



BI-MONTHLY NEWS from the CCC

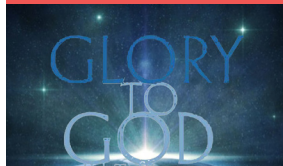
IN THIS ISSUE:

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



CHRISTMAS GREETING Reflections on the Season of Peace



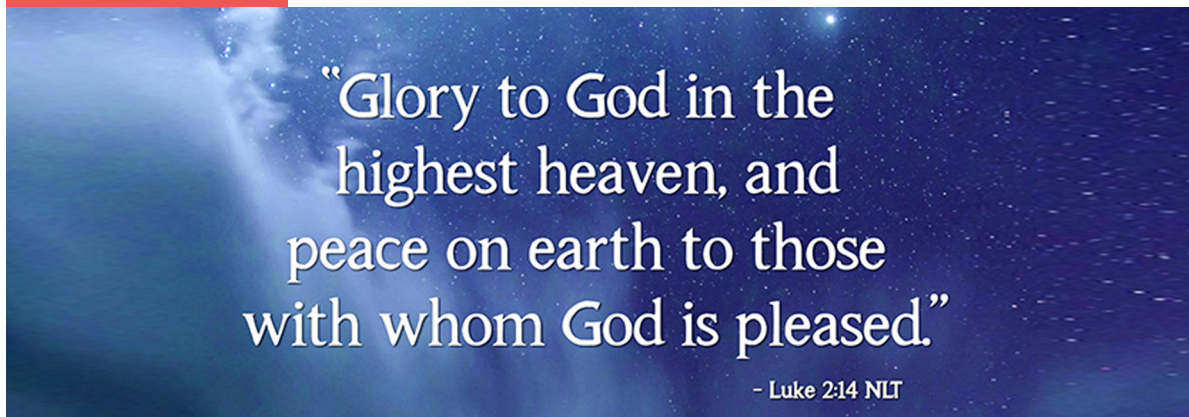
"ONE ANOTHERS" AND PEACEMAKING Thinking of others and making peace



ARGENTINIAN CHURCHES ALIVE AND ACTIVE: Visiting WECF Friends in Argentina

- AROUND THE WORLD
• THINGS TO NOTE
• CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES

CM COMMENTS



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



RON HAMILTON, CCC CONFERENCE MINISTER

The angel's message to the shepherds is commonly repeated on cards and greetings.

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.' (Luke 2:14)

People cling to the promise of peace. Jesus was born at a time that was called the Pax Romana (Roman peace) but there was unrest among the Jews due to the occupation of foreign rulers. We live in a time where peace accords are brokered but are short lived.

CM COMMENTS

For generations people have looked to the promise of the Messiah, coming as the “Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

This angel’s announcement points us upward and forward. God receives the glory for the gift of His Son, born as the Savior of the world. Paul says, “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15) The peace of Christ is promised to those “on whom his favor rests.” It is our responsibility to respond to the gift of salvation and receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Only then can we experience the peace that “transcends all understanding.” (Philippians 4:7)

The promise of “peace on earth” is not empty words to those who place their faith in Jesus. We live in a broken world with broken hopes and dreams of wholeness and peace. The church has the unique opportunity to speak peace into disappointment and demonstrate wholeness in the face of brokenness. Followers of Jesus experience the shalom of God having peace with God and extending peace to others.



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.

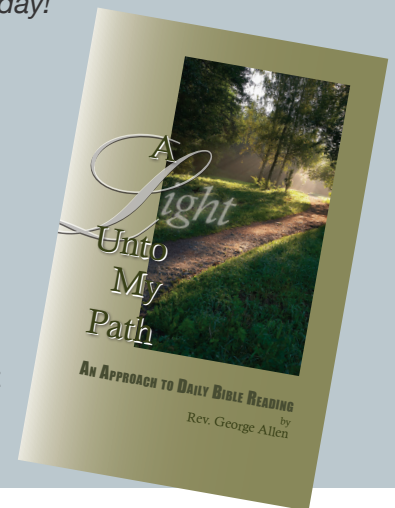
Go to: <http://www.cccusa.com/resources/publications/>

**While supplies last, order yours today!*

A NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION

Get ready for the new year with a new Bible reading strategy from the CCCC.

Go to the CCCC page (<https://nsresources.com/collections/ccc-usa>) at Next Step Resources for more information about this and other ministry resources.





CHRISTMAS PEACE

THINKING OF OTHERS AND MAKING PEACE

NE REGION



TERRY SHANAHAN,
NORTHEAST REGIONAL MINISTER

LIVING OUT THE “ONE-ANOTHERS”

I recently visited one of our churches where they were studying the “One-Anothers” of the Bible.

The “one anothers” are verses like:

John 13:35 “Therefore let us stop passing judgment on *one another*. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.”

Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to *one another* in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

Romans 12:16 “Live in harmony with *one another*. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited”.

Romans 14:13 “Therefore let us stop passing judgment on *one another*. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.”

As I contemplated these verses of scripture I looked over the spiritual landscape of New England and reflected on

CHURCH DEVELOPMENT



JOHN KIMBALL,
DIRECTOR OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

CHRISTMAS AND PEACEMAKING

One of the primary themes of Christmas is peace. “Peace on earth, goodwill to men.” It’s written on our Christmas cards, signs, and even ornaments. Biblical peacemaking and Christmas go hand in hand. But sometimes I think people don’t grasp what this peace is.

When Jesus is called the Prince of Peace, the Hebrew term there is *shalom*. This kind of peace is much more than an absence of conflict on the earth. It speaks of completeness, wholeness, perfection – taking everything back to God’s original creation (Genesis 1:31). For humanity, it speaks of wholeness in body, soul and spirit.

In the context of Christmas, biblical peacemaking means we are used by God’s Holy Spirit to bring shalom to those around us. We become willing participants in his mission to restore peace on the earth. It’s participating in preaching the good news to the poor. It’s being an instrument in God’s hands to proclaim freedom for prisoners, helping the blind to see, being an instrument of God’s justice for oppressed and declaring his favor. (Luke 4:18-19)

I find it interesting that both the Greek and Aramaic terms for peace have similar meanings to shalom. Further, the

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where this is being lived out. I've shared in this space in the past the season of turmoil that has been prevalent in recent months in our region. Pastors have been terminated and resigned under pressure. Churches have split over some challenging issues. Sins of gossip and judgment have divided the Body of Christ. In the midst of such turmoil it is often hard to gain perspective. But it was there in the middle of the conflicts and crises that I discovered the One-Another's of the Bible being lived out to their fullest.

I reference Director of Conference Care Peter Woods article in October FORSEE Update on Vicinage Council's Rediscovered regarding the use of such councils for conflict resolution. If you have not read it, it is a must-read.

I have been part of four Vicinage Council's that were not held for the purpose of ordination. Two were for vetting pastors before they were called to a church and two were for helping churches who were in deep conflict. In all of these instances the mandate for being there for one another was being lived out.

In our most recent vicinage Council not only did seven pastors come together to deliberate about some very thorny issues, but in addition, a board of elders from another church came to meet and pray with the elders whose church was experiencing devastating conflict.

That relationship continues and both churches are being lifted up to the throne of grace.

1 Corinthians 1:10 "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with *one another* in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought".

It's in the Bible and it is being lived out in The Church!

DEVELOPMENT

Greek term *sozo*, translated "to save," also carries this flavor of healing, deliverance, completeness— to make whole. Jesus didn't come to just save us from our sins, but to fully restore us.

Christmas is the story of a loving God who invades a broken and conflicted world in order to bring salvation and peace. Christmas isn't Christmas without shalom. So just how do we join Jesus in his mission of peacemaking? I would suggest it begins with prayer and intercession. Here are some ideas for how you can pray for those around you:

1. Start by understanding that, before it is a condition, peace is a person – Jesus himself is our source (Ephesians 2:14)
2. Pray for healing – for the wholeness we've been describing (Luke 7:50)
3. Pray for deliverance – think of the demoniac who was in his right mind after meeting Jesus (Mark 5:15)
4. Pray for salvation (Luke 7:50; 8:48)
5. Pray for provision – and not just financial (John 14:27; 2 Peter 1:1-8)
6. Pray for reconciliation – with God and man (Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 2:14)
7. Pray for understanding (Philippians 4:7-9)
8. Pray for sanctification (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
9. Pray for perfection (2 Corinthians 13:11)
10. Pray for victory over evil (Romans 16:20)
11. Pray for your own peace to spread (John 20:21; Luke 10:1-17)

There are many ways to be instruments of shalom to the world around us, but I believe it always starts on our knees.

May God bless you this Christmas with a fresh understanding of and passion for your own role in Jesus' mission of biblical peacemaking.

May we all represent our Prince of Peace well!

CCCC NEWS-FRATERNAL RELATIONS

RON HAMILTON, CONFERENCE MINISTER

ARGENTINIAN CHURCHES ALIVE AND ACTIVE

I had the privilege of representing the CCCC at the mid-term meeting of the World Evangelical Congregational Fellowship held in Argentina on November 8 – 9 at the Congregational Seminary in Urdinarrain, a small town several hours north of Buenos Aires. The meeting provided an opportunity for members of the Congregational Church in Argentina (*Iglesia Evangélica Congregacional en la Argentina* – a fellowship of about 120 churches) to get to know members of the WECF from around the world. The Argentinian fellowship was officially accepted as a member of the WECF in 2016.

The meetings also provided an opportunity for international delegates to visit member churches and pastors of the Argentina fellowship. Representatives from Australia, Brazil, the United Kingdom and the United States were warmly welcomed by these churches on the days following the mid-term meeting. Steve and Helen Gammon joined my wife, Shirley, and me as representatives of our Conference.

I was very encouraged by the time in Argentina. The Argentinian fellowship is active and growing and their churches are healthy and alive. This group is planting churches in Uruguay and southern Brazil. It was a joy to meet pastors from these areas and hear their faith stories and learn of their ministries.

These Argentinian churches were planted in the 20th Century by missionaries from the United States. These people were sent by churches from a Vulga (an area in western Russia) German Reformed background who learned of German people setting in Argentina. They had a started desire to start churches that functioned as the church did in the Book of Acts. We have many churches with a similar heritage who are a part of our fellowship. I know that they would be encouraged to witness the fruit of the mission work of their forefathers.

The Argentinian fellowship is very effective in raising up a new generation of pastors and church leaders. The seminary students come out of member churches with a strong call to ministry. They are actively engaged with member churches on the weekends as they work in youth and children's ministries. Some of these students also assist in pastoral ministry with new and developing churches.

We visited church services in Urdinarrain and San Antonio (Entre Rios province) as well as the 60th anniversary service of a church in Buenos Aires. There was a common expression of enthusiastic and sincere worship in these churches and a strong sense of Christian fellowship. We can thank the Lord for the vital spiritual life that is evident in our sister churches in this nation.



AROUND THE WORLD

SHALOM!

TUVYA ZARETSKY,
CCCC INTERNATIONAL
WORKER
SERVING ALONG WITH
HIS WIFE, ELLEN
WITH JEWS FOR JESUS,

Tonight, we light candles to mark the Festival of Dedication, identifying Hanukkah with our Jewish neighbors. We also remember that Jewish leaders challenged Yeshua (Jesus) during Hanukkah (John 10:22-24) saying, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ [Messiah], tell us plainly." Jesus' answer was simple, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep." The works that He did are reported in preceding chapters as he confronted those same leaders (think of the blind man healed in John 9). Only sheep in the Lord's "flock" heed the Good Shepherd. They understand what it means when Jesus says, "I and the Father are One" (John 10:30). This passage is a poignant reminder of the spiritual battle in which we are engaged, the opposition forces against the truth, and the Lord's remnant who believe.



Ellen and I are grateful for your partnership in our Jews for Jesus ministry.

**FOR TO US A
CHILD IS BORN,
TO US A SON IS GIVEN;
AND THE
GOVERNMENT
SHALL BE UPON HIS
SHOULDER,
AND HIS NAME
SHALL BE CALLED
WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING
FATHER, PRINCE OF
PEACE.**

This Hanukkah/Christmas season is one of the more fruitful times of year for sharing the gospel. I've had opportunity to visit with five Jewish-Gentile couples in recent days!

Please pray especially for S--- and his wife. They ... attended our 2017 Rosh HaShanah service this past September. I was thrilled when S--- e-mailed me after Thanksgiving to say, *"I would love to meet and hear your path to Christianity. My wife, who like me wasn't religious, has become a practicing Christian. I've been reading the Bible with a minister and am considering converting."* Wow, I don't receive e-mails like that very often. So, we met for a wonderful conversation. S--- is seeking the Lord. He asked me to pray the Lord will give him wisdom. Please pray with me for S---'s salvation.

On November 16, I presented a paper at the Evangelical Theological Society in Rhode Island on Jewish-Gentile Couples Ministry. I was pleased with the excellent reception. A copy of the paper is available online at my Box account: <https://jfj.box.com/s/e2457e8p-kczo3i125k65ieg0rdkadl32>. And my new outreach booklet for couples, *Finding Spiritual Harmony in Your Jewish-Gentile Relationship*, is now available online in the Jews for Jesus store: <http://store.jewsforjesus.org/finding-spiritual-harmony-in-your-jewish-gentile-relationship-by-tuvya-zaretsky-bt137.html>

As we look ahead to 2018, here are matters for prayer:

Isaiah 9:6

- I need Godly wisdom to advise our Behold Your God (BYG) Jerusalem outreach team. They are counting on my campaign experience and expertise with ministry to couples or families in spiritual need. BYG 2018 is a big deal!
- I'm praying for effectiveness in training and for safety as I travel to Ukraine and Israel in January. I will prepare our Russian-speaking staff for ministry to Jewish-Gentile couples in the Former Soviet Union and in Israel.
- We continually pray for our ministry to Jewish-Gentile couples and their families.

TUVYA ZARETSKY | 10962 LECONTE AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90024
E-MAIL: TUVYA.ZARETSKY@JEWSFORJESUS.ORG | ONLINE: J4J.CO/TZA

CCCC NEWS

PASTORAL CHANGES

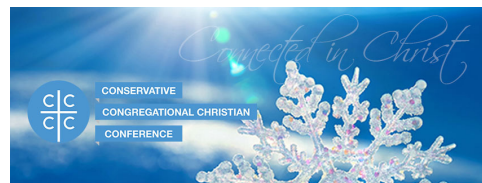
Grafton, NH	Millbrook Christian Fellowship*	Joel Adeney
McClure, PA	Mt Bethel Church*	Robert Nash*
Pleasanton, KS	First Christian Church (Independent) Douglas Sarver	
Chepachet, RI	Chepachet Union Church	John Eklund *

PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Bethune, CO	Hope Congregational Church *
Greeley, CO	St. Paul's Congregational Church * (Part-time Associate Pastor)
Hebron, CT	Hebron Church of Hope *
Salem, CT	Congregational Church* (Part-time Youth Pastor)
Sharon, CT	Sharon Congregational Church (Independent)
Sherman, CT	Sherman Congregational Church * (Part-time Youth Pastor)
Parkersburg, IA	First Congregational Church *(Teaching & Missions Pastor)
LaSalle, IL	LaSalle Congregational Church
Millstadt, IL	Zion Evangelical Church (Independent) (Part-time Dir. of Christian Education)
Billerica, MA	Community Congregational Church *
Boston, MA	Park Street Church * (Senior Pastor)
Easton, MA	Free Evangelical Fellowship (Independent)
N. Brookfield, MA	North Brookfield Congregational Church *
Peabody, MA	West Congregational Church (Independent)
Salem, MA	First Baptist Church (Independent)
Saugus, MA	Clifftondale Congregational Church *
Wilmington, MA	Wilmington Congregational Church (E-Free)
New Haven, MI	First Congregational Church *
Glen Ullin, ND	Evangelical Congregational Church *
Mitchell, NE	Federated Church *
Glenville, NY	East Glenville Community Church *
Lakeview, NY	Lakeview Community Church *
Lisle, NY	Center Lisle Congregational Church (UCC)
Vermillion, OH	Vermillion E & R Church * (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 *
Warfordsburg, PA	Whips Cove Church (Independent) (Part-time)
Spokane, WA	Plymouth Congregational Church *
Wilton, WI	Faith Congregational Church *

* = Conference member

THINGS TO NOTE



FIND US ON FACEBOOK

@CCCCUSA

Give us a like and join the conversation! Share a photo of your holiday celebrations. We'd love to hear from you!

If you haven't already done so...

It's TIME to return your Ministerial Questionnaires and Church Surveys.

Thank YOU!



NOTE: To receive the weekly email FORESEE UPDATE, make certain we have your correct email address.

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.



2018 Annual Gathering at **Gordon College** in **Wenham, MA** July 31 – August 3, 2018.
(NOTE this is later in July than we are typically scheduled.)

Watch for REGISTRATION MATERIALS AND MORE INFORMATION
Coming to your mailbox and online at the end of FEBRUARY



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8941 33rd St North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042

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