

# National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

## HISTORIAN'S REPORT 2020

I was honored to be asked to serve as the Historian of our National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. It was rewarding to do the Necrology each year. While not formally connected, most of my work as Historian has been focused on the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth in “New” England. The thought behind all of the work has been more ‘what have been the fruits’, product, results, rather than the event itself. I believe that is what those brave and inspired souls were most interested in happening. I see them as people willing to go as far as they could to live out a great life-giving worshipful faith. They succeeded.

Beyond the primary results there have been many secondary and further fruits. Their combination of individual responsibility to be in relation with God and their equal investment to be in community with other women and men on the same ‘way’ has done powerful, wonderful and remarkable things for our nation and our world. In the broadest sense this ‘way’ has brought into the world much more focus and a great strengthening idea of the worth of every man, woman, and child. It was not an easy or even path to get to where we are today. From individual relationship with God and being in covenant with others grew democracy in our churches, then our towns, then our nation. In many ways we did become that hoped for light on the top of the hill. Individual human worth grew as we realized the worth of women, children, and peoples unlike ourselves. The knowledge grew of what we have to give and what others have to offer to us. We are all better for it.

I would like to thank the members of the Plymouth Landing 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Task Team. They have been such a great pleasure to work with. The Rev. Phyllis Merritt contributed her creative stories of True Love Brewster. Mrs. Mary McAliley helped us with the Logo and the ‘swag’. The Rev. Wendy Van Tassell also did much of the Logo and ‘swag’ work as well as producing the DVD of True Love Brewster. The Rev. Tom Van Tassell worked with her and steadied our ship advocating for the idea that we need to emphasize P400 as a commemoration more than a celebration. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Richard contributed resources for worship. Mr. Larry Sommers created resources for you to give presentations at your church and community. The editing and IT work for the Sunday inserts with worship and “Did you know they were a Congregationalist...” was done by the Rev. Ian McDonald. The Rev. Norm Erlendson was with us and made many thoughtful contributions as well as extra effort to raise some funds for our projects. The authors of the inserts made contributions that will continue to bear fruit for many years. They were The Rev. Robert Hellam, The Rev. Garry Fisher, Mr. Larry Sommers, The Rev. Norm Erlendson, and The Rev. William Lange. Thanks too, to all of you who picked up the torch and use the commemoration resources.

As Historian it is my recommendation that there be created in the NACCC office a Memory Bank of clergy, their spouses, and national leaders to assist the work of the Historian, the Editor of *The Congregationalist* and others. This is needed to do the task of recognition and commemoration. After a person dies it is too late. Errors and omissions are likely if the information is not held in a central and reliable repository. Example forms have been provided the NA office.

Thank God for life, love, grace and inspiration. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

The Reverend William C. Lange, Historian 2017-2020