



BI-MONTHLY NEWS from the CCCC

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CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

8941 33rd St North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042 651-739-1474

E-mail: homeoffice@cccusa.com www.cccusa.com

www.cccusa.com/FORESEE/ Email: communication@cccusa.com



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SURVIVING STORMY TIMES



RON HAMILTON, CCCC CONFERENCE MINISTER WITH DAVID GRAINGE, PASTOR OF SNYDER AVE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

The Snyder Ave Congregational Church (SACCP Philly) in south Philadelphia, PA has been a member of the CCCC since 1964. Rev. Herb Anderson served as Senior Pastor at the church from 1965-2016. He recalls many of the early days of life in the Conference, especially the 1976 Annual Gathering at Cape May Bible College in Cape May, NJ. Herb served as the chair of the Local Arrangements Committee and he remembers all the work involved in welcoming the CCCC delegates to the Eastern PA and NJ area. That meeting was interrupted by the passing of Hurricane Belle that brushed the New Jersey coast and made it impossible to start the meetings on time.

The Snyder Ave Church has endured many stormy times as an urban church. While a number of inner-city ministries were not able to survive the storms, this church adapted to a changing culture and is now thriving in Philadelphia. SACCP Philly first welcomed a Cambodian church

CM COMMENTS

plant into their building in 1996. Today the church is a multi-ethnic, multi-congregational, evangelical church. In addition to an English-speaking congregation, the church currently hosts congregations of Burmese (Karen and Chin), Central American, Congolese (African), Laotian, Nepali, and other ethnic origins.

David Grainge became the pastor of the church when Pastor Anderson retired last year. He says this about the church and its ministry:

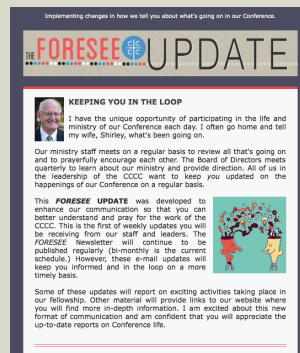
“Our South Philadelphia neighborhood is wonderfully diverse, consisting of many ethnicities and cultures. SACCP Philly – Snyder Avenue Congregational Church—is both a church and a multi-ethnic gathering of churches— 6 in all— that serves the newly arrived refugees and immigrants of our neighborhood. The Lord Jesus said, ‘I will build my church’...and we are asking him to build his church out of the nations that have come to us. SACCP Philly is a disciple-making church that teaches the rich doctrines of the faith while creating a passion for God and a love for our neighbors.”

Conference Minister, Ron Hamilton, spoke at the church on Worldwide Communion Sunday on October 1, 2017. All the congregations meeting at Snyder Ave. Congregational Church joined for worship that morning and shared at the Lord’s Table. Each congregation participated with special music, Scripture reading and prayers. Ron shared from Galatians 3–4 with Galatians 3:28 as the theme verse.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Hamilton recalls, “I was excited when I received the invitation to share at SACC. I knew that I had to prayerfully prepare for this service when I was told, ‘The service will be in 5 different languages...your message will not be translated.’ It was a joy to share with this congregation and this was one of the most encouraging experiences I’ve had as Conference Minister. The communion service was special as I witnessed people from many nations, tribes and languages gathered together in praise and thanksgiving for the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“...THE COMMUNION SERVICE WAS SPECIAL AS I WITNESSED PEOPLE FROM MANY NATIONS, TRIBES AND LANGUAGES GATHERED TOGETHER IN PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORK OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”



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Please let the HomeOffice know of any changes. If you are not on our e-mail list, go to www.cccusa.com/FORESEE and find the sign-up button in the footer.



"OF COURSE"

OCKENGA FELLOWS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS TRAVEL TO CHINA

NE REGION

BY SHEA FITZGIBBONS, ASSOCIATE PASTOR, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF KINGSTON, NH

DESTINATION: BEIJING

The destination? Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai. *The duration?* 12 days in August 2017. *The travelers?* Ockenga Fellows Program (OFP) participants (17 pastors and ministry leaders from New England), GCTS Associate Professor of World Christianity and Asian Studies Dr. Xiyi Yao and two Christian Chinese nationals. *The cost?* \$0. *The experience?* Priceless!

"The Ockenga Fellows Program identifies high-potential, early-career pastors to participate as cohorts in a two-year program consisting of seven, three-day retreats ("round-tables") and one study abroad trip to China, all at no cost to each participant."

Read more about OFP at www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/church-renewal/.

In addition to Dr. Yao, acting as guides on our trip were Jack, an associate pastor from a house church and Hunter, a director of short-term American study tours for Chinese youth. While our adventures included a fair share of tourist attractions (Tiananmen Square, The Great Wall, Terracotta Warrior Museum, et al.), the lasting value was

experienced through shared meals, prayer and worship with leaders from the Church in China. Chris Dunaway (ABC-VT/NH) in my Community Pastors Group recently remarked in a sermon,

"Both Sundays of our trip we worshiped with local churches. And we didn't understand a word of what they were singing, and we didn't understand a word of the sermons. But you know what? Standing there, with all those believers singing words we didn't understand, but words we knew were directed to the same God as ours, became even for us, a joyful, worshipful experience."

The joy came from "the unity of the Spirit" and the tears I personally experienced while worshipping reflected the reality of God's Word: "There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call" (Eph 4:4). Though none of the leaders we interacted with are connected with the CCCC, many of them are living out a number of our guiding values:

- David in Beijing is a young pastor keen on living out shared life and mission as he remains dependent on believing prayer and intercession to guide their church through leadership succession after their founding pastor (currently on sabbatical) recently announced he is not returning.

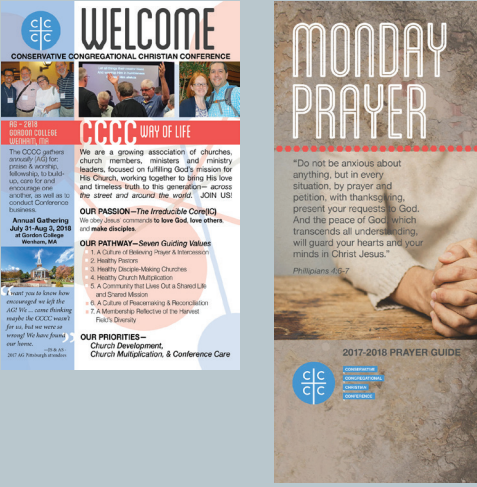
NE REGION

- Wendy, who attends the church and works for Campus Crusade, is reaching urban students and connecting them with her healthy disciple-making church.
- Pastors Jacob and April traveled 3 hours to meet with us in Xi'an! They exhibited unparalleled gratitude for GCTS's online resources as well as the encouragement we shared through prayer and intercession. Jacob shared stories of their ministry to Muslim background believers in Lanzhou, demonstrating the fruit of his church's shared life and mission amidst a diverse harvest field.
- Bi-vocational Pastor Randy and his associates in Shanghai as well as young church leaders Ye, Zheng, Ju and Linjing originally from Wenzhou all relayed stories of advancing the gospel in their workplaces. These Christians demonstrate courageous evangelism in a society where it is illegal to proselytize. Though the government knows where practically every unregistered house church meets, to keep a low profile and rather than continuing growth in one location, these urban churches typically plant new churches after reaching between 300-500 members.

One Saturday evening over a healthy bowl of noodles, I asked Joshua, a young deacon of a Shanghai house church who works as a designer, "Do you talk about Jesus with your co-workers?" and without hesitation he replied, "Of course!" He expounded, describing in his current position which he began one year ago how he immediately told co-workers he was a Christian. Over time, Joshua's associates curious to learn more about Christianity began asking him questions and eventually accepted his invitation to attend church. After seeing the surprised faces of my colleague and me, he asked us, "Do Americans talk about Jesus in their workplaces?" Our answers were significantly less emphatic, and ambiguous at best. Without a word, our table was dumbfounded with irony, best described by a Chinese church leader cited in Daniel Henderson's, *Old Paths New Power* (Moody, 2016): "We believe we are handling our persecution better than you are handling your prosperity."

While China remains officially atheist, the Communist Party cannot purge from the Chinese soul what is plain to them: That God exists and He is sovereign. So many respond to the gospel because it fills the longing of their hearts. And the result? They tell their family, friends, associates, and neighbors about Jesus. "And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47b).

Personally and ministerially, this trip was refreshing to me. Apart from the CCCC Annual Gathering in Pittsburgh, I hadn't taken a break from my local ministry context for retreat or vacation since December 2016. As a result of this excursion I was inspired, challenged, and humbled by the faithful work of our brothers and sisters in China. I returned to New Hampshire determined to equip the flock unto the end that, if asked whether they talk about Jesus wherever they go, the answer will be, "Of Course!"



CCCC PRINT RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE HOME OFFICE

Overprint copies of both the Monday Prayer Guide and the CCCC Ministry flyer are available* at cost (+shipping) from the Home Office.

Monday Prayer Guides - \$10 per 50 (*includes shipping*)- \$15/100

Ministry Flyers - \$8 per 50 (*includes shipping*)- \$10/100.

Self-print files of both items are also available on the website.
Go to: <http://www.cccusa.com/resources/publications/>

**While supplies last, order yours today!*

CCCC NEWS



MATT MILLIGAN, CCCC PRESIDENT

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

The Board of Directors met on October 17th via web conference. It marked the first meeting since the July Annual Gathering, with newly elected members in place and the full

Board present. Some of the following highlights from the meeting indicate three key areas that are emerging as strategic points of focus this year.

Financial freedom to carry out our God-given mission

The Conference expenses are currently tracking with budget, and while the income is sitting below that, the largest months of members' support are expected to come with the final quarter of the year. Auditors have also approved the release of \$39,000 which was previously restricted. The staff are highly engaged in developing a clear process available for churches in transition who want to creatively find ways to support local church mission within the Conference.

Communication of vision and ministry

The Stewardship Committee reported that they are working toward better communication of the vision and work of the CCCC. The Annual Gathering Committee is already hard at work toward our 2018 gathering at Gordon College in Wenham, MA where we will be getting to celebrate and highlight much of what God is doing among the Conference.

Processes that promote the mission

Training for use of Natural Church Development resources in our churches, the Turning Point process, and the development of online options for equipping our Community Pastors are some of the ways our staff is working toward clear systems that directly promote ministry in our Conference.

May the name of Jesus Christ always be praised through the CCCC and to the ends of the earth.



CHRIS JOHNSON, ASSOCIATE PASTOR,
POQUONOCK COMMUNITY CHURCH,
WINDSOR, CT

WHY FACEBOOK IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR CHURCH

"Facebook is a fad. It will come and go just like other communication methods before it. It will be replaced by another form of social media after it." Those statements may sound like a justification for dismissing Facebook as non-essential to our ministries, but the truth is the church cannot ignore its importance.

If our churches' goal is the advancement of God's Kingdom by engaging the most people we can for the gospel, to serve our surrounding communities, and to bring people to salvation; then ultimately, we want people to leave Facebook and have real conversations and develop real relationships— not virtual ones. We want people to engage with our churches, not Facebook.

As leaders of the church, we can't ignore that over 2 billion people worldwide not only use Facebook, but do so on average 20 minutes a day. The most significant age bracket of users is between the ages of 25-34 making up to 30% of the total users of Facebook. 1 in 5 of all internet pages used in the United States are Facebook web-pages. (Source zephoria.com) If you want to reach people where there are for the sake of Jesus Christ, according to the numbers, Facebook is an active virtual mission field that can't be ignored.

So, how do people leap from being fed by their Facebook feed to being fed by the Word of God in community with other believers? The church needs to be present on Facebook as much as they should be present in non-virtual communities (i.e., the real world). First, you must have basic knowledge of how Facebook works. Facebook and other social media have built-in algorithms to bring "posts" that are engaged by the greatest numbers of people to the top of a user's newsfeed. In other words, the more people engage with your church Facebook page or group; the more others will see your content.

AROUND THE WORLD

**HOLDING THE ROPE**

BY DEAN AND KATHIE CARLSON

We love rope-holders! ...The concept of rope-holders is 200 years old. We learned it from William Carey – known as the father of modern missions. When Carey was boarding the ship to India, he turned to his friends and compared missions to a person being lowered into a cave on a rescue mission. Carey made a heartfelt appeal: “I will go where you won’t go, but please hold the rope.” His friends took up the challenge and prayed, assisted, and supported Carey for years. Their rope-holding effort enabled Carey to be powerfully used of the Lord to bring positive change to India.

We shared this story with friends in 1989 as we ventured into Africa, and have been humbled by those the Lord has raised up as our personal rope-holders in mission. We’re awed at those who have prayerfully supported our ministry from the beginning, and are deeply grateful for those who have taken hold of the rope along the way. Working together, God has used our teamwork to advance the Great Commission in Africa and around the world.

One of our beloved rope-holders was a 99-year-old woman who’d held our rope for nearly 25 years. She and her husband loved the Lord and passionately worked to share hope in Jesus around the world. When he passed, she continued to firmly hold the rope, contributing an astounding [monthly amount] to our ministry. It’s amazing to look back and see how the Lord used her faithfulness to expand the ministry. She’s now being rewarded for a life of joyful generosity.

Our rope-holders have enabled us to reach deep, dream big, and go far in catalyzing church planting movements, mobilizing missionaries from the Global South, equipping women, building partnerships, and developing mission-minded leaders at every level. We’re following the Lord forward in a very fruitful season of ministry. As president of One Challenge, I have the joy of leading some 300 U.S.-sent workers and influencing 718 Global Alliance workers impacting 103 nations. Committed to lead by example, we’re responsible to raise all the support necessary for our leadership responsibilities, ministry travel, and salary.

The passing of such a major supporter presents us with a new opportunity to trust God for his provision. Would you pray with us for God to raise up new rope-holders to take her place? It could be that the Lord would move the hearts of current partners to strengthen their grip through increased prayer and monthly support. If you sense the Lord’s prompting, we’d be happy to connect personally if you’d like to explore possibilities.

We love the promise in Zephaniah 2:11 –

“Distant nations will bow down to him, all of them in their own lands.” Together, as we seek God’s honor and serve the global church, this is coming true before our very eyes.

Thanks for your strong grip!



**DEAN AND
KATHIE CARLSON
ARE CCCC
INTERNATIONAL
WORKERS
SERVING WITH
ONE CHALLENGE
INTERNATIONAL**

**www.
onechallenge.org**

CCCC NEWS

PASTORAL CHANGES

Kingston, MA	Mayflower Church * (Part-time Youth Pastor)- Reuben Sandoval
Elgin, ND	Hope Conservative Cong Ch Ed Zimmerman
Chardon, OH	Hambden Congregational Church * Kyle A. Boone
Superior, WI	Hope Church * Jeremy Skaggs*

PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Bethune, CO	Hope Congregational Church *
Greeley, CO	St. Paul's Congregational Ch * (Part-time Ass't Pastor)
Hebron, CT	Hebron Church of Hope *
Salem, CT	Cong Ch (Independent) (Part-time Youth Pastor)
Sharon, CT	Sharon Congregational Church (Independent)
Sherman, CT	Sherman Congregational Ch * (Part-time Youth Pastor)
Parkersburg, IA	First Congregational Ch * (Teaching & Missions Pastor)
LaSalle, IL	LaSalle Congregational Church
Pleasanton, KS	First Christian Church (Independent)
Billerica, MA	Community Congregational *
Boston, MA	Park Street Church * (Senior Pastor)
Easton, MA	Free Evangelical Fellowship (Ind)
N Brookfield, MA	North Brookfield Congregational*
Saugus, MA	Cliftdale Congregational Church *
Wilmington, MA	Wilmington Congregational Church (Ev. Free)
New Haven, MI	First Congregational Church *
Glen Ullin, ND	Evangelical Cong Church *
Mitchell, NE	Federated Church *
Grafton, NH	Millbrook Christian Fellowship *
Glenville, NY	East Glenville Community Church *
Lakeview, NY	Lakeview Community Church *
Lisle, NY	Center Lisle Congregational Church (UCC)
Vermillion, OH	Vermillion E & R C * (Part-time music director/keyboardist)
Wellington, OH	United Church of Huntington * (Part-time youth pastor)
Xenia, OH	Mt. Zion Church *
Chicora, PA	St. Paul's Community Church *
McClure, PA	Mt. Bethel Church *
Warfordsburg, PA	Whips Cove Church (Ind, part-time)
Chepachet, RI	Chepachet Union Church
Follett, TX	St John's Congregational* (part-time)
Spokane, WA	Plymouth Congregational Church *
Wilton, WI	Faith Congregational Church *

* = Conference member | + = Independent
Check for monthly Placement updates at www.cccusa.com/FORESEE

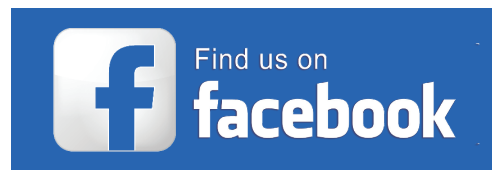
FACEBOOK

My small church in the suburbs of Hartford, CT has about 70 members and regular attendees, but our Facebook page has over 200 members. So, every time we post an event, a picture, or an update on our ministry, potentially 130 people who are not a part of our fellowship are getting updates about our church.

In the past, we've paid for articles in the newspaper, but today, we use less money by advertising our church events on Facebook. We can target advertisements toward a certain demographic depending on the type of event. Our free Easter Egg Hunt last spring, meant to bless families in our community, saw over 100 children attending simply by spending \$50 on a targeted Facebook Ad. There are many free options on Facebook as well. Sharing your posts and events on Town Groups can just as effective.

Beyond what your church can post to communicate the gospel, current trends show that people "church shop" in person far less than they once did. They'd rather make their decision based on your Facebook page and website before they even come into your church building. We recently had a couple move to town who knew all about us as a church long before we knew who they were because they had studied our website and Facebook page to determine we were the church them.

Facebook is a tool. You may not have the time or the expertise to engage people with it, but find someone from your church who does and partner with them. The hope is that someone scrolling their Facebook page may engage with your church and ultimately with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

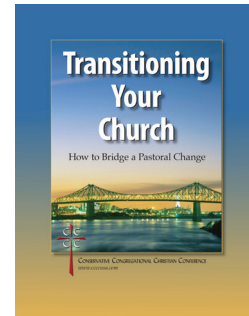
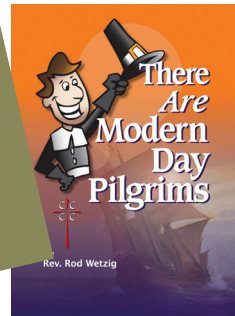
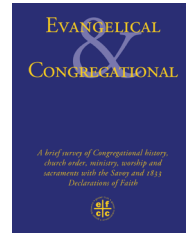
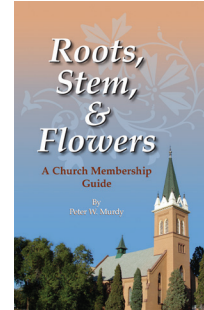
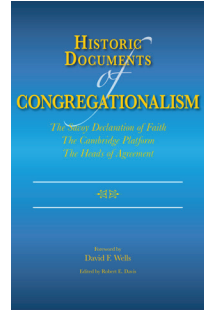
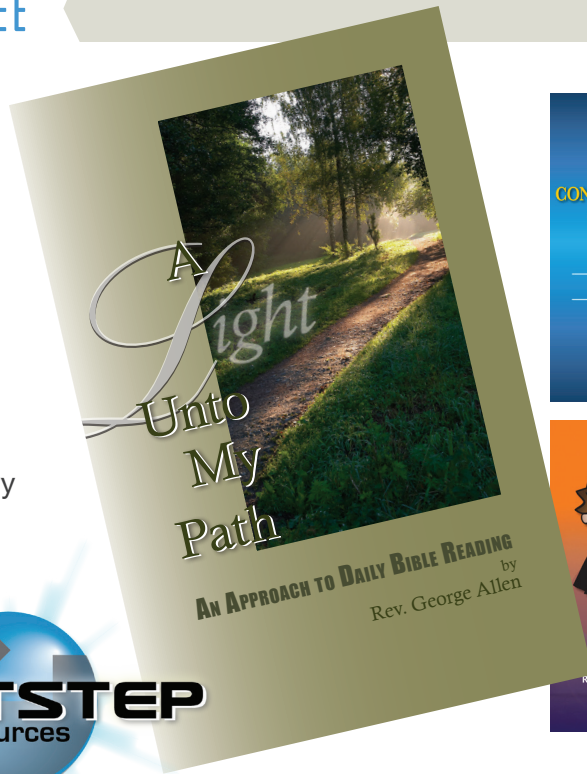


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8941 33rd St North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042

