

NACCC NEWS

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2009

FROM MY HEART TO YOURS

Dear Friends,

Our predecessors had the luxury of time and money, and a single cause. In the initial beginnings of the Association contributions we were made by individuals who believed in this cause and participated with their presence at both state and national meetings. They were generous and involved as a result of the fight to support two common goals - remain autonomous and not surrender any ecclesiastical powers, and to reclaim the authority of Christ as sole authority of the church. Many more clergy and leaders were involved in the beginnings of our Association than they are today. It was a different time and there were different motivations for involvement in wider fellowship work. What are the motivations to be involved and supportive of the wider fellowships in which your church is a member (but may or may not be in-

involved) today?

I can think of many - Church Renewal, starting new congregational churches, missions, leadership education and training, lay ministry training, ministers support services, shared visions, Clergy recruitment and education, the multiple blessings of fellowship, sharing best Practices, analysis and reflection, encouragement of our tradition, capital needs, grants for revitalization, joint mission outreach.

The Cambridge Platform has a larger view of the reason for a local church to participate in wider fellowships - the maintenance of communion through mutual care, consultation, admonition, participation, and recommendation; and the administration of relief. Henry Martyn Dexter, an inspired Congregational theologian/pastor, once wrote, "Those who do not actively keep agreements of fellowship or

violate agreements of the wider fellowship destroy it."

If I were serving a local church right now the support of the wider fellowship would not be compromised, even in these economically-strapped times. Why? Because covenants are important not only to the local Church as the constituting and gathering documents of their life in Christ, but because a congregation, autonomous as it is, has a responsibility to live beyond itself. Because we are called to build up the body of Christ, and this has never meant, "our local church" alone. Because I have seen the fruits of fellowship and they are beyond what any church can experience by itself. Because I would want any church I serve to be able to replace me with a minister who loves Christ, loves serving Christ within a Congregational church, respects the intelligence of the members

of that church, and wants to bless and be blessed by the wisdom and counsel of brothers and sisters in Christ from other Congregational churches.

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Tom Richard

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ASSOCIATION OUTSOURCES WEB-HOSTING



As a result of a decision by the Executive Committee, the National Association is outsourcing member church's Web services. Right now we host thirty-nine church Web sites. This shift will accomplish three goals: (1) Give our churches reliable and cost-effective Web-hosting and email service, (2) Relieve NA staff members of system maintenance issues that are beyond our present capabilities and scope, and (3) Expand the Web-hosting services offered to member churches through third-party providers.

The NACCC endorses **Chaney Systems, Inc.** as a Web host provider. Chaney Systems will be able to seamlessly migrate your existing website to their secure servers hosted at their facility located in

downtown Milwaukee. Chaney Systems is the NACCC's network and Web consultant and has complete knowledge and access to all the current coding and setups of your Web site. Transition to the new hosting environment at Chaney Systems has no upfront charge. Their servers are 100% compatible with what we have offered.

After your website is transferred for no charge, Chaney's hosting facilities offer features such as: standard hosting features - \$10/month hosting fee; 50M disk storage space; 5G bandwidth per month; 1 FTP user account accessible 24/7 for updating your Web site; 5 email addresses using your domain name (each email account above 5 costs \$1.25/month);

Web site data backups; DNS management; hosted on Microsoft Windows 2003 servers.

When you are ready to transfer your Web site to Chaney Systems, contact us at 262-679-6000. We will forward you a hosting agreement customized for NACCC customers. Return the hosting agreement to us either by email, fax or mail and we will start the move immediately.

For those churches that have not been hosted by the NA, we would encourage you to contact Chaney Systems and ask about their services. For an NACCC contact, please call Rebecca Moore, ext. 19 (1-800-262-1620) or email rmoore@naccc.org.

DFM CHOOSES THREE FOR CONFLICT TRAINING

The Division For Ministry has chosen three people to attend the Alban Institute's training in conflict management: Rev. Barry Symanski (WI), Rev. Mimi Biedron (MI), and Rev. Don Mayberry (ME). The funding of

training for leaders from various parts of the country enables the National Association to deliver services to churches in conflict faster and more economically. A second important benefit is that it creates

deeper partnerships between the National Association and regional associations which are closer to churches needing this and other services.

CAMPAIGN CORNER

BRANCHING OUT A LEGACY

By
Diana David
Campaign Administrator



BRANCHING OUT

The *Branching Out* campaign recently received a significant gift to support the Center for Congregational Leadership from The Traditional Congregational Church of Stanton, Michigan. Their \$25,000 donation was made in memory of Dr. Victor C. Beal, Jr., a long-time member of their congregation.

Raised in Stanton, Michigan where he graduated as high school valedictorian in 1949, Dr. Beal began a distinguished career by earning a Bachelor's Degree in Dairy Production from Michigan State Uni-

versity. After serving with the U.S. Army from 1953-1955, he returned to Michigan State University to earn a Master's Degree in Dairy Cattle Breeding, and in 1963 received his Ph.D. in Population Genetics from Purdue University. He focused his professional career on veterinary disease and animal health, and retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC after 40 years of dedicated service. His fellow workers and friends at Traditional Congregational Church will always remember him

for his intelligence, integrity and generosity.

Since education was important to Dr. Beal throughout his life, Traditional Congregational Church wanted to continue his legacy by making this contribution to support the educational programs of our new Center for Congregational Leadership at Olivet College. Their legacy gift in memory of Dr. Beal will be commemorated on a plaque displayed at the Center.

If you or your congregation would like to make a significant gift to the *Branching Out* campaign to continue someone's legacy, please contact me at 800-262-1620, x25, or email ddavid@naccc.org.

"Thy Will Be Done"
DVD including the Plymouth Annual Meeting's Bible lectures, Congregational lecture, and more is available at the NA's online bookstore. What an excellent resource for new members classes and adult education groups!

"Congregationalism 101"
is a DVD produced by the NA's Congregational Church Development division for use as an educational piece for congregations who care about passing on our Congregational Way of doing church. It is available at the NA's online bookstore.

The First Congregational Church of Searsport, Maine, has 40 **Pilgrim hymnals** (1958 version) in good shape that they would like to give to any church that needs them. Call 207-548-0327.

EDUCATION
AND
WORSHIP
RESOURCES
AVAILABLE

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

“**FCC, ANAHEIM**, THEIR NEWSLETTER INCLUDED THE INCREDIBLE STORY OF THE FIRES THAT SURROUNDED THE SCHIBSTED’S HOME. THE FLAMES WERE SO INTENSE AND QUICK THERE THAT ALL THEY COULD TAKE WITH THEM WHEN THEY LEFT WAS THEMSELVES AND SOME FAMILY PICTURE ALBUMS. A TERRIFYING STORY!

THEY ARE SO GRATEFUL THAT THEIR HOUSE WAS SPARED AND THEY KNOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE THE VALUE(S) OF LIFE!”

FCC, Ashland, In the midst of a search for a settled minister, Ashland is able to bring in new members; they also are sending news and prayer lists out to members weekly by email...**FCC, Yarmouthport**, the Cape Singers performed “The Christmas Story in Word and Song” at two Cape Cod churches including FCC. The cost? Every attendee was asked to bring something for the local food pantry...**FCC, Adams**, participated in the Angel Tree project which links churches with families in need around Christmas time. The church bought gifts for three families with children...

North Cong’l. Farmington Hills, a 35-member choir and 25-member orchestra performed the Christmas portion of Handel’s Messiah; they are discussing two books, *The Shack* and *Will In The World*...**Community Cong’l. Maple Hill**, participated in a Festival Of Choirs with the Lutheran Church in a nearby town; Youth groups and Church School children brought cookie plates to shut-ins as they caroled to homes of seniors and shut-ins...

FCC, Toulon, had a benefit Christmas concert for missions; **FCC, Fall**

River, had a men’s chorus composed of church members sing at the Christmas Eve Service; Interim Minister doing a series of helpful articles on ministry challenges in their monthly newsletter; **Berwick Cong’l**, this church was one of three NACCC churches in the area which exchanged Advent candle-lighting responsibilities, sending members to the other churches to share Advent in this special way; **Bethany Union** participated in providing Christmas gifts for children at local schools. Like many other NA churches, they celebrated the hanging of the greens during Advent and had a pageant on the 21st of Dec...**Plymouth, Minneapolis**, the church commissioned five new anthems in honor of five choir members who have been with Choirmaster/Director Phillip Brunelle for forty years or more. This year was Brunelle’s fortieth anniversary as music director; the church had a giving tree with notes stating gift requests of people in need...**FCC Wauwatosa**, Sam Schaal the Associate Minister, has accepted a call to a Unitarian Church in St. Louis; three adult seminars were offered during Advent:

Sam Schaal’s reflection on five years of ministry, Phil Landis’ Grand Biblical narrative tour, and Dan Schowalter’s study of Acts...**Messiah, Los Angeles**, had a guitar ensemble provide a Christmas concert; the Messiah Guild provided a concert by the church’s former music director and a professor at Chapman College who is the church’s former organist...**Saunders Memorial Church**, Rev. Bob Carlson has been serving the church on an interim basis for several weeks. For the first time in years, the church had a Christmas Eve service and they were delighted to offer it to their members and the community of Deere Isle. **Carmel, ME**, as a follow-up to the last item, Rev. Carlson is now serving Carmel, ME, Church in the same way, both interim and consulting with them on revitalization...**FCC, Otsego**, about to call their part-time youth pastor to full-time service; several wonderful and warm-hearted notes from families the church blessed during the holidays; weekly sermons of their pastor are now taped and sent to snow birds. ..

A YEAR OF PRAYER

Every year is a year of prayer when devout Christians individually and communally desire to grow spiritually. In the several cultures of humankind, the year is calculated and celebrated in a variety of ways. In the West the secular year begins in January and is seen as a time for new beginnings. The "Opening Year" challenges us to become "open" to a variety of opportunities.

A PRAYER FOR OPENNESS

Let us pray:

Open our Hearts to love beyond
the selfishness of desire
to the mutuality of unity.

Open our minds to think beyond
the conventional wisdom
to the insights of understanding.

Open our eyes to see beyond
the facade of appearances
to true perception.

Open our ears to hear beyond
the cacophony of the world
to the harmony of silence.

Open our hands to help beyond
the necessity of duty
to the responsibility of privilege.

Open our mouths to speak beyond
the platitudes of the day
to the wisdom of the ages.

Arvel M. Steece
Chaplain-Director, Emeritus
Congregational Society of Retreat Guides

The Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides has volunteered to lead and support the National Association's Year of Prayer" effort in at least two ways – the inclusion of prayers that can be used by NA member congregations (like this one submitted by Dr. Steece) and suggestions for how the spiritual life of a congregation can be enhanced.

YEAR of PRAYER SUGGESTION #4

If your Church does not have one, create a prayer chain, or prayer tree, involving not just Diaconate members but also others who will volunteer to be a part of the network. Look for more suggestions from the CSCRG in future issues of the NA News.



Pray Without Ceasing

Fraternal Visits:

Rev. Bob Carlson rep the NACCC in Deer Isle, ME
Rev. Bob Carlson represented the NACCC as interim and consultant in Carmel, ME
Dr. Tom Richard to Plymouth Racine
Dr. Tom Richard to FCC, Kenosha
Rev. Wendy Van Tassell to Clear Lake Iowa for Michael Nash's Installation
Dr. Tom Richard to FCC, Beardstown, IL

Dr. Tom Richard to Tinley Park Community Church
Rev. Mark Rustin to Bangor Seminary for the Inauguration of Dr. Kent Ulery 10th president of the seminary
Dr. Tom Richard to St. Luke's Christian Community Church, Morton Grove, IL

ROBES AVAILABLE

We have three black pulpit robes in excellent condition. One is a last (tall) doctoral robe; one is a medium doctoral robe; and one is a size small. We also have a whole set of stoles for the seasons of the year. Please get in touch with the NA office if you are interested.

40TH CONVOCATION OF THE NACCC

“WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO TURN A CHURCH AROUND?”

As memories of the Christmas season fade and we ponder what the New Year will bring, the word that seems to be forthcoming on world fronts is “stimulus.” What will it take to turn this economy around? What does it take to turn a church around? What are people willing to do to help change situations? As pastors, I know that we, too, are wondering what this year will bring for our churches and our national and local associations. You are invited to talk about “stimulus” and encouraged to come to the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches 40th Convocation this year to explore these

questions and find some answers and be stimulated in your own ministries. Our Pastor/Leader-in-Residence will be Bill Tenney-Brittain, a senior editor from Net Results and an expert in church growth from Easum, Bandy Associates. He is a speaker on transformational leadership and the author of numerous books, including “The Hitchhikers Guide to Evangelism.” He will challenge us to see how to share the Good News in this 21st century crisis and will give us insight and tools to share with our churches. The “E” word has not been so popular in many of our circles but Bill will help us to unpack our

old prejudices and look to new ways to bring hope to our world.

For all our clergy, the convocation is a time of education and renewal. I hope you will plan to join us at the Center for Development for Ministry on the campus of the University of St. Mary on the Lake, in Mundelein, Illinois from April 27-30, 2009. More information and registration forms will be sent out soon and posted on the web. Questions can be directed to Rev. Patti Dando Haaheim, Dean, at revpatti@yahoo.com.

FUTURE EVENTS

April 27-30, 2009
Ministers' Convocation
St. Mary's Center
Mundelein, Illinois

June 27-30, 2009
NACCC Annual Meeting
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

NOMINATION FORMS

Nomination forms for the Donna E. Alexander Award and the Christian Education Achievement Award can be found on our Web site, www.naccc.org by clicking on “Nominations for Awards.”



Check Your
Calendar

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

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