

71st NACCC Annual Meeting & Conference
Held in person and by Zoom virtual conference
June 21-24, 2025

Business Meeting: Session I
Saturday, June 21, 2025

Minutes (DRAFT)

The Business Meeting: Session I of the 71st National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) Annual Meeting convened on Saturday, June 21, 2025, at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO and online in a virtual conference.

Rev. Ron Tolliver offered an Opening Prayer.

Welcome

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord welcomed all those in person and online. She thanked Rev. Dawn Carlson for leading us in singing and Rev. Ron Tolliver for the prayer.

She continued: “We are gathered this week to celebrate the theme of our Annual Meeting, ‘Come and See.’ Let us look at what is happening now, what is possible, and what can happen.

This is a very different model for our meeting. Since there are no NA churches in the area to host this meeting, we started with a blank slate. Karen Robu said we are building the plane while we are flying it. Yes, that is what we have done.

Have there been challenges? Yes, but have there been joys. Yes! So many joys.

We have people from across the country working together, praying together, having important conversations together, all who share a love of the Congregational Way. I am forever grateful to this group of people who have brought us to this place to conduct our business and join together in worship and friendship.”

Rev. Joyce Acree and Rev. Dr. Karen Robu, co-chairs of the Host Committee and the Annual Meeting and Conference Committee (AMCC), officially welcomed everyone to St. Louis and thanked the people who stepped up to create something entirely new. They briefly described the hospitality the gathering can expect in the next few days.

A Time for Being Church

Two years ago, our Past Moderator, Art Ritter, began the practice of having “Being Church” moments before the business sessions. Moderator Jodee Landa Lord noted that she has invited four churches that took part in the Vitality Ministry’s special grant program to give these presentations.

The first was from Carol and Mark Taylor of the United Church of Beloit, who spoke about the Foundry Theater Group, a special needs company, and the grant’s support for improving their technology. They showed a short video where members of the company thanked the NACCC for their support of the project.

Call to Order

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord called the meeting to order at 1:25 pm, CDT.

Constituting Prayer

The Moderator called on her friend, Dr. Patrick Hunt, to offer the Constituting Prayer.

Introduction of the Head Table

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord introduced Vice Moderator Rev. Dr. Martin (Marty) Hall, Secretary Dr. Kate O'Dell, and Parliamentarian Doug Loux. She noted that part of Marty's duty was to collect announcements, so if anyone needed something announced from the platform, they must write it out and give it to Marty.

Establishing a Quorum/Credentials Report

Rev. Joyce Acree of the AMCC reported that 62 delegates are participating in the meeting, which represents approximately 28% of the active 223 Member churches. With more than 20% of our member churches represented, as required in our Bylaws, Moderator Jodee Landa Lord declared a quorum was present and the meeting could proceed with the business of the Association.

Approval of the 2025 Annual Meeting Agenda

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord referenced the published agenda created by the AMCC that was made available to all registered attendees by email and posted on the NACCC website. She noted it could be found on pages 5 through 27 of the program booklet.

2025 AM01 MOTION by Dawn Carlson and seconded by Irv Gammon that the proposed Agenda be approved as distributed. The motion was approved without discussion.

Review of the Standing Rules and Voting Instructions

The Moderator noted that the Standing Rules and Voting Instructions for meetings that will include Electronic Participation were posted on the NACCC website and were available on page 31 of the Annual Meeting Program booklet.

The Moderator called attention to the sixth item on the list regarding new business. All new business, including proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws, must be introduced from the floor during today's business session, Business Meeting: Session I. The written notice must then be submitted to Secretary Kate O'Dell before 9 am CDT on Monday, June 23, 2025. Also, she emphasized that speakers are to keep their remarks to two minutes and can speak no more than twice on the same question on the same day. She stated that they would hold to that rule.

2025 AM02 MOTION by Jennifer Hall and seconded by Joe Hackett to approve the Standing Rules and Voting Instructions as presented. The motion was approved without discussion.

Approval of the 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes

The 2024 Minutes Certification Committee – Rev. Julie Sheridan Smith, Rev. Patti Haaheim, and Rev. Dan Vellinga – have reviewed the Minutes of the 70th Annual Meeting held in person and by video conference on June 22–25, 2024, in Spokane, WA. They recommend approval of the Minutes as presented.

2025 AM03 MOTION to approve the Minutes of the 70th Annual Meeting held in person and by video conference on June 22–25, 2024, in Spokane, WA as presented. The motion does not require a second. The motion was approved without discussion.

Introduction of the Minutes Certification Committee for the 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord announced that Rev. Wendy Van Tassell of First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, MI, ret.; Rev. Doug Gray of First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City, Utah; and Rev. Patty Smith, of Berwick Congregational Church, Berwick, Iowa, have agreed to serve on the 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes Certification Committee. She thanked them for their service.

Introduction of New Business

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord reminded everyone that any new business must be introduced at today's Business Meeting: Session I, and Secretary Kate O'Dell must receive any new business in writing by 9 am PDT on Monday, June 23, 2025. None was presented from the floor.

Introduction of new NACCC Executive Director

Vice Moderator and Chair of the NACCC Board of Directors, Marty Hall, introduced Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp, the new Executive Director of the NACCC. Vice Moderator Hall shared a portion of the Search Committee's letter recommending Rev. Dr. Krupp and invited him to the microphone. Rev. Dr. Krupp shared some thoughts about the search process and some of the questions that he will be leading us in answering.

Introduction of Staff and Strategic Alliances

Vice Moderator Marty Hall introduced Mike Fales, who brought greetings from the University at Olivet president, Dr. Steven M. Corey. He then showed some slides and spoke about the University and their programs. He asked prayers for their international students; it is getting harder and harder for them to come to the United States. Mike Fales, past moderator of ICF, shared highlights from the recent 50th Anniversary ICF meeting in Thessaloniki, Greece. He introduced the new ICF Moderator, Haroutune Selimian, from Syria and the Moderator-Elect Dr. Charles Packer.

The Vice Moderator then recognized other representatives of organizations and institutions that partner with the NA.

Andover-Newton Seminary
Congregational Christian Partnerships
Congregational Library Archives
Congregational Retreat Society
Eden Theological Seminary
Interim Ministry Network
International Church Council

MMBB
Piedmont University
Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation
Outreach Program
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary
Washington Gladden Society
Plimouth Patuxet Museums

Vice Moderator and Chair of the NACCC Board of Directors, Marty Hall, introduced members of the NA staff.

Maggie Helmick, editor of *The Congregationalist* and Communications Manager

Julie Robie, Missions Coordinator

Sarah Sobecke, Executive Assistant

Kristin Ward, Director of Development

Laura Wright, Church Services Coordinator

Cheryl Milnes, CFO

Austin Tenney, Financial Accountant

Jesse Bauer-Phipps, Meeting Coordinator

Announcements

Vice Moderator Hall then brought several announcements to attendees' attention.

Action to Move Approval of New Church to Business Meeting: Session II on Monday, June 23, 2025

The new church's representative was unable to attend today's meeting, so Vice Moderator Hall recommended that action on approving them for NACCC membership be postponed until Monday, June 23, 2025.

2025 AM04 Motion by Sharon Higgins and second by Rebekah Barsch to postpone the approval and installation of the new church to Monday, June 23, 2025. The motion was approved without discussion.

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord called for everyone to return at 3:00 pm CDT for the first Plenary Session. She also pointed out the second Plenary Session at 4:15 pm, the Third Plenary Session at 7:30 pm, and the Vespers Service led by the Congregational Retreat Society at 9 pm.

Business Meeting: Session I recessed at 2:28 pm CDT.

71st NACCC Annual Meeting & Conference
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Business Meeting: Session II
Monday, June 23, 2025

Minutes (DRAFT)

Business Session II of the 71st National Association of Congregational Christian Churches Annual Meeting reconvened on Monday, June 23, 2025, at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO, and online in a virtual conference.

A Time for Song

A Time for Prayer

Past Moderator Rev. Art Ritter began the morning program with A Time for Prayer.

Special Presentation: Board of Directors Citation

Rev. Dr. Marty Hall and Rev. Tom Van Tassell presented the Board of Directors Citation to Past Moderator Rev. Art Ritter.

A Time for Being Church

Nancy Hayes of First Congregational Church, Royal Oaks, Michigan described their new program for encouraging people to participate in hatha yoga. They were guided by wondering how they can best use their beautiful church building and the professional expertise of church members. Their program will be inclusive and designed to serve all ages and physical abilities.

Announcements: Vice Moderator Marty Hall

Call to Reconvene

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord welcomed everyone to the Business Meeting: Session II at 9:19 am CDT.

Secretary Kate O'Dell reported that she had received no new business by 9 am this morning.

Reports, Elections, Budget Approval

Nominating Committee Report

Rev. Justin Nierer gave the report of the Nominating Committee: Rev. Justin Nierer, Sandstone Congregational Church, Jackson, Michigan [term to end 2026]; Rev. Dr. Patrick Hunt, Heritage Congregational Church of Berea, Ohio [term to end 2027]; Rev. Doug Gray, First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City, Utah [term to end 2027]; Rev. Kay Miller-Todd, Berwick Congregational Church, Berwick, Iowa [term to end 2027].

He then read the slate of nominees for each position and introduced those who were in the room. The slate was made available to all registered attendees by email, included in the Annual Meeting packet, and posted on the NACCC website. He noted a correction: Rev. Dr. Robin Carden is no longer a continuing member of Vitality. Also, Rev. Joyce Acree is not eligible for reelection to the Annual Meeting and Conference Committee (AMCC), so Jennifer Hall will be added as a nominee for the AMCC.

Secretary Kate O'Dell reported that no additional names had been submitted by the required deadline.

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord called for nominations from the floor. Hearing no further nominations, she declared the nominations closed and called for the vote.

Election of the NACCC Leadership

2025 AM05 **MOTION that the entire slate be elected as presented. The motion does not require a second. The motion was approved without discussion.**

Ratification of Leadership Council Actions

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord called attention to the list of Actions by the Leadership Council from June 2024 through June 2025 that require ratification (2025/2026 LC 01 through 22). These are posted on the NACCC website and can be found in the Annual Meeting packet.

2025 AM06 **MOTION by the Leadership Council that the Association delegates ratify the actions of the Leadership Council from June 2024 through June 2025 which require ratification (Leadership Council motions 2024/2025 LC 01 through LC 22). The motion does not require a second. The motion was adopted without discussion.**

Ratification of Board of Directors Actions

Vice Moderator Marty Hall called attention to the list of Actions by the Board of Directors from June 2024 through June 2025 that require ratification. (2024/2025 CO01 through CO75). He noted that two motions, CO45 and CO 57, require separate ratification. The list is posted on the NACCC website and can be found in the Annual Meeting packet.

2025 AM07 **MOTION by the Board of Directors that the delegates ratify the actions of the Board of Directors from June 2024 through June 2025 that require ratification (Board of Directors motions CO01 through CO75, excluding CO 45 and CO57 that require separate ratification). The motion does not require a second. The motion was adopted without discussion.**

Ratification of CO45 – Motion to approve Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp as the new NACCC Executive Director.

Vice Moderator Hall acknowledged the work of the Executive Director Search Committee and asked that the attendees join him in thanking them.

2025 AM 08 **MOTION by the Board of Directors that the delegates ratify Motion CO45 approving Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp as the new NACCC Executive Director. The motion does not require a second. The motion was adopted unanimously without discussion.**

Financial Report

Vice Moderator Marty Hall introduced the NACCC Treasurer, Patrick Stewart, and the CFO Cheryl Milnes, who presented the financial report.

Discussion: CFO Milnes responded to questions: about the Newbury Church monies – how they were accounted for in the report; What does the category “Liabilities” include? Why do the Lay Ministry Training Program expenses appear in Growth Ministry?

2025 AM 09 MOTION by the Board of Directors that the delegates ratify Motion CO57 approving the 2025/2026 Budgets of the Shared Ministries Fund, The Center for Congregational Leadership, and the Ministry Councils as recommended by Board of Directors Action. The motion does not require a second. The motion was discussed and approved.

Business Meeting: Session II recessed at 10:07 am, CDT.

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Business Meeting: Session III
Monday, June 23, 2025

Minutes (DRAFT)

Business Meeting: Session III of the 71st National Association of Congregational Christian Churches Annual Meeting convened at 1:30 pm, CDT on Monday, June 23, 2025, at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO and online in a virtual conference.

Rev. Dr. Robin Carden offered an Opening Prayer.

A Time for Being Church

Rev. Dr. Jeff Luchun of Mt. Hope Congregational Church, Livonia, Michigan explained that they are trying to find ways to share an ancient faith with people in the modern world. They are using the grant to subsidize providing a place for local nonprofit entities that need a space to serve the community. Through these partnerships they are supporting those organizations and have welcomed many new people into the church both physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Announcements – Vice Moderator Marty Hall

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord convened Business Meeting: Session III at 1:41 pm CDT.

Introduction & Vote on a New Member Church

The Leadership Council has presented the following church for full membership in the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches: Grace Christian Church of Vilas, North Carolina.

2025 AM10 MOTION by the Leadership Council that Grace Christian Church of Vilas, North Carolina be accepted into full membership in the NACCC. The motion does not require a second. The motion was approved unanimously without discussion.

Installation of New Member Churches

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord invited Executive Director Gerry Krupp forward to perform the installation ceremony with Daniel Coffey from Grace Christian Church, who was present virtually, affirming the Church's desire to join the NACCC.

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord announced that no new business was presented at Saturday's Business Meeting, so the body can proceed with the agenda as presented.

Mission Partner Presentations

Rev. Rich Miller-Todd introduced NACCC Mission Partners, who spoke about their organizations.

Crystal Thompkins, Morgan Scott Project, Tennessee

Dr. Charles Nyane, Word Alive Mission, Ghana

Dave Degler, Christian Ministry in the National Parks

Rev. David Hulse, Seafarer's Friend, Massachusetts
Laura Ramirez, PanAmerican Institute, Tijuana, Mexico
Mark and Dotty Dugle, Happy Life Children's Home, Kenya
Glenn Hornbuckle, Educational Concerns for Hunger Org., Florida
Tim Uthmann, Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation

Business Meeting: Session III pause

The Business Session paused 30 minutes for an ice cream break sponsored by the Congregational Foundation.

Mission Partner Presentations

Mark Cox, Convoy of Hope
Julie Claassen, Fishers of Men

Business Meeting: Session III recessed at 3:42 pm, CDT.

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Business Meeting: Session IV
Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Minutes (DRAFT)

A Time for Song

A Time for Prayer

Rev. Beth Bingham of Congregational Church of the Chimes in Pomona, California, led the gathering in prayer.

A Time for Being Church

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord invited Liz Loder of North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, Wisconsin, to share about their Vitality grant project. They recognized that parents these days have many concerns but often do not have resources to address them. Their project was to design classes that will be offered at no cost.

The Business Meeting: Session IV of the 71st National Association of Congregational Christian Churches Annual Meeting convened on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at the Renaissance Airport Hotel in St. Louis, MO, and online in a virtual conference.

Call to Order

Moderator, Rev. Jodee Landa Lord called the meeting to order at 9:04 am, CDT.

Congregational Foundation Presentation

President Laura Hamby introduced the members of the Board of Governors and the NACCC support staff. She then talked about various aspects of the Foundation's support for the NACCC. She encouraged everyone to participate in the fundraising campaign for *The Congregationalist* and think together with their churches on how to provide this support. She announced a "soft start" beginning this summer for the campaign, which will begin January 1, 2026.

Kevin Bortman spoke about the distinction between the Foundation and the NACCC.

Reports and Awards

Mission and Outreach Ministry Council

Chair Rev. Rich Miller Todd introduced a video by Linda Lacey, who talked about her experiences when she participated in the Freedom Journey.

Growth Ministry Council

Chair Rev. Dr. Irvan Gammon described the Growth Ministry Council's function as being the spiritual version of duct tape, holding things together by strengthening churches, supporting the youth, striving to increase professionalism, expanding visibility, fostering collaboration, and promoting social justice engagement. He then spoke about how the Council's activities carried out these purposes and encouraged everyone to leave this place as ambassadors for God's word. He acknowledged Rev. Terry Bobzien, who is retiring as an editor of the Advent and Lenten devotionals.

Vitality Ministry Council

Chair Rev. Robb Tarr introduced the Vitality Ministry Council members and acknowledged the NACCC staff who support the Ministry's work. He first noted that ten churches received the Vitality grants and invited attendees to read about their achievements and what they've learned. One goal of the grant program is that other churches will find encouragement and ideas for a project of their own. The grant program will be offered again for the coming year, so Rev. Tarr urged attendees to think about putting plans together for the November 1, 2025, deadline. His report included other activities and achievements of the past year and looked forward to what the Vitality Ministry will be working on in the coming year and the future.

Rev. Tarr then called on Julie Sheridan-Smith to introduce this year's recipient of the Jeanette Butman Award, Lynn Merkel. A video featured people congratulating and thanking Lynn while speaking about her many accomplishments. She joined the meeting virtually to receive recognition.

Rev. Tarr invited Rev. Wendy Van Tassell and Rev. Tom Van Tassell to read nominating letters and then introduced the recipient of the Harry R. Butman Award, Rev. Sarah Terlouw. Rev. Justin Nierer also read his nominating letter.

Lay Ministry Training Program Graduate Recognition

Co-Chairs Rev. Dr. Charles Packer and Polly Bodjanac acknowledged NACCC staffer, Laura Wright, and thanked her for supporting the Lay Ministry Training Program (LMTP). Polly spoke about what last year's Cohort A graduates are doing and announced that four students are enrolled in Cohort C. She acknowledged the Lay Ministry Editorial Board, the local cohort mentor, and introduced the 2025 LMTP Cohort B graduates. Rev. Dr. Charles Packer offered a prayer of blessing for the graduates.

Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies Graduate Recognition

Rev. Doug Gray was joined by Rev. Patrick Horn who gave an overview of the program. Rev. Gray introduced the 2025 graduate, Sally Redondo Padilla, and certified that she has met all the requirements of the CFTS program. Rev. Horn, Rev. Gray, and Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp offered a prayer of thanks and blessing for Sally Redondo Padilla. Rev. Krupp invited anyone in seminary or preparing to enter one to talk with CFTS Board members about support for their studies.

Rev. Rich Miller-Todd came forward to present the Charles R. Rush award to the Rev. Johnathan Jones, Senior Minister of First Congregational Church, Anchorage, Alaska. Sharon Higgins, FCCAK's delegate to the Annual Meeting, accepted the award on Rev. Jones' behalf.

Recognitions

Host Committee

Moderator Rev. Jodee Landa Lord recognized the 2025 Annual Meeting and Conference Committee co-chairs, Rev. Joyce Acree and Rev. Dr. Karen Rabu and all AMCC members. They received enthusiastic applause from the attendees.

Recognition of Outgoing Leadership

Vice Moderator Rev. Dr. Marty Hall called those who are outgoing NACCC leaders forward to receive thanks for their service: Rev. Dr. Robin Carden, Vitality Ministry; Cynthia Hardy, Vitality Ministry; Rev. Bob Higgins, MOMC; Rev. J. R. McAliley, Nominating Committee; Rev. Tom Van Tassell, Board of Directors.

Installation of NACCC Leadership

Executive Director Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp then led the liturgy of installation for incoming NACCC leadership.

2026 Annual Meeting Preview

AMCC Host Committee Chair Jeff Kaufman invited everyone to the Annual Meeting and Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts, June 27-30, 2026. The theme is Hope and a Future with reference to Jeremiah 29:11.

Closing Remarks

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord thanked everyone who had shared the gifts God gave them in making the meeting a success.

Adjournment

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord noted that no further business was before the assembly, so she passed the gavel to Moderator-elect Rev. Dr. Marty Hall, who declared the Business Meeting of the 71st Annual Meeting and Conference in St. Louis, Missouri adjourned at 11:21 am, CDT.

Benediction

Moderator Jodee Landa Lord and Vice Moderator Rev. Dr. Marty Hall invited attendees to stand if they were able for the benediction and closing hymn. They offered the Benediction and invited everyone to sing “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.”

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Kate O’Dell
NACCC Secretary

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches
Minutes Certification Committee 2025
Final Report

The 2025 Minutes Certification Committee – Rev. Doug Gray, Rev. Wendy Van Tassell, and Rev. Patty Smith – have reviewed the Minutes of the 71st Annual Meeting held in person and by video conference on June 21-24 in St. Louis, Missouri and amended them where necessary. They recommend approval of the Minutes as presented.