

NACCC NEWS

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2011

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FROM MY HEART TO YOURS

Dear Friends,

Some years ago, the New York Times ran an op-ed tribute written by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., about one of America's most famous theologians, Reinhold Niebuhr. There is a line in it that caught my attention:

His warnings against utopianism, messianism, and perfectionism strike a chord today. We are beginning to remember what we should never have forgotten: we cannot play the role of God to history, and we must strive as best we can to attain decency, clarity, and proximate justice in an ambiguous world.

Niebuhr had his faults (don't we all) but there are so many more solidities among the ephemerality. I was a reader of Niebuhr in Seminary and the years following have found myself going back to his writings. His Gifford Lectures of the 1940's, in the midst of a world war, were entitled The Nature and Destiny of Man. In those lectures there was a powerful message of doing the work of Christian love, doing the work of justice, doing the work of caring for the least and the lost. Less talk, more action.

I am concerned that Christians seem way too eager to put God in the middle of political ambitions and policies, too sure of what God would say. We are too quick to speak for God. And, we seem to be less and less actively pursuing what Jesus would do in the simplest or most complex situations.

My concern is not because I am unsure what I believe or in whom I trust, or who is leading the way for my life or those I serve. My concern is our lack of humility. We seem to have opted for extreme oratory and behaviors instead of living so that others may see Christ in and through us.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Dr. Thomas Richard
Executive Secretary

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The Center for Congregational Leadership is delighted to receive the **Arvel M. and Kathleen Steece Theological Library**. This extensive collection will be housed at and managed by the Center and Olivet College. Many thanks to religion professor, Mike Fales and his crew of Blake Walters, Rev. Jack Brown, Jean Paul Cortes and Frank Palacio who drove from Olivet to Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts to pick up and transport the collection. Also, thanks to Rev. Irven Gammon and the Florence Congregational Church (MA) for laying the groundwork for the move. The collection will benefit many. Once catalogued, most volumes will be available for circulation. Others will be available at the Center for research purposes. Thank you, Arvel and Kathleen.

I earned a certificate in Distance Education from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in November. This extensive professional certificate program will allow her to develop and design online courses as appropriate for our churches and leaders.

For more information about the Center and educational opportunities, contact Dr. Mauro at bmauro@naccc.org or 1-800-262-1620 x 12. Or visit our new website at www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org.

Blessings,

Betsy

CONGRATULATIONS!!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND CHURCHES UPON ORDINATION:

REV. JANE MILASCHEWSKI, JANUARY 8, 2011
CHURCH IN THE COVE, BEVERLY, MA

REV. LUCAS MILLER, JANUARY 30, 2011
SOMERSET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, SOMERSET, MI



UPCOMING EVENTS

WEB SAVVY MINISTRY

CENTER FOR CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP ~ OLIVET, MI

Workshop - Saturday, March 19, 2011, 9 am to 4:30 pm

WHAT: Interested clergy and laity are invited to learn how to use technology effectively in the church and its impact for ministry. This is an introductory workshop for those wishing to learn more about creating websites, using social media and collaboration options.

WHEN: Participants will gather at the Center for Congregational Leadership in Burrage Library on the campus of Olivet College, Olivet, MI on Saturday, March 19, 2011 at 9 a.m.

Topics:

- ◆ Overview of technology and its impact on ministry
- ◆ Social media – forms of communication
- ◆ Web sites that work
- ◆ Ethics and Policies

Afternoon Clinics:

- ◆ Build your own website
- ◆ Set up a facebook account
- ◆ Meeting rooms and document sharing

SEMINAR COST: \$20 which includes lunch. To obtain a registration form visit our web site www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org or contact bmauro@nacc.org or msteele@nacc.org

CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY AND POLITY INTENSIVE BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS July 23 - 30, 2011

WHAT: Interested clergy and laity are invited to join students from the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies to learn more about the rich history, theology and heritage that forms our unique expression of worship and faithfulness. Led by faculty knowledgeable in the Congregational Way, participants will attend lectures, have opportunity for personal research and will see sites around Boston and Plymouth, Massachusetts.

SEMINAR COST: \$695. The registration fee will cover all costs including room, meals, the Plymouth excursion and museum entrance fees. You are responsible for transportation to and from Boston.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: March 15, 2011. This registration deadline is firm as rooms at Mariner's House need to be booked by that date. A \$100 non refundable deposit will hold your spot. Full payment is due by June 15th.

For more information, registration form and the syllabus go to:
www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org

CONTACT INFORMATION. If you have questions, you may contact:

Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro – bmauro@nacc.org
1-800-262-1620 x12 or 269-749-7228

2011 ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA—JUNE 18-21

I am looking out the window at my back yard filled with snow and an outside temperature below freezing. There is also the prediction it will stay this way for awhile. It makes the thought of Arizona heat sound good. See you there!

I am excited about having Dr. Marva Dawn as our Bible lecturer. She is a popular speaker in the areas of Bible, worship and community life, to mention a few of her areas of expertise. She holds several Masters Degrees and a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics from the University of Notre Dame. I sense that we are in for a real treat in her presentations. She will give us material and insights that we can use in our churches as tools to grow spiritually as well as numerically. So plan to come to enjoy, learn, and employ, as well as fellowship.

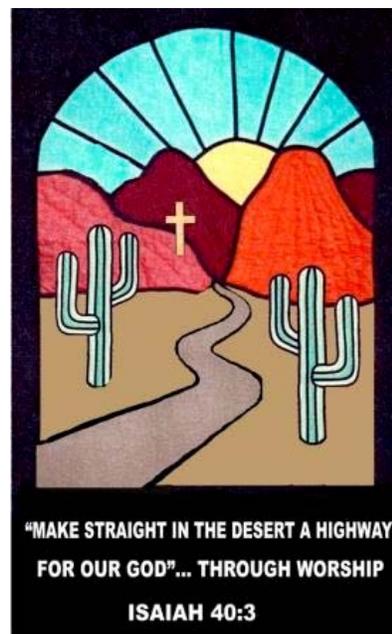
Our Annual Meeting & Conference is meant for such listening and usage. With worship and learning opportunities we can go home with inspirations to use in making our meeting houses even more of a place to bring Christ to this world and its current generations with a newness for those people in these times.

Come and join with us in Scottsdale, Arizona where, in air conditioned comfort, there will be another coming together of God's free people.

*Joe Clarke, Moderator
Warden Community Church*

VIDEO PRODUCTION HELP NEEDED

Do you know someone that can help at the 2011 Annual Meeting & Conference with the video production? Is there someone you know that attends the meeting anyway and would like to help on a voluntary basis? The NACCC will help cover some expenses. This includes video recording (audio & visual) of speakers and saving the videos to be placed on the NACCC's website and on a DVD. Please contact Carrie Dahm if you are interested (800-262-1620 ext 15).

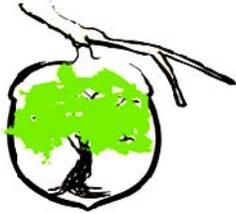


Attention Leadership Team Looking Forward to Scottsdale, Arizona

It is not too early to be thinking about your committee, division or commission display for the Resource Room. The information age in which we live demands up-to-date, eye-catching, and professional looking displays. Start now by putting a person on your team in charge of upgrading your display which is housed at the NACCC office. The displays will be transported on a truck to the Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort. Contact your NACCC support staff if you need help and/or information.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

CAMPAIGN CORNER



BRANCHING OUT

We are sincerely grateful to all who included the NACCC in their Christmas giving. Over 230 individuals and 100 churches generously responded to our year-end appeal, so we are entering 2011 with more than \$20,000 in contributions to support our various ministries.

Branching Out Aims for Arizona

The Congregational Foundation plans to celebrate the completion of the *Branching Out* campaign at the NACCC's Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona. Between now and June, the Foundation's Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, and NACCC staff will step up solicitation of churches, leadership team members and other individuals as we continue to press toward the goal of raising the \$5 million needed to build endowments for fully funding the campaign's two initiatives:

- ◆ The Center for Congregational Leadership (\$3.5 million)
- ◆ The Fund for Congregational Growth and Renewal (\$1.5 million)

In addition to seeking new donors, we will also be asking previous donors to increase their pledges. Here is how you and your church can help:

- ◆ If you are already a campaign donor, please consider extending your pledge or making an additional gift
- ◆ If you are a newcomer to the campaign, please make a multi-year pledge or a one-time gift
- ◆ Ask your church to conduct the National Offering this spring

We are grateful for many churches and individuals who gave a strong beginning to this campaign, and hope that you will now help us finish it. By acting together in fellowship, we can bring it to a successful conclusion and secure a promising future for the Congregational Way.

Joy of Giving Holiday Offering

At the time of this writing, the Division for Ministry's *Joy of Giving* offering on behalf of the Ministerial Assistance and Enrichment Fund has raised more than \$7,200! 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 participating churches for making this offering a success:

Congregational Church of Sun City, Sun City, AZ
 Community Church at Jess Ranch, Apple Valley, CA
 Congregational Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles, CA
 Hanover Congregational Church, Hanover, CT
 First Congregational Church, Burlington, IA
 First Congregational Church, Toulon, IL
 First Congregational Church, Yarmouth Port, MA
 North Congregational Church, Farmington Hills, MI
 McGraft Memorial Congregational Church, Muskegon, MI
 First Congregational Church, Roscommon, MI
 First Congregational Church, Saugatuck, MI
 Grace Church, Columbiana, OH
 North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, WI
 Community Congregational Church, Kewaunee, 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, 2011.

If your church would like to apply to this fund, please visit our website at www.naccc.org. Look under the Features section on our Home page or go to the Resources tab and click on Forms for specific guidelines and application forms. If your church does not have internet access, please call me at 1-800-262-1620 x25 or email ddavid@naccc.org to request this information.

Thank you all for the blessing of your support in the New Year!

Diana David
Director of Development (Part-Time)

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

This is the last issue in which we share the many wonderful happenings at our member Churches during Christmas holidays. **Rockwood**, The church is on the community's annual Holiday Home Tour; volunteers are making milk-jug luminaries to light the way for worshippers on Christmas Eve ... **Church In The Gardens**, members are decorating the church for the season; Fathers are meeting to discuss II Samuel Chapters 11-13 "are the sins of the father played out in the lives of their children..."; they will have a Victorian wassail holiday party, complete with period costumes; their "Earth Matters" film series continues, sponsored by the Green Team of the Church... **Amelia Christian**, rehearsing for a Christmas Cantata; recent newsletter had an outline of 10 translations of the Bible. Very enlightening... **FCC, St Johns** Senior High providing babysitting service for Christmas shoppers; church is mentoring an intern minister... **Winthrop**, participating in Wreaths Across America, placing wreaths on the graves of veterans; they are also part of a massive recycling effort and accept old tvs, appliances, computers, key boards, cell phones and digital cameras... **FCC, Rochester**, 41 shoe boxes were packed for Operation Christmas Child; they are adopting a child through Love, Inc; replacing church's roof... **FCC, Clear Lake**, they also take part in Operation Christmas Child and have filled 23 boxes with presents; celebrated hanging of the greens to beautify their sanctuary... **FCC, Spencer**, with other churches celebrating the annual festival of choirs, pageantry and music of the Christmas story; small group ministry begins in new year; church adopting a family in need during Christmas; during Advent, a Sunday morning group meeting to share "In My Heart I Carry A Star"... **Church In The Cove**, during Advent season added seven new members; Jane Milachewski was examined by a vicinage council and it voted unanimously to proceed with the church to

ordain her! Date in January is being planned; on All Saints Day recognized those departed who have been saints of the church... **FCC, Emporia**, several members served at the Abundant Harvest Food Kitchen this past Fall; reps attended the ordination of Jamie Bonema in Tonganoxie; this church is also participating in Operation Christmas Child ministry... **Farmington Hills**, one of the many traditions at North Church is the Christmas pageant with children and youth, every age group is represented in the pageant; they also have a living Christmas card in which groups are dressed in costume and present tableaus at the end of worship each week; Young people host an advent workshop at the church; participate in St. Alexander's Food Cupboard, another group is headed for New Orleans as part of the Southeast Michigan Conference's mission outreach emphasis. Want to go? Take a look at www.nolamission11.net... **Duluth Cong'l**, On the steps of City Hall an ecumenical group will host a worship service remembering those who died last year and reminding the community of God's call to care for the homeless and wandering. The offering? Warm hats, coats, mittens... **University Church**, the Angel Tree is an annual appeal for gifts for those in need; the Head-to-Toe Hygiene Pantry is a church outreach that has served the needs of 408 families in the last year; new office complex is nearly complete; Women's guild put together layettes for infants (and families) in need. This is the ninth year the guild has distributed layettes to Garard House, Birthline, Wesley Hospital, Hunter Clinic and The Tree house....

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

February

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

March

March 2, 1968	Fred Dole
March 4, 1973	Wayne Jacobson
March 4, 1979	Herbert Bowers
March 6, 1955	Harry Clark
March 7, 1982	James Schibsted
March 9, 1997	Carl Mesnig
March 11, 2007	Dawn Carlson
March 12, 2005	James Jupin
March 13, 1966	Wilson Gene Parks
March 15, 1986	Robert Stainback
March 15, 2006	Israel Young
March 16, 1997	Mark Dieter
March 16, 2002	Steve Whitworth
March 22, 1992	Terry Bascom
March 24, 1996	Robert Sullivan
March 25, 1990	Ronald Lake
March 25, 2001	Joan Laska
March 31, 1974	Michael Person



RECENT EXECUTIVE AND FRATERNAL VISITS

Dr. Leo Christian represented the NACCC at the Service of Ordination for Jane Milaschewski at the Church in the Cove in Beverly, MA on January 8.

Dr. Tom Richard visited and preached at Preston City Congregational Church on January 16.

Dr. Marilyn Danielson represented the NACCC at the Vicinage Council of Lucas Miller at Somerset Congregational Church, Somerset, MI on Jan 22.

Dr. Betsey Mauro represented the NACCC at the Service of Ordination of Lucas Miller at Somerset Congregational Church on January 30.

Rev. Sandy Freud represented the NACCC at the installation of Warren Angel Feb 6th at Laguna Hills Congregational Church, CA.

Dr. Betsey Mauro visited:

Congregational Library where she assumed a position on the Board of Directors of the American Congregational Association.

Etna Congregational Church, Pittsburgh, PA

Executive Staff attend Leadership Meetings, Seminars, Workshops:

Strategic Planning Team; Executive Committee; Congregational Spiritual Practices Team; Board of Governors, Congregational Foundation; Finance Committee.

**The Green Team**

A Green Team has been set up under Church Services to research all aspects of recycling and being good stewards of the earth and to make recommendations to the churches. The members of the team are:

Kenneth Arnold
Plymouth Congregational Church
Wichita, KS

Sharon Jenks
First Congregational Church
Clarkston, MI

Carolyn Rinehart
First Congregational Church
Anchorage, AK

Robert Secor
Peoples Congregational Church
Bayport, MN

In Need of Hymnals?

The First Congregational Church in Saugatuck, MI has over 100 hymnals "The Hymnal for Worship & Celebration" available for anyone who would want them. If interested contact Kathleen Slawson, 269-857-2929 or office@1stcongregational.net

WEBEX FOR CHURCH TREASURES, TRUSTEES...

A free on-line workshop on Church investments, is being planned for Spring. More information will follow, but please alert your church treasurers, trustees, and investment boards. Date, cost, and registration information will follow.

CHURCH REVITALIZATION EVENT

HEALTHY CHURCH WORKSHOP with Leadership Transformations Inc

April 2, 2011 9AM - 3PM Novi - Michigan

For Clergy and Church Leadership Teams



In this one-day training, you will discover a powerful church health model and a web-based tool called CHAT (Church Health Assessment Tool) that makes it easy to implement in your church setting.

You will be trained in *Ten Traits of a Healthy Church* which uses timeless biblical principles to assess the health of a local congregation. These Ten Traits unpack the only church health model which blends together the Great Commandments and the Great Commission.

You will also be trained in the full functionality of the CHAT Survey and how to maximize its powerful, but user-friendly design within a local church to pursue greater health and vitality.



This event is sponsored by the Congregational Church Development Division of the NACCC.

Presentations by:

Dr. Steve Macchia Founder & President of Leadership Transformations, Inc.

Rick Anderson Vice President of Leadership Transformations, Inc.



<http://www.leadershiptransformations.org>

Lunch will be provided

Free will offering will be taken

HOST:
Meadowbrook Congregational Church
21355 Meadowbrook Road,
Novi, MI 48375

Register and Information
Phone: 800-262-1620
E-mail: LMiller@NACCC.org

A MOMENT IN HISTORY

Beginnings: Looking to Geneva

Of little or no importance to today's Congregationalists, if not positively embarrassing, but of the highest importance to our forebears, is that they, along with Presbyterians, many Baptists, and even many Anglicans, all "Puritans", were followers of John Calvin. Our origins lie in a tumultuous international reforming movement that had coalesced around three towering figures – Martin Luther (1483-1546) in Wittenberg, Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) in Zurich, and John Calvin (1509-1564) in Geneva.

During the reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547), years before Congregational (Separatist) thinkers like, Robert Browne (1579), and Separatist churches, like the Scrooby congregation (1606), Thomas Cranmer, the reforming Archbishop of Canterbury, was corresponding with Calvin. Though the Church of England did not reform thoroughly on the Genevan model, it did adopt a creed, the Thirty-Nine Articles, that included the distinctively Calvinist doctrine of "double predestination." Protestant students from the Continent studied at Oxford and Cambridge. England provided shelter for persecuted French and Dutch evangelicals. Frankfurt, Strasbourg, and especially Calvin's Geneva, provided shelter for English Protestants when the Catholic Mary came to power. English evangelicals published the first English language Bible, *The Geneva Bible*, from there. Calvin's writings were quickly translated into English and enjoyed wide circulation.

All varieties of Reform in England were powerfully affected by Calvin. This was due partly to the power of his writing, partly to his mentoring of key figures, and partly to his towering, if domineering personality. The Presbyterians' Westminster Confession of Faith (which Congregationalists also ascribed to) reads like a Calvinist primer.

Key Calvinist ideas included: Living to the glory of God. Scripture as the absolute authority. The capacity of all for a direct relationship with God, unmediated by human institutions. The necessity of God's grace in Jesus Christ for actualizing that possibility. The goal of minimizing the sinful self. An all-powerful God who foreordains both the elect and the damned. Our uncertainty as to whether we are elect or damned, with acceptance of Christ and doing good deeds the best indicators.

It was from this Calvinist stew that Congregationalism emerged. Yet it wasn't long until a reaction set in. American Congregationalists struggled with the idea that a loving God would condemn some to damnation. The idea of one's fate being predetermined was challenged by the revivalists of America's Great Awakenings. Unhappiness with the gloomy Puritan views of human nature as well intellectual doubts about the Trinity eventually led half the Congregational churches to declare themselves Unitarian. By the time of the Civil War, Calvinism was affirmed only indirectly, and has now virtually vanished from sight.

Calvinism did, however, produced the "Protestant Ethic" and the sober, serious, intellectually curious, introspective, activist, moralistic figure we know as the "Yankee". If we are now mystified how such creativity could emerge from something that seems so gloomy and pessimistic, we perhaps have more to learn.

References: Gordon Wood, *Calvin*, Yale University Press, 2009
John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Westminster Press, 1960

Rev. Arlin Larson, Historian, NACCC
First Congregational Church
Searsport, ME



John Calvin

*What Kind of Pastor Does Your Church Need?***42nd Annual Minister's Convocation
May 2-5, 2011**

**Center for the Development in Ministry-University of St. Mary of the Lake
1000 E. Maple Avenue - Mundelein, IL 60060
847.566.8290**

Convocation is your time after Lent and Easter to kick back and take a breather. It is a time to renew acquaintances and regenerate your spiritual engine.

This year, Rev. Eric Britcher will lead us in a Bible study which answer's the question, "What kind of pastor does your church need?"

Eric is the Interim Senior Pastor at First Congregational Church, Mansfield, OH. He brings a rich portfolio of experience to share.

In the afternoon on Tuesday and Wednesday, we will unwind with Rev. Steve Schafer's Fantastic Game. If you like Jeopardy, you will enjoy the challenge of Steve's game. Steve is the pastor of the Mount Hope Congregational Church in Livonia, MI.

Also on Wednesday, Rev. Matt Olson, Pastor of First Congregational Church, St. Johns, MI will speak on "Conflict as a Positive Thing".

Watch for the flyer in your bulk mailing. The schedule and registration form are also available at www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org

***By Faith
NAPF & HOPE 2011***

From the cold of Alaska to the heat of Arizona.... Bring your sunglasses, sandals, and thirst for Jesus Christ and join us at Arizona State University in Phoenix/Tempe

June 25-30, 2011 Arrive Saturday - Depart Thursday

\$600

NO registrations will be accepted after May 15, 2011. Watch for additional information and new scholarship information on the NACCC

website at NACCC.org

THANK YOU!

The following churches became first-time contributors to the Shared Ministries Fund between October 1, 2010 and December 31, 2010:

- Sacramento Congregational Church, Rio Linda, CA
- Second Congregational Church, Jewett City, CT
- United Congregational Church, Norwich, CT
- Eagle Rock Church, Thomaston, CT
- Jupiter First Church, Jupiter, FL
- Church in the Cove, Beverly, MA
- Second Congregational Church, Warren, ME
- First Congregational Church, Central lake, MI
- Community Congregational Church, Lathrop Village, MI
- Everyone's Community Church, St. Louis, MO
- Bear Creek Congregational Church, Robbins, NC
- Baleville Congregational Christian Church, Newton, NJ
- First Congregational Church, Newton Falls, OH
- Mayflower-Plymouth Congregational Christian Church, Toledo, OH
- Federated Church, East Smithfield, PA
- Peacham Congregational Church, Peacham, VT

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

Barbara Brown Taylor



Word & Note
 The Divine Arts of Knowledge and Exaltation
 March 4, 5 & 6, 2011



Details at **Boston Brass**
www.plymouth-church.net



316•684•0221
 202 North Clifton • Wichita, KS 67208



The Congregational Foundation

Want to create something of lasting value?
You can be confident your legacy gift will make the
difference you're seeking to create. Contact
ddavid@naccc.org for more information.



SEND ME YOUR NEWS

Submissions for the April/May
edition are due by Mar. 15, 2011.

Marie Steele, Editor
msteele@naccc.org

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

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