

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

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www.naccc.org

NACCC NEWS

FEBRUARY / MARCH

2010



FROM MY HEART TO YOURS

Dear Friends,

Often, changing things in Churches (and Associations) takes time. In 1977, Rev. Erv Britton, then Executive Secretary of the NACCC, wrote a letter in response to concerns raised by the Senior Minister of one of our member Churches. Guess what those concerns and questions were about?

Finances of the Association; having Association meetings bi-annually, with corresponding attention to state associations on the alternate years; efforts to instill a sense of fiscal responsibility in the organization's various components; hiring the Ormond Center (Dr. Robert Wilson) to do a thorough review of our organization; whether the British Seminar (then called the London gathering) should be examined because of its cost; staffing questions and issues.

Sounds very much like a list of concerns which face us 33 years later. Enough time has been spent discussing these, tabling them, and finding reasons to avoid doing anything about them. It is time for action. Delegates will receive answers to these and other questions at the upcoming gathering. The Strategic Planning Team will present a plan for your consideration in June in Anchorage. Some of you have already asked whether delegates will see these and other important reports before the meeting. Yes, they are being put on-line as I write this to you.

Delegates to our Annual Meetings have voted down three strategic plans in my time on the leadership team or in this position. I hope and pray we are brave enough this time to vote for a brighter future instead of living in the past.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Dr. Thomas Richard
Executive Secretary

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NEW REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHURCH MUTUAL

Dear NACCC Friends,
I am your new Church Mutual representative. I've been a representative since 1994 and worked closely with Rebecca Behrens in servicing your account. Becky has kept me up to date on the NACCC account, but if there is any way I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call on me.
My local number is 414-331-8652 (cell).

I have done a number of seminars on risk management and sexual abuse prevention, so if there is a forum you feel I could be of assistance to you in, I'd be happy to customize a topic to meet the needs of your churches.

-Doug LeClair
dleclair@churchmutual.com

Church Mutual is the official property and liability insurer for the NACCC

*An exciting
Annual
Meeting and
Conference awaits
you in Anchorage*



FROM OUR
MODERATOR -
SHERRY GLAB

BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS TO ANCHORAGE!!!!

Hi Everyone!

It's not too early to think about getting tickets to Anchorage. Here are some tips from our resident travel guru who is somehow able to find a deal just about any time she wants:

Anchorage is serviced by United, Alaska, Delta/Northwest, Sun Country, Frontier, US Airways, American, Continental, and Air Canada. They are several non-stop flights to Anchorage via Chicago, Denver, Salt Lake City, Seattle, Los Angeles, Phoenix.

Consider cheap airlines (Southwest, Jet Blue) as far as Seattle, WA, then make connections to Anchorage from there.

Redeye flights in and out of Alaska are the cheapest fares – be prepared to sleep on the plane.

Use frequent flyer mileage whenever possible, some airlines you can combine miles and money for reduced fare.

Search engine www.kayak.com

Search multiple cities of departure (Right now roundtrip from Washington, DC Reagan Airport to Alaska is \$200 cheaper than flying roundtrip from Chicago, New York, or Boston).

Tuesday, Wednesdays, Saturdays are generally cheaper days to travel-use calendar tool on airline websites for flexible travel to find cheaper days to fly.

Consider taking Amtrak for part of your travel arrangements as far as Seattle. It is easy to get from train depot to most airports - allow ample layover time between train and plane departures as Amtrak often runs late. No Amtrak service to Alaska.

Don't wait until the last minute - Alaska does not often experience airfare wars during the summer months—it is tourist season and flights fill up fast and are more expensive in the summer.

An additional discount to compare from the NACCC office: **Delta Airlines** (previously Northwest) is offering a discount traveling to/from any of the following cities; Anchorage (ANC), Seattle (SEA) or Vancouver, BC (YVR). The dates have been extended for additional travel before or after the meeting. To get an airfare quote, call **(800) 328-1111** and give **discount group code NM4AM**.

- Claudia Kniefel, Host Chair

The excitement and enthusiasm is building – can you feel it?

I had the pleasure of meeting with our host committee this past month and are they organized! Truly exciting plans are being worked on and what a dedicated group they are. They have already “seen the great light” as far as hosting us is concerned.

Our keynote speaker is Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Bingham, Pilgrim Congregational Church, Pomona, Calif., and former minister of the First Congregational Church in Anchorage. She has experienced first hand that wonderful “light” as winter turns into Spring each year.

Our Congregational Lecturer will be Rev. Wayne Riggs from San Diego, Calif. Rev. Riggs is a most enthusiastic speaker and is a true believer in the Congregational Way.

Dr. Jeffrey Kwan, Associate Professor of Old Testament, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Calif., will be the Bible Lecturer. You will not want to miss his words of enlightenment. We are planning a question and answer period following each lecture so come prepared for an exciting time of involvement.

See you in Anchorage!

- Sherry Glab, Moderator

BEST PRACTICES

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF MAINE EXTENDS STUDENT SUPPORT TO CAMEROON

At our Fall Fellowship meeting, held this year at North Deering Congregational Church in Portland, the CCCME expanded its sphere of support for theological education by granting a full four year scholarship for a student to be selected by school officials.

The American Presbyterian Mission from the Presbyterian Church of the United States arrived in Cameroon at the middle of then 18th century. The first mission fields of the American Presbyterian Church were in Liberia from 1832. Then some missionaries arrived in Gabon via the Island of Rio-Muni also called Corisco in 1850. But from 1842 from the island of Corsco, some American missionaries started reaching the Cameroonian coast. When those who settled in Gabon started having linguistic problems with French colonizers in Gabon because they did not want to evangelize the natives using French, all American Presbyterian Missionaries of Central Africa decided to leave Gabon. Therefore, they had two new missionary fields, the Island of Corisco occupied by Spanish, and the coast of Southern Cameroon, occupied by German from 1884. Because of their long establishment on the island, Corisco became their launching base in order to reach Southern Cameroonian coast populated by Batanga.

First Cameroonian Natives ministers from Batanga on the coast were trained at the island of Corisco. Batanga became an organized church in 1879. The next year, the evangelization of the inner territory became. Some twenty five years later, my father would be teaching and will become Christian.

From 1880 until 1918, wherever a Missionary resided, he had some Native students Pastor to train in the minis-

tries. As you can see, it took more than 30 years before they could appoint a teacher of missionaries to be devoted to teaching. By the time my father left as a teacher of a parochial school in 1928 to become a student at Dager Theological Seminary, highly qualified professors were already in the Faculty. The Rev. Dr. Melvin Frazer, the Rev. D. May, the Rev. D. Good and so on. For many years, this was the only Theological Institution which trained Pastors for the Presbyterian Churches of Cameroon, Central Africa and Equatorial Guinea. Thirty of us graduated with the Bachelor of Theology Degree they later on changed into Master of Divinity Degree in 1972. I was taught by the Revs. Dr. Layman, Dr. Neely, Dr. Gould, Dr. Mva'ah Zombo, Dr. Mandeng, Dr. Ngally and other Cameroonian, Americans and European professors.

The school used to have more than 10 dormitories built with wood; two large classroom buildings, a library, a big chapel and many houses for professors. Today as I know, many buildings need repair; the library needs books; there is no technological equipment in school, but the enrollment is high even though there are more than ten other Protestant Theological Institutions in the country.

Our Council has a long history of support for theological education through grants from our Bradshaw Fund and direct support to Bangor Theological Seminary. We are excited to provide this opportunity to further the proclamation of the Gospel in Africa though a seminary trained pastor.

The Congregational Way has taken us to many places and understandings and now it has led us to this "new place." God's compass is true as we embark on this journey into ministry.

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Francois Akoa-Mongo, Machiasport Congregational Church and Rev. Mark E. Rustin, North Deering Congregational Church, in Maine.

Thank You, Lisa!

For the past several years Rev. Lisa Dembkowski has been the editor of this publication. Her more recent schedule as Associate Minister of Plymouth Congregational Church in Wichita has made it difficult to keep up with the NANEWS.

Before entering ministry Lisa was a publisher and Editor. We thank her for sharing her professional skills with the Association.

- Tom Richard

CAMPAIGN CORNER



BRANCHING OUT

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Branching Out Thanks Friends Across the Country

The *Branching Out* campaign is grateful to the Iowa/Nebraska Association of Congregational Christian Churches for their recent support and heartening vote of confidence. Along with their very generous contribution, they sent the following note: “*We know God will do mighty things with this money. Thank you for everyone’s hard work on this worthy project.*”

Thank you also to Edith Bartley, James Waechter and Rev. Dr. David Fisher for hosting and organizing a *Branching Out* gathering in early December for members of Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims in Brooklyn, New York. At this event, eighteen people from their congregation visited with Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro, Dean of the Center for Congregational Leadership, and local seminarians in the warmth of Edith Bartley’s home. This is one of similar gatherings that will be occurring throughout the country to give people the opportunity to learn more about how the Center and the campaign are helping churches.

Holiday Giving Helps our Ministers

We are happy to report that the Division for Ministry’s *Christmas Gift of Gratitude* offering on behalf of the Ministerial Assistance and Enrichment Fund has raised more than \$8,500! This fund provides the ministers of our Association with support in times of financial or personal crisis, continuing education opportunities and assistance with the search process. Thank you to the following churches for making this offering a success:

Congregational Church of Sun City, Sun City, AZ; First Congregational Church, Pleasant Valley, CT; Hanover Congregational Church, Hanover, CT; Congregational Christian Church, North Manchester, IN; First Congregational Church, Yarmouth Port, MA; North Congregational Church, Farmington Hills, MI; First Congregational Church, Hudson, MI; McGraft Memorial Congregational Church, Muskegon, MI; Onondaga Community Church, Onondaga, MI; Rapid River Congregational Church, Rapid River, MI; First Congregational Church, Royal Oak, MI; First Congregational Church, Saugatuck, MI; South Barnstead Congregational Church, Strafford, NH; Plain Congregational Church, Bowling Green, OH; Ione Community Church, Ione, OR; North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, WI; Community Congregational Church, Kewaunee, WI; First Congregational Church, Oshkosh, WI

Grant Opportunities

The Congregational Foundation is pleased to announce that it is now accepting applications for the **John Richard Fund**. This fund awards grants to NACCC member churches to help defray costs for a special performing arts program or music event. The deadline for applications is **April 1, 2010**.

If your church would like to apply to this fund, please visit our website at www.naccc.org, or call me at 1-800-262-1620 Ext. 25 or email ddavid@naccc.org to request this information.

- Diana David
Director of Development (Part-Time)

The 1620 Society

Bill and Lee Ahrens of Royal Oak, Michigan, have added their names to the membership of the 1620 Society.

The 1620 Society is comprised of persons declaring their intent to remember the NACCC in their estate planning. For more information you may contact: Diana David, ddavid@naccc.org, or call her at 1-800-262-1620 Ext. 25

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Mt Dora Comm., had a page and a half of their recent newsletter "To Your Health" from their parish nurse on preventative measures during Winter months such as calcium supplements, and feasting on protein, as well as their care network for members and the community ... **North Shore Cong'l**, celebrate Monday (10:00am) communion with staff and members during Advent; a January women's retreat at a Benedictine retreat center in Wisconsin is planned. **FCC, Wayne**, like many churches during this time of the year, they held a Church Fair; 43 members donated 34 pints of blood in a recent drive; they sponsor a monthly outreach project; during flu season they have all their classrooms thoroughly sanitized... **FCC, Allegan**, church sponsors a weekly Congregational Kitchen feeding those in need in their community; Meijers store matches every dollar donated to the local food pantry... **Grace, Columbiana**, Rev. Joy wrote an excellent historical piece on apostolic preaching. The most important thing about listening to a sermon? Listen for the big points... **Forest Hills**, they have a film showing every Thursday night as part of their series "Earth Matters" sponsored by the Church's Green Team and World Service Committee... **Maple Hill**, in their News and Notes a list of 10 programs and outreach projects that this small but vibrant church has planned for the season. There is truly something for everyone... **FCC Millinocket**, the gathering of greens took 11 truck loads of greens!; like other churches they have begun a prayer shawl ministry for those the church is praying for... **Duluth**, they have built a beautiful memorial garden

(named the Allison Andersen Garden). Families in the church may spread the ashes of loved ones in the garden. **FCC, Beloit**, during holidays they remembered the prison fellowship which ministers in help and hope of reconciliation and real change in people's lives; they also participated in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree buying presents for boys and girls in need... **Peoples Bayport**, they are creating a Christmas Garden of poinsettias and taking them to shut-ins after their Christmas Eve Service; as a way to go peacefully through Advent there is a Wednesday evening Taize service. **Pilgrim, Taunton**, the Elizabeth Pole society group is reading Marjorie Douglas' book The Everglades; their advent fair was filled with all sorts of wonderful food and gift ideas for Christmas... **Naperville**, volunteers are wrapping presents at Barnes and Noble, any proceeds from the free gift wrapping will go to a mission program called Wayside Cross... **FCC, Hanson**, hosted a time and talent fair during November; they collect kits for a program called Worthy Women (victims of domestic abuse). **FCC, Akron**, here are some of the many things on their weekly schedule in Advent – yoga classes, labyrinth walk, men's gathering, women's spiritual journey, advent concert, bible study, advent workshop, a program on the youth group's summer mission trip, hanging greens, Bach's lunch ... **Plymouth, Minneapolis**, they have their own Christmas ornament; they dedicated pledges and financial gifts in their Growing Up Giving campaign; the adults program for advent includes Getting to Know Yourself, Learning Schooling, Parenting, and Mary's Role in the Advent Story.

HAITIAN
AND
CHILEAN AIDE

Already \$45,000 of the \$70,000 contributed to date, has been sent to missions within Haiti (Gap-Canaan Ministries—Steve Mossburg and Voices in the Wilderness - Jim Owens) who are aiding victims of the devastating earthquake.

Since the publication of this issue of the NEWS, Linda Miller has received several phone calls from Association Churches, asking how they might help the earthquake victims in Chile.

You can help the people of Haiti or, more recently, the victims of the earthquake in Chile, by sending contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing, NACCC, Box 288, Oak Creek, WI 53154 or call Linda or Associate Executive Rev. John Carson, for more information (1-800-262-1620 ext 13).

Christian Life Award Appreciated

We received a wonderful note from Roger Hawk, who has been teaching Christian Education to a Seniors class at FCC, Toulon for 31 years!

I am very appreciative of the Spirit of Christian Life award orchestrated through Pastor Wayne McLeod and the First Congregational Church of Toulon. I suppose thirty-one years of Sunday Schooling to the Seniors would be enough now that I am one., but I am sure his intent is to spur me on to number thirty-two.

Do you have someone your church wants to honor for special service? Contact us. We like to help you.

lmiller@naccc.org

RECENT EXECUTIVE AND FRATERNAL VISITS

Oneonta Cong'l. Church, South Pasadena, CA; North Cong'l. Church, Farmington Hills, MI; First Cong'l. Church, Horton, MI; Friendship Church, Treasure Island, FL; United Church of Marco Island, FL; Cape Coral, FL; Plymouth, Brooklyn, NY; Winthrop Cong'l, Holbrook, MA; Plymouth and University Churches, Wichita, KS; Cong'l. Church, Salisbury, NC; FCC, Peterson, IA; FCC, Naples, FL; FCC, Michigan City, IN; FCC, Los Angeles, CA; Church of the Chimes, Sherman Oaks, CA

Rev. Bobbie Chapman represented the Association at Rev. Kevin Smail's installation of the Yoked Parish of Becket, MA, on Nov. 1st

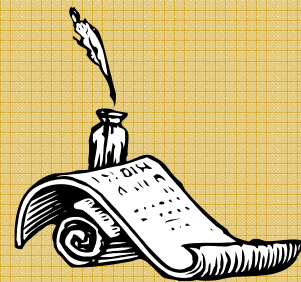
Rev. Dr. Tom Richard participated in the Vicinage Council and Ordination of Fred Thimmel at Lake Country Congregational Church, in Hartland, WI.

Dr. Arvel M. Steece recently led members of Robbins Memorial Church, Greenfield, MA, in a Quiet Day.

Dr. Don Sinclair represented the NACCC at FCC Evanston, IL, for a consultation with leadership.

NA Moderator, Sherry Glab, represented the NA at the funeral of Steve Casner at Pilgrim Church in Pomona, CA.

As one of the five former ministers of Union Cong'l. Church in Braintree, MA, in attendance at the Church's 200th Anniversary, Rev. Bob Carlson brought greetings on behalf of the NACCC.



Get your nominations in now, for...

The 2010 Joseph Jones Russell Award

*Division of Ministry Awards:
Harry R. Butman Award
Jeannette Butman Award*

The Donna Alexander Award

The Christian Education Award

*Go to our web site at naccc.org
Click on "Resources", "Forms",
"Nominations" to get the forms and
more information.*

Or call the NACCC at 800-262-1620



ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

February

Feb. 1, 1992	Craig Crossman
Feb. 1, 1974	Larry Wentzel
Feb. 6, 1982	Richard Miller-Todd
Feb. 8, 2004	Erik Nordgren
Feb. 8, 2004	Howard Owen
Feb. 10, 1991	Lawrence Cameron
Feb. 14, 1965	Richard Vinson
Feb. 15, 1981	Gail Mills
Feb. 15, 1974	G. Alden Taylor
Feb. 17, 2008	Steve DeGangi
Feb. 22, 2004	Mark Long
Feb. 22, 1987	Allan Palmer
Feb. 23, 2003	Harding Stricker
Feb. 26, 1967	Jack E. Noble

March

Mar. 2, 1968	Fred Dole
Mar. 4, 1979	Herbert Bowers
Mar. 4, 1973	Wayne Jacobson
Mar. 6, 1955	Harry Clark
Mar. 7, 1982	James Schibsted
Mar. 9, 1997	Carl Mesnig
Mar. 12, 2005	James Jupin
Mar. 13, 1966	Wilson Gene Parks
Mar. 15, 1986	Robert Stainback
Mar. 15, 2006	Israel Young
Mar. 16, 1997	Mark Dieter
Mar. 16, 2002	Steve Whitworth
Mar. 22, 1992	Terry Bascom
Mar. 24, 1996	Robert Sullivan
Mar. 25, 1990	Ronald Lake
Mar. 25, 2001	Joan Laska
Mar. 31, 1974	Michael Person

The following churches became first-time contributors to the **Shared Ministries Fund** between October 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009:

First Congregational Church, Rio Vista, CA
 Grace Congregational Church, Farmington, CT
 Beacon Congregational Church, Galesburg, IL
 Plymouth Congregational Church, Sedgwick, KS
 Goshen Congregational Church, Goshen, MA
 Rapid River Congregational Church, Rapid River, MI
 McGraft Memorial Congregational Church, Muskegon, MI
 First Congregational Church, East Bloomfield, NY
 Alexis Congregational Church, Toledo, OH

Thank you for the blessing of joining in fellowship with other NACCC churches contributing to the Shared Ministries Fund!

THANK YOU

THANKS FOR THE CHRISTMAS GIFT

Among the dozens of notes and emails we received from retired ministers, who received a gift from the Association at Christmas were these three:

...Holly and I are most appreciative (for the gift). I'd like to say we did something special with it—and we did—we put it toward our mortgage...We continue to be blessed with excellent health and a wonderful family, and a country that is still free...God bless you and yours.

...Just a brief note of thanks for remembering me—among the retirees—at Christmas. As you know, it is a challenge these days to be living on a fixed income. Our Lord has provided, bless Him, but every little bit helps. Let this be an encouragement to the Division for the Ministry.

...Each year I marvel at the thoughtfulness and love expressed in it. May our God and His Son grant you and the whole staff success in ministry this year.

Congratulations to Oneonta Congregational Church

in South Pasadena, California, on the occasion of their 100th Anniversary. As part of this celebration, they hosted a Congregational History and Polity Seminar. Working with the Center for Congregational Leadership, Oneonta provided warm and welcoming hospitality to 20 participants. Faculty were Rev. Dr. Steven Peay and Rev. Dr. Rick Hartley who highlighted not only the historical development of the Congregational Way but also its theological underpinnings of Covenant Theology. May Oneonta Congregational Church and all churches celebrating special anniversaries find inspiration for the future as they celebrate the traditions and rich heritage that have inspired them.



**Best
Wishes!**

HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW BEEN ORDAINED IN 2009?

Please email the name, date, and place of the ordination to the NACCC office. We want to check the ordinations we have confirmed against those of which we may not have been notified. Please email Gary Socha at — gsocha@nacc.org. Thank you for your help!

SECOND NOTICE

If you intend to update your MIF in order to email it to a Church for consideration, please remember that you **MUST** complete the new disclosure protocol first. If you need more information on the process check out our website www.nacc.org or call Susan Carson at 800-262-1620 Ext.18.

DO YOU HAVE PICTURES OF ACTIVITIES AT YOUR CHURCH?

We want photos of your Church's Ministries—educational, worship, special events, and youth happenings.

We want to show others what good things are happening at your church..

Email digital photos, identifying the event and people in the photos to Rebecca Moore at —
rmoore@nacc.org.



IN OUR PRAYERS

As of the publication of this issue of the NEWS, we have heard of the death of Kathy Trump, wife of Rev. Bill Trump, Senior Minister of Congregational Church of the Chimes in Sherman Oaks, CA, and mother of Sarah and Charlie.



Stephen Casner, a long time Congregationalist and member of Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona, CA, died March 11. He and his wife, Marria, have three children, Emily Caballero, Dan Casner and Alicia Casner, and five grandchildren. Steve was very active in his church as a choir member and youth director. Steve and Marria were very involved in community organizing, outreach and mission work. Steve was on the board of Panamerican Institute, served on the NACCC Missionary Society from 1984 to 1988 and started a second term in 2009. As a social worker and teacher vocationally, his passion was for those in need, worldwide. Steve was a quiet man who lived by his conviction that we should "talk less and walk faster." He was an inspiration of service and compassion to all who knew him.

Please also keep Julie and Steven Peay, First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, WI, and family in your prayers at the recent death of her father, Eugene "Bud" Frankwick.

Dr. Michael Chittum, Senior Minister of the First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City, UT, has informed us that B.Z. Kastler, who was formerly a member of FCC, and one of the early moderators of the NA, died on Nov. 22, 2009. Please keep his family in your prayers.

Eunice Erdahl, member of First Congregational Church in Wauwatosa passed away peacefully into God's loving care on Friday, March 12, 2010, at the age of 90. Beloved wife of John for 67 years. Loving mother of Nancy (Juergen) Hartter, Janet (Robert) Chronister, and Robert (Kimberly) Erdahl. Adoring grandmother of 6 and great-grandmother of 4. Further survived by her sister, Sarah Ketteler and brother, William Price other relatives and friends. Preceded in death by her brother Robert Price. Eunice served on many boards and committees on the state and national level, and together they attended many state, national, and international conventions.



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*Bringing together Congregational
Christian Churches for mutual
care and outreach to our world in
the name of Jesus Christ.*

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
www.naccc.org