

THE

# FORESEE



BI-MONTHLY NEWS from the CCCC

### IN THIS ISSUE:

#### CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

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THE GIFT THAT  
KEEPS ON GIVING  
*God's Indescribable  
Gift*



CORNERSTONE  
CORPS PROJECT  
*Orthodox  
Congregational  
Church*



CHRISTMAS  
AROUND THE  
WORLD  
*Greetings from WECF  
member churches*

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATES
- AROUND THE WORLD CHRISTMAS VIDEOS
- CHANGES & OPPORTUNITIES

### CM COMMENTS



## THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING



RON HAMILTON, CCCC CONFERENCE MINISTER

Christmas is a season for giving. Many believe that the practice of giving stems from the Magi who visited Jesus and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Regardless of our thoughts and practices about gift-giving at Christmas, this is a season to thank God for giving his one and only Son to be our Savior. We join the apostle Paul in saying,

*"Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15)*

Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving. While we search for Christmas gifts that last, most gifts don't last very long. I recall buying my grandson a toy drone. He was excited and launched it in the house. He put the batteries in the drone and watched it fly. It soon hit the ceiling and

CM COMMENTS cont. from pg 1

crashed to the floor. It was not repairable, and the gift ended on its maiden voyage. Not so with Jesus! Paul says that the gift of salvation offered through Jesus has touched and changed many and will continue to do so.

*“But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!”*  
(Romans 5:15)

Billions of people from around the world have experienced the love and grace of Jesus since He was born over two thousand years ago. The good news of the Gospel spread rapidly after Jesus was crucified for our sins and raised from the dead for our salvation. We, who have believed, are Christ’s ambassadors to keep the message alive.

We share this ministry together as members of the CCCC. We are working to equip and encourage pastors to do the work of the Gospel. We are engaged in developing churches to keep the message of salvation alive in this generation. We are actively planting new churches in communities that need the light of the Gospel. Through our Turning Point process, we are replanting churches that are at the end of a life cycle of ministry. We join other believers in keeping the message alive in our nation and around the world!

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns

Let men their songs employ

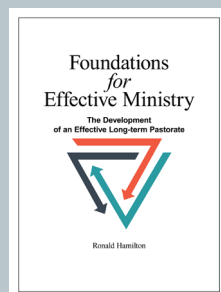
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

## GIFTS FOR YOU:

I have recorded a sermon with a New Year’s Theme, “Forward Looking,” for your use. Watch it for personal encouragement. Use any part of it for your own message or teaching. Show it in your church.



I am also offering an E-pub of my dissertation on THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM PASTORATE. Pastors and church leaders can read this to learn how personal spiritual development, leadership development, and equipping people for ministry will build effective ministry for the glory of God.

To access these materials, please go to: <https://cccusa.com/FORESEE/gifts> to find download links.

## NC REGION



## LINGERING THOUGHTS ON THANKFULNESS

RAY DELAURIER, NC REGIONAL PASTOR

We have heard or preached on thankfulness this time of year, and we are encouraged to be more thankful to God and to others. We respond by saying, "Yes, I need to be more thankful because I often don't have a heart of gratitude. So I will strive to do better." That desire seems to last a few days or weeks and the attitude of gratitude returns to that prior place until next November. It seems really difficult to have a thankful disposition over a long period of time. We can't fake it. It is very elusive. Maybe trying harder to be thankful isn't the answer. Maybe we need another connection.

A connection I found helpful recently is from Paul's words in Phil.4:11, "*Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have **learned** in whatever state I am, to be content.*" What is fascinating is not the idea of contentment, but that he had to "learn it." He didn't previously know it. Apparently it is not intuitive. Perhaps contentment has to be learned because, like many biblical truths, it is counter-intuitive.

The natural way to look at contentment is that, "I'm not content unless I get that, have that, achieve that, or become that." We think we will be content if we add something to our lives. Yet, we strive and strive, but contentment is elusive.

Jeremiah Burroughs, in his book, *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* suggests that a Christian comes to contentment not so much by way of addition, as by the way of subtraction. This is our way to contentment, and it is a way in which the world has no skill. Therefore, it is not by adding to what we would have or we currently have or adding to our condition; but rather, by subtracting from our desires, so as to make our desires and our circumstances even and equal.

If Jesus is really sovereign King over my whole life, then He is to be ruler of my desires as well. Knowing that *His divine power has given to us everything we need for life and godliness* (2Pet.1:3), I already have everything I need as His gracious provision to me. Therefore, through prayer, devotion, faith and thankfulness for what I do have now, I can decrease my desires to match my God-provided circumstances. Then and only then will I learn contentment, and with that contentment cultivate a truly thankful heart each day.

## NC REGION

## YEAR END 2020

### CORNERSTONE CORPS PROJECT

## "Renewing our Vision and Our Building for the Lord"

### Orthodox Congregational Church in Lanesville Gloucester, MA



The Church Development Committee recently met with Pastor Peter Aberle and representatives of the Orthodox Congregational Church's leadership who shared how the Lord has worked in this historic church as they demonstrate God's love in their community through outreach ministries and the use of the Parish Hall.

Over the past several years, the maintenance needs of the aging church sanctuary building (built in 1830) have multiplied. The church was led to move forward with repairs to infrastructure and the building's exterior. We rejoice with our brothers and sisters in Lanesville at the Lord's provision of \$367,000 of the estimated \$500,000 needed for the work.

Encouraged by God's provision and the ongoing faithfulness of the Lanesville Church family, we commend this project to the CCCC family so that we can come alongside them and add to the resources that God is providing for this project.

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To make a donation mail your check to the CCCC Home office or go to: [www.cccusa.com/giving](http://www.cccusa.com/giving) and mark your contribution "Cornerstone Corp" in the drop down menu next to the heading, "Apply this gift to."

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE



## REPORT ON OCT VIRTUAL MEETING

REV. ALVIN HELMS – CCCC PRESIDENT

A season of challenge reminds us of the choices before us. We believe in the providence of God and know He has allowed such a season. There are only a few alternatives in such a season: choose to worry and fret; choose to become cynical and apathetic; or choose to engage in a God-honoring way through the crisis. Our CCCC leadership team is moving forward with the decision to engage our world in a way that honors God and advances His mission.

A call to mission amid a messy world continues to be the heartbeat of the CCCC leaders, staff, and board as we gather and conduct the business of the Conference. Each time we meet there are testimonies of encouragement regarding CCCC churches and members who are making disciples and advancing God's mission in creative ways. Increasing numbers of the CCCC family are engaged in this challenging season in making disciples who make disciples. The board continues to focus on our vision and values and encourage more of our family to remember our mission of making disciples across the street and across the seas.

The board would like to encourage all our ministers and churches to join us as we choose to engage together in advancing the mission that the Lord has placed on our hearts in recent years. If your church has not accepted the 2% Challenge, please talk to your leaders about our vision to expand our ministry to ministers and churches through the ministry of Regional Pastors. This vision is already bearing much fruit in parts of the country that have needed this encouragement for years. If you are new to the Conference begin making plans now to send some representatives from your church to the Annual Gathering in Rhode Island next summer. It is a great setting to grasp the mission and vision of the CCCC.

Finally, I am amazed and encouraged by our newest board members: David Bodanza, Gayle Buford, Joe Marlin, and David McKinley. Their unique gifts and perspectives that will add to those already serving the needs of the Conference as we seek to move forward in God's preferred future for the CCCC. As we close out a year that we will never forget we choose to focus on the glory and greatness of our great God instead of temporal challenges that come and go throughout history. We remember the words of Frances Havergal the hymnist who wrote: "Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blessed; finding as He promised, perfect peace and rest. Those who trust Him wholly find Him wholly true."

**A CALL TO  
MISSION AMID  
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CONFERENCE.**



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE



### 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

WAYNE SWEITZER – CCCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Strategic vision refresh. Staffing needs and transition processes. Multi-year budgeting and resourcing. Stewardship, grant applications, and generous financial gifts. Future Annual Gatherings.

These are some of the high-level issues considered by the CCCC Board of Directors and Conference leadership during their last in-person meeting in February 2020. As the end of the multi-day meeting drew near, the Board recognized that several important topics warranted additional, on-going attention.

Accordingly, they formed a subcommittee to prayerfully continue discussion of specific strategic planning topics with a smaller, more focused cadre. This so-called Five-Year Plan (5YP) Subcommittee has met monthly since then via teleconference, with two overarching purposes in mind:

- (1) to advise the larger Board and other Conference leaders on a range of strategic issues, plans, and objectives; and,
- (2) to inform and support the multi-year budgeting efforts of the CCCC Finance Committee as they ensure alignment between future resourcing and those strategic plans and objectives.

The Subcommittee is comprised of three members of the Board of Directors: Mr. Phil Lewis, Rev. Thomas TJ Turner, and myself. Participating advisors to the Subcommittee include: Rev. Tim Dubeau (Mideast Regional Pastor), Rev. Dr. Ron Hamilton (Conference Minister), Rev. Alvin Helms (Board President), and Rev. Dr. Phil Noordmans (West Regional Pastor).

In addition to these regular participants, the Subcommittee has engaged outside experts for specific discussions, such as Mr. Frank Pace, retired President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc., and Rev. Keith Tolley, former President of Vision New England, for their perspectives on topics such as defining success, prioritizing leadership characteristics, aligning mission and resources, and succession planning.

Per the Board's direction, the Subcommittee's initial focus has been on issues related to future leadership succession, recommending for instance the adoption of succession planning as an on-going organizational process -- as opposed to an episodic, reactive undertaking -- to be better prepared for whenever future leadership transitions might occur.

The Subcommittee has also begun to focus on Conference staffing and personnel resources and responsibilities, particularly regarding the Home Office and the planning and execution of future CCCC Annual Gatherings. For the latter, the Subcommittee is working closely with the Annual Gathering Subcommittee as they begin analyzing the results of the recent survey of the Conference membership.

Please pray for the efforts of these fellow disciples of Christ as they consider these and other strategic issues, that the Holy Spirit will make plain in their deliberations His will for the future of the Conference in accomplishing the work of His Kingdom.

**HIGH-LEVEL  
ISSUES  
CONSIDERED  
BY THE CCCC  
BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS  
WARRANT THE  
FORMATION OF A  
FIVE-YEAR PLAN  
SUB-COMMITTEE  
FOR ONGOING  
CONSIDERATION  
OF THESE  
ISSUES.**

## CCCC HISTORY



## NEW BOOKS ABOUT THE PILGRIMS

ALWYN YORK, CCCC HISTORIAN

The pandemic forced the cancellation or postponement of many events that had been planned for 2020 to mark the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Mayflower. However, the publication of books whose release had been planned to coincide with the anniversary was not disrupted.

A notable release was the 400th anniversary edition of William Bradford's *Of Plimouth Plantation*, published jointly by the New England Historical Genealogy Society and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. This edition is based on a new transcription of the original manuscript, the first in over a century. Extensive annotations incorporate recent information and interpretations. There are introductions by leading scholars which provide background information on the Pilgrims, William Bradford and the history of the manuscript. An introductory essay by Paula

Peters, a journalist and educator who is a member of the Wampanoag tribe, gives a Native perspective on the Pilgrims. This new edition is an essential resource for deeper understanding of the Plymouth Colony. It can be purchased at [americanancestors.org](http://americanancestors.org). Thanks to the wonders of the digital age, anyone can view Bradford's actual manuscript for themselves. A recent high-resolution color scan of the manuscript is available to view or download at the State Library of Massachusetts website.

*They Knew They Were Pilgrims* by John G. Turner is a new book that centers on the Pilgrims' understanding of the concept of liberty. Their understanding of liberty differs from ours today, and it brought them into conflict with other groups who were their contemporaries. For us freedom of religion means toleration for all sorts of spiritual beliefs and practices. For them it meant the ability of worship God purely in the way he directed without mixing in any merely human

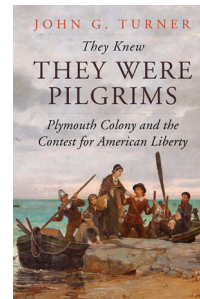
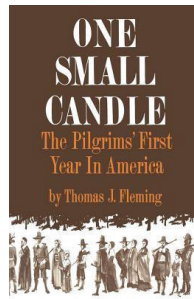
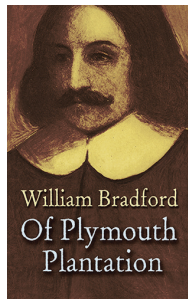
traditions. They viewed the Bible's instruction as being plain to any right thinking godly person, so there was no need for religious toleration. This eventually brought them into conflict with Baptists and Quakers, which Turner's book details.

Turner's history covers the whole span of the Plymouth colony from its founding to its eventual absorption into Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691. Because of its scope, the book includes topics in the colony's history that are not very well known. Much of this, frankly, is less inspiring than the story of their heroic early days. We learn of the growing hunger for land

which produced increasing tension with their Native neighbors, leading to the tragedy of King Philip's War. We also learn that these colonists who came seeking freedom for themselves ended up enslaving others, particularly Native

prisoners of war. William Bradford in his later years lamented the decay of spiritual fervor in the colony from what they had in the beginning. The evidence of this becomes apparent in the later history of Plymouth colony as described in this book.

While preparing this article I became aware of a very significant book about the Pilgrims just published in September. *One Small Candle* by Francis Bremer is a history of the Pilgrims with a special emphasis on their religious lives and ideas. It aims to demonstrate how Plymouth colony influenced the development of Congregationalism in New England. I plan a separate article on this book in the next issue.



## CCCC NEWS

## PASTORAL CHANGES

Hudson, IA	Community Church of Hudson* Erik Davis
Westport, MA	Pacific Union Church* Mark Gelinas
Kingston, MA	Mayflower Church* - Anton Brown
Salem, MA	First Baptist Church* Steven White*
Cleveland, OH	Jones Road Chapel* Jeff Bodziony

## PASTORAL OPENINGS

Avon CT	Valley Community Baptist Church (Converge) (Executive Pastor)
Colchester, CT	Christian Life Chapel (ECFA) (Part-time)
Holden, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
Middleborough, MA	First Congregational Church*
Middleborough, MA	Rock Village Church (ABC)
Middleton, MA	Middleton Congregational Church (Independent)
N. Chelmsford, MA	Congregational Church*
Peabody, MA	West Congregational Church (Independent)
Sutton, MA	First Congregational Church (UCC)
Bremen, ME	Bremen Union Church (Independent)
Bloomington, MI	Bloomington Christian Church (Independent)
Honor, MI	Honor Congregational Church*
Lansing, MI	Olivet Baptist Church (ABC)
Nevada, MO	First Christian Church (Independent)
Beulah, ND	Beulah Congregational Church*
Glen Ullin, ND	Evangelical Congregational*
Kulm, ND	First Congregational Church*
Taylor, ND	Taylor Ecumenical Parish (Independent)
Colebrook, NH	Monadnock Congregational Church (UCC)
Peterborough, NH	Monadnock Congregational Church*
Lake Grove, NY	New Village Church (Independent)
Lisle, NY	Center Lisle Congregational Church (UCC)
Richford, NY	Richford Congregational Church (Independent) (Part-time)
Oberlin, OH	East Oberlin Community 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)
Parkston, SD	Parkston Congregational Church*
Jericho, VT	Jericho Congregational Church* (Pastor of Youth Ministry)

\* = Conference member | + = In Process

## AROUND THE WORLD

VIDEO NEWS FROM THE WORLD  
EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONAL  
FELLOWSHIP (WECF)

First, a Christmas greeting from WECF President, Rev Mike Plant:

<https://youtu.be/ikB81ZcKAQU>

Then, in response to a request for Christmas videos, WECF members from Nepal and Myanmar have sent the following videos of their church families Christmas celebrations.

## FROM NEPAL

Rev. Jangkholam DOUNGEL writes, "This short video named "Anom e, Eiho Christmas" (Our Christmas is Joyful)" is made by Mamang Khongsai and his team urging/requesting everyone in the town to get ready, as December is near, and to celebrate Christmas with a joyful heart, even though there is lockdown and Coronavirus everywhere.

This video is basically a video to encourage and motivate people living in Manipur to celebrate Christmas without the fear of Coronavirus or anything else, and to joyfully welcome the Lord Jesus in our hearts this Christmas, as we all usually do."

Additionally there is a video from the Children's Home in Yangon, Myanmar.



To view go to [www.cccusa.com/FORESEE/video-wecf](http://www.cccusa.com/FORESEE/video-wecf).

## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

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

Go to the CCCC page: <https://nextstepresources.com/product-category/denominational-resources/cccc-usa/> at Next Step Resources.com for more information about this and other CCCC ministry resources.

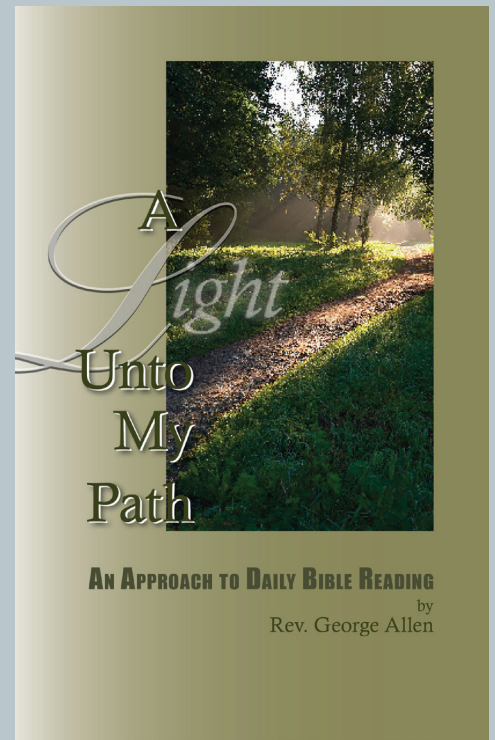
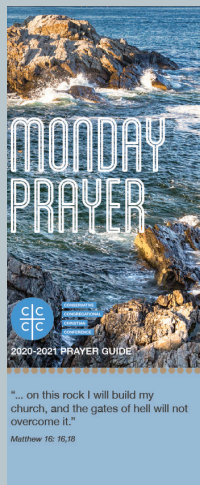
## MONDAY PRAYER GUIDES ALSO AVAILABLE

Copies of the Monday Prayer Guide are available\* at cost (+shipping) from the Home Office.

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

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

*\*While supplies last, order yours today!*



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