

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

TO: NACCC MEMBER CHURCHES

FROM: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

RE: Nominations for positions to be filled by vote of the Delegates at the Annual Meeting & Conference, June 2020 and current terms. Respective terms begin at conclusion of the meeting.

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## **MODERATOR, Two-Year Term:**

[Two-year Term to end 2022; vote is needed in 2020, first year of nomination]

### **Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bacon Hammer, Madison, Wisconsin**

The Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bacon Hammer has served Heritage Congregational Church in Madison, WI, since 2002. She chaired the NACCC New Hymnal Committee, which produced *Hymns for a Pilgrim People* in 2007, has served as Chair of CFTS and the Center for Congregational Leadership Subcommittee, offered workshops at the NACCC's Annual Meeting, presented papers for Congregational Symposia, was the Congregational Lecturer at the 2015 Annual Meeting, and hosted the 2012 Congregational Symposium. As part of the Wisconsin Congregational Association, Cindy has served in numerous roles, including: Moderator, Secretary, Chair of Youth and Camp, Camp Minister and Director, President of the Clergy Association, and member of the Leadership and Lay Ministry Training Course Committee. For the LLMTC, Cindy has taught courses in Worship, Wisdom Literature, Pastoral Care and the Gospels.

## **VICE-MODERATOR, Two-Year Term:**

[Term to end 2022; vote is needed in 2020 to serve two years as Vice-Moderator, first year of nomination as Vice-Moderator; may be nominated for a two-year as Moderator in 2022]

### **Rev. Art Ritter, Novi, Michigan**

Art is the Senior Minister of Meadowbrook Congregational Church in Novi, MI. He is a native of Stanton, MI and grew up in the Traditional Congregational Church there. Art has a B.A. from Alma College and an M.A. from Central Michigan University and worked first as a Parks and Recreation Director in Bridgeport, MI. He graduated from the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies in 1985. Ordained in that same year, Art has also served National Association churches in Toulon, IL; West Bloomfield, MI; and Salt Lake City, UT. He has been active within regional associations and the National Association, with terms on the Christian Education Commission, Nominating Committee, Division for Ministry, Congregational Church Development Division, Executive Committee, and the Annual Meeting and Conference Committee. Art and his spouse Laura have two adult daughters, Maren and Amelia.

## **SECRETARY, One-Year Term:**

### **Rev. April Barrett, Portland, Michigan [Newly elected this year]**

April Barrett has been the pastor of First Congregational Church of Portland, Michigan, since July of 2018. She has pastored in Free Methodist and American Baptist churches, as well as serving in the Dominican Republic, Japan, and Costa Rica as a missionary. April has served in many ministry roles including mission board, mother's club ministry, Stephen Ministry, pulpit fill and workshop speaking, and as children's director and teaching director for the women's Community Bible Study class in Jackson, Michigan. She attended the Boston Seminar in 2019 with several others who are new to the Congregational Way. April and her husband Patrick have been married for 31 years and have two adult daughters.

## **TREASURER, One-Year Term:**

### **Jeffrey H. Dillon, Franklin, Wisconsin [Re-elected this year]**

Jeff and his wife Sharon are charter members of Faith Community Church, Franklin, WI. He has served this congregation as Treasurer (25 years), Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Chair of the Board of Religious Education. Jeff is a retired civil engineer, working 34 years for the City of Milwaukee and finishing his career as the city's Transportation Design Manager. He served two years as Assistant Treasurer of the NACCC prior to being elected Treasurer at the 2005 Annual Meeting. Jeff also serves as Treasurer of the Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association. Jeff and Sharon have two adult children, Alison and Ryan.

## **HISTORIAN, One-Year Term:**

### **Rev. Dr. Mary E. Biedron, Farmington Hills, Michigan [Newly elected this year]**

Mary (Mimi) Biedron (M.Div., D.Min.) serves at North Congregational Church, Farmington Hills, MI, where she has been Associate Minister (1998-2011) and is currently Senior Minister (2011-present). Prior to that, she was the Director of Christian Education at First Congregational Church of Toledo, Ohio from 1981-1998, when she was active in Congregational activities as a layperson. She is a 1999 graduate of the CFTS program, and is currently the Moderator of the Southeastern Michigan Association of Congregational Churches, as well as a member of the Board of the Congregational Library and Archives. She and her husband, Glenn, have three adult children and two grandchildren.

## **YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, One-Year Term:**

### **Patrick Stewart, Marshalltown, Iowa [Re-elected this year]**

Patrick served as the volunteer Youth Leader at LaMoille Congregational Church for nearly 20 years and is currently serving as the Chairperson of the Iowa-Nebraska Association Youth Task Team. Patrick has attended NAPF-HOPE conferences since 2005 and served as either an attendee, CIT, or counselor/small group leader. He has been the Youth Representative on NACCC Leadership Council for the past several years and is currently on the Annual Meeting Committee along with serving his first year on the NAPF-HOPE Planning Team. Patrick is employed by a local non-profit community action agency working as the Payroll Manager in the finance department. He enjoys listening to music, singing, playing co-ed softball and men's church league basketball, and watching the Iowa State Cyclones, Kansas City Chiefs, and Chicago Cubs. He really enjoys spending time with the church youth group doing fun activities and giving them the same experiences, he had as a youth. Patrick looks forward to serving another term as the Youth Representative.

## **MINISTRY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES SERVING ON THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

### **One-Year Term as Nominated by their Elected Council**

#### **Growth Ministry Council Reps:**

**Mary Prendergast, Pilgrim Congregational Church, Pomona, California**

**Rev. Dr. John Tamilio III, Congregational Church of Canton, Canton, Massachusetts**

#### **Mission and Outreach Ministry Council Reps:**

**Rev. Jamie Bonnema, Maple Hill Community Church, Maple Hill, Kansas**

**Janet Wilson, Grace Congregational Church, Greenville, Iowa**

#### **Vitality Ministry Council Reps:**

**Rev. Justin Nierer, Sandstone Congregational Church, Jackson Michigan**

**Rev. Sarah Terlouw, First Congregational Church, Saugatuck, Michigan**

## **ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBER-AT-LARGE – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

### **New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2020-2023]**

#### **Rev. Garry Fisher, South Bend, Indiana**

Pastor Garry Fisher is Michigan born and raised, attended Concordia Seminary, was ordained in 1977, and has served several congregations both in and out of the NACCC. He entered the NACCC as a member at Watervliet, MI, went on to be pastor at Grand Junction, MI and currently Community Congregational Church, South Bend, IN. He and his wife, Marlene, had 5 children by birth and 7 special needs children by adoption. Marlene passed away in 2000. Most of the children have grown and moved out, but Andrew (32) and Zachary (29) remain in the home, where Garry is assisted by his son, Rev. Benjamin Fisher, recently ordained at Community Congregational Church. Garry has been active in regional, state, and national conference activities.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Staggered Terms, as indicated)**

**New Nominee** [Four-Year Term 2020-2024]

### **Rev. Dr. Beth Bingham, Sherman Oaks, California**

Beth Bingham grew up in Madison, Wisconsin and graduated from Cornell College with a degree in English. She then went to Yale Divinity School receiving a Master of Arts in Religion. She received her Doctor of Ministry Degree from Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. Beth began her ministry at North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point Wisconsin as the Director of Christian Education. She was a chaplain at Columbia Hospital in Milwaukee, then the Assistant Minister at the Congregational Church of the Chimes. She then served as Senior Minister in Anchorage, followed by 26 years as Senior Minister at Pilgrim Church in Pomona. Since October of 2018, Beth is back at the Church of the Chimes as their Senior Minister. She has been active in her community and was an elected member of the Claremont, California Board of Education. She has served in many capacities with the NACCC including the Commission of Christian Education, the Division for the Ministry, the Executive Committee, and the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies. Beth's late husband Paul was also active in the NACCC. While her stepsons are in the East, she delights spending time with her son Teddy who is an attorney in Los Angeles. She loves exercising, reading, paddle boarding, and watching baseball.

## **Congregational Foundation Representative serving on the Board of Directors**

**[One-year Term as nominated by the Board of Governors]**

### **Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere, Methodist Congregational Federated Church, Demorest, Georgia**

## **Continuing Members on the Board of Directors [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Dr. Marty Hall, North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, Wisconsin** [term to end 2021]

**Jodee Lord, Oakwood Heights Community Church, Staten Island, New York** [term to end 2022]

**Claudia Kniefel, First Congregational Church, Anchorage, Alaska** [term to end 2023]

## **GROWTH MINISTRY COUNCIL**

**Second Time Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023; Completed a Three-Year Term 2017-2020; and a Two-Year Term Replacement 2015-2017]

### **Mary Prendergast, Pomona, California**

Mary Prendergast is a 5<sup>th</sup> generation member of Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona, CA. She attended the NAPF and HOPE conferences from 2004 to 2015, where she met her husband, Ryan Prendergast (originally from First Church of Christ Lynn Congregational in Lynn, MA). Mary has served on the Growth Ministry Council since 2015, on the Leadership Council since 2017, and on Pilgrim's Board of Christian Education since 2012 (chair for 5 years). Recently, Mary spent 14 months co-chairing the Pastoral Search Committee for Pilgrim. Mary earned her MBA from Azusa Pacific University in 2012, and works for her family business, Brooks Property Management. Mary serves on many local boards and committees in the Pomona community, and is excited to continue her work with the NACCC.

**Second Time Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023; Completed a Three-Year Term 2017-2020]

### **John Tamilio III, Beverly, Massachusetts**

The Rev. Dr. John Tamilio III is the Pastor of the Congregational Church of Canton and a Visiting Associate Professor of Philosophy at Salem State University. A dedicated member of the NACCC, John was the Congregational Lecturer at last year's Annual Meeting and Conference in Cleveland, Ohio and he is currently the chair of the Growth Ministry Council. John's writings can often be found in the Lent and Advent Devotionals and *The Congregationalist*. He and his wife Cindy enjoy camping and spending time with their therapy dog Lizzie.

## **Continuing Members of the Growth Ministry Council [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Dr. Patrick F. Hunt, Heritage Congregational Church, Berea, Ohio** [term to end 2021]

**Curt Schmidt, Congregational Church of Bound Brook, Bound Brook, New Jersey** [term to end 2022]

**Pastor Carol P. Taylor, United Church of Beloit, Beloit, Wisconsin** [term to end 2022]

## **MISSION AND OUTREACH MINISTRY COUNCIL**

**New Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023]

### **Colleen Murray, Gahanna, Ohio**

Colleen has dedicated most of her life to trying to make a positive difference in the lives of children. She is the proud mother of two grown sons and is currently the facilitator for an intervention room at Gahanna Lincoln High School. She also works with K-5 children and facilitates arts and crafts at the YWCA after school program and summer camp. She was raised in the Congregational Church and is the daughter of the late Rev. Dr. Robert Murray. She has participated in choir and drama ministry at Gahanna Community Congregational Church since 1986, where she often plays special flute music. She has served as President of the Ohio Association Women's Fellowship; on the Church Services Commission and on the Annual Meeting & Conference Committee for the NACCC. She oversees church outreach programs which benefit the students in the district where she is employed. She is an amateur photographer who enjoys trying to capture nature and the beauty of God's world.

**Second Time Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023; Completed a Three-Year Term 2017-2020]

### **Rev. Jamie Bonnema, Maple Hill, Kansas**

Jamie Bonnema (MBA, M.Div.) has been a pastor for 13 years, and is currently serving in Maple Hill, Kansas. A 2010 graduate of St. Paul School of Theology, he considers himself fortunate to have been able to participate in the CFTS program. Missions have always been a passion of Jamie's, and he believes that missional awareness brings a greater understanding of God's activity on earth, a greater sense of citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven and is an essential element in discipleship. He has personally visited missions in the United States, Mexico, Panama, and Kenya, and has led a trip to the Morgan Scott Project in Tennessee.

**Continuing Members of the Mission and Outreach Ministry Council** [no vote necessary]

**Rev. Gregory W. Carmer, Ph.D., Church in The Cove, Beverly, Massachusetts** [term to end 2021]

**Rev. Julie Johnson Staples, J.D., Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York** [term to end 2022]

**Janet Wilson, Grace Congregational Church, Greenville, Iowa** [term to end 2022]

## **VITALITY MINISTRY COUNCIL**

**Second Time Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023; Completed a Three-Year Term 2017-2020]

### **Rev. Sarah Terlouw, Saugatuck, Michigan**

The Rev. Sarah Terlouw currently serves as the pastor of the First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, MI, where she has been for five years. Previously, she has served as the pastor of Hampshire Colony Congregational Church in Princeton, IL and as chaplain for the Appalachia Service Project. Her current leadership roles within the fellowship circles of the Congregational Way are as the Director of the Michigan Congregational Summer Camp, Treasurer of the West Michigan Association of Congregational Christian Churches and as a member of the Vitality Committee and Leadership Council of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. She lives in Holland, MI with her husband Tim (they just celebrated their second anniversary) and their Aussie-Doodle, Brewster (named after, of course, William Brewster).

**Second Time Nominee** [Three-Year Term 2020-2023; Completed a Three-Year Term 2017-2020]

### **Rev. Justin Nierer, Jackson, Michigan**

Rev. Justin Nierer is the lead pastor of Sandstone Congregational Church in Jackson Michigan. He has been on the Vitality Council since 2017 and has spent this last year at its chair. During his time on the Vitality Council, the National Association has seen the idea of Regional Convocations come to fruition, and Justin celebrates that with the rest of the association and council! He is a regular contributor to *The Congregationalist* Magazine author of the "Mrs. Peabody Series" of stories. Justin absolutely thrives in Congregationalism and adores the NACCC. He is married to Seneca, and they have one seven year old son named Wesley who right now wants to be a scientist but last year wanted to be a ninja.

**Continuing Members of the Vitality Ministry Council** [no vote necessary]

**Rev. Ian Macdonald (M.Div.), First Congregational Church, Greenville, Michigan** [term to end 2021]

**Rev. Dr. Irven A. Gammon, Florence Congregational Church, Florence, Massachusetts** [term to end 2022]

**Cynthia Hardy, Congregational Church of the Valley, Chandler, Arizona** [term to end 2022]