

THE

FORESEE



BI-MONTHLY NEWS from the CCCC

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

IN THIS ISSUE:



IN HIS STEPS
Responding to "Stay at Home" Mandates



CREATIVITY & COPING
A New Normal in the Pandemic



MAYFLOWER
Examining our Heritage

- NE REGION NEWS
- CHURCH PLANTING & THE PANDEMIC
- WECF NEWS
- AG CANCELLATION
- FINANCIAL UPDATE
- CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES

CM COMMENTS



IN HIS STEPS



RON HAMILTON, CCCC CONFERENCE MINISTER

The response to the coronavirus pandemic has severely limited our ability to do ministry. "Stay at home" orders have shut down public gatherings, moving most of our meetings to online programs. Believers are isolated from one another and regular pastoral care ministry is severely limited.

The teaching of 1 Peter 2 provides some helpful teaching on how we should respond.

¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish

CM COMMENTS

**OUR
COOPERATION
IN THESE TIMES
IS A TESTIMONY
OF OUR TRUST
IN GOD AND OUR
CONCERN FOR
THE WELFARE OF
OTHERS.**

people. ¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

Our cooperation in these times is a testimony of our trust in God and our concern for the welfare of others. Even more, it reflects the sacrificial obedience of Jesus. Peter continues this teaching as he speaks to slaves who are unjustly treated, "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps (1 Peter 2:21)."

Our obedience to the guidance of our leaders, even if we don't like it or agree with every part of it, provides an opportunity to reflect the love and grace of our Lord Jesus.

²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." ²⁵ For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:22-25)

I pray for God's work in this tumultuous time and trust for the end of the pandemic. In the meantime, I trust that we will look like Jesus in our response.

RESOURCES TO HELP CHURCHES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Here are a few resources available for pastors and churches during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Association of Evangelicals has developed this web page to help pastors and churches deal with the effects of the pandemic.

<https://www.naecarepackage.com/>

This resource, developed by the Billy Graham Center, the Peace Plan, and the Humanitarian Disaster Institute, provides multiple resources for ministry during the pandemic. It is updated regularly.

<https://coronavirusandthechurch.com/>

The latest guidance for faith communities is available at the Center for Disease Control site.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

Ron Hamilton, CONFERENCE MINISTER



CREATIVITY & COPING

A NEW NORMAL IN THE MIDST OF THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

AROUND THE CONFERENCE

CURBSIDE PRAYER

MELANIE EBNET,
AVON COMMUNITY CHURCH, AVON, MN

Pastor Alvin Helms mentioned in his Easter message, "...one of the most encouraging things for me to see as a pastor...to see this local church rise up and serve our city, serve one another, serve the church family, it's been a great blessing for me."

In this time of social distancing, God continues to work in many different ways. The idea for "Drive-Thru prayer" was introduced by Pastor Alvin to the Care Prayer Team. Curbside food...why not prayer?

The team was put together to brainstorm, via texted prayers and zoom meetings. Details were discussed: signage, banners, resources to hand out, scheduling dates and times, at least 2 people on board to pray...Curbside Prayer was birthed.

The first scheduled time was a Tuesday morning. Eight prayer warriors showed up to serve in the fog and drizzle. As the hour passed, we got many honks and our first couple drove up for prayer and to encourage us!

The second time was a cold, and windy, Thursday evening, too windy for our banner and resources to withstand.

"FAITH ON FACEBOOK" AND OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

As the restrictions for gathering resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic continue, the number of pastors and churches turning to online resources for communicating and connecting with their congregations is increasing.

Church leaders and members alike are learning new skills in order to reach out and to stay in touch while social distancing mandates are in place.

As you search for available online resources, an option that you don't want to overlook is the **CCCC Resource Sharing Dropbox**. This is a repository of presentations, training materials, documents, templates, policies, etc., where you can access already created resources available to CCCC members to use for free. It is also a place where you can upload materials you have created that others might employ.

Newly added to the CCCC dropbox is a **"Faith on Facebook Toolkit"** created by Shea Fitzgibbons of Hope Community Church in Newburyport, MA.

The CCCC Resource Sharing Dropbox continues to grow. It is full of many great FREE resources available to CCCC

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

CHURCH PLANTING IN THE SHADOW OF COVID-19

KASEY AND KATIE HORVATH,
LIBERTI CHURCH LEBANON, PA



In February of 2019 Liberti Church began to gather in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. We planted with a vision to live, speak, and serve as the very presence of Jesus for our city, through the faithful practice of Worship, Community, and Mercy.

In God's providence, the church began to grow as we purposely taught our followers to love God, love their neighbors, and make more disciples. In twelve months, we saw 3 adults praying in a living room become 40 adults regularly meeting for biweekly public worship. In February of 2020 we looked back and said, "The LORD has done great things for us and we are glad" (Psalm 126:3).

Then, one month later, COVID-19 hit our region. For a young church plant with limited resources, the implications for not meeting weighed heavy— "How will this affect our momentum and budget as we move toward a public launch?"

While trying to wisely respond to COVID-19, the Holy Spirit brought to mind the comforting reality that Jesus is not only the true bread (John 6:32) and the true vine (John 15:1), but he is also the true church planter (Matthew 16:18).

The complexities and difficulties of a pandemic are not limited to church plants; they are broadly experienced by all congregations. However, Christ's scope of building is not narrowly focused on new churches, but rather includes every local expression of his Church. Therefore, brothers and sisters, let us not lean on our own understanding, but confidently trust that Christ will build his Church, even in the shadow of COVID-19.

Press on, God is faithful!

NE REGION



NEW ENGLAND IN THE FACE OF COVID 19

REV TERRY SHANAHAN,
NE REGIONAL PASTOR

We are all adapting in these unprecedented times to work within the confines of social distancing amid a world of need. Never has there been a greater need for the good news of Jesus Christ.

Our members have been keeping the faith and fellowship that unites us as Christians. During the "stay-at-home" orders, I have shared in some Sunday services of our NE member churches. I have sung out in my living room, prayed and been ministered to by the pastors from New England. I have joined Zoom Bible Studies and seen how we are missing each other.

Our Area Pastors and Community Pastors are holding their meetings online as well. My time on the road has been replaced with virtual meetings.

Leaders have found creative ways to minister, reporting that online services have more viewers than their in-person worship attendance.

One of our churches is doing "C-P-R." Their Deacons have been given a group of people in the congregation and they are 1) calling them regularly to see how their doing; 2) praying with them; and 3) reporting back to the pastor as to their needs. C-P-R: Call, Pray, Report.

In some ways this season has brought us all closer to each other and closer to God. Aslan is on the move!

THE DIFFICULTIES OF A PANDEMIC ARE NOT LIMITED TO CHURCH PLANT ... CHRIST'S SCOPE OF BUILDING ... INCLUDES EVERY LOCAL EXPRESSION OF HIS CHURCH.

CCCC HISTORY



MAYFLOWER

ALWYN YORK, CCCC HISTORIAN

Nathaniel Philbrick's *Mayflower* is the most readable book on the Pilgrims that I have found. Philbrick is a masterful storyteller, with a knack for bringing history to life. The book is based on serious scholarship and his sources are thoroughly documented, but in a way that does not intrude upon the narrative.

The book gives a three-dimensional portrait of the Pilgrims, going beyond the rosy picture we may have of the First Thanksgiving from grade school. Philbrick is a secular historian, but I was impressed by the way he strives to be fair to both the Pilgrims and their Indian neighbors. He tries to present both sides as they understood themselves.

Christian historians have had a tendency to idealize the Pilgrims, while many recent secular historians have tended to demonize them because of their treatment of the Native Americans. Philbrick tries to avoid doing either.

The title of the book is a bit misleading. *Mayflower* deals with a longer period of time than just the early days of the Pilgrims' arrival and settlement. By extending the story of the Plymouth Colony into the second generation we learn of a less familiar and darker aspect of the Pilgrim story. About half of the book is about King Philip's War, a bloody conflict that produced great loss of life both among the colonists and the Native Americans, and whose results were devastating for the tribes. In a sad irony of history, the leaders of the two sides in the war were the sons of two men of the previous generation who had been close friends. Josiah Winslow, governor of Plymouth, was the son of Edward Winslow, a Pilgrim who was a great friend of the Indians and had negotiated the terms of the

peace that had prevailed in the early days of the colony. King Philip (or Metacom), leader of the hostile tribes, was the son of Massasoit, the chief who was a faithful ally of the Pilgrims all his life. The way that early friendship and cooperation between the two groups of people deteriorated into hostility and war is a truly tragic story.

Parts of this book will be painful reading for us as heirs of the Pilgrims. We would like to see them as always righteous and heroic. But much like the Old Testament historical books, *Mayflower* portrays the people of God realistically with both their virtues and their flaws. In their relationships with the Native Americans we see how Christian love of neighbor and evangelistic concern sometimes gave way to racial prejudice and greed. Philbrick points to the spiritual decline that was seen after the first generation as a major factor leading to the war that would occur: "Instead of the

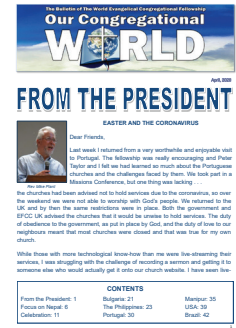
afterlife, it was the material rewards of *this* life that increasingly became the focus of the Pilgrim's children and grandchildren." (p. 198)

Philbrick describes the interesting way that the Plymouth colonists and their Indian neighbors mutually influenced each other in the early years. The traditional picture of cooperation and friend-

ship that has come down to us is more than a myth. Philbrick observes, "For a nation that has come to recognize that one of its greatest strengths is diversity, the first fifty years of Plymouth Colony stand as a model of what America might have been from the very beginning." (p. 347) *Mayflower* illustrates what a Christian community can be when its people truly act according to their faith but also the sad effects when such a community departs from its principles.



AROUND THE WORLD



WECF NEWS

World Evangelical Congregational Fellowship (WECF) President, Mike

Plant recounts his experience from a recent trip to Portugal:

“...The fellowship was really encouraging and I felt we had learned so much about the Portuguese churches and the challenges faced by them. We took part in a Missions Conference, but one thing was lacking ... the churches had been advised not to hold services due to the coronavirus, so we were not able to worship with God’s people.

“How do we handle what is happening in the world at the moment? Some truths to remember:

Throughout our lives, God works in all things, (Rom. 8:28) both those that feel good and those that feel bad to make us like his Son and ultimately, at his appearance (1 John 3:2), ‘we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.’

“...Maybe the effects of the coronavirus will be to turn some at least to seeking God. Maybe Christians will be spurred on and revitalized by the urgency of the situation.”*

*Excerpt from the April 2020 Issue of *Our Congregational World*, the WECF newsletter. To read more go to www.cccusa.com/FORESEE/2020/04/wecf-april-2020.

THINGS TO NOTE



2020 ANNUAL GATHERING CANCELED

On April 14, 2020 the CCCC Board of Directors unanimously voted to cancel the 2020 Annual Gathering in Warwick, RI. This decision was not made lightly, but in consideration of:

- an unknown future regarding the assembly of large gatherings,
- a lack of assurance regarding the hotel's ability to host us,
- current financial struggles making the registration fee out of reach for many,
- continuing transportation issues,
- and a probable reluctance on the part of many to gather in large groups well into the fall of this year.

The event has been rescheduled for next year. Save the dates and plan to join us for the 2021 CCCC ANNUAL GATHERING at the Crowne Plaza Hotel— Providence/Warwick, Rhode Island TUESDAY, July 13 – FRIDAY, July 16, 2021.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

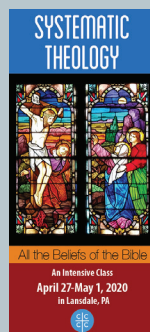
GREG WILCOXON, TREASURER

Year-to-date giving for our first quarter has been strong and is ahead of 2019 by \$11,682. YTD expenses have increased \$25,962. This increase is primarily due to salary and travel expense for the newly appointed Regional Pastors. The Board has agreed to offset these expenses, as needed, from the bequest received last year.

Our Conference is currently in a solid financial position. All bills are paid, and our cash flow position is strong.

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on our member pastors and member churches. We are praying for you and trusting that God will continue to provide for your needs.

Thank you for your continued support of the shared life and shared mission of the CCCC. We pray by faith that God will continue to bless our Conference as He always has done.



SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY CLASS POSTPONED

The CCCC Systematic Theology Class sponsored by the Credentials committee for pastors and lay leaders has been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Work is being done to reschedule for Fall, likely in October. Please watch for more details

CCCC NEWS

PASTORAL CHANGES

Glenville, NY	East Glenville Community Church * Mitch Reed*
Kennedy, NY	Clarks Corners Community Church* Richard Johnson
Tripp, SD	Friedens Reformed Church (EA) Andy Underhile

PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Collinsville, CT	Christ's Community Church*
Colchester, CT	Christian Life Chapel (ECFA) (<i>Part-time</i>)
Parkersburg, IA	First Congregational Church* (Shepherding Pastor)
Hamilton, MA	First Congregational Church*
Holden, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
Kingston, MA	Mayflower Church*
Middleborough, MA	First Congregational Church*
Middleton, MA	Middleton Congregational (Independent)
Peabody, MA	West Congregational Church (Ind)
Sutton, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
West Newbury, MA	West Newbury Congregational*
Bloomington, MI	Bloomington Christian Church (Independent)
Honor, MI	Honor Congregational Church*
Lansing, MI	Olivet Baptist Church (ABC)
New Haven, MI	First Congregational Church*
Glencoe, MN	First Congregational UCC
Nevada, MO	First Christian Church (Independent)
Buelah, ND	Beulah Congregational Church*
Dickinson, ND	Evangelical Bible Church* (Associate Pastor)
Glen Ullin, ND	Evangelical Congregational Church*
Kulm, ND	First Congregational Church*
Taylor, ND	Taylor Ecumenical Parish (Independent)
Mitchell, NE	Federated Church
Colebrook, NH	Monadnock Congregational (UCC)
Peterborough, NH	Monadnock Congregational Church*
Lakeview, NY	Lakeview Community Church *
Lisle, NY	Center Lisle Congregational (UCC)
Richford, NY	Richford Congregational Church (Independent) (<i>Part-time</i>)
Huntsburg, OH	Huntsburg Congregational Church*
Navarre, OH	Stanwood Community Church (Independent)
McClure, PA	Mt Bethel Church*
Soudertown, PA	Immanuel Leidy's Church (Independent)
Stowe, PA	St. Paul's Church *
Warfordsburg, PA	Whips Cove Church (Independent) (<i>Part-time</i>)
Huron, SD	First Congregational Church*
Loomis, SD	Loomis Community Church*
Parkston, SD	Parkston Congregational Church*
Scotland, SD	Scotland Community Church*
Jericho, VT	Jericho Congregational Church* (Pastor of Youth Ministry)

* = Conference member | + = In Process

PRAYER cont from pg 3

About the same number of warriors showed up. This time a new idea was to have some of us outside accepting prayer requests and praying with the participants that drove up, then passing the prayer requests indoors for others to continue to pray. These requests even went home for others to bring before the Lord.

We had many more participants this evening! One person said, "I have been in isolation and lonely, starting to feel depressed, but I knew you would be out here, so I forced myself to come, now I feel so much better!" This is for the one person that needs us today!

The plan now is to continue to offer this service twice a week. Once in the morning, and once in the evening.

Even though we are not meeting for weekly services in the church building, the real church is continuing to find ways to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We're not taking a break from "church" and saying, "See you later when this crisis is over," but stepping out in faith to follow Jesus' leading.

Where do you see God working in your life?

What is the Lord asking you to do?

RESOURCES cont from pg 3

members and member churches, all of which you can download and adapt to your particular needs.

A **updated video** to instruct you about joining and using the Dropbox has recently been posted on the website under the Resources tab. Go to: www.cccusa.com/resources/resource-sharing/.

Joining the Dropbox is easy! You will need to create a free Dropbox account: go to Dropbox.com to set it up. Then send us an email using the same email address that you used for your Dropbox account so that we can add you to the folder. We'll include you and you'll be all set.

We'd love for every CCCC pastor/church or a representative from every church led by CCCC pastors to join the folder. Email cccresourcesharing@gmail.com with your request to join and start taking advantage of all that's available in the folder while participating in the shared life and ministry of the CCCC.



2020 YEARBOOK

A professionally printed version of the CCCC yearbook can be ordered from **Next Step Resources**. You can access the order page from our website. Go to: www.ccccusa.com and navigate to “Print Resources and Publications” under Resources in the main menu. The cost is \$15 and includes shipping.

In addition, the CCCC Yearbook is available as a PDF that is downloadable from the website, also on the “Print Resources and Publications” page.



CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE
8941 33rd St North, Lake Elmo, MN 55042

POSTAGE