

NACCC NEWS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2013

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4

SHARING THE JOURNEY

You know how it is when you get the same message multiple times from different places; how it feels like God is trying to tell you something? Well, that's what's been happening to me lately. The message . . . **STAY FOCUSED ON THE MISSION**. Not exactly revolutionary thinking, I know, but in times of change and transition, it is vital. I have been reminded, by individuals (including my wife) and through a couple of training experiences, that it is at these times that we must remain steadfast to our mission, aligning all of our work to it. So I've taken to keeping our mission statement in front of me at my desk, where I will see it as I work. (FYI – this is how it goes: "Bringing together Congregational Christian Churches for mutual care and outreach to our world in the name of Jesus Christ.") For further guidance in my work, I've also been referring regularly to a couple of foundational principles that the Strategic Planning and Transition Teams used.

1. "Does this help our churches grow stronger?"
2. "Would Christ approve of our decisions?"

Pretty good guidance for all of our work as an Association, I'd say!

The words, taken as a whole, remind me to look beyond the subject at hand to be mindful of how everything fits into the bigger picture. It helps me to set aside any emotional attachment I may have to how things have been done before. These words of mission and focus, in short, help me to remain true to my primary obligation: to do what is best, in all things, for the greater good of our churches in service to Christ. Doing so gives me, gives us, the courage we need to move our work forward. I ask for your continued prayers and support of the volunteer and staff leadership who have been tasked with guiding our Association in this time of transformation. Thank you.

In Christ,
Casey vanderBent,
Interim Executive Secretary



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2014 ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE . . .

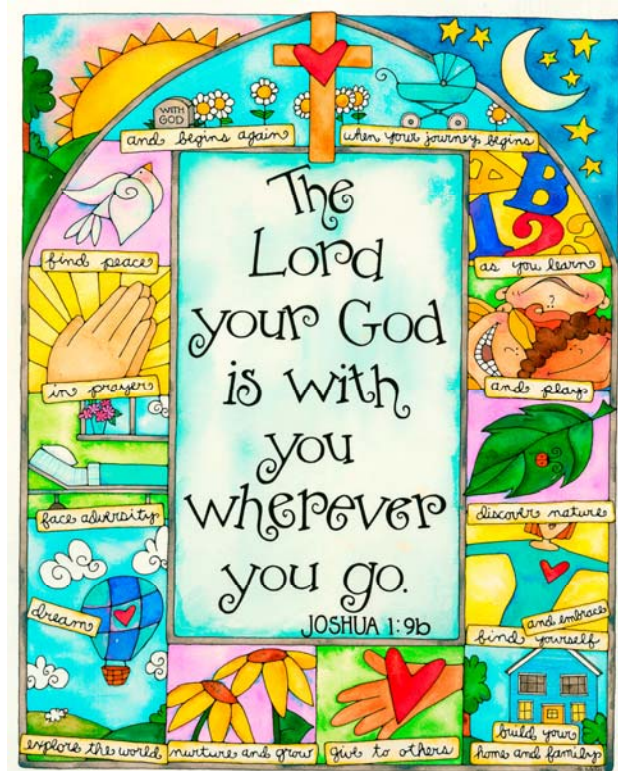
The Annual Meeting and Conference Team is busy planning the next gathering in Omaha, Nebraska. The Iowa-Nebraska Association is excited about having the churches in Omaha. The theme is "The Lord your God is with You Wherever You Go." The conference will seek to explore God's presence in the various areas of our lives that are represented on the logo. For the first time, you are given an opportunity to purchase items with the logo imprinted on them (posters, mugs, journals, prints, bookmarks). These would be great Christmas presents. By your purchase, you will be supporting the NACCC mission project workshop for the Omaha 2014 Annual Meeting and Conference. We will be assembling hospital care kits for patients entering the hospital so that our churches can experience a different way to be a healing presence in their own communities. Each church will be asked to bring items for the hospital care kits to the Omaha 2014 Annual Meeting and Conference. As a part of this mission workshop, individuals are asked to contribute a prayer that can become a part of a prayer journal to be included in the care kit. On the next page are separate cards for submitting a prayer and for identifying items needed for the care kits.

Kay Miller-Todd

2014
Annual Meeting
&
Conference

Omaha, Nebraska
June 28-July 1, 2014

Hosted by the Iowa/
Nebraska Association



2014 ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE . . .

Offer Your Heart

Help prepare hospital care kits at the 2014 Annual Meeting in Omaha.



- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Kid's activity book | Sudoku | sticky note pad |
| Crayons /pens | folders | pipe cleaners |
| Small Etch A Sketch | playing cards | crossword puzzles |
| Hand sanitizer | small pillow | comic books |
| Comb | brush | little mirror |

Offer Your Heart in Prayer

Share a prayer as part of a prayer journal to be included in the hospital care kits created at the 2014 Annual Meeting. Simply enter your prayer below or on the back and return to: Kay Miller-Todd, 3407 Kingman Blvd., Des Moines, IA 50311.



Center for Congregational Leadership

Have you seen the **Church Membership Handbook** posted on the Center for Congregational Leadership's website? There have been 294 hits on the handbook just in the month of September. If you weren't one of them, perhaps you would like to take a look at it. Some who have, gave us this feedback: "Nicely done." "Great job!" "Thank you for all your work in organizing this for us." The handbook was also mailed in hardcopy to all of our member churches in September. The Center also has many resources posted that will be helpful in planning special services, assist your Boards and Committees to be effective and many other references to help you follow the Congregational Way. Check us out at www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org

We get letters.....

From the Gomer Congregational Church, Gomer, OH considering affiliation with the NACCC "You provided helpful information and answers. As one member said, 'If this represents the kind of support we would receive from the NACCC, I would be very comfortable being associated with them'."

From the Pastoral Search Committee, Durand, MI "Thanks so much for taking the time to visit with our PSC committee. It really relieved us of our frustrations and came at a good time. We also learned from you more about the Congregational Way."

From Jerry Turner who is participating in the Beta Test on the on-line History & Polity Course: "I found the material in this on-line course is covered in a way that makes it easy to understand. There were some things that I had forgotten from the seminar, and this opportunity was a great refresher for me. I commend the authors, instructors, and all that have worked on bringing this on-line course to life.

I see it as a refreshing drink for those thirsting for a better understanding of Congregationalism. I would love to see this recommended to new members in our church, and I will certainly make that recommendation. This is a wonderful way to get to understand and appreciate our Congregational heritage."

MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS

Laura Hamby, Chair of the Missions and Outreach Ministry Council, had an opportunity to visit Piney Woods School (one of our NACCC supported Missions) on her way back from the 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference. Even though this was an unexpected visit, she was shown around campus and talked to a variety of people. It was a delightful visit.

Lisa and Norberto Cortes from Mission Mazahua are in the US from September 22 to November 3. They are visiting churches in Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

Please pray for the Old Stone Congregational Church in Lyons, Colorado and the flooding they have had. MOMC is collecting funds through OGHS for them and the community. Also, pray for those affected by the typhoons in the Philippines and the hurricanes in Mexico.

If you or your church is interested in any of the NACCC supported missions, please contact Linda Miller at lmiller@nacc.org or (800)-262-1620 ext. 1618.

Every Dollar Given to Missions . . . Goes to Missions.



PASTOR APPRECIATION

**October is Pastor Appreciation month.
Don't take your pastor for granted.
Their mission is to serve you.
Make it your mission to thank them.**

STATE & REGIONAL ASSOCIATION NEWS

The **Michigan Conference of Congregational Christian Churches** will hold their 172nd Annual Meeting, Friday and Saturday, October 18 & 19, 2013 at Sutton's Bay Congregational Church. The Conference starts at 3 pm on Friday and goes through lunch on Saturday. \$35 registration includes Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch. Lisa and Norberto Cortes will be the guest speakers at Friday's dinner. Workshops include:

- ◊Rev Terry Bobzien: "Go Down Moses: Justice in Liberation Theology"
- ◊Rev. Dr. Marilyn Danielson: "What do Petri Dishes & Churches have in Common? Both have Cultures"
- ◊Rev Mike Fales: "Hosanna in the Highest: Mission Opportunities for Michigan Congregationalists"
- ◊Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro: "Trust in the Covenant Community: Pastor, Parishioner, & the Fine Line between Confidentiality and Disclosure"
- ◊Rev. Dr. Charles Packer: "Spiritual Friendship and the Local Church"

The Michigan Conference first met in 1841 and has met annually ever since.



The **Midwest Association of Congregational Christian Churches** will be having their Annual Meeting October 25 & 26 at First Congregational Church, Terre Haute, Indiana. The meeting convenes at 5:30 pm on Friday and goes until 1 pm on Saturday. \$25 registration fee includes Friday dinner and Saturday breakfast & lunch. The program "Leveraging the Strengths of Small Churches" will be presented by Rev. Dawn Carlson.

ORDER YOUR DEVOTIONALS

It is now time to order your Advent devotional, "*Christ, the Messiah*" and Lent devotional, "*The Way to the Cross Leads Home.*" The devotionals are \$2.50 each which includes postage and handling.

Send your orders to:

Linda Miller at lmiller@naccc.org or call the NACCC office at (800) 262-1620.

Wayne McLeod Receives Award . . .

On September 23rd at the Central Illinois Agency on Aging Annual Meeting held at the Civic Center, Reverend Wayne McLeod was surprised with receiving the third annual Kathryn W. Timmes Award for Outstanding Commitment to Intergenerational Services. Mrs. Timmes began her early service to the State of New York as Director of Migrant Children's Care Center, then set the stage for the diversity of her interests and her continued service to the State of Illinois, and the Peoria area in particular.

An avid counselor and educator, Mrs. Timmes' employment history includes a strong record of academic advisement, teaching, and personal counseling at Spaulding (now Notre Dame) High School, Roosevelt Junior High, Manual and Woodruff High Schools, as well as positions with Bradley University and Illinois Central College. Mrs. Timmes was present to present the distinguished award.

Rev. McLeod was recognized for his years of service toward others and the past fifteen to Stark County and the related organizations including the ministerial associations, Resource House, Food Pantry, Good Samaritan, Christmas Food Baskets, individual interventions, in addition to being full time minister of the Toulon Congregational Church. He is also active in the Midwest Association of the Congregational Churches. He has actively served the Toulon Lions Club as secretary and a variety of technological services for over a decade.

Rev. McLeod was one of three recognized this day for a variety of awards amidst several hundred who attended the luncheon and program. Those in attendance were Board of Directors Roger Hawk, Bob Mueller, and Patsy Trickle; Advisory Board member Fran Hackwith and guest Ruby Turnbull; and incoming board member Dennis Rewerts.

—submitted by Roger Hawk



Rev. Wayne McLeod

Congratulations to . . .

Barbara Erlendson was inducted into the ***Arbella Society*** at the 2013 Annual Meeting and Conference. The Arbella Society honors those who have come from other traditions and write a graduate level research paper. Her paper was titled: *Regional Associations of Congregational Churches: Their Formation, Their Function and Their Future*.

Barbara commented, "I discovered how Congregationalism offers both freedom and protection, that associations do not diminish the local church but makes them stronger, that they can prevent a local church from feeling isolated, standing alone on the prairie, in the city or on a suburban corner. . . Most of all, I discovered very deep and real blessings in my job, in my congregation and in my faith."

Rev. Mark Jarvie on his recent graduation from Spring Arbor University, Spring Arbor, MI. He earned a Master's degree in Spiritual Formation and Leadership.

Rev. Charles Hall of FCC, Barkhamsted, NH has retired and is moving to White Lake Township, MI where he will be closer to his 2 daughters and families.

Rev. David Fisher of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn NY on his recent retirement.

Rev. Ariel Castillo of Lawrence, MA has been accepted to active duty chaplaincy in the Army.

First Congregational Church of Beloit, WI celebrated their 175th Anniversary, September 14th. They are also offering three concerts this fall starting October 20. For more information about Musica Maxima 2013 check their website www.firstcon.org.

Church Happenings

Do you have extra space at your church? Consider opening up a Thrift Shop. Several of our churches are either leasing out space to other organizations or are running their own, like **FCC, Yarmouth Port, MA** is doing. Proceeds can assist the church in its ministries or go to a charitable cause. It often begins with members bringing their surplus items, but before you know it word gets around and the whole community is participating.

Give your music program a voice in your newsletter. The **Preston City (CT) Cong. Church's** organist/choir director added something clever in their publication: advertising "FREE SAMPLES" as a way to lure people in to check out participating in the choir. Good job!

Remember to pray regularly for your sister churches in the NACCC and your area. You might think of doing a regular prayer rotation, even including NACCC or other missions that you support. They include those in their newsletter at **FCC, Spencer, IA** and in prayer time at some of our other churches.

Some folks in churches are uncomfortable talking about money, particularly when it comes to encouraging people to remember the church in their estate planning. The result is that many churches miss out on the opportunity to receive a continued blessing from members after they have passed on. Thank you, **FCC, Mansfield, OH**, for setting a good example in your newsletter!

Small, personal touches in your newsletter can draw your readers in. **FCC, Fall River, MA** prints these words right above where they attach the mailing label with the member's name: "Prepared especially for . . ."

If your pastor preaches from the Lectionary Readings each week (that's a three year rotation of scripture passages, with several assigned for each Sunday), you might think about connecting

other programs to those readings, like Sunday School and adult classes. You can also post them in your newsletter and encourage people to read ahead. A number of our churches do that, including **Florence (MA) CC and FCC, Rochester, WI**.

Years ago I started a "Wheels to Worship" program in a little church I was serving, to give rides to home-bound members. Many churches have that program, **Central CCC, Galesburg, IL** highlighted their program in a recent article. Doesn't everybody deserve a chance to come to church?

Casey vanderBent
Interim Executive Secretary

VISITS AND SPECIAL EVENTS REMEMBERED

Rev. Casey vanderBent

- ◇ participated in the closing worship at FCC, Kenosha, WI.
- ◇ visited with 19 clergy, representing 16 NACCC churches on a 9 day trip to Maine & Massachusetts.
- ◇ gave the sermon and taught a class at FCC, Wauwatosa, WI.

Rev. Betsey Mauro:

- ◇ attended the Memorial Service of Pearl Gossett.
- ◇ met with the Search Committee at FCC, Durand, MI.
- ◇ met with Gomer Congregational Church, Gomer, Ohio and St. Paul's Congregational Church, Grand Haven, MI to discuss affiliation with the NACCC.
- ◇ attended the ICF meeting in London, England.
- ◇ met with Olivet Congregational Church, Olivet, MI concerning Constitution and Bylaws revisions.

Church Happenings, con't.

LETTERS SENT AND/OR AMBASSADOR VISITS

Denmark Cong'l Church, Denmark, ME ; 10 year clergy service anniversary

Pilgrim Cong'l Church, Green Bay, WI; installation service

First Cong'l Church, New Bedford, MA; chapel rededication

Flatbush-Tompkins Cong'l Church, Brooklyn, NY; sanctuary rededication

Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, NY; minister retirement

New Hampshire Assoc. meeting; fraternal greetings

First Cong'l Church, Barkhamsted, ME; minister retirement

RECENT CALLS

RIVERPOINT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WEST WARWICK, RI
REV. GAIL MILLS AS PART-TIME MINISTER

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL COMMUNITY CHURCH, ROSCOE, IL
REV. LISA ABB AS SENIOR MINISTER

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OTSEGO, MI
REV. DARIN YOUNGS AS SENIOR MINISTER

CHURCH OF THE OAKS, DEL REY OAKS, CA
REV. ROBERT HELLAM AS SENIOR MINISTER

RECENT ORDINATIONS

REV. JAMES BACKING
JUNE 8, 2013
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, HUDSON, MI

REV. KAREN ROBU
SEPT. 15, 2013
PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WICHITA, KS

REV. DR. MARK McANLIS
SEPT. 29, 2013
PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, GREEN BAY, WI

OCTOBER

Michael Matheny	Oct. 1, 1978
James Clifton	Oct. 1, 1984
David Hulings	Oct. 1, 1989
Art Thibeault	Oct. 1, 1989
Robert Morris	Oct. 1, 1995
Lee Attema	Oct. 1, 1996
Lee Ann Gagne	Oct. 2, 2004
Robert Howell	Oct. 5, 2000
Donald Mullen	Oct. 6, 1969
Cynthia Shepherd	Oct. 6, 1979
Dewey Gierke	Oct. 6, 1991
Joseph Cooke	Oct. 7, 1955
Edwin Remaly	Oct. 8, 1961
Lori Wiley	Oct. 8, 2000
Jay Groat	Oct. 11, 1987
Robert Moynihan	Oct. 11, 2003
Glenn Stone	Oct. 12, 1980
Jonathan Roach	Oct. 12, 2008
Richard Koch	Oct. 13, 1985
Richard Hotchkin	Oct. 13, 1991
Nancy Lois	Oct. 14, 2012
Ruth Lyons	Oct. 14, 1984
Jay Terbush	Oct. 14, 1984
Harvey Pierce	Oct. 15, 1952
Douglas Gray	Oct. 15, 1994
Joshua Davis	Oct. 15, 2006
Joel Curtiss	Oct. 16, 1988
Paul Westerville	Oct. 16, 2008
David D'Arcy	Oct. 17, 1971
Scott Barton	Oct. 17, 1976
Robert Barletta	Oct. 18, 1998
Duane Kellogg	Oct. 19, 1975
Sally Nolen	Oct. 19, 1986
Michael Mitchell	Oct. 19, 2003
Barry Lucas	Oct. 20, 2002
Cathy Houston	Oct. 22, 2000
Michael Robertson	Oct. 22, 2000
Kathryn Smith	Oct. 22, 2002
Sanford Freud	Oct. 23, 1983
Cynthia Petrie	Oct. 23, 2011
Kathryn Rust	Oct. 24, 1999
Gary Smothers	Oct. 25, 1959
Wesley Woodman	Oct. 26, 1974
John Swanson	Oct. 26, 1985
Mark Jarvie	Oct. 26, 2003
Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder	Oct. 27, 1974
Bruce VanDer Kolk	Oct. 27, 1996



Eugene Whitey	Oct. 28, 1968
Robert Fleischmann	Oct. 28, 1973
Charles Whipple	Oct. 28, 1973
Cayle Beagle	Oct. 28, 2001
Mike Haefner	Oct. 30, 2011
Richard Kurrasch	Oct. 31, 1971
Carol DiBiasio-Snyder	Oct. 31, 1981
Jerrold Jones	Oct. 31, 1993
Fred Thimmel	Oct. 31, 2009

NOVEMBER

Gary Pierce	Nov. 1, 1964
Ted Selgo	Nov. 1, 1969
Alan Ferguson	Nov. 1, 1978
Robert Livingston	Nov. 1, 1980
David Walz	Nov. 1, 1997
George Johnson	Nov. 1, 2001
Ashley Cleere	Nov. 2, 1991
Susan Hunnicutt	Nov. 3, 1991
Adam Soderberg	Nov. 3, 2002
Norman Erlendson	Nov. 4, 1990
Ivy Beckwith	Nov. 4, 2000
Emily Robertson	Nov. 5, 2006
Wendy Van Tassell	Nov. 6, 1994
Leon Hermes	Nov. 7, 1965
Robert Moston	Nov. 7, 1997
Jamie Green	Nov. 7, 2009
William Lange	Nov. 8, 1975
Harlan Nuss	Nov. 9, 2002
Tom Boehne	Nov. 9, 2003
Irven Gammon	Nov. 9, 2003
Stephen Tucker	Nov. 11, 1971
Terry Bobzien	Nov. 12, 2011
James Kurtz	Nov. 14, 1952
Rick Hartley	Nov. 14, 1993
John Lancz	Nov. 15, 1967
John Doud	Nov. 15, 1978
Christopher Stephens	Nov. 19, 2005
Ardyth Kovacevich Johnson	Nov. 20, 1983
John Deuble	Nov. 20, 1994
Richard Lindvall	Nov. 21, 1976
Claude Dunn	Nov. 21, 1998
Angus MacDonald	Nov. 22, 1945
Karl Kraemer	Nov. 22, 1999
David Hirtle	Nov. 24, 1976
Eric Lison	Nov. 24, 1985
John Koehler	Nov. 30, 1975

PLAN TO ATTEND

CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY AND POLITY INTENSIVE SEMINAR

Dates: October 29 – 31, 2013

**Location: Center for Congregational Leadership
Olivet College, Olivet, MI**

*Ideal for ministers, lay people and all who wish to deepen their
understanding of the Congregational Way.*

FACULTY:

Rev. Norm Erlendson, Senior Minister, Third Congregational Church, Middletown, CT
Rev. Charles Packer, Senior Minister, Rockwood First Congregational Church, Rockwood, MI

Rev. Erlendson and Rev. Packer will lead participants through the history and polity of the Congregational Way with special attention to how the history and polity informs our Congregational practice today.

SEMINAR COST:

On campus attendance \$295.00 per participant for the complete program and meals
Webinar attendance \$225 per participant

SEMINAR SCHEDULE:

Tuesday: 4 pm – 9 pm
Wednesday: 8:30 am – 8:30 pm
Thursday: 8:30 am – noon

OVERNIGHT LODGING: The Comfort Inn, (204 Winston Drive, Marshall, MI 49068) offers reduced room rates to Olivet College related guests. (Phone: 269-789-7890, just off I-69 Exit 36). Simply tell them you are attending a seminar at the college and ask for the college rate. They will need your credit card number. Free wireless internet, indoor pool, exercise room & continental breakfast are provided.

For more information

Registration form is available at: www.centerforcongregationalleadership.org

Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro, Dean
bmauro@naccc.org
(800)-262-1620 x1613

or

Marie Steele, Asst. to the Dean
msteele@naccc.org
(800)-262-1620 x1614

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Mather Redux: New Perspectives on Cotton Mather

October 18th & 19th at the Congregational Library & Archives,
Call 617.523.0470 x230 or
visit <http://matherredux.eventbrite.com/> for more info.

Michigan Conference of Congregational Christian Churches

Annual Meeting
October 18—19, 2013 at Congregational Church of Suttons Bay
Suttons Bay, Michigan

Midwest Association of Congregational Christian Churches

Annual Meeting
October 25 - 26, 2013 at First Congregational Church
Terre Haute, Indiana

History & Polity Intensive Seminar

October 29-31, 2013 at Center for Congregational Leadership
Olivet, Michigan

44th Annual Convocation

April 28—May 1, 2014
Weber Retreat & Conference Center, Adrian, Michigan
www.weberadriandomincans.org

ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK?

There's a new Facebook open group for members and friends of NACCC churches. The group, NACCC Meetinghouse, open to lay people and clergy, is a place for Congregationalists to meet on the internet to discuss what's important to us. Join the conversation. Everyone's voice is important!

UCC LOAN LETTERS

If your church has received any of the latest round of letters from the UCC, asking for full or partial repayment of antiquated building loans, please contact Casey vanderBent at the NACCC office or check in with a member of the Continuation Committee for information on how to respond before taking any other action.

May we have faith in life to do wise planting that the generations to come may reap even more abundantly than we. May we be bold in bringing to fruition the golden dreams of human kinship and justice. This we ask that the fields of promise become the fields of reality.

—Emil Gudmundson



SEND ME YOUR NEWS

Submissions for the Dec/Jan. edition are due by Nov. 20, 2013.

Marie Steele, Editor
msteele@naccc.org

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF
CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES**

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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



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 the Congregational Foundation at: (800) 262-1620 or foundation@naccc.org