DC. We all agreed that this is such a "must-see" that we are planning for Delegates attending the 64th Anniversary 2018 Spring AEA Ministries Conference to enjoy and explore this very informative presentation.

In fact, speaking of the Spring 2018 Conference, please make plans now for our Washington, DC event – April 27th-29th – at the Refuge of Hope Ministry Center in Downtown Washington, DC. This will be an amazing time – taking place at the newly constructed Education Center with speakers of excellence and an agenda that will be enriching and fulfilling.

In addition, we want to invite you to visit ChesapeakeBibleCollege.org for latest updates on newly added Distance Learning Centers and Individual Student programs. You'll find the latest news there and the Online 2.0 Development team is readying a major announcement very soon about the next level of College Curriculum online for the College, now in its 40th year of operation.

It's going to be a wonderful 2018 and we give God the Highest Praise for all He has done for us, and for what He is about to do – in the Name of Jesus!

God Bless you and Happy New Year!



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Launch out into the deep...
Part 2

2018 Spring Conference

Join us in Washington D.C. for American Evangelistic Association's Spring Conference

along with the

28th Anniversary of Refuge of Hope Disciple Center

An AEA Chartered Church, 10 P. Street NE, Washington D.C. 20002

April 27, 28 & 29, 2018

- Fri, April 27, 2018** AEA ministers and guests arrive at Refuge of Hope. The cost of \$150.00 covers any guest or ministers who would like to attend the weekend activities with lodging on a first come, first served basis. The closest airports are Reagan National and Baltimore/Washington International. Amtrak Train at Union Station is 8 blocks from the church. Confirmation for Tour of the Museum of the Bible, Meet and Greet and Conference Reservation must be made by April 20, 2018.
- Museum Tour** 2:00 - 5:00 PM Visitors who arrive early - Tour the Museum of the Bible. Free, limited tickets, first come, first served.
- Meet and Greet** 7:00 - 9:00 PM, Vicino's Restaurant, 959 Sligo Avenue, Silver Springs, MD. Dinner price average \$20.00 per person, includes tip.
- Sat, April 28, 2018** 9:00AM-5:00PM American Evangelistic Association and Men of Standard/Sister to Sister Conference, includes lunch with a variety of workshops, and Licensing and Ordination Ceremony. At 2:00-5:00 PM - Conference continues at the Museum of the Bible. Register early and the first 20 people...your ticket is free.
Conference Registration is Free, but a freewill offering will be taken during the conference. Conference Workshop activities are held on site at Refuge of Hope.
After 5:00PM, Visitors are free to enjoy Sightseeing in the D.C. area.
- Sun, April 29, 2018** 1:30-5:30PM Refuge of Hope's Anniversary Celebration and Reception will be held on site. Dinner will be provided.

For Lodging, Please make your checks payable to: Refuge of Hope and mail it to Refuge of Hope, 10 P. Street NE, Washington D.C. 20002. Confirm your reservation by calling Minister Therese Farmer (301) 814-6002, email: theresefarmer@aol.com or Deacon Eunice Jones at 301-316-8575, Eunice.jones@verizon.net.

Your contributions are tax deductible and will assist us to support outreach programs in the U.S. and abroad.

The Refuge of Hope Biblical Missions Team will be returning to Israel in 2018. If you are interested in traveling with the team this year, Email: Dr Judy Farmer, Team Leader at judyfarmer8@aol.com or call (301) 535-3368.

Members Corner

Solutions for Compassion Fatigue in Self-Care

Rev. Dr. Loretta Iannicelli

Equip Care Ministries, Inc. Boston, Massachusetts



Ministers of the Gospel know and realize that there are many forms of ministry found within the four walls of the church as well as outbound in our communities. Fast-paced and ever-changing trends in various ministry settings have broadened many leaders' horizons with attempts to keep up with the latest-and-greatest. Outwardly, many ministers worldwide see an increased need to seek new forms of church programming, networking opportunities, and digital technologies. Bi-vocational ministry is on the increase, with many facing challenges for balance of life, vocation, and family. These scenarios are compounded as ministers strive to work effectively among today's cultural worldview. This brings to light a need to pay close attention to an inward focus that empowers an outward balance toward sustainability, resiliency, and endurance for the long haul in ministry.

Just released in 2017, The Barna Group reported on vital research in their book entitled, "The State of Pastors." Research showed that many need to connect with one another and their communities. Released statistics showed that one-in-nine pastors self-report as being at high risk to burnout; only one-in-five have excellent or good satisfaction with having true friends; and seven-of-ten of these high-risk ministers meet less than once a month with peers or a mentor. As we turn the corner into 2018, I continue to ask the question to many in collaboration, "At what cost will it take for you to commit to a serious focus upon your inward health and well-being which grounds one firmly toward onward success and vitality in ministry?"

For me, I am no stranger to change. Yet unfortunately I had to learn the hard way whereby burnout almost cost me my ministry. With authenticity and transparency, I was the classic go-getter in ministry. I was always ready, willing, and able to initiate and tackle tall buildings at a single bound. At the time, spiritually, I struggled as being the classic Martha, gifted in many areas, but missing the better thing (Luke 10:38-42). Early on as a ministry rookie, my skewed and blinded sense of outward doing corrupted my inward focus with God. As time went on, ministry struggles, scars, and war-wounds stacked up.

Fortunately for me, God led me through a genuine and honest assessment of self and how my vitality and endurance rested truly upon Him. Through a greater revelation in practicing the spiritual disciplines as outlined in Scripture, I gained a deeper value of myself in Christ with the newfound knowledge, wisdom, and strength that turned my life and ministry around. There is no lack of understanding in knowing that leaders spend endless hours meeting the needs of others. Many sacrifice self as they continue to strive to be present, responsive, informed, and effective. So, other than taking breaks from the Lord's work, how can we as leaders prevent burnout? How can those of us who care for others best care for ourselves?

Self-care and spiritual discipline are no strangers. Like receiving a prescription from the physician, self-care for leaders is the balm that can aid ministers to best meet their own personal and ever-changing stress levels that can enhance emotional, physical, and spiritually-driven need. The spiritual disciplines date back to ancient practices laid out by the early church for endurance. They are ways for us to power up through encounters with God as we seek transformation of self through Him.

Looking back, my taking a serious moment to just pause for an honest and strategic assessment of myself in Christ, was a ministry milestone worth noting. So, I ask – When was the last time you paused for your authentic and transparent assessment of self? Have the many ministry, life, and family "to do's" compromised the need to just "be" in Him? My pause ultimately led me to the understanding that while I was an effective and relevant pastor, mother, co-worker, and colleague, there was some stuff rising up in me that I just needed to get a handle on.

Signs of burnout can present in various ways. Physically, stress symptoms could include headaches, elevated blood pressure, back, neck, and shoulder pain to name a few. Cognitively, one can experience heightened or lowered alertness, memory problems, and even being overly critical or active in the blaming of others. Emotional abandonment, agitation, or anxiety can occur with behavioral issues including an inability to relax or rest with active withdrawal or anti-social acts potentially occurring. Spiritually dangerous symptoms could include being directly angry with God, experiencing imposed gratefulness, or actively seeking a renewed search for meaning. Fortunately, Scripture provides many reminders of how God desires for us to draw closer to Him, by seeking His presence, and gaining His wisdom and wholeness as we rest in His promises. I found great value in my humbly identifying that it was okay for me to be weak, acknowledging that I am not super-human.

As I drew closer to Him, I found I also discovered ways to steward taking better care of myself. Care ministry can truly be a rewarding and fruitful experience if one does not forego the attention required to various elements that may arise for those who consistently expose themselves to crisis and suffering. Prolonged and unchecked exposure to diverse stressors which may be found in compassion or care ministries may

Solutions for Compassion Fatigue in Self-Care - CONT.

lead to compassion fatigue – which is defined as the residue of emotional energy or strain of exposure from working with those suffering from the consequences from traumatic events (Definition: The American Stress Institute). Discovering ways to strategically let go of work, gain a sense of self-care achievement, acquire adequate rest and relaxation, and effectively practice daily stress reduction can help. So, my question posed here for all ministers and leaders would be: “What have you found effective during and after the care experience to help you with compassion stress?”

Uniquely and simultaneously, God strategically placed my ministry amidst various secular settings (hospital, first-response, fire, police and emergency management), whereby I gained the bird’s eye view of how these leading professions encouraged their leaders to focus upon health, wellness and sustainability. I quickly observed that other leading professions placed a very high regard on the well-being and post-care of their valiant warriors. Likewise, so should we. Here, I quickly observed, that similarly, the roles of ministers and leaders are in fact a first-response calling. Like doctors or other medical professionals (who meet to collaborate in medical rounds or in best-practice forums), we too deal with healing, wholeness, and wellness to soul, body - but also to the Spirit dynamic of humanity. Like First Responders, Police, Fire, and EMTs, we too as clergy are the first line of defense to those we serve, even going well beyond the call of duty during our regular office times. But at the most basic of levels, I celebrate the fact that we are neighbors one to another. We share a responsibility and stewardship for self and others, honoring the fact that we share our existence, our vocation, and our world together.

The pulse of change within our greater church culture starts first with ourselves as leaders. Today, I urge you to action – To take a pause for an authentic and transparent inventory of self with an inner assessment designed to provide you with the forward-thinking stewardship that will sustain your mission. We know the mission remains for us to always love God and people via the vein of care and compassion regardless of time, location, culture or trend. But amidst life’s challenges and the balancing act, how can we better care for ourselves? Can today’s effective minister withstand the odds of ministry burnout and all that life throws at us? Do we as ministers and leaders value ourselves enough to take our own healthy dose of our own loving and compassionate medicine? I say yes! We can!

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