

THE

FORESEE



BI-MONTHLY NEWS from the CCCC

CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

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CM COMMENTS



STAYING IN TOUCH



RON HAMILTON, CCCC CONFERENCE MINISTER

I have been a member minister in the CCCC since 1970. I received a letter from the Conference Minister informing me of my acceptance as a Licensed Minister. That was first official contact that I had from the CCCC. It is amazing to see how communication from the Conference has changed over the years.

The name of the newsletter, the **FORESEE**, has not changed. But the format is vastly different today than it was years ago. I used to receive a printed hard copy of the newsletter monthly. The church that I served would receive a bundle of 50 hard copies to distribute to the church. Today, I receive a weekly **Foresee Update** via email with short notices on the life and ministry of the CCCC. I also receive a bi-monthly reminder that the full **FORESEE** newsletter is available for download.

CM COMMENTS cont. from pg 1

DESPITE THE CHANGES IN THE VEHICLES OF COMMUNICATION, MY RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS THE SAME. I MUST READ WHAT I RECEIVE AND REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR THE CONFERENCE.

The annual *CCCC Yearbook* used to be sent via bulk mail each year to my home address. While the content is similar, the yearbook is now available for download on the CCCC website. I keep a copy on the desktop of my computer for reference about the names of members ministers and churches in our fellowship. The yearbook is revised twice a year. Once in August after the action items have been voted on at the Delegates meeting, and in January after the annual Ministerial Questionnaires and Church Surveys have been completed. The January edition can be purchased from the CCCC ministry resources partner, Next Step Resources.

The annual meeting program was previously mailed to my home each spring. The schedule and registration form were enclosed. Today, I receive an email telling me that the information is available on the CCCC website and registration can be completed online. A bulky black and white Annual Report has been replaced by attractive downloadable reports, and video reports have been added this year.

I notice that a year-end financial appeal is mailed to my home address each year. That is the way it has always been and probably will always be. The Treasurer and Finance Committee want to be sure that I understand the need to financially support the CCCC on a regular basis.

Despite the changes in the vehicles of communication, my responsibility remains the same. I must read what I receive and remember to pray for the Conference. I need to keep the CCCC updated on my current contact information. I have to remind myself of deadlines for registration and submitting my annual questionnaire.

I am grateful for the various forms of communication that are available to Conference members. Please join me in doing your part to take full advantage of this information.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITY

STATE OF THE PLATE: RESEARCH ON CHURCH GIVING & PASTOR CARE

We are inviting all of our churches to participate in the nationwide State of the Plate research being conducted **now until August 17**.

Because August is a great time to alert churches to the free Bless Your Pastor materials and \$250 gift card, we included this as a thank you gift for those who participate in the survey. In addition to receiving the results of the research, (https://data.surveygizmo.com/r/479716_5f232b37e-ab4b6.00302251) you will also receive **free Easy as 1-2-3**

Bless Your Pastor materials for your church that can include a \$250 Amazon Gift Card for Senior Pastors.

Go to the following link to participate in the 5-minute survey: <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5651251/cccc>.

Because of COVID-19 challenges, it will be more important than ever before to churches to find creative ways to use the Bless Your Pastor materials during **October Clergy Appreciation Month**.





CCCC COMMUNICATION

KEEPING IN CONTACT WITH CCCC MEMBERS AND MEMBER CHURCHES

AROUND THE CONFERENCE

Committed to Connecting with You

Our Conference has long been committed to communication with our members and member churches. The means we have used have changed over time but the desire to connect and share life-on-life is part of who we are.

The unprecedented events of 2020 have moved us to employ social media, web conferencing and email more than ever. Because we are relying more and more on email to reach out to our members, we are in the process of a data audit to purge and update our email lists. In doing so we have identified duplicate emails, as well as obsolete and erroneous information for many of our credentialed members. Therefore, we are asking you to be diligent to reply to the questionnaires and surveys this fall, paying special attention to providing us with correct contact information, especially one KEY email address that we will use to communicate with you.

We are also aware that some of our credential members are not on our lists or have unsubscribed. We will be adding the information we currently have and updating with the changes submitted on the fall questionnaires and surveys as they are filled out and returned to the office.

Regularly Communicating

Our regular communication includes:

- *Weekly FORESEE UpDates* containing news and stories about what God is doing in our midst
- *Bimonthly FORESEE newsletter* with expanded reports; also available as a PDF so it can be download-

ed to distribute in your churches; or the online version can be linked to websites and included in newsletters

- *Regular correspondence regarding the Annual Gathering*, commencing at the beginning of the year and continuing until the conference is held
- *Critical notifications* for credentialed members regarding membership, significant issues: i.e., staff changes, major initiatives, etc. (occurring annually in the fall and randomly timed depending on circumstances.)

These electronic messages are supplemented with regular USPS mailings. (*Please be sure we have your correct mailing address too, especially if you are not receiving any CCCC correspondence in the postal mail.*)

We understand that there are circumstances where you do not wish to receive all of these emails. Please understand however, because of protocols dictated by the email service provider, if you unsubscribe using the links in the footer of any of the email messages you are removed from all lists and will no longer receive ANY CCCC notifications. Instead, please contact the Home Office to let us know that you wish only to receive the critical information necessary for credentialed members.

The staff and office personnel are working hard to stay in fellowship and communion with our members and member churches. We invite you to help and participate as together we enhance our communication and strengthen our Conference to love God, love one another, and as we go, make disciples!

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

MAKING DISCIPLES: KEY TO DEVELOPING YOUR CHURCH

JOHN KIMBALL, CCCC DIRECTOR OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

In a recent meeting, I told a church that there are three things the American Church has allowed to atrophy:

- Prayer (specifically intercession),
- Bible reading
- and the intentional making of disciples.

I am convinced more than ever that these are primary contributors to the Church's decline across our nation. The CCCC Family has an opportunity to address one of these directly in mid-September.

Because of COVID-19, the Church Development Team has rescheduled our **Annual Gathering Intensive, Making Disciples: Key to Developing Your Church**, as a **webinar on September 10th**. This is both an overview of our process and the on-ramp for our new online learning system. You'll learn about the life cycle of a church, discipling through our spheres of influence, common obstacles to disciple making, restoring fruit to local church ministry, and more.

Because this year's version will be a webinar, it will be significantly less expensive than in past years. The cost will be only \$40 per participant and will include all materials needed. In order to mail materials in time for the webinar, the **registration deadline is September 1**.

The seminar will run from 10am to 4pm EDT with a 30-minute break for lunch (and other shorter breaks during the day). It's a great time for you and your church leadership to participate. We'd love for you to join us! For more information, or to register, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/making-disciples-the-key-to-developing-your-church-tickets-113109014106>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS ZOOM MEETING**

REV ALVIN HELMS, CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Psalm 62 offers us this much needed encouragement:

On God my salvation and glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. (NASB)

In these challenging and uncertain times, our hope and comfort is not in our talent and treasure but in our good, great and loving God. The season of Pentecost is a time to celebrate the truth that Pentecost is a redemptive-historical reminder that Jesus is our risen Savior and Lord and reigns over everyone and every circumstance. This is our hope and comfort.

These are exciting times for the CCCC. We held a Virtual Annual Business Meeting last month. A video of the meeting and the Annual Report are available online at www.cccusa.com/ag. I want to thank Todd Venman for leading this meeting and for his faithful service as our Conference President. We were excited to welcome new ministers and churches into our fellowship again this year. Those who were welcomed this year will have the opportunity to be welcomed in person at our 2021 Annual Gathering. Currently we have approximately 800 ministers and 300 churches that are a part of our CCCC family.

Another first occurred at the Virtual Annual Business Meeting this year with video ministry reports. Please take some time to view these reports that detail the advances being made towards our priorities of Church Development, Church Multiplication, and Conference Care. The addition of several new Regional Pastors is also a great source of encouragement and an answer to prayer. Please make sure that you make the effort to connect with the Regional Pastor in your area.

The Board of Directors has appointed a 5-Year Planning Committee to address the needs of our Conference in finances, personnel, and ministry strategies to help us stay on track with our priorities. You will receive updates on the progress of this committee in the months ahead. The CCCC Way of Life continues to be a focus for our Board and staff. The vision we continue to pursue began many years ago. We are encouraged as we see God's hand of provision as we seek to be led by Him in all we pursue. The early leaders of the CCCC were missional leaders. That continues to be our focus as we live in obedience to Jesus as we love God; love others and make disciples. You are in our thoughts and prayers as you serve God in your local area. Thanks for your faithful service.

CHURCH MULTIPLICATION**THE MISSION GOES ON ...**

BRYAN LONG, DIRECTOR OF CHURCH MULTIPLICATION

As our churches plan for the ministry year, we face the reality that COVID-19 will continue to force us to do things differently. In many ways this is disappointing. Routines we rely on and programs we look forward to will not be possible. Recently, the Church Multiplication Committee had to make the hard decision to postpone our annual gathering of church planters called The Nineveh Project that was set for October. We are saddened by this development even though it was necessary.

However, it is also an opportunity to learn different ways to expand our reach. With the outbreak of coronavirus, video conferencing has exploded and connected people in fresh ways. Perhaps you never imagined learning Zoom, but the moment required you to adjust. I have had more “face-to-face” interactions with our church planting pastors, prospective planters and advocates than I ever would have before. A few weeks ago, I was meeting with someone in Boston, Minnesota, and Denver all in one afternoon! We are looking to host some church planting huddles over Zoom this fall in lieu of the Nineveh Project. Ministries look new, but the mission goes on...

As you continue to figure out your next steps for kingdom work, I would love the opportunity to meet in your city (digitally), hear your story and to share more about how you can be a part of church planting. Our desire is to see every church in the conference involved in the work of kingdom expansion. No matter your size, budget, or context, you can make a big difference.

There are opportunities to become a sponsor church, a coach, a regional recruiter and more! Ministries look new, but the mission goes on...

Let us embrace this season as a time to refocus and reinvent! We would love to help you explore how with church multiplication. Feel free to reach out to me at: blong@cccusa.com.

CONFERENCE CARE**CHESTER, VERMONT: A CASE FOR TURNING POINT**

Many congregations are facing critical decisions concerning the life and health of their churches. The CCCC has developed the Turning Point process to come alongside congregations who are struggling and seeking possible next steps to move forward. The Congregational Church of Chester in Vermont worked with the Conference in this process.

Over the last five years Rev. Susan Moody and the church in Chester have worked closely with the CCCC Church Development Team in a development work. This has resulted in deeper faith, new conversions, and an increased prayer life. Despite the best efforts of the pastor and the membership, the church determined that their current ministry was not sustainable.

They initiated the Turning Point process last year. Leadership from the CCCC presented the three available options: Directed Development, Restart, or Legacy Care. The church members voted for a Restart, choosing to end their current ministry and give resources to a church planter to begin a new local work in a new way for the sake of the Kingdom. The Turning Point Interventionist Team met with the church leadership to write a covenant agreement.

A closing service was held on June 28, 2020. Due to COVID-19, it was a private worship service. However, a video was professionally produced as a remembrance of all the years this church proclaimed the Gospel and reached the lost in that location. Before closing the congregation elected a Transition Board to oversee the church until a replanted church is in place. The Board began its work in July and is working with the Church Multiplication Team to identify a pastor to lead the replanted ministry.

CCCC HISTORY



BOOKS FOR YOUNG PILGRIMS

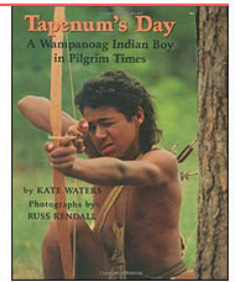
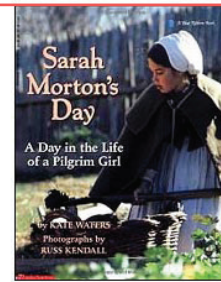
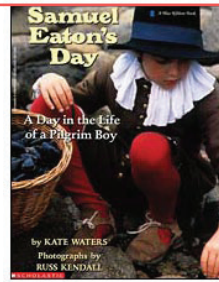
ALWYN YORK, CCCC HISTORIAN

As school begins (whether in the classroom or remotely) this is a good time to highlight some books that teach young Congregationalists about their Pilgrim heritage.

For elementary age children I would recommend a trilogy of books by Kate Waters illustrating what it was like for boys and girls in Plymouth in Pilgrim days. Published by Scholastic Press, the titles include Sarah Morton's *Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl*; Samuel Eaton's *Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Boy*; and Tapenum's *Day: A Wampanoag Indian Boy in Pilgrim Times*. These books were produced in cooperation with the Plimouth Plantation Living History Museum. The text is accompanied by photographs taken at the museum with reenactors dressed in period costumes.

With meticulous attention to historical accuracy, each book depicts the daily routine of a child living in Plymouth. We learn what their homes were like, what clothes they wore, what they ate, and what chores they did each day. We also see the role of religion in their lives. Sarah is learning Psalm 100 from the Psalm book. Samuel's father gives a blessing before their breakfast, and the language and content of the prayer are faithful to what a Pilgrim father would have expressed.

One element which adds to the sense of authenticity is the language used. The books are written in the first person, with the child addressing us in the language of the period. Thus we have "cockerel" for rooster, "coney" for rabbit, and "dally" for wasting time. Sarah's doll is a "pop-pet." When Sarah is frustrated, she exclaims "Oh, marry!"



Fortunately there is a glossary at the end. In *Tapenum's Day* we learn words from the Wampanoag language. The English are *wautaconuoag* ("coat-men").

A book I recommend for middle school age readers is *Voyage to Freedom* by David Gay. Published by Banner of Truth, it tells the story of the crossing of the Atlantic aboard the Mayflower told through the eyes of Justice and Prudence, a boy and girl who are part of the fictional Lovelace family. The book gives a vivid sense of the hardships of crowded and unsanitary conditions, and the danger and the fear experienced during storms that threatened to destroy the ship.

Although the family portrayed is fictional, the incidents related are historical. We learn of the abandonment of the Speedwell, the near drowning and rescue of John Howland, and the tormenting of the Pilgrims by a scornful and threatening sailor who is suddenly struck by a fatal illness. A dramatic moment happens when the Mayflower is saved from breaking up during a storm by the use of a jack for house construction which the Pilgrims "just happened" to have.

Throughout the book the faith of the Pilgrims comes through as the parents of Justice and Prudence show how to meet fearsome and discouraging circumstances with prayer and trust in God and how to respond to scorn and persecution.

TURNING POINT cont. from pg 5

Chester is not the only place where Turning Point is having an impact. Christ Congregational Church in Longmont, Colorado voted to close in 2019 and left its assets to the Conference. Similar to the situation in Chester, a Board was elected to evaluate options for future ministry in this rapidly growing city. Other churches are also considering options presented by this process.

It is estimated that 3500 – 4000 churches close in our nation every year. We are pleased to offer help to churches who are uncertain of their future. We believe together that the local church belongs to Jesus Christ and is his instrument in this world to expand the Kingdom of God. The church is the bride of Christ and Jesus says that even the gates of hell will not be able to stand against it (Matthew 16:18). The Turning Point process restores hope and extends Kingdom ministry.

CCCC NEWS

PASTORAL CHANGES

Carlsbad, CA	Carlsbad Community Church * Aaron Filbrun *
New Haven, MI	First Congregational Church * Mike McDonald *
McClure, PA	Mt. Bethel Church * - Jacob Tanner
Huron, SD	First Congregational Church * Brian Held
Scotland, SD	Scotland Community Church * Brian Beck

PASTORAL OPPORTUNITIES

Collinsville, CT	Christ's Community Church*
Colchester, CT	Christian Life Chapel (ECFA) (Part-time)
Parkersburg, IA	First Congregational Church* (Shepherding Pastor)
Holden, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
Kingston, MA	Mayflower Church*
Middleborough, MA	First Congregational Church*
Middleborough, MA	Rock Village Church (ABC)
Middleton, MA	Middleton Congregational (Independent)
N Chelmsford, MA	Cong Church* of N Chelmsford
Peabody, MA	West Congregational Church (Ind)
Sutton, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
Bremem, ME	Bremen Union Church (Independent)
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)
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) (Part-time)
Huntsburg, OH	Huntsburg Congregational Church*
Navarre, OH	Stanwood Community Church (Independent)
Soudertown, PA	Immanuel Leidy's Church (Independent)
Stowe, PA	St. Paul's Church *
West Pittston, PA	First Congregational Church* (Independent) (Part-time)
Loomis, SD	Loomis Community Church*
Parkston, SD	Parkston Congregational Church*
Jericho, VT	Jericho Congregational Church* (Pastor of Youth Ministry)

* = Conference member | † = In Process

A REGIONAL PASTOR DURING COVID-19



PHIL NOORDMANS, WEST REGIONAL PASTOR, Several weeks ago I reached out to an Area Pastor in a rural community to discuss the possibility of a face-to-face visit. My thought was, "Surely that's a safe place to go." His wise response, however, drew my attention to a reality I had overlooked. In order to get to his area, I would need to fly to a major airport, rent a car, and stop at a few restaurants. Every leg of the journey would potentially put me in contact with people who were COVID-positive and I would unwittingly become a carrier.

Even though travel has ground to a standstill, there are still many things we as Regional Pastors can do. My strategy for staying connected is threefold:

1. **PRAY.** I pray regularly through the list of pastors and churches in the west.
2. **COMMUNICATE.** Two or three times per month I send a brief note to the pastors and churches in the west. Some notes are inspirational and others, informational.
3. **CALL.** In response to the Holy Spirit's prompting, I pick up the phone and call.

I thank God for the Area Pastors who are serving voluntarily in their locals. I also believe that Christ's promise to build His Church is not hampered by COVID-19. Just at the church in China flourished during the cultural revolution, so churches in our areas can flourish during these unprecedented times. Let this be one of our prayers: "Lord Jesus, show us the steps of obedience that we are to take now to cooperate with you to build Your church."



Jorge Hrebien (1961-2020)

Jorge Hrebien, a recent Board member, passed away on August 5th. He was a pastor at Plymouth Church in Whittier, CA, a unique ministry of one church, two languages. Jorge worked to share this concept of ministry and hoped to welcome other Spanish speaking members into our fellowship. He impacted our Board with his devotion to the mission of the church and the development of the next generation of leaders. He is survived by his wife, Isabel, and their two daughters.



CORNERSTONE CORPS TESTIMONY

PASTOR ANDY FRUDD, LAKE VIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH (LVCC)

Within a couple years of my arrival a chunk of our ceiling fell in making the need for a new roof obvious. I have watched in awe as the small group of people from the church answered an overwhelming challenge.

In a few years God enabled them to raise the funds needed to replace the roof on church and parsonage. Raising what amounts to almost two years' worth of our annual budget in three years is an amazing testimony to the faithfulness of our people. Equally amazing is the time and effort that has been put in by individuals to oversee this project. With no full-time staff, this fell on the shoulders of those in leadership positions. They have given selflessly of their time to make this project happen.

We are also grateful for the partnership that the CCCC has offered us. The gracious gift from the Cornerstone Corps put us over the top financially and has allowed the project to be complete. We also are grateful for the favor of our God. Not only did he provide the resources through His people but he protected our roof and sanctuary while the funds were being raised. God is using LVCC for his plan and purpose!



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POSTAGE