

NACCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT FY2022

The culmination of my first year in the role of Executive Director delivers joys to celebrate.

Staff *foster collaboration* as we exchange ideas about upcoming initiatives, coordinate procedures, and share responsibilities. We gathered for two retreats – balancing work and play. As a new practice, we start each week with a Monday morning stand-up meeting to be attuned to the needs of churches and the tasks at hand. Anticipating the arrival of a new CFO, we are keenly aware of the volume of activity in Oak Creek. As Dan Drea embarks on his retirement, we are grateful for his legacy of sound financial footing.

Increased professionalism is evident throughout the NACCC. We have expanded the use of technology by creating a Member Forum, adopting new accounting and fundraising software, and installing an Owl in the conference room to enhance Zoom conversations. After careful consideration, the Board of Directors introduced changes to the budgeting process. The treasurer will present a balanced budget for review at the annual meeting. A hybrid conference in June makes the gathering more inclusive. Several individuals have commented on how we have broadened our outreach and welcomed more voices to our activities.

We have *expanded the visibility of the NACCC* through partnerships. Relationships with Interim Ministry Network, Church Mutual, and Darkness to Light bore webinars on effective transitional leadership and making churches safe. Additional webinars – forging new partnerships – are scheduled for later in the calendar year. An agreement with the Center for Parish Development furthered renewal initiatives in five congregations. Within our Association, the comprehensive Lay Ministry Training Program has awakened individuals and congregations to new opportunities for pastoral leadership.

I convened a Planning and Action Committee in November to wear the lenses of reflection and vision. This group, comprised of representatives from staff, Board of Directors, Leadership Council, and two at-large members, meets twice a month. Our candid dialogue led us to embrace three overarching objectives for the National Association: *fostering collaboration, increasing professionalism, and expanding visibility*. We have taken steps on all three of those roads to progress in the past year. I noted several examples above; the Ministry Council reports provide others. With heightened intentionality, we will continue to move forward in faith in ways yet to be imagined.

Thank you, staff, leadership, and members of the churches of the National Association for the joy you bring to our collective commitment to the Congregational Way and the world we call home.

Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere
Executive Director