

# NACCC News



## National Association of Congregational Christian Churches: *The Messenger*

### Seeking Ambassadors

Michael Chittum, Executive Director

The Ambassador program is one that originated several years ago, but its importance has never been greater. An Ambassador of the NACCC is one who would visit a member church on behalf of the Association.

This visit could be for a variety of celebratory events, including: a church anniversary, a minister's anniversary serving the church, a ministerial installation, or a minister's retirement. An Ambassador could also take NACCC produced resources to a church as it begins a search process for a new settled minister or is dealing with questions about governance or confronting church conflict.

Looking ahead, due to the realities of having a single executive and to my hope of having more and better contact with our member churches from the NACCC, I would seek to have 4-5 people in each of our regional associations who would be willing to serve in the areas where they live.

The workshop at the 2017 Annual Meeting will serve to be an introduction to the resource material available and serve as an opportunity to sign up as an Ambassador. I hope to see you there.



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Hello from Denham Springs, Louisiana. A group of 27 from Olivet College went for a week of disaster relief work in December. A grant from the Mission and Outreach Ministry Council enabled them to go. Over 40,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in late August. This house has been gutted and students spent the day rebuilding it.



Jeff, one of the students, is blind but was able to learn how to drive drywall screws by touch.



2017 Annual Meeting and Conference (page 11)

## NACCC Word of the Month

**Workshop**  
[wurk-shop]

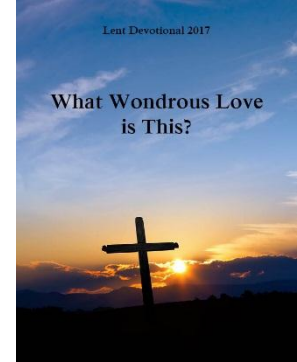
1. a meeting at which a group of people engage in intensive discussion and activity on a particular subject or project. The NACCC offers several workshops at our Annual Meetings.

Learn more about the 2017 Annual Meeting & Conference Workshops on page 13.

## Help Us Support All Our Member Churches

The NACCC would like to **THANK** those member churches who have generously contributed to the 2016/17 *Shared Ministries Fund* appeal. Your gift supports all of the work at the NACCC including the specific care provided to your fellow churches who are in the greatest need of our help. Last year's contributions helped the NACCC offer; services, programs and fellowship to 349 churches in 36 states, publish and print 28,000 copies of the *Congregationalist*, assist 29 churches in finding a minister, vet and financially support 27 national and international missions, and support the education and ordination of 8 new ministers.

The NACCC fiscal year ends March 31<sup>st</sup>, so if you haven't contributed your "Fair Share" donation it is not too late! We hope you value your membership as much as we do! Help us to continue our mission of *"Bringing together Congregational Christian Churches for mutual care and outreach to our world in the name of Jesus Christ."*



Order Lent Devotionals on page 15.

### Send Me Your News

Submissions for the March edition are due by February 20, 2017  
[mohara@nacc.org](mailto:mohara@nacc.org)

National Association of  
Congregational Christian  
Churches  
8473 South Howell Ave  
Oak Creek, Wisconsin 53154  
[mohara@nacc.org](mailto:mohara@nacc.org)  
800-262-1620 ext 1615

# *Excellence in Ministry Awards*

## Nomination Form

Help us celebrate excellence in ministry. The NACCC wishes to recognize leaders and/or innovators who have made significant contributions to Congregationalism. The Nominees should exemplify personal commitment to the principles of Congregationalism of faith, freedom and fellowship.

Nominations may be made by churches or individuals. Supporting documentation may also be submitted to assist the VMC in their selection process. This may include letters of support and/or articles about the nominee.

These yearly awards will be given at the discretion of the Vitality Ministry Council (VMC). Submitted materials will be kept confidential and become the property of the NACCC.

**DEADLINE FOR NOMINEE CONSIDERATION IS APRIL 30.**

For consideration, return this nomination form and any supporting documents to:

*Center for Congregational Leadership  
Burrage Library - Olivet College  
320 S. Main Street  
Olivet, MI 49076*

E-mail: [msteele@nacc.org](mailto:msteele@nacc.org)

Fax: (269) 749-7290

Reset Form

<input type="radio"/> Marian Bradshaw Award	<input type="radio"/> Harry R. Butman Award	<input type="radio"/> Jennette Butman Award
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ordained minister</li> <li>➤ Personally committed to Congregationalism</li> <li>➤ Preference given, but not limited, to a minister of the State of Maine</li> </ul> <p><b>Award: \$500.</b> Award to be used for continuing education other than a professional degree program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ordained minister who has served at least ten years in an NACCC church</li> <li>➤ Personally committed to the principles of Congregationalism</li> </ul> <p><b>Award: \$500.</b> This award is intended to provide ministerial assistance to lift and encourage a minister.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The spouse of a Congregational minister who has served an NACCC church for at least 10 years and has assisted their spouse in ministry.</li> </ul> <p><b>Award: \$500.</b> Awarded on the basis of need, merit or outstanding achievement</p>

Nominee's Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Church Membership

\_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City

\_\_\_\_\_

State

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone

\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail

\_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Church Membership

\_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City

\_\_\_\_\_

State

\_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone

\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail

\_\_\_\_\_

*Please describe the nominee's personal commitment to Congregationalism and other achievements that further the principles of Congregationalism.*



## 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Minister's Convocation Registration

May 8 – May 11, 2017

Weber Retreat and Conference Center  
1257 East Sienna Heights Drive  
Adrian, Michigan 49221  
517-266-4000

<http://weber.adriandominicans.org/>

### Start making your plans now!

The Ministers' Convocation will be held May 8 -11, 2017 at the Weber Center in Adrian, Michigan. This is 2 weeks later than our usual schedule.

**The Program.** The Convocation Task Team is working on the program and more details will be forthcoming. The main speaker will be George Hunsberger, recently retired from Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan.

Dr. Hunsberger received the B.A. degree from Belhaven College in 1966 and the M.Div. degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in 1970. In 1987, he received the Ph.D. degree from Princeton Theological Seminary in the field of Ecumenics, Missiology, and the History of Religions. His doctoral work focused on Lesslie Newbigin's theology of cultural plurality.

George was Professor of Missiology and Director of the Doctor of Ministry program at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, where he has taught since 1989. An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA), he has served as a university campus minister in Florida, as pastor of a Presbyterian congregation in Mississippi, as team leader for Africa Foundation in Nairobi, Kenya and on the faculty of Belhaven College.

George is a member of the *American Society of Missiology*, serving as its Secretary-Treasurer from 1988-1997 and its President from 2004-2005. Since its inception in 1987, he has coordinated *The Gospel and Our Culture Network in North America (GOCN)*. George is the author of *Bearing the Witness of the Spirit* and co-author of *Missional Church* and *Treasure in Clay Jars*. He is co-editor of *The Church Between Gospel and Culture*, *A Scandalous Prophet*, and *Christian Ethics in Ecumenical Context*.

### Other information you should know:

**Housing.** All rooms at the Weber Center have private baths and may be booked as singles or doubles. **Housing is limited.** We have 40 rooms reserved. On your registration form you have the opportunity to sign up for a single or a double. If you sign up for a double, please make your own arrangements for a roommate and put their name on the registration form. Because of the limited housing, we are not able to offer housing for less than three nights.

**Transportation.** For those outside of driving distance, Detroit Metro Airport in Romulus, Michigan provides the easiest access to the Weber Center. However it is still approximately a one hour drive from airport to Center. The Weber Center will provide a shuttle to and from the airport for \$20.00 each way. Please make those arrangements with the Weber Center directly.

**The Weber Center.** The Weber Center is fully handicap accessible. Sleeping rooms, meeting rooms, cafeteria and chapel are all in one smoke free building. Elevators provides access to all floors. The campus includes walking trails, a nature path through a wetlands area, and a labyrinth.

**Evening Socials.** Our traditional social time in the evenings will continue. The Weber Center will provide soft drinks, juice, beer and wine. However, we are asking anyone who is driving to the Weber Center to bring snacks to share in the evening. This keeps the total cost of Convocation down.

# 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Minister's Convocation Registration

## May 8 – May 11, 2017

Weber Retreat and Conference Center  
1257 East Sienna Heights Drive, Adrian, Michigan 49221  
517-266-4000 <http://weber.adriandominicans.org/>

Name			
Street			
City, State, Zip			
Phone:		Email:	

Conference, meals & lodging: \_\_\_\_\_ Single \$250                      \_\_\_\_\_ Double \$190 per person  
(Please include roommate's name)

Commuter Registration Fees:

\_\_\_\_\_ Monday \$25                      \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday \$37                      \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday \$37

Dietary Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fees must be paid in full with the registration form and are non-refundable after April 27th.

My arrival date & time: \_\_\_\_\_

My departure date & time: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be driving                      \_\_\_\_\_ I will arriving by plane at \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival time: \_\_\_\_\_ on airline: \_\_\_\_\_ Flight # \_\_\_\_\_

Departure time: \_\_\_\_\_ on airline: \_\_\_\_\_ Flight # \_\_\_\_\_

### *Method of payment*

Check – payable to NACCC \$			
Visa		Mastercard	
** We are unable to accept Discover or American Express cards.			
Credit card number			
Security Code		Expiration Date	
Signature			

**Return Registration & Payment to:**  
Center for Congregational Leadership  
320 S. Main Street – Burrage Library  
Olivet, MI 49076

**or Fax to: 269-749-7290**

**Registration deadline: April 25, 2017**



**The Vitality Ministry Council of the NACCC is**

## **Calling for Submissions for the J. J. Russell Sermon Award**

The J.J. Russell Sermon Award recognizes pastoral excellence in preaching related to Congregationalism. Submitted sermons must focus on some aspect of classical Congregationalism and its relevance for today.

Applicants must be: an ordained pastor who is serving an NACCC active member church of under 400 congregants.

Submissions must include:

- A copy of the Sunday Worship Bulletin at which the sermon was preached
- An audio of the sermon (DVD, podcast, YouTube, etc.)
- A manuscript or true transcript of the sermon.

The Award Winner will receive:

- \$350
- Full Registration to the Annual Meeting and Conference
- ½ the Room Rate at the Annual Meeting and Conference

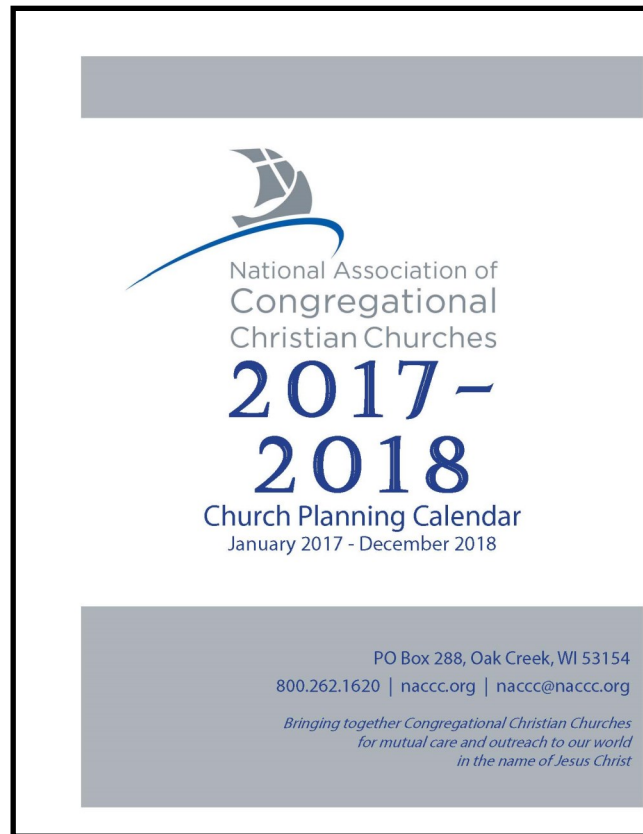
The Sermon must have been preached after the last Annual Meeting and Conference but before April 30<sup>th</sup>. The NACCC reserves the right to publish the award-winning Sermon.

## **Deadline for Submissions April 30, 2017**

Send Submissions to:

Rev. Phil Jackson  
First Congregational Church  
329 Main Street, Route 6A  
Yarmouth Port, Massachusetts 02675

## 2017 - 2018 NACCC Planning Calendar Order Form



Please send \_\_\_\_\_ Two Year (2017-18) Calendars  
Price: \$10.00 per copy – Plus shipping & handling charges

**(Please Print Clearly)** Send Calendars to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send completed form to:

**NACCC**

**PO Box 288**

**Oak Creek, WI 53154-0288**

or

**Email your request to: [lmiller@naccc.org](mailto:lmiller@naccc.org)**

**Telephone: (800) 262-1620 ext. 1618**

**Fax: (414) 764-0319**

## **ACCOMMODATIONS:**

### **DORMS AT PIEDMONT COLLEGE**

1021 Central Ave., Demorest, Georgia 30531

Dorms will be available Wednesday, June 21 thru Wednesday, June 28 and will cost \$60 per person for a total stay (1-8 nights).

Some dorms will be accessible from the outside, some will have elevators. All dorm rooms have single beds. One person will occupy a dorm room with a twin bed, and two rooms will share a bathroom with a shower. Some dorms are ADA accessible. Some have common areas and all will have access to a laundry facility, a refrigerator and microwave. All dorms are air conditioned. Your total stay will also include one set of bed linens and one set of towels. There will be no cleaning service during your stay. Guests will need to bring their own toiletries and personal items such as; shampoo, soap, and a hairdryer. Alarm clocks will be available upon request. Parking is available at the residence halls.

### **HAMPTON INN CORNELIA**

161 Market Corners Drive, Cornelia, GA 30531; 706.778.0040

A limited number of rooms have been reserved, so please book early, the cutoff date, June 7, 2017. If you would like to arrive before June 21; or stay after June 27, please call the hotel to check availability.

For reservations:

~Call 1-800-HILTONS and ask for the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, NACCC or use reference code, CHXCCC to receive the group rate.

~To book online, click on the following link:

[http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/groups/personalized/C/CRNGAHX-NAC-20170621/index.jhtml?WT.mc\\_id=POG](http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/groups/personalized/C/CRNGAHX-NAC-20170621/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG)

The group rate is \$95 per night [& 15% tax & \$5 per night state fee-TOTAL \$114.25] and includes a hot breakfast, Wi-Fi, business center, fitness room, outdoor pool and comp parking. <http://hamptoninn3.hilton.com/en/hotels/georgia/hampton-inn-cornelia-CRNGAHX/index.html>

The Hampton is 3 miles or 5 minutes from the campus and Piedmont College will provide shuttle service throughout each day. Piedmont College will host a hospitality suite at the Hampton Inn some evenings, depending on the schedule.

### **DELTA AIRLINES DISCOUNT:**

Delta discounts to the Atlanta Airport (ATL) are available with extended travel dates of June 15, 2017 - July 4, 2017. Reservations and ticketing are available via [www.delta.com/meeting](http://www.delta.com/meeting). Select "Book A Trip" and enter NMPHD in the meeting code box. Reservations may also be made, with no ticketing fee, by calling Delta Meeting Reservations at (800) 328-1111; Monday thru Friday, 7:00am-7:00pm CDT.

**CAMPUS TRANSPORTATION:**

Piedmont College will provide continual shuttle service throughout the day between the campus and the Hampton Inn. Piedmont will also provide transportation around the campus for those that have mobility issues. The Hampton is 3 miles or 5 minutes from the campus.

# WORKSHOPS

(subject to change)

**How to Sponsor a Mission** will touch on itinerating visiting Missionaries and will include a panel discussion.

## **It Couldn't Happen Here - Or Could It?**

Once upon a time, the lack of peace and safety church leaders worried about mostly happened somewhere else; occasionally in homes, often on the street, and mostly on the other side of the world. Now, the rise in deadly shootings and other crimes has disproportionately visited churches. Join us as the Growth Ministry Council helps you understand the need for a plan and the pieces to put in place for a safe church.

## **Write it Right and Write it Now!**

Do you ever read something and think, I could write like this! Here's your chance! Every year we publish 2 devotional booklets for the Advent and Lenten seasons. Those short devotions filling these 2 booklets are composed by lay people and pastors from across our NACCC, just like you! Join our writing workshop for information, ideas, and time to write a devotion!

## **The Church and Law Enforcement**

Negative events in the recent past have created a tenuous relationship between law enforcement and the community. This workshop will present ways in which the church can become actively involved in developing a positive relationship between law enforcement and the community.

## **Small, Medium or Large. Thriving Congregational churches come in all sizes.**

Three ministers from NACCC churches speak on successful programs in their churches.

- Rev. Sarah Gladstone, First Congregational Church, Saugatuck, MI, represents a small-size church.
- Rev. Les Wicker, First Congregational Church, Naples, FL, represents a medium-size church.
- Rev. Bill Trump, First Congregational Church Wauwatosa, WI, represents a large-size church.

## **What young parents are looking for in a church?**

Karen Massey, a professional in Christian Education, helps answer this important question. Karen is the Associate Professor and Faith Development at the McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, Georgia. She teaches Faith Development, Worship, Church Administration, Christian Education and Women's studies. Karen is a founding member and past president of the Christian Educators' Network, a professional ecumenical organization for ministers in the field of Christian education. Her publications include Vacation Bible School curriculum series, *Under Construction*, and *Christian Education Developments in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*.

## **How to successfully resolve church conflict**

David Brubacker, a nationally respected expert in church conflict resolution, discusses what can be done when a church is in conflict. David, a member of Congregational Consulting Group, was formerly with the Alban Institute. He wrote the Alban book, *Promise and Peril*, which presented discoveries from his dissertation research on congregational conflict. David has been consulting with congregations for over 25 years and is a highly regarded professor at Eastern Mennonite University.

## **Preaching with Imagination: Preaching that Keeps the Preacher's Soul Alive**

Rev. Brett Younger, Senior Minister, Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, conducts a workshop for ministers answering questions: How does a preacher keep offering a fresh and lively word? Can the preparation and delivery of sermons be a source of spiritual renewal week in and week out? Learn ways preachers can engage their own journey, the Scripture, the church and the world. Before coming to Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, Brett served for eight years as a preaching professor at the McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta, Georgia.

### **Why you should consider becoming an Ambassador to NACCC churches**

Rev. Michael Chittum, Executive Director, NACCC, discusses plans for recruiting and training volunteer Ambassadors to visit neighboring NACCC churches, bringing greetings and assistance from the national organization. The goal is to contact and visit our 350 + churches. This means recruiting and training 70 Ambassadors to each contact and visit 5 (on average) NACCC churches.

### **Exploring the History of American Congregationalism**

This workshop explains the main distinctives of the Congregational tradition, and how it changed and developed over time. It will also answer the question "Were there Congregationalists south of the Mason-Dixon line?"

### **Being a 'First Responder': How to Identify and Encourage Gifts for Ministry in the Local Church**

It was recently pointed out in an article in *The Congregationalist* that it is those pastors, lay leaders, and members of our churches that can be "first responders" in recognizing the presence of gifts for ministry and fostering a sense of vocation in those who possess them. "First responders" work to connect those who are called with the education and support required to serve our churches. Come and learn from those who have been involved in receiving or confirming a call to ministry how to cultivate the instincts and skills needed to be such a "first responder" in your church!

### **Learn about indexing your investment portfolio**

Indexing seeks to give you the most of what the markets have to offer, without the additional manager risk associated with active management. Learn about how Vanguard uses index investing in the Congregational Investment Trust (CIT), available to all NACCC member churches, and how indexing can play a key role in any portfolio. Eric Salzer is a Senior Investment Consultant from Vanguard Institutional Advisory Services and he manages the CIT portfolio with the CIT Oversight Committee. Mr. Salzer will lead the discussion, answer questions, and explain how index investing helps the CIT achieve its goals.

### **Extending Congregational and Individual Prayer Life**

This workshop, led by members of the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides, will introduce the efforts of the Society to promote the devotional life within Congregational churches and among their members. Explanations of Quiet Days and Silent Retreats will be given and participants will have the opportunity to practice prayer that is typically part of Society offerings.

### **How your congregation can better serve, and make a difference in its community**

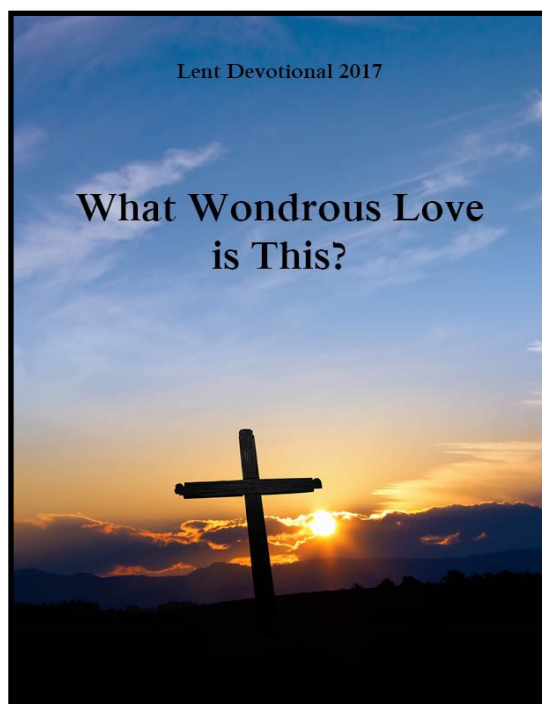
The Gospel has both a personal and social dimension. The church is called to be salt and light to the world. What contribution is your church making to the social betterment of its surrounding community? If your church disappeared would anybody in the community notice? What social gospel values guide its mission and outreach ministries? Who are you becoming as a congregation in service to your neighbors? This workshop will discuss the core biblical, human, and social values on which a vision for a dynamic social service ministry modeled on the compassion of Jesus may be built.

### **Reimagining Church**

For nearly three decades Mainline Protestant churches in the US have struggled to grow, both numerically and spiritually. It is my belief that there are multiple reasons for the exodus of Boomers and Gen Xers and the unwillingness of Millennials to join churches. I would like to focus on two factors: 1) Folks who are exiting/not participating in churches value a missional focus and 2) these same folks are community-centric. Therefore, any organization, including the church, that is perceived to be anything other than community-centric will experience a lessening of influence and participation in the coming years.

# 2017 Lent Devotional Order Form

Ash Wednesday  
Is  
March 1, 2017



Please send \_\_\_\_\_ 2017 Lent Devotionals  
Price: \$3.00 per copy – includes shipping & handling charges

**(Please Print Clearly)** Send Devotionals to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send completed form to:

**NACCC**  
**PO Box 288**  
**Oak Creek, WI 53154-0288**  
or

Email your request to: [lmiller@naccc.org](mailto:lmiller@naccc.org)  
Telephone: (800) 262-1620 ext. 1618  
Fax: (414) 764-0319