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Jennifer Mandelbaum Rock

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59th Annual Meeting and Conference
National Association of Congregational Christian Churches
June 22-25, 2013

The CONGREGATIONALIST

Magazine of the Congregational Way

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September 2012

ABOLITION TOWNS: GRINNELL

Panamerican Institute
CELEBRATES
ITS 50TH

THE NEW **NA**

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE
2012 ANNUAL MEETING

Inanda Seminary, South Africa—

“SHINE WHERE YOU ARE”

OSHKOSH SANCTUARY CENTENNIAL

and more ...



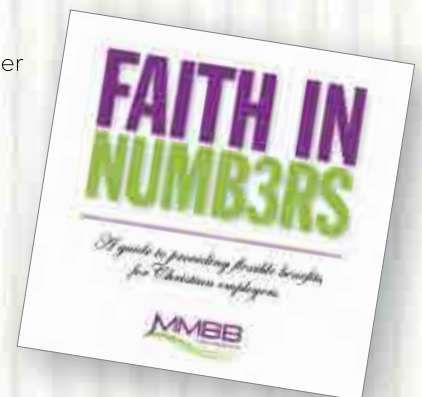
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Larry Sommers

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Annual Meeting delegates and attendees worship in the early New England-style meetinghouse of the Colonial Church of Edina, Minnesota.

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The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches
Bringing together Congregational Christian Churches for mutual care and outreach to our world in the name of Jesus Christ.



In the Cloud

If you're wondering what all the "cloud" commercials are about, here's the skinny: Part of the program you're running isn't stored on your computer at all. It's stored on the company's server. You don't know where, because from your perspective it really doesn't matter. It just works.

Cloud computing fixes two really annoying problems. First, it protects you from losing all your work because the computer froze up, or the power went out, or your kid pushed the funny button. Second, you can work on the same project from any computer. No more carting files around and re-installing programs.

Here's a list of my favorite cloud applications. All work with both Macs and PCs:

NA TELEPHONE/INTERNET CONFERENCING SERVICES

What it is: Reasonably priced, easy phone or computer conferencing available through the NACCC office in Oak Creek.

How I use it: It's perfect for regional or national team meetings.

What's it cost: Phone conferencing is much cheaper than a road trip, and it's dead simple. Assuming everyone has a computer, Internet, and a little tech savvy, the Internet conferencing works great, costs less, and lets you share documents. Skype offers similar services for free but requires all parties sign up for an account and learn to use the program.

GOOGLE DOCS

What it is: Collaborate on a shared document in real time. Other users will see the words pop up on their screens as you type.

How I use it: Meeting minutes.

What's it cost: Free! But you do have to sign up for a Google account.

DROPBOX

What it is: Ever use a thumb drive to move documents? It's kind of like that, but it lives in the cloud and connects to your computer with drag-and-drop simplicity.

How I use it: I share bulletins with my office manager, lesson plans with the Sunday school superintendent, and vacation

pictures with my family. All in one spot. All with proper permissions and security. All continuously synced.

What's it cost: 2 GB for free, with extra space for making referrals. When I ran out of space, they gave me more for free!

SKITCH

What it is: Easy image capture and editing.

How I use it: A hundred ways.

When I need to give directions, I snap pictures of my screen, add some arrows and text to explain what to do, and then email it. It's also useful for drawing graffiti on friends' pictures.



What's it cost: Free!

WEEBLY

What it is: Drag-and-drop Web site design and hosting. Easy to set up, easy to update, and easy on the eyes.

How I use it: Our church Web site is hosted on Weebly. It's the perfect small church solution.

What's it cost: Free to cheap, depending on the features you want. Way cheaper than hiring a professional Web designer.

"Sounds great, but what's the downside?" Cloud computing trades ease of use for physical control of your data, opening you up to a whole new level of security risk. Is it a good trade? Make your decision based on the value of the data, not on the hype of the advertisement.

Use them wisely, and cloud applications will save you time and money while exposing you to very little risk.



THE REV. ROBERT J. BRINK is senior minister at First Congregational Church, Saugatuck, Mich. If you have a technology-related question for "Net Mending," e-mail Rob@RevSmilez.com or write Rev. Rob Brink, P.O. Box 633, Saugatuck, MI 49453.

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

58th Annual Meeting
and Conference:

Let The Waters Flow



Melissa Stephan

The Rev. Patti Dando Haaheim celebrates communion.

“The New NA” set sail Monday, June 25, from Bloomington, Minn., on “rivers of living water.”

Unanimously, 142 member churches present and voting rebuilt the National Association “from the keel up” for the first time in its 57-year existence. With the dawning of what had just been accomplished, shouts and applause burst forth from the gathered body.

The Strategic Plan, more than three years in the making, will now be implemented as envisioned by the Transition Team (see “Rollout: The New NACCC,” *THE CONGREGATIONALIST*, June 2012, pp. 6-9).

Transition Team chair Rev. Beth Faeth and Executive Committee chair Varn Philbrook got a sustained ovation for their dogged and gracious guidance of the complex process.

The Rev. Patti Dando Haaheim moderated the Minnesota-flavored 58th Annual Meeting and Conference, with its theme, “Out of our hearts shall flow rivers of living water” (John 7:38). In Saturday’s opening session, Minnesota Congregationalists poured waters gathered from the state’s myriad lakes, rivers, and streams into a fountain designed and built by the Rev. Casey vanderBent, co-chair of the host committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

Seven churches were accepted and inducted to membership in the association (see sidebar next page).

Delegates on Tuesday approved a Shared Ministries Fund budget with a \$153,941 deficit, with hopes that the “new NA” will achieve organizational solvency in the near future.

The churches also voted to make senior staff compensation public. Accordingly, it was disclosed that the Rev. Dr. Tom Richard, executive secretary, is to receive total compensation of \$10,276 per month during the current fiscal year and the Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro, dean of the Center for Congregational Learning, \$8,195 per month.

Delegates expressed concern over the termination, for purely financial reasons, of the associate executive secretary position capably filled by the Rev. John Caron—a loss that underscored the association’s financial crisis. (Rev. Carson



The Rev. J. R. McAleily explains how the Missionary Society will function in the new NA, as the Transition Team fields questions from delegates.

has been called to the pulpit of Elijah Kellogg Congregational Church, Harpswell, Maine, and began service there July 1.)

Responding to an urgent need, delegates and attendees in Minnesota passed a hat and raised \$2,271 on the spot to help the NAPF and HOPE youth groups, on their mission project in South Dakota, provide a new roof for the home of a Lakota Indian daycare provider (see "NAPF/HOPE," pp. 18).

A highlight of the meeting was the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies graduation ceremony for six new ministers: Gloria Skeete, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Julie Sheridan Smith, Wauwatosa, Wis.; Lisa Bolton-Hunt, East Lansing, Mich.; Margaret Wallin, Lansing, Mich.; Phyllis Merritt, Jonesport, Maine; and Reno Wright, Southfield, Mich.

Rev. Merritt received the John W. Claxton Memorial Award, for showing extraordinary understanding of Congregationalism and its practices and thereby contributing to the excellence of the CFTS program.



Rev. Phyllis Merritt

But beyond the practical matters handled by delegates to the Annual Meeting, the "Conference" portion of the yearly gathering provided opportunities for learning, worship, inspiration, and fellowship.

SPEAKERS AND WORKSHOPS

Bible Lecturer Dr. David Fredrickson, professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, held forth on "Thirsty Theology." (See "Thirsty Theology," pp.9-10.)

Church planting consultant Dr. Ed Stetzer, sponsored by the Congregational Church Development Division, urged Congregational churches to re-engage as evangelists, more than a century after the heyday of Congregational church planting efforts. (See "Great Commission," pp.13-14.)

Nancy Biele, congregational advisor for the Minnesota Council of Churches, spoke briefly on sexual misconduct and abuse in churches and what to do about it. (See "Sexual Misconduct," p. 15.)

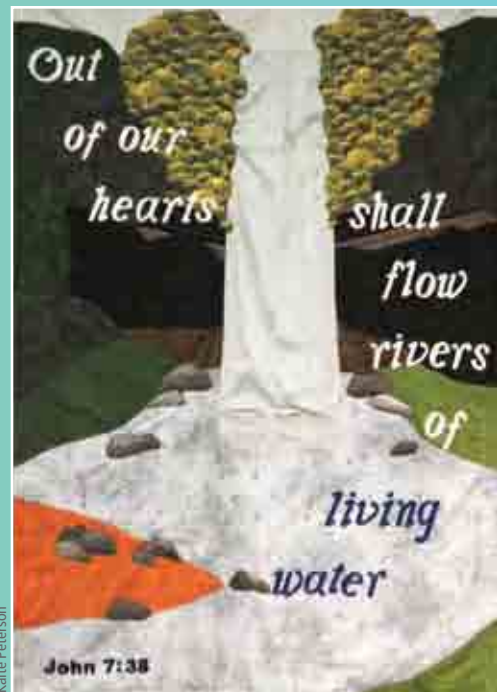
In place of the traditional Congregational Lecture, the Minnesota Fellowship sponsored a Congregational Drama, "The Faces of Our Heritage." (See "Bridging Generations," p. 11.)

In addition, attendees could choose three from a total of 19 helpful workshops available on Sunday afternoon, including such topics as "Change and Consensus Building" (Rev. Dr. Don Olsen), "Securing Your Pastor's Future" (Rev. Dr. Sara Day of MMBB), and "Banners and Paraments and Stoles ... Oh My!" (Jacky Hansen).

WORSHIP

Worship and inspiration began with a quiet day retreat on Friday, led by the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides (see "Living Waters and Rebirth," p. 12).

Sunday worship with holy communion took place June 24 in the conference hotel's ballroom. The Rev. Cathy Schuyler, Duluth Congregational Church, preached "Compassion is the Foundation," her 2011 Division for Ministry award-winning sermon. A choir of volunteers sang the anthem, "Like Rivers in the Desert," conducted by Melinda Hoke, choir director of People's Congregational Church, Bayport, Minn. The Revs. vanderBent and Haaheim celebrated the Lord's Supper service.



The conference banner, designed and produced by Jacky Hansen.

NEW NACCC

Member Churches

The following churches joined the National Association:

Freedom Congregational Home Church
Anchorage, Alaska

Hampshire Colony Congregational Church
Princeton, Illinois

West Gorham Union Church
Gorham, Maine

Orthodox Congregational Church of Petersham
Petersham, Massachusetts

First Congregational Church
Breckenridge, Michigan

First Congregational Church
East Hardwick, Vermont

The River Community Church
Houlton, Wisconsin

The Sunday offering of over \$3,000 was given ImpactLives™, a Minnesota-based non-profit helps feed the hungry of the Third World; and the group's subsequent workshop, NACCC people packaged 8,424 meals—enough to feed 39 families of six for more than a month.

Congregational Christian Partnerships sponsored morning devotions and evening vespers each day, a prayer breakfast, and an evening healing service led by the Rev. Dr. Arthur Rouner Sunday night. One of the hotel's meeting rooms was set aside as a 24-hour chapel.

Delegates and attendees also received grace in the wilderness by wandering the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, across the street from the conference hotel. More than one guest reported a close encounter with a graceful white-tailed doe roaming the wooded site.

A final worship opportunity occurred on Tuesday night at Colonial Church of Edina, Minn. After a delicious meal, attendees worshiped in the church's striking 1970s sanctuary, built in continuation of the early New England meetinghouse style.

Dr. Rouner, founding pastor, recalled how the architect, after touring New England meetinghouses, promised: "We will build you what the Pilgrims would build, if they were around today." Rouner's instant reply to the architect: "*We are!*"

Colonial's current senior minister, the Rev. Dr. Daniel Harrell, preached on "The Ponzi Gospel."

FELLOWSHIP

Congregationalists seem to understand most church activities as "Fellowship." Besides the fellowship of business meeting, lectures, workshops, and worship times, the conference offered fellowship and mutual care by a host of NA sub-groups.

Fifteen national and international missions had representatives present, mingling with delegates and attendees, and reporting the progress and needs of their missions during a Missionary Society luncheon and an evening gathering. The Missionary Society Alumni also met and vowed to continue their support under the new NA structure.

There were also the usual (but never routine!) comings-together of Congregational Foundation donors, the American Committee for the International Congregational Fellowship, the *CONGREGATIONALIST* Editor's Round Table, the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides, the Retired Ministers and Intentional Transitional Ministers, the Division for Ministry and Congregational Foundation



Rouner



V. Philbrook



Faeth

Larry Sommers photos

for Theological Studies, the Washington Gladden Society, Women in Ministry, the Anne Hutchinson Society, and the Committee for the Continuation of Congregational Christian Churches.

Other fellowship opportunities included a delegates' reception and ice cream social Saturday night, a picnic followed by musical entertainment at Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis, and a jam session with Rev. Elliot Wimbush and Friends.

CREDIT DUE

The gathering was planned and coordinated by the Annual Meeting and Conference Planning Committee, co-chaired by Liz Philbrook and moderator Patti Haaheim; the Minnesota Host Committee, co-chaired by Rev. Casey vanderBent and moderator Patti Haaheim; the Credentials Committee, Beth Borland and the Rev. Andrew McHenry; and the NACCC meeting planner, Carrie Dahm, and missions director, Linda Miller.

At the close of the meeting, Rev. Haaheim handed over the gavel to the Rev. Neil Hunt, who now starts a two-year term as moderator under the new NA structure. The role will include chairing the new Leadership Council and moderating the annual business meeting but will no longer include conference planning.

Delegates and attendees looked forward to the coming implementation of the Strategic Plan and to next year's Annual Meeting and Conference in Orlando, Fla.



The Rev. Dr. Lori Wiley conducts a workshop on prayer.

Barry Szymanski

2012 Bible Lectures:

“Thirsty Theology”

A Happy—and Humbling—Exchange

Those who came to the well thirsting for biblical study with theological depth were likely not disappointed by Dr. David E. Fredrickson’s three Bible lectures. His presentations invited hearers to re-imagine the person of Christ and the mission of the Church, offering new interpretive lenses for familiar New Testament texts, based on close engagement with the original Greek.

Fredrickson is an ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, where he has taught since 1987.

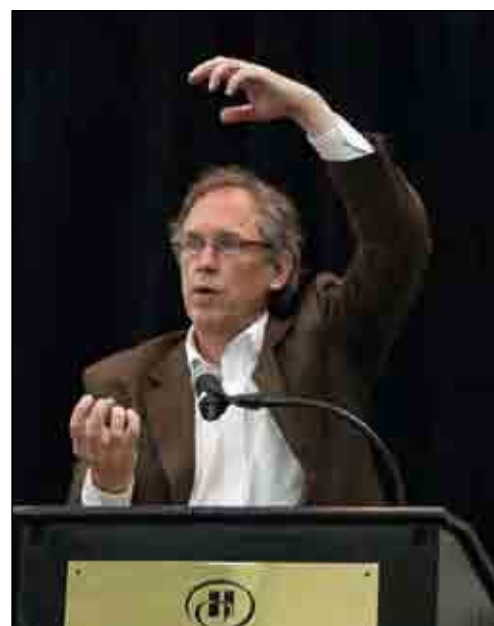
In his first two lectures, he treated the Christ-hymn in Philippians 2, noting, “The irony of this little piece of poetry is that it is one of the most radical, liberating passages I could imagine in the New Testament” yet has often been interpreted to justify oppression.

The typical reading of this text holds that as God and Christ have “all the same stuff”—omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and so on—Christ is simply “putting all of the ‘omnis’ on the shelf, hiding them, masking them.” He takes human form and is completely obedient to God, serving as an example that we too, should be obedient to God. Thus, Christ was raised from the dead as a reward for obedience, and human beings need to imitate that obedience.

Fredrickson, however, championed an alternative reading considered previously by Bernard of Clairvaux and by Martin Luther, who asked, “To whom was he [Christ] a slave?” Perhaps the answer, Fredrickson suggested, is that he was a slave to humankind.

Fredrickson reminded us that the Philippians, far away from thriving synagogues, would not have come to faith in Christ through the Hebrew scriptures; rather, their culture was Greco-Roman. In Greek thought, divine-human interactions were often characterized by abduction and sexual violence. Stories of Zeus and Europa, Ganymede, and Eos and Tithonos reinforce this perception.

Within the Christ-hymn, the term *arpagmos*, a Greek term for robbing or stealing, is often translated as “exploitation.” In Fredrickson’s view, instead of robbing or stealing from humanity, Christ “emptied himself of all the ‘omnis.’” Christ is portrayed as one who is in love with humankind and who—as in



Dr. David Fredrickson

ancient Greek love poems—empties himself and becomes a slave. Christ is viewed as dying from a form of “lovesickness,” a familiar concept in the ancient world. Those immersed in Greco-Roman culture would have resonated with this description.

Fredrickson’s second lecture applied the interpretation of Philippians 2 to a congregational setting, noting that *ekklesia*, the Greek word for “church,” implies a gathering or “assembly of free persons who, through speech to determine consensus, decide their future.” In the Roman household, slaves bore the burdens, freeing the householders to participate in the assembly. The *ekklesia* of the Church, on the

other hand, acknowledges Christ's death for all humanity. This opened the doors for those of all stations to participate in the Church, the new "household" envisioned by Paul.

Further, "Lord" (*kurios*) is the name for one who has control over all things, and God gives this title over to Jesus in Philippians 2. As Frederickson reads it, Christ's lordship is defined by the "longing for deep, intimate communion and sharing in the necessity of others." Here Frederickson drew on Martin Luther's concept of the "happy exchange." Luther envisioned the work of Christ in the act of salvation in terms of marriage:

Faith ... unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom. ... [E]verything they have they hold in common, the good as well as the evil. ... Christ is full of grace, life, and salvation. The soul is full of sins, death, and damnation. Now let faith come between them and sins, death, and damnation will be Christ's, while grace, life, and salvation will be the soul's.

—MARTIN LUTHER, "THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN,"
IN *LUTHER'S WORKS*, AMERICAN EDITION, VOL. 31, P. 351.

This notion of exchange discloses a God very interested in creating divine-human communion. The question Frederickson seemed to raise in this appeal to exchange and communion is: "How much is the Church willing to follow Christ into the necessity of others and how far is it willing to go into others' pain?"

The final lecture also provided rich imagery for the Church's ministry of following Christ and entering into others' struggles. First, Frederickson referenced John 13:1-11, the account of Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet. Throughout his lectures, Frederickson confronted the original Greek text, and nowhere was it more revealing than in these comments on the foot washing. John uses the word *niptein*, the infinitive "to wash," the act of a slave and also an act of hospitality. Jesus, in washing their feet, becomes their "slave."

He seems to be setting a pattern and saying, in response to Peter's rejection of his washing, "If you don't know me in this way, you do not know me at all." Here Jesus uses *meros*, a term for "part" or "share," the language of inheritance. The Church, Frederickson contended, is heir to what God has given the Son. Peter seems not to know that he has been given a gift, "a share in what the Father has given the Son," and "if we deny anyone else this sharing, we deny ourselves."

Concluding with John 17:20-24, Jesus' prayer for the oneness of the Church, Frederickson dealt with the nature of unity being mentioned: "Have you ever thought

of living in the 'in-between-ness' in the middle of the Father and the Son?" Frederickson queried. "We actually exist in the ecstasy between the Father and the Son."

Frederickson applied this to the Church's mission: "Mission happens when the world sees the people of the Church living ecstatically with one another...[and] when people see how the Church lives in the midst of suffering."

Citing philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, Frederickson contrasted ethics being "about learning to control one's emotions," as per the ancient Greeks, with the concept that "ethics are about hearing the knock on the door of the widows, strangers, and orphans." And he asked, "Where do we find the courage to bear another's death, doubt and despair?"

Though some Roman Catholic and Reformed theologians might decline, on Christological grounds, to accept the "happy exchange" proposed by Luther and developed in these lectures, which calls for a human being (finite) to contain the essence of the divine (infinite), the portrait of Christ unveiled by Frederickson undeniably provoked much contemplation on the individual's and the Church's call to ministry, mission, and humble service.

Frederickson did not leave us unsatisfied, but a thirst remains. It is a thirst that will linger as it leads us into one another's lives and souls in more authentic and life-changing ways. It is a thirst for active, dynamic, ecstatic communion with Christ and one another.



THE REV. DR. CHARLES A. PACKER is senior minister of the Rockwood First Congregational Church in Rockwood, Mich., adjunct professor at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit, and chaplain-director of the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides.

SOURCE

For Luther quote: *Luther's Works*, American Edition, Vols. 1-30, ed. by Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing Company, 1955-1967); Vols. 31-55, ed. by Helmut T. Lehmann (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1955-1986).

Bridging the Generations On Stage



RJ and Kate Jones play a mother and daughter seeking their Congregational antecedents in "The Faces of Our Heritage."

A Review of "The Faces of Our Heritage"

by Randy Asendorf

Traditionally, the NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference features a Congregational lecturer, some sage of our Way opining about who we are and who we are not as Congregationalists or about our contributions to American religious life. With due respect to those orators, who have always enlightened and sometimes entertained us, the Minnesota Fellowship's host committee took a different route in Bloomington this year.

Written in part by the Rev. Casey vanderBent, "The Faces of our Heritage" is a Congregational drama presented on Saturday night, June 23, by a cast of players headed by Kate and RJ Jones playing themselves, a mother and daughter. It seems RJ has to write an essay on some hero or heroine of the Congregational Way for her confirmation class, and asks for her mother's advice. Kate remembers a mini-drama performed at the Annual Meeting several years ago in which Anne Hutchinson, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and other women were portrayed. Mom suggests that RJ consider writing about a famous Pilgrim or Puritan male—clearly against both women's natural inclinations—and mentions some candidates.

Now, who should show up that evening in the Jones kitchen but John Robinson, John Eliot, Lemuel Hayes, and Washington Gladden, played respectively by the Revs. John Miller, Charles Packer, Elliot Wimbush, and Seth Jones. Each performer wrote his character's monologue and each provided a unique perspective on Congregationalism's splendid though sometimes checkered history. Rounding out the cast was the Rev. Terry Bobzien playing a contemporary Congregational minister—himself—who came to the NA from the Presbyterian Church. His inclusion in "Faces" helped connect our present and future with our past, represented on stage by the aforementioned gentlemen.

Mom Kate frequently referenced the NA in her conversation with RJ, and that certainly went over well with the audience, eager to see our beloved association portrayed as an important part of Congregational and American history.

The mother-daughter dialog, while a bit stilted at times, was mostly entertaining, and I'd like to think that these two could actually have this conversation without a 15-year-old getting bored out of her mind. On stage, at any rate, Kate and the monologists apparently piqued RJ's interest enough that she selected her topic and got to work. Her choice for an inspiring Congregationalist? Naturally: Her mom, Kate. (I told you it was against her nature to write about a man!)

All the historical characters whose personal testimony made up the bulk of the play said some pretty profound things, but one in particular stood out for me. Elliot Wimbush's Lemuel Hayes said he was "more concerned about getting heaven into individuals than getting individuals into heaven."

Amen to that, and thanks to all who had a part in "The Faces of Our Heritage."

Critic's note: *The play was billed as the second of a series of dramas performed at Annual Meetings. This is incorrect. Several years ago, under the direction of the late Rev. Dr. Bob Murray, we presented a play with a similar theme. I know because I was in it.*



The Rev. Seth Jones appears as Washington Gladden in "The Faces of Our Heritage."



RANDY ASEENDORF, a frequent contributor to **THE CONGREGATIONALIST**, has served the National Association as a member of the Communication Services Committee, the Editorial Advisory Board, the Executive Committee, and as co-chair (with his wife, Nancy) of the host committee for the successful 2011 Annual Meeting and Conference in Scottsdale, Ariz. Randy and Nancy are members of the Congregational Church of Sun City.

A QUIET DAY

Living Waters and Rebirth

by Wendy Van Tassell

To disengage from our current culture, overloaded with its ever-expanding technology and possessions, and brimming with constant demands on our time, one must be intentional. It won't happen by accident.

For the better part of three decades the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides has offered a Quiet Day prior to the NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference. This year's retreat was held at the Franciscan Retreats and Spirituality Center in Prior Lake, Minn.—a site located on 60 acres with woods, prairie grass, and a pond.

Once there it was time to turn off our cell phones and to quiet ourselves in order that we might tune our ears, our minds, our hearts to God's still, small voice.

In opening worship, the Rev. Charles Packer led us with hymns, prayers, scripture, and the Southwell Litany. In the prayer of confession I was particularly confronted with these words: "We allow our wells to run dry and in our dehydration we turn to that which does not fully replenish." It was time to return to what is most true and real and soul-sustaining, the living waters of our God, who was there to provide everything we needed. I am no different from King David, with the need to be led by the still waters where my spirit can be renewed.

The Rev. Barry W. Szymanski, minister of pastoral care at First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, Wis., presented three 20-minute meditations around the theme of "Living Waters and Rebirth." Through the window of scripture Barry invited us to ponder "Living With Self-Truth," "Living in Happiness as God Planned," and "Living as a Shepherd."

Each meditation was delivered in the chapel of the center. From there individuals moved in silence all over the center to reflect upon what Barry had said. Some remained in the buildings, others walked the paths. Outdoor chairs and benches offered inviting places to think, journal, rest, reflect, read, and pray for periods of 30 minutes to an hour.

In the center of the Quiet Day retreat, lunch was served. It's a bit counter-intuitive to be surrounded by members of the NACCC family and not talk, but holy silence extended through the meal as we received physical nourishment to complement the day's spiritual nourishment. Charles Packer



Barry Szymanski



Barry Szymanski

The Rev. Charles Packer leads Quiet Day participants in worship.

shared a reading by Kathleen Norris from *The Cloister Walk*, accompanied only by the clink of utensils.

The Quiet Day ended with worship, similar to the opening worship, led by Charles. Following 6½ short hours of quiet, it was time to re-engage with the world and its demands, time for re-birth, time to live our lives bathed by God's living waters.

Maybe you, too, are in need of a Quiet Day. To learn more about the Congregational Society of Classical Retreat Guides and its Quiet Days or Silent Retreats, contact the society's president, Rev. Randy Kohls, revkohls@sbcglobal.net, or its chaplain-director, Rev. Dr. Charles Packer at 734-379-3711 or rfcc@netzero.com.



THE REV. WENDY G. VAN TASSELL co-pastors First Congregational Church of Spencer, Iowa, with her husband, Tom. Wendy serves on the Annual Meeting and Conference Planning Team and is a Pilgrim Partner, mentoring two current CFTS students. Wendy received the 2012 Executive Committee Citation for her dedication and commitment to the NACCC.

“On The Highway of the Great Commission”

by *Stu Merkel*

Barreling down the highway, I was in a hurry. I had just enough time to get from Milwaukee to Minneapolis for the opening session. I programmed the GPS, set cruise control at the safest possible speed, and headed off towards possibly the best NA meeting ever. I was excited to witness the keynote presentation by Ed Stetzer, a leading authority on church planting and revitalization across the country, and I arrived just in time.

Stetzer had spent a day and a half with the members of the Congregational Church Development Division, which sponsored his talk, and he knew very well what the situation and needs are in NACCC churches. He chose four passages of scripture, words of Jesus that are the clearest explanation of Christ’s purposeful direction for the people of God.

“AS YOU SENT ME INTO THE WORLD, I HAVE SENT THEM INTO THE WORLD.” —*John 17:18*

Stetzer made clear that at the heart of Jesus’ passion for everyone was a desire that we would know that “we are sent.” He pointed out that Jesus’ prayer in his last hours reveals that he knew himself to have been sent by God, and that his hope and prayer for all his dearest followers is that they, too, would accept that they were people sent by Jesus. All too often, Stetzer said, we “act arrived more than we act sent.” Having just arrived at the meeting after my five-hour drive, this idea made complete sense: I knew that tired feeling of having arrived but remembered the invigorated energy of the earlier drive. I thought, “Yes! We are people with some place to go! But to whom are we to go?”



Church planting expert Ed Stetzer.

Larry Sommers

“THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS.”

—*Matthew 28:19*

Stetzer explained that in the words of the Great Commission, “all nations” more correctly meant people of all varieties and ethnicities. The first churches were formed by people telling others about Jesus, and as people learned of this great new hope, they formed churches where they lived. So we are sent “to all people,” where they are at. We should form churches that make sense and give meaning to those for whom we go. Just as I was getting it all, nice and comfy in my conference chair, Stetzer startled me: “God did not design us to *act sent*, but to *be sent*,” he

said—and that meant, “to all people.” Was I just acting sent? I don’t know, but that’s when I sat forward to hear more.

“THE MESSIAH WILL SUFFER AND RISE FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY, AND REPENTANCE FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS WILL BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME TO ALL NATIONS.”—Luke 24:46-47

Stetzer then spoke of the message that Jesus wanted shared most of all. Jesus revealed that preaching repentance and the forgiveness of sins was the primary focus of being sent. All people must know there is a life of second chances and a promise of hope in God, found only in the saving love of Christ Jesus. Remembering that I had yet to check in to the hotel, I imagined the freshly cleaned room I would soon find upstairs; but I understood that many people didn’t yet know about the refreshing new life waiting upstairs for them.

“AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.”—Acts 1:8

Stetzer urged us to be people and churches “sent to all people!” He said it’s time to reach “people who are far from God,” because that is plainly and simply what Jesus expected.

Stetzer said our churches must not be “cul-de-sacs on the highway of the Great Commission.” After a long drive, that image was clear. Just one dead end would have ruined my chances of arriving on time. And churches that have made themselves a cul-de-sac are ruining the chances for some to know God.

I won’t soon forget that image of “the highway of the Great Commission” and am more determined than ever to stay on that highway. Ed Stetzer had made an impression, a positive one, and hopefully a long-remembered one.



THE REV. DR. STUART MERKEL is senior pastor of Faith Community Church, Franklin, Wis. A graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary (M.Div. and D. Min.), he has served churches in Connecticut, Illinois, California, and Wisconsin. Stu has served the NACCC most recently on the Congregational Church Development Division and is regional director for Alpha Wisconsin. He has a passion for the local church and seeing NA churches planted and revitalized. Stu is married to Lynn and has two boys, Peter and Greg.

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Nancy Biele on

Sexual Misconduct and Abuse in Church Life

by Betsey Mauro

“Sexual misconduct is not a sexual issue; it is an issue of power,” said Nancy Biele, congregational advisor for the Minnesota Council of Churches, who for over 20 years has worked with victims of sexual exploitation and as a policy advisor and trainer for denominations and congregations.

Churches are not immune from the abuse of power. In communities that are supposed to be a sanctuary for the weary and the vulnerable, built upon the grace-filled love and compassionate ethics of Christ, such exploitation can be hard to imagine; but for victims, whether children or adults, the resulting emotional and spiritual pain can last a lifetime.

In a 2008 Baylor University study, three percent of women who had attended church in the past month and responded to a random survey reported having been the object of clergy sexual misconduct at some point in their adult lives.¹ Of those three percent, almost all reported that the advances were made in secret, and two-thirds reported that the clergy member making the advances was married.

Because clergy are invited into people’s lives during intimate and vulnerable times, attractions based on care and dependency may arise and can even be expected. However, acting upon those attractions has caused grievous harm to the body of Christ and the gathered people.

Ms. Biele listed five markers of vulnerable congregations: **(1) family, friends and victims ignoring warning signs; (2) a culture of “niceness”; (3) ease of private communications; (4) little oversight of clergy; and (5) trust in the sanctuary, where people feel safe to disclose vulnerabilities.**

Abusers are often in positions of authority with little supervision. By their clergy roles, they have opportunity and access, and they often hide secrets behind the claim of “confidentiality.” They usually have limited self-awareness, lack recognition of their own sexual feelings, and have personal needs that are not met. The pressure and stress of the job leads to isolation and poor judgment.

A victim can be anyone, male or female, child or adult, who is feeling vulnerable and may reach out to clergy for affirmation, acceptance, or to have unconscious needs met. According to Biele, most victims never tell of their experiences but simply leave the congregation: “They become the *de-churched*.”

In short, when clergy need meets parishioner vulnerability, the result can be devastating to individuals and to the community at large.

Prevention begins by acknowledging the risk. All 50 states have statutes against child abuse, but churches must also be proactive in prevention. And churches, Biele said, often underestimate the complexity of the problem.

General education about the issues and religious education about power and abuse are important tools to employ. Policies that help churches know how to respond to reports of abuse, as well as what to say and how much to say, are crucial. Knowing the appropriate way to respond to a victim can make the difference between added hurt and the first steps of healing.

1 <http://www.baylor.edu/clergysexualmisconduct/index.php?id=67406>



Melissa Stephan

Dealing with Misconduct: Some Resources

Examples of child protection policies are available on the NACCC Web site at <http://www.naccc.org/Resources/ChurchResources.aspx>.

Church Mutual Insurance Company has available a DVD and brochure entitled, “Safety Tips on a Sensitive Subject: Child Sexual Abuse.” (<http://www.churchmutual.com/index.php/choice/risk/page/intro/id/21>.)

For more information or help in establishing policies, contact Betsey Mauro at the Center for Congregational Leadership, bmauro@naccc.org or 1-800-262-1620, ext. 12.

Nancy Biele may be reached at neb@usfamily.net.



THE REV. DR. BETSEY MAURO is dean of the Center for Congregational Leadership at Olivet College and formerly served the Rockland Congregational Church, Rockland, Maine. Her doctoral thesis was a study of Congregational ideas and attitudes about secrecy and confidentiality in the church setting.

ICF North America 2012-2013



Melissa Stephan

Attendees share fellowship at the ICF North America dinner.

by Sharon Binger

AMCO—the American Committee for the International Congregational Fellowship—has decided to use a more clarifying name: “ICF North America,” emphasizing that we are simply the North American part of ICF. We meet in person at every NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference, and by phone throughout the year.

You are welcome to join our group. We are separate from the NACCC; however, the NACCC itself is a member of ICF, having joined in 2008.

The food was good, as usual, at this year’s ICF North America dinner, but it was also spiced with diners from all over the world. Eleven missionaries and around 40 other attendees were able to gather in fellowship.

We discussed the upcoming Quadrennial Meeting of the International Congregational Fellowship, scheduled for July 29–Aug. 2, 2013. Adult and youth meetings will take place at Brunel University, near Heathrow Airport on the edge of London.

The theme is discerning how God is leading us in our pilgrimage today and into the future. Fellowship opportunities will include a visit to the Congregational church in Bedford where John Bunyan (1628–1688), author of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, lived.

“We are encouraging people to book early to avoid disappointment as places are limited,” writes Barry Osborne, ICF communications officer. “Anyone who uses the form that is already on our website at www.intercong.org/conference-information/note-my-interest/ will be given priority. Registering interest does not require a deposit

Besides inexpensive tours being put together by the UK hosts, our own Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies will offer a trip immediately following the ICF meeting. “The tour is called the **CFTS British Seminar**,” writes the Rev. Mike Fales of Olivet College, which will visit most of the sites associated with our Puritan heritage” and will also include historic sites in Holland. Further information is available from Mike, or from the Rev. Dr. Betsey Mauro of the Center for Congregational Leadership.

of any kind. All who register an interest will receive a priority booking form during August or early September.

“Some UK churches will welcome ministry from non-UK members of ICF on Sundays on either side of the Conference dates. Details will be published on the ICF website together with the details for the optional additional tours following the conference.”

For more information about ICF North America, please feel free to contact co-chairs Sharon Binger (ltlyfreely@gmail.com) and Patti Dando Haaheim (revpatti@yahoo.com), secretary Tom King (Thomas.King@losangeles.af.mil), or treasurer Sue LeFeber (Sue@northshorecongl.org).



SHARON BINGER is a Sunday School teacher and member of the Spiritual Life Board at People's Congregational Church, Bayport, Minn. She also serves the wider fellowship as a member of the Minnesota Fellowship of Congregationalists, the NACCC Nominating Committee, executive secretary for Congregationalism—Minnesota Council of Churches, and ICF co-chairperson and regional secretary for North America.

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NAPF/HOPE

by Sierra and Rosalie Whyte and Lynn Merkel

While the NACCC convened in Minnesota, the National Association of Pilgrim Fellowship and Heritage of Pilgrim Endeavor youth groups converged on Rapid City, S. Dak., for a week-long partnership with Mission Discovery, June 24-30. Two sisters from California report their experiences below.

ROSALIE WHYTE: This was my first year attending NAPF. Despite a 4 a.m. wake-up call, our travel was full of laughs, smiles, and anticipation. Mid-flight, I remembered to pray to God, asking for a direction and purpose. God always comes through, but little did I know the great events that would take place this week.

Throughout the week, various mission groups “divided and conquered” different projects, working with the Lakota-Sioux Native American tribe in Rapid City. My group worked at Rural America Initiatives Prenatal to Five Head Start pre-

school. They had envisioned a dream playground but were never able to find the funds or manpower to build it. We helped them reach their goal, building a deck, a stage with seating, and a playhouse.

I had never used a power tool or actually built anything in my life, so this was an awesome learning experience! By working together, we not only created a playground but gave hope to the staff of Head Start, whose aim is to provide a bright future for the Lakota-Sioux children.

On our last day, the staff made us lunch, which was really good, and very generous. The children sang the Lakota alphabet and numbers; another group performed an honor song, using the stage we built. The kids then played with the playhouse. This was one of the happiest moments I have ever experienced, because I saw the purpose I prayed for being carried out. We were God’s way of calming the storm.

Unexpectedly, the adults meeting in Minnesota got an opportunity to participate with the NAPF and HOPE youth in one of their projects. **Lynn Merkel** tells the story:

The homeowner’s name is Priscilla Yellow Horse. She just graduated from college with a degree in early childhood education, and she works at the Dakota Transitional Head Start where we had another group building a dream playground.

Most of Priscilla’s family still lives on the reservation but Priscilla inherited the house from someone. The house needs lots of work inside and out. One work group built a deck and painted the entire exterior (two-story). She lives with her two teenage kids and her boyfriend and one of his children. They are trying to get the house ready for his three other children to join them.



The roof of Priscilla’s house—before (left) and after.



The rain gutters were full of roof shingles that had fallen off. The roof really needed to be replaced. Supplies for the roof cost about \$1,400 and we found a local roofing contractor who offered to volunteer his labor to replace the roof.

We’d like to thank the NACCC family as they blessed us and the Lakota people by providing the funds for this roof. The total special offering collected \$2,271. Besides the roof supplies, we also used the funds to purchase a replacement sliding glass door for another home, \$300. The Commission on Youth Ministries will disburse the remaining funds soon.

From left: (1) NA youth learn how to frame a wall for a playhouse. (2) Natalie Tasseff of Mansfield, Ohio, Tanner Korbitz of Shorewood, Wis., and Peter Merkel of Franklin, Wis., finish roofing the playhouse. (3) Emily Miller-Todd of Des Moines, Katy Newton of Pomona, Calif., and Kristin Lewis of Franklin, Wis., lead songs. Photos by Mindy Jaster.

In addition to mission work, we had morning and evening worship, as well as small group time. As Jeremy Camp's song, "Overcome," says, "We will overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of our testimony, everyone overcome."

Another significant part of NAPF is the friendships built. I met some life-altering people and made good friends I know I will have for a long time. The time we spend just socializing is more important than it seems, because it allows us to build on a deeper level, with the common love of Jesus Christ.

SIERRA WHYTE: This was my fourth NACCC conference and my first year at HOPE. We organized a Vacation Bible School for the local community, built a playground, and painted and cleaned up various homes. I especially enjoyed the day spent at VBS, playing with the kids and teaching them Bible lessons. Also, I loved touring with all of my friends in HOPE. We saw Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse, and the *Dances with Wolves* film set. It was great to make these memories, and I can't wait till next year's conference in Orlando, Florida!



ROSALIE, left, and **SIERRA WHYTE** are members of Pilgrim Congregational Church, Pomona, Calif. Rosalie, 14, will attend Culver Academies, Culver, Ind., in the fall. She enjoys playing club volleyball and running track. Sierra, 19, is a sophomore at Oral Roberts University studying drama and TV and film performance.

LYNN MERKEL is a member of Faith Community Church, Franklin, Wis., and the wife of its pastor. She co-chairs the NACCC Commission on Youth Ministries and has attended more than 30 NAPF/HOPE conferences, many as a member of the conference planning team. She says, "I love leading mission trips! Especially when other members of my family are present."



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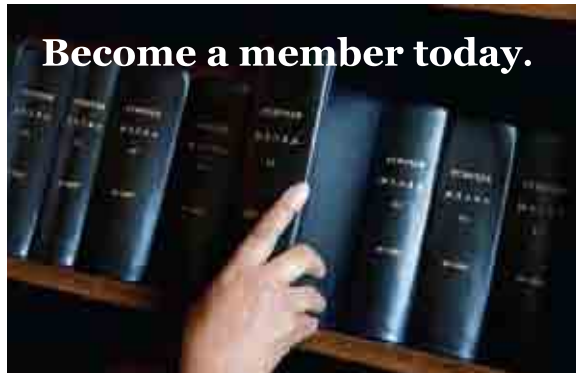
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ABOLITION TOWNS:

From 1800 until the start of the Civil War in 1861, Americans focused on westward migration, religious revivals, social reform, and the Slave Question. Three frontier colonies—one in Ohio, one in Illinois, and one in Iowa—embodied all of these themes. Oberlin, Galesburg, and Grinnell, planted as outposts of idealism by energetic Easterners, pioneered civic and spiritual progress, with Congregationalists playing leading roles. This is the last of three articles examining these “abolition towns.”

PART 3—GRINNELL

by Arlin T. Larson

The Second Great Awakening, ignited by George Washington Gale and Charles Grandison Finney in the 1820s, only grew brighter (and hotter!) in the decades leading up to the Civil War. After converting Finney and soon being overshadowed by him, Gale established the Oneida Institute in western New York to train Finney’s enthusiastic converts as evangelists and reformers. The two roles were inextricably linked in their minds: As Christians turned away from sin in their hearts, so should they also turn from sinful practices in their lives. Finney described it as a change from selfishness to disinterested benevolence. Abolition was to become a chief test of one’s sincerity.

The population of upper New York, the epicenter of the Awakening, consisted largely of emigrating New Englanders, Congregationalists and Presbyterians, moving west with the frontier. They brought with them a hardheaded Puritanism and an ideal of community life that they believed could be the new nation’s salvation. The three abolition towns of this series all aimed at re-creating a bit of New England on the frontier.

Gale quickly moved on from Oneida to found one of these towns, Galesburg in west-central Illinois (*see Part 2 of this series in our June 2012 issue, p. 12*). At the request of Arthur and Lewis Tappan, wealthy supporters of abolition and other

reforms in New York, Finney moved his base of operations to the recently planted colony of Oberlin, Ohio, where an influx of radical students from Lane Seminary opened an opportunity for a major effort in the West (*see Part 1 of this series in our March 2012 issue, p. 14*).

The Oneida Institute did not wither on Gale’s departure but rather gained new prominence under his successors, the Rev. Beriah Green and his financial backer, Gerritt Smith. Oberlin and the Oneida Institute would remain the centers of ecclesiastical abolitionism for the entire period as their graduates fanned out both east and west.

JOSIAH BUSHNELL GRINNELL

One student greatly energized by his experience at Oneida was the Rev. Josiah Bushnell Grinnell, the founder of our third abolition town, Grinnell, Iowa. The Oneida Institute, he writes,

was the home of freedom; its pupils were trained for practical men in the coming struggles of the Republic... The influence of such an institution was never lost upon [this] young student who turned his back on Yale, to gain the advantages under such an instructor as

renowned President, Rev. Beriah Green. ... *The Institute lost its particular status a generation ago, but among those who sat at the feet of President Green, its principles have lived in power* (Men and Events of Forty Years, p. 30).



Josiah Bushnell Grinnell, a man of many parts, one of the abolitionist colonizers of the Second Great Awakening.

After a short stint as a colporteur for the American Tract Society in Wisconsin, where he developed a love for the prairies, Grinnell returned east to attend Auburn Theological Seminary, in the Finger Lakes region of New York. Upon graduation, in 1847, with his radical ideas, seminary education, and intense drive, he determined to take the fight directly to the heart, as he saw it, of the slavery problem—Washington, D.C.

There with the help of prominent abolitionists he planted the District's first Congregational and abolition-minded church. The congregation soon included leading northern legislators. Opposition, however, was intense, and Grinnell was hounded out of town after being charged with a crime: Teaching a black couple a bit of astronomy. Though brief, this Washington sojourn would provide valuable experience when he returned to the District as a Civil War Congressman.

A NEW ENGLAND TOWN ON THE FRONTIER

Along the way, Grinnell had become a correspondent for the *New York Tribune* and a friend of its editor-publisher, Horace Greeley. When in 1853 Grinnell approached Greeley with the concept of an "ideal town" in the West, Greeley offered encouragement (though he denied specifically uttering the famous words, "Go West, young man, go West").

Grinnell soon advertised his intentions in the *Tribune* and *New York Independent*, emphasizing the benefits of "associated" as opposed to "isolated" colonizing, using religious, even millennial, rhetoric reminiscent of the appeals for Oberlin and Galesburg.

The tide of emigration westward, whether for good or for ill, can no more be stayed than the course of the gulf-stream. ... How, then, should such persons go West? ... In



Horace Greeley gave early encouragement to Grinnell's colonization plan.

companies, with persons of congenial, moral and religious sentiments, embracing mechanics, and pecuniary ability to make the school and the Church paramount and attractive institutions from the outset. ... Organized emigration becomes a Christian duty, if a new home is sought. ... [T]he force and position of Christians in the frontier States determine their influence on the all-abounding errors, and whether Christ's triumph shall be early and complete, or delayed indefinitely (Forty Years, pp. 88-9).

Grinnell briefly considered establishing a colony in Missouri, where his wife had inherited property, but pro-slavery feeling there was simply too strong. The actual location of his colony in central Iowa was determined by a chance encounter in 1853 on the Rock Island Railroad when the outspoken Grinnell got into a boisterous argument with pro-slavery fellow passengers. An older gentleman intervened to cool things down. It was Henry Farnam, president of the railroad. He and Grinnell hit it off, and Farnam convinced Grinnell to base his plans on the expansion of the railways. He further encouraged him by providing free tickets for prospective colonists and making railroad land available rather than holding it for speculation.

THE MAINE CONNECTION

Three men, then a fourth, responded to Grinnell's advertisements by becoming founders and backers of his colony. They were Homer Hamlin, a Congregational minister from Ohio; Henry Hamilton, a skilled surveyor; and Amos Bixby and Dr. Thomas Holyoke—both prominent lay leaders in the First Congregational Church of Searsport, Maine, a town famed for its concentration of deep-water sea captains (and where I am currently the pastor).

Holyoke, a physician, and Bixby, a lawyer, both arrived in Searsport in 1850 and immediately plunged into church life as Sunday School superintendents, choir directors, delegates to councils and associations, and confidants of the pastor, Stephen Thurston. They left together for Iowa in 1854, eventually bringing more than 60 colonists with them, so that Searsport's contingent became far the largest in the original populus of Grinnell, Iowa. In addition, Holyoke and Bixby were two of the four original financial backers of the town, each purchasing a quadrant of the site.

What motivated the Searsport colonists? Records of the organizing effort have not been found, but we know something of their backgrounds and religious culture. Holyoke and Bixby were well-to-do professionals. Several families were headed by former sea captains, most since

become farmers. Several were skilled tradesmen. About half were substantial property owners, according to the 1850 census, but many were not. Certainly population pressure in the East motivated some to seek their fortunes elsewhere. But, as with the abolition movement as a whole, what stands out most is their intense religiosity.

Searsport Congregational Church was fully caught up in the Awakening. Since Thurston's arrival as minister in 1825, there



The Rev. Stephen Thurston led the moralistic Searsport congregation. Oil on canvas, First Congregational Church of Searsport, Maine.

had been continual, sporadic, revivals. Teams of lay leaders were appointed to "to visit the members of the church at their dwellings, & endeavor to excite them to greater circumspection, diligence, and zeal in the Christian life." The minister and others served as leaders of the "Searsport Teetotal Temperance Society," which sent out teams to "remonstrate" with those using "ardent spirits as a beverage" or trafficking in them. The pastor spoke out against Universalism, Millerism, and the Masons.

The church adopted a discipline plan that was enforced by visiting committees, church trials, and excommunications:

The following things were reported to be matters calling for investigation, action, or discipline, according to the nature of the case.

1. 2. & 3. *Continued, allowed, & unnecessary neglect of Public worship—of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper—& of family morals.*
4. *Profanation of the Holy Sabbath.*
5. *Refusing to aid in supporting religious worship & ordinances.*
6. *The use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.*
7. *The illegal traffic in such liquors.*
8. *The renting of buildings in which to ["drive"?] such traffic.*
- 10¹. *The suffering of children, when minors, & under parental control to attend dancing schools (Records, First Congregational Church of Searsport, Maine).*

Additionally the church adopted an anti-slavery resolution declaring that slavery is "a heinous crime against God and

man," that the slave trade is "criminal," that every Christian has the duty to work against the sin of slavery, that is the duty of the church to "withdraw Christian fellowship from all slaveholders, & the apologists & defenders of slavery," and, finally, that it is the duty of Christians to pray earnestly that God might "turn away from the evil which now so seriously threatens to destroy this otherwise prosperous and happy republic."

Rev. Thurston gave a stirring anti-slavery sermon for the twelfth anniversary of the American Missionary Association.

The combination of revivalism and intense moralism evident in Searsport was present in hundreds of New England and New England-influenced congregations, including those now filling the upper Middle West. Yet they were not the majority, especially on the issue of abolition, and it required considerable fortitude to persevere. Countless churches split. Searsport itself did in 1854. The reasons are not explained, but it occurred at the height of anti-slavery discussions and of complaints about "peculiar trials."

We shall see that abolition was not uncontroversial in our "abolition towns" either. When in 1854 some 60 members of the Searsport congregation began migrating to become part of Grinnell's new colony, they found themselves surrounded by skeptics of abolition, just as they had been in Maine.

ABOLITION IN GRINNELL

But Grinnell's colony quickly prospered in a skeptical, if not outright hostile, environment. By 1856 there were over 200 homes. New colonists paid a fee to support the proposed college and agreed not to touch "ardent spirits" on pain of forfeiting their land. Because of its abolitionist views and overwhelming sympathy for the newly forming Republican Party, the new colony was regarded with suspicion and even had a hard time obtaining postal service.

When postal service did come, the stage drivers deliberately cut across Amos Bixby's fields, leading to "Grinnell's first lawsuit." It wasn't Bixby suing the Postal Service either, but rather a criminal prosecution of Bixby for shooting the lead horse on the stage—a rash act, which did, however, put an end to the trespassing; furthermore, he was acquitted.

Grinnell himself became Iowa's leading abolitionist and a conductor on the Underground Railway, harboring fugitive slaves in his enormous wool barn. Amos Bixby and Oberlin-trained Professor Leonard Parker led the abolition cause locally.

Yet agreement among the colonists was not complete. A man signing himself "Opposition," believed to have been a Searsport sea captain, none other than the father-in-law of founder Thomas Holyoke, sent a complaining article to the *Iowa State Journal*.

¹ There is no item 9. Either item 10, which appears immediately below item 8, is simply mis-numbered; or item 9 dealt with a subject too unseemly to write down, such as adultery.

ASA TURNER AND THE IOWA BAND

Bixby writes that the same Capt. Clark thought to be “Opposition” met with professional slave-hunters at the stage station “to inform him that a nice piece of property known as Francis was unlawfully harbored in Grinnell. He also wrote, or is supposed to have written, to her old master, Mr. Overton. These things gave us all many a touch of trepidation—not knowing what day she might be demanded for return to slavery under the fugitive slave law. The penalties for aiding, or harboring, fugitive slaves were so severe that one might dread them” (letter to Leonard Parker, May 16, 1887).



John Brown

Grinnell’s most famous abolition incident occurred in March 1859, when John Brown came to town as he headed east en route to his soon-to-be notorious raid at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. Grinnell

describes the meeting in his memoirs:

A ring at my door, March, 1859. “Good evening, sir. I am a stranger here—pardon me—is this Mr. Grinnell? ... I am not here for a social visit—I am the ‘awful John Brown’ of whom you have heard—Captain John Brown of Kansas. ... We are sixteen persons, with horses, and man and beast must be fed, and stop with friends, and not spies.” I opened the door to my parlor, since called the “Liberty Room,” to say, “This is at your service. ... Our hotel will be as safe as any place, for a part of your company, and there is no occasion to wait until night, for you have too much of an outfit for concealment” (Forty Years, p. 210).

Evidently Grinnell went beyond simply providing shelter; in a subsequent letter

Grinnell College Department of Special Collections and Archives.



A photo of five aged members of the Iowa Band, taken sometime between 1870 and 1890—from left: Daniel Lane, Ephraim Adams, Harvey Adams, William Salter, Alden B. Robbins. Not pictured are Ebenezer Alden, James J. Hill, Horace Hutchinson, Erastus Ripley, Benjamin Spaulding, Edwin B. Turner.

Asa Turner was a member of the “Yale Band,” a group of New Englanders dedicated to spreading the gospel on the frontier. They founded Illinois College in 1830. Turner spent the next few years raising funds for the college and planting 13 prairie churches.

In 1838, Turner was called to the pulpit of the Congregational Church of Denmark in the newly-formed Iowa Territory. The next year he became the American Home Missionary Society’s agent for Iowa. Immediately, he besieged New England with letters seeking toilers for the western vineyard.



“Father Turner,” pioneering Congregational minister, mentor of the Iowa Band.

“By 1842 he had convinced 11 young missionaries, the ‘Iowa Band,’ to come west to join him. Eventually he inspired more than 100 others to follow their lead” (Scott R. Grau, “Turner, Asa,” *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, University of Iowa Press, 2009. Web, 8 August 2012).

Turner and his Iowa Band planted churches, started Iowa College (see main text), and struggled fiercely for abolition, temperance, and Christianity.

In 1870 the Rev. Ephraim Adams wrote a book about the Iowa Band, with a poignant dedication to the Rev. Asa Turner, “as one of the first Congregational Ministers in Iowa, and one whom we all love to call Father Turner. ...”

Brown reported that he and his lieutenant John Henry Kagi addressed packed meetings at Grinnell for two successive nights and

were loudly cheered and fully endorsed. Three Congregational clergymen attended. ... All of them took part in justifying our course and in urgent contributions on its behalf. ... Mr. Grinnell spoke at length and has since labored to procure us a free and safe conveyance to Chicago ... (quoted by Grinnell in Forty Years, p. 218).

After this incident J. B. Grinnell was reviled as “John Brown” Grinnell; but he was untroubled by it and even, later in life, referred to Brown as “the Hero of the century.”

GRINNELL UNIVERSITY

A proper New England town required a college as well as a church and grammar schools. Grinnell’s prospectuses spoke of a “Grinnell University” and surveyor Henry Hamilton, one of the colony’s founders, contributed seed money for a “Literary Fund” to support the institution. At first, however, this “university” existed only in Grinnell’s mind. The Grinnell College of today was then known as Iowa College, and it was located in Davenport, not Grinnell.



An idealized view of the Iowa College campus in the late 19th century.

“Grinnell University” was important not only for carrying out the civilizing mission of the colony, but for attracting colonists of the desired sort. With his keen eye for exploitable opportunities, Grinnell immediately recognized that an earlier wave of Congregationalists (the “Iowa Band” of home missionaries, *see sidebar, p. 23*) had done the work for him by opening Iowa College. Knowing that Iowa College’s welcome in Davenport was lukewarm, Grinnell began lobbying its trustees to move it to Grinnell.

His hope was realized in 1857. An unfriendly Davenport city council precipitated the school’s move by deciding to build a road through campus. Extending Main Street was not the only issue, however.

Davenport was simply uncomfortable with the New England reformers. One problem was their opposition to “ardent spirits;” a large German population in Iowa took its beer and wine for granted.² The second issue was their abolitionism. Though Iowa was a free state, racial prejudice ran deep. Furthermore, as a river town, Davenport depended on trade with the South and did not want to be branded as hostile to its trading partners.

The new Congregational colony of Grinnell would provide a much more friendlier environment. The move occurred in the summer of 1858. Grinnell, for his part, gave up his chosen name, “Grinnell University,”³ and made no attempt to reconfigure Iowa College on the manual labor model of Oneida and Oberlin or to become president. His real priorities were politics and commerce.

When the dust settled, however, both the parties from Grinnell and those from Davenport came to realize that neither had the financial, material, or personnel resources that had been optimistically proffered during their “courtship.” Thus the enrollment of the school’s first freshman class was delayed until 1861; and by then the nation was heading into its Civil War, which would soon deplete the college of both students and faculty.

Under the leadership of head trustee George Magoun, the college affirmed the traditional New England curriculum of Greek, Latin, and mathematics. Magoun was inaugurated as the school’s first president in 1865; in passing over Oberlinite and abolitionist Leonard Parker in favor of Magoun, the trustees, perhaps inadvertently, showed that the era of militant evangelical reform was drawing to a close.

It wasn’t until George A. Gates was inaugurated as second president in 1887 and the Rev. George Herron was hired as professor of “Applied Christianity” that the college achieved notoriety as a venue of social reform, in the new era of the Social Gospel.



George Magoun, first president of Iowa College (later Grinnell College).

JB GRINNELL’S WIDER STAGE

Of no small importance was the colony’s role as a base of operation for its larger-than-life founder’s expansive ambitions.

² Later, as a state legislator, Grinnell would moderate his temperance views to keep the Germans on board on abolition—a compromise that pained him greatly.

³ The school changed its name from “Iowa College” to “Grinnell College” in 1909, 18 years after the colony founder’s death.

After all, an important goal was to bring New England's influence to bear on the entire West. Success and even survival depended on economic prosperity. Both politicians and entrepreneurs would be required. J. B. Grinnell dived into both realms with enthusiasm.

On the political front, he aligned with the Republican Party as it formed in reaction to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which threatened to bring slavery to the North. In 1856, he was elected to the State Senate on a platform of free-soil, temperance, and free universal public education.

In 1862, as the Civil War raged, Grinnell, though still regarded with suspicion for his Abolition views and his connection with John Brown, was elected to Congress. He became one of the few radicals to give Lincoln his full support. He was elected to a second term, partly out of sympathy after a failed assassination attempt by a secret society known as Knights of the Golden Circle.

Grinnell had chosen his town's location on the basis of anticipated expansion of the railroads; he became actively involved as a legislator and then as a promoter of railroad companies. Grinnell was also an organizer and first president of the Iowa Association of Wool Makers, another industry he regarded as critical, and later played similar roles with the Iowa State Horticultural Society and the Iowa State Stock Breeder's Association.

Living the rest of his life in the town he founded, he taught a popular Sunday School class where one student stated that "teacher seldom knew anything about the lesson but he knew plenty of other things"—a fitting commemoration of one of the period's most remarkable characters.

ABOLITIONS TOWNS—CONCLUSION

Oberlin, Galesburg, and Grinnell are today known for their fine liberal arts colleges, which carried the tradition of humanistic, service-and-duty-oriented education into a new era. They maintained a focus on the "whole man," a secularized variation of conversion and spiritual formation, even as higher education was revolutionized in a practical and utilitarian direction by the new Land Grant colleges and state universities.

The cause of temperance continued to unfold into the twentieth century. If Prohibition seems excessive to us, it should be noted that our reformers espoused it for precisely the reasons we now prohibit such things as methamphetamines and cocaine—the ruin of many lives and the violence, including domestic violence, they trigger.

The reformers' greatest legacy, however, is certainly the abolition of slavery. Without their unwavering insistence that treating human beings as property was sinful pure and simple, and not to be tolerated, the crisis of the time would certainly have been resolved by some compromise allowing slavery's continuance as a price for national unity. Few today can wish our abolitionist forerunners had failed in that cause.

In many ways, however, these antebellum evangelical reformers seem utterly alien. It is not only their zealotry and severity. They also refuse to fit contemporary categories of thought: At once revivalists and social radicals; conservative theologically but fully embracing current intellectual trends; lumping together "liberal" and "conservative" issues—abolition on the one hand, opposition to ballroom dancing and card-playing on the other.

As Congregationalists, we can look to their time with wonder as the era when we made our greatest impact on our nation, and be inspired to imagine other possibilities for faithful living than those we now conceive.

The author would like to thank local historians Charlene Knox Farris of Searsport, Maine, and David Connon of Earlham, Iowa, for drawing his attention to the Searsport-Grinnell connection.



THE REV. DR. ARLIN T. LARSON is in his tenth year as minister of First Congregational Church, Searsport, Maine, and is historian of the NACCC. He will present a historical perspective keynote address on opening night of the Eighth Congregational Symposium to be held in Madison, Wis., November 8-10, 2012.

Photos of J.B. Grinnell, John Brown, the Iowa Band, Asa Turner, the Iowa College campus, and George Magoun courtesy of Grinnell College Department of Special Collections and Archives.

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Photo courtesy of Inanda Seminary.

“Shine Where You Are”

Susan Valiquette

Above: A group of students, “Lucy Lindley Wayfarers,” parade in the early days of Inanda Seminary.

Left: Students walk past Lucy Lindley Hall, home of the Lucy Lindley Interpretive Center at Inanda Seminary, South Africa. The building and center are named for a pioneering missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who founded the girls’ school with her husband in 1869.

A Historical Glimpse of Inanda Seminary

by Scott Couper

The Rev. Daniel Lindley (1801-1880) and his wife, Lucy (1810-1877), arrived in Cape Town in 1835, sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Lindleys lived out an extraordinary faith journey. They served the Matabele, the Dutch Afrikaners, and the Zulus when all were at each others’ throats, yet earned the respect and love of all these diverse communities.

Their mission was located in the eastern province of Natal (now known as kwaZulu-Natal), and its growth proved agonizingly slow, taking 11 years before the first indigenous convert was baptized and 34 years for the ordination of the first indigenous leader.

At that point, in 1869, at a time and place when formal education for anyone was still a rarity, Lucy Lindley prayerfully advocated for the establishment of Inanda Seminary. It became the first (and is now the oldest) secondary boarding school exclusively for black females in southern Africa.

Mary Kelly Edwards (1829-1927), a 40-year-old widow from Ohio and the first woman appointed by the Woman’s Board of Missions of the Congregational Churches, soon arrived to serve as the school’s first principal.

Early mission strategies had been based on transforming society from the top down, starting with the male *amaKhosi* (chiefs); and few, if any, ever converted.

Theological pontificating from the pulpit by ordained male ministers more often than not failed to persuade.

Edwards understood that society is often changed from the bottom up. Her leadership in the classroom educated young girls to model Christianity in the home. The mission was successful because it educated females to demonstrate to their neighbors and children the fruits of Christianity in the domestic space. Apertures then opened for the light of the Christian faith.

Young African Christian women were enabled to join as partners with males being trained and educated at the American Board’s Adams College, which had been established in 1853.

The cultural, linguistic and theological gulf between a North American woman and southern African girls was massive, and Edwards, not given to romanticizing her task, endured many frustrations from the beginning. Her time in Africa distressed her greatly, yet she persevered.

Edwards’ almost 60 years of ministry helped transform Zulu society. Arguably, only a mother figure, who instructed and taught by example, could have succeeded in engendering a new Christian society, the *amaKholwa* (Believers). Edwards served Inanda Seminary until her death in 1927 at age 98. Each year students and staff parade to her resting place in the local cemetery, lay a wreath of flowers, and sing songs in her honor.

Just as the founding of Inanda Seminary was nothing short of revolutionary, its survival is nothing short of miraculous. The school has endured a succession of governments, from British colonialism to the present post-Apartheid government, with many stages of development characterized by racial paternalism and segregation.

Inanda Seminary’s most difficult years occurred during the Apartheid era (1948

to 1994), when the white supremacist government imposed an inferior educational system on people of color. The government threatened to close the seminary in the mid-1950s. Despite the closure of other historic mission schools, including Adams College in 1956, Inanda Seminary escaped the legislative axe. Nonetheless, the school repeatedly found itself on the verge of closure. Legislation against private schools prevented the seminary from charging tuition or receiving any subsidy from the government. The seminary became dependent upon overseas funding, which began to decrease in the 1970s.

Administrative and financial dysfunction reached such a state that the church declared the school insolvent and announced its closure in December 1997. Alumnae of the school protested and volunteered to run the school themselves. And they bravely did.

In 2001, Nelson Mandela encouraged a corporation to restore the school's ruined infrastructure. New life also came in 2003 with the appointment of Principal Judy Tate, who has through much prayer and work "resurrected" the school.

Today, the school is growing from strength to strength, building on 142 years of faith-based education. Christian values are inculcated with daily worship, confirmation classes and pastoral counseling. The mission and purpose of the seminary are captured in its six core

values—honesty, loyalty, self-discipline, respect, sociability and responsibility—and in its commitment to service. Inanda Seminary students depart the school equipped to live out the school motto: "Shine Where You Are" (Philippians 2:15).

The school embraces independent thinking and the freedom of expression, and strong academics ensure that the school qualifies its students for university. The faculty empowers students to contribute to development of the nation by becoming leaders. Alumnae include the former deputy president of the Republic of South Africa, the former deputy speaker of the Parliament, the former minister in the presidency and minister of health, and the former South African ambassador to France and to the United States.

The school's community of believers extends beyond its alumnae. Pixley ka Isaka Seme, founder of the African National Congress, hails from Inanda. Chief Albert Luthuli, the first African Nobel Peace Prize winner, became a member of the seminary's advisory board in 1936 with the Rev. John Dube, the first president of the ANC.

Over the past two years, Inanda Seminary's Lucy Lindley Interpretive Center has received many infrastructural improvements. This year the school installed a new exhibition, professionalizing the school's museum and archive. The Interpretive Center preserves and proclaims the semi-

nary's Congregational heritage by making its historic collection accessible to its students as well as tourists and researchers.

In part due to the American Board's influence in South Africa, the Inanda area is considered the "Cradle of Democracy," and the school's verdant and bucolic campus is a flagship site on the *Woza eNanda* (Come to Inanda!) Heritage Route.



As Global Ministries (United Church of Christ and the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ) missionaries, **SCOTT COUPER** and his wife **SUSAN VALIQUETTE** serve the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa at the historic Inanda Seminary as development manager and chaplain, respectively.

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The Family as a Domestic Church

by Cornelius F. Murphy Jr.

A belief that the family has a religious vocation is closely intertwined with Christian history in America. Within Protestantism, the publication of Horace Bushnell's Christian Nurture in 1846 initiated a movement to make the family, in itself, an important witness to the vitality of faith. This desire to broaden the scope of witness to the gospel has continued within the Protestant denominations. Hopes for the sanctification of the family have come much later to the Catholic community. The Second Vatican Council's advance in understanding the Church as the People of God, rather than an essentially hierarchical system, was an important change that enhanced all the roles of the laity. Reflections on the family as an ecclesia in miniature have been greatly facilitated by the writings of the late Pope John Paul II.

This is the second part of a two-part series examining Protestant and Catholic thoughts about the family as a sort of "domestic church."

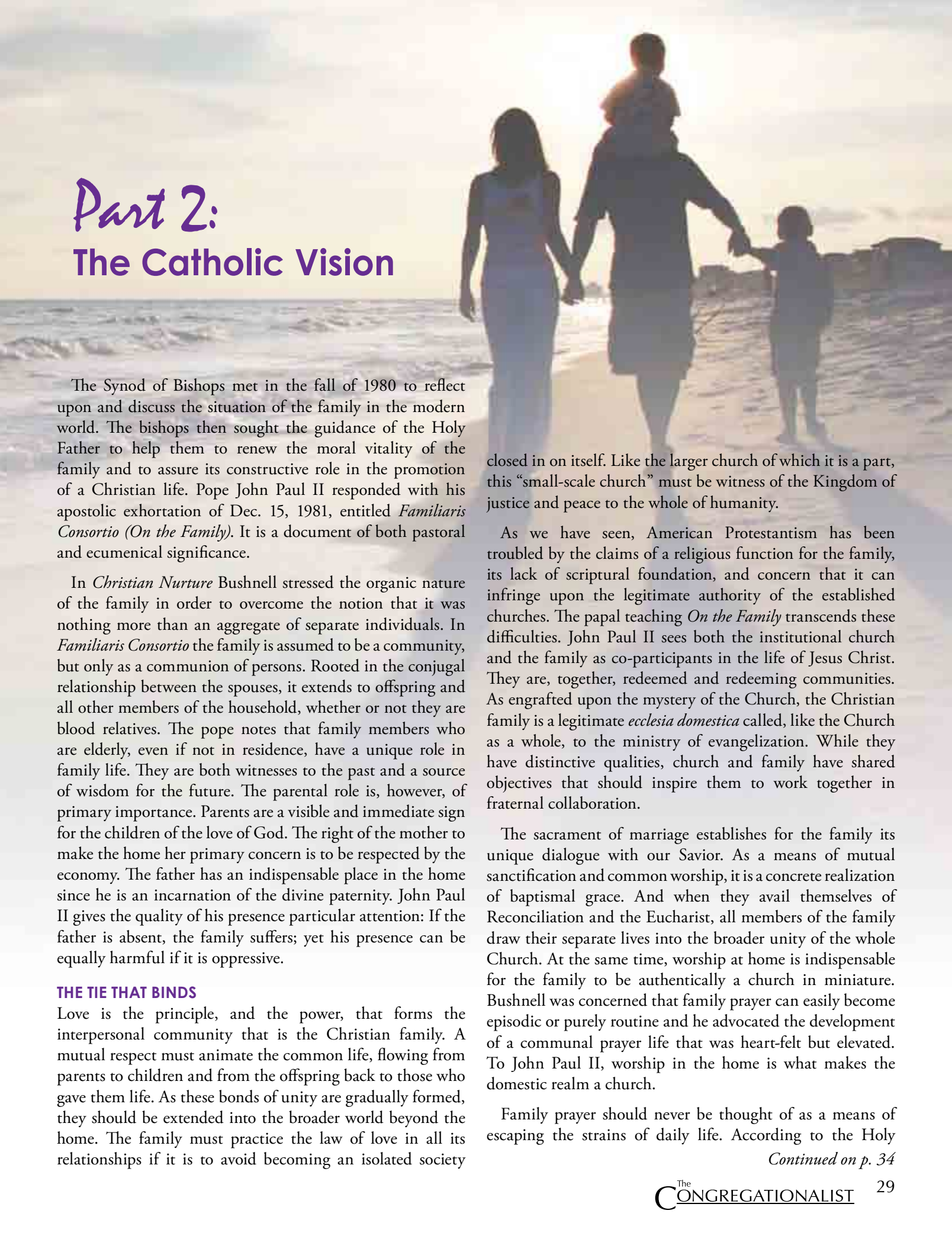
Parents are a visible and immediate sign for the children of the love of God.

There has never been within the American Catholic Church as much interest in family religion as there has been in our Protestant Christianity. The centrality of the public celebration of the Eucharistic, primarily in an urban parochial setting, had left Catholicism, prior to Vatican II, without a sense of the distinct importance of worship in the home. The important religious communities were the special vocations connected with the vowed religious life, and religious authority was clearly identified with the local bishop and the parish priest. Some innovations, such as the Christian Family and Focalare movements, tried to teach families how to live a fuller Christian life by gradually promoting piety within the home as well as becoming concerned for social justice in society at large.

IMPACT OF VATICAN II

The work of the Vatican Council revealed prospects of substantial changes. The publication of the document *De Ecclesia (Of the Church)* by the Council in 1964 suggested a new understanding of the role of the family in the overall life of the Church. In *De Ecclesia* attention was given to the role of the laity in the evangelization of the world. In this context, the family was recognized as being, in some sense, a domestic church. In *Lumen Gentium (Light of the Nations)*¹ it was observed that through procreation, followed by baptism, married spouses were deeply involved in the constant creation of the People of God. The significance of this insight was alluded to in various audiences of Pope Paul VI, but it was left to John Paul II to systematically explain the distinctive religious role of the family.

¹ Also known as *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council.



Part 2: The Catholic Vision

The Synod of Bishops met in the fall of 1980 to reflect upon and discuss the situation of the family in the modern world. The bishops then sought the guidance of the Holy Father to help them to renew the moral vitality of the family and to assure its constructive role in the promotion of a Christian life. Pope John Paul II responded with his apostolic exhortation of Dec. 15, 1981, entitled *Familiaris Consortio* (*On the Family*). It is a document of both pastoral and ecumenical significance.

In *Christian Nurture* Bushnell stressed the organic nature of the family in order to overcome the notion that it was nothing more than an aggregate of separate individuals. In *Familiaris Consortio* the family is assumed to be a community, but only as a communion of persons. Rooted in the conjugal relationship between the spouses, it extends to offspring and all other members of the household, whether or not they are blood relatives. The pope notes that family members who are elderly, even if not in residence, have a unique role in family life. They are both witnesses to the past and a source of wisdom for the future. The parental role is, however, of primary importance. Parents are a visible and immediate sign for the children of the love of God. The right of the mother to make the home her primary concern is to be respected by the economy. The father has an indispensable place in the home since he is an incarnation of the divine paternity. John Paul II gives the quality of his presence particular attention: If the father is absent, the family suffers; yet his presence can be equally harmful if it is oppressive.

THE TIE THAT BINDS

Love is the principle, and the power, that forms the interpersonal community that is the Christian family. A mutual respect must animate the common life, flowing from parents to children and from the offspring back to those who gave them life. As these bonds of unity are gradually formed, they should be extended into the broader world beyond the home. The family must practice the law of love in all its relationships if it is to avoid becoming an isolated society

closed in on itself. Like the larger church of which it is a part, this “small-scale church” must be witness of the Kingdom of justice and peace to the whole of humanity.

As we have seen, American Protestantism has been troubled by the claims of a religious function for the family, its lack of scriptural foundation, and concern that it can infringe upon the legitimate authority of the established churches. The papal teaching *On the Family* transcends these difficulties. John Paul II sees both the institutional church and the family as co-participants in the life of Jesus Christ. They are, together, redeemed and redeeming communities. As engrafted upon the mystery of the Church, the Christian family is a legitimate *ecclesia domestica* called, like the Church as a whole, to the ministry of evangelization. While they have distinctive qualities, church and family have shared objectives that should inspire them to work together in fraternal collaboration.

The sacrament of marriage establishes for the family its unique dialogue with our Savior. As a means of mutual sanctification and common worship, it is a concrete realization of baptismal grace. And when they avail themselves of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, all members of the family draw their separate lives into the broader unity of the whole Church. At the same time, worship at home is indispensable for the family to be authentically a church in miniature. Bushnell was concerned that family prayer can easily become episodic or purely routine and he advocated the development of a communal prayer life that was heart-felt but elevated. To John Paul II, worship in the home is what makes the domestic realm a church.

Family prayer should never be thought of as a means of escaping the strains of daily life. According to the Holy

Continued on p. 34



NEWS

ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE



Missionaries and their advocates gather for lunch at the Annual Meeting and Conference, June 25, 2012.

There were 15 missions represented at the Annual Meeting and Conference this year by 17 visiting missionaries. The Missionary Society spent quality time with each missionary discussing accomplishments, goals, frustrations and needs. Look for a new wish list on the Missionary Society page of the NACCC Web site soon.

The Missionary Society Alumni Association met as well and are planning an event for after next year's Annual Meeting and Conference in Orlando, Fla. MSAA wants to send our visiting missionaries to the **Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECHO) (Florida)** for a day of learning about sustainable food sources. They will then be able to follow up with ECHO by Internet from their home missions.

WORK GROUP HELPS HOSANNA INDUSTRIES

A work group from North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, Wis., spent a week at **Hosanna Industries (Pennsylvania)**. "They helped to provide \$92,000 of market valued work to needy families in the area," said Amanda Becker, Hosanna Industries staff. "It was a pleasure to work with them."



BIBLE AND SPORTS CENTER IN ARGENTINA



Sports Arena



Classroom for Bible study

Work is going well on the Bible and Sports Center for **Asociacion Civil Cristiana Congregacional (Argentina)**. Three small rooms are already in use by the Sunday School children. The small sports field under the same roof still has a dirt floor and no walls. Those will be the next projects.

HAITI UPDATE

The **Love Worth Sharing** team, with eight people, visited **Haiti** in May. They reported that the country is doing so much better. The tent cities are mostly gone now. The government is paying people a \$1 a day to pick up trash. There is also work started on rebuilding roads. **Love Worth Sharing** held a two-day medical clinic where they met with 150 people. They also made a connection with an orphanage of 20 children, an hour north of Port-au-Prince airport. They need reading glasses, flip flops, crocks, Tums and eye drops.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE MISSIONS

Panamerican Institute (Mexico) celebrated its 50th Anniversary in Tijuana. See "Lighting Candles for 50 Years," pp. 32-33.

Morgan Scott Project (Tennessee) helped 387 families this spring with seeds and fertilizer. They had 28 work groups that worked on 32 homes, including two complete rehabs.

Christ to the Villages (Nigeria) celebrated three graduations from their schools this month.

Happy Life Children's Home (Kenya) now gets a weekly tele-consult with U.S. Dr. Mark Plaster, who "sees" children via Skype and recommends treatment to the home's nurse in Nairobi, reports Jim Powell, the mission's U.S. representative.

NEEDS

PHILIPPINES FLOODS

Christian Mission in the Far East and **National Association of Congregational Churches** are dealing with flash flooding in the *Philippines*. Donations may be sent to the NACCC office for “One Great Hour of Sharing—Philippine Floods.”

Rev. Jaime Julian, CMFE, reports: “Just arrived from a visit from Sarangani Province and South Cotabato. I brought some help from our Bayanihan Giving or Helping one another for our brethren who until now needs help due to flash floods. Their immediate need is food and clothing. There are families that do not have home to return cause their houses were taken by the flood. There is one daughter of Pastor that still missing up to this date.”

Rev. Symphony John Castillo, NACC, reports that a twister hit the seas of Leyte, destroying fishing boats. The fishermen were spared.

WISH LIST

The Missionary Society is compiling a list of needs under \$100 for each mission. This would be a good resource for class projects or for individuals who want to give for a specific need. For example, **Bethel Ministries International (Central Africa)** is looking for goats for the women in their villages. One goat costs \$40. This goat can sustain a woman’s family by sales of its milk products.

School supplies are needed by **Morgan Scott Project (Tennessee)**, **Bread of Life Mission (Florida)**, **Rebecca Mackish Memorial Mission (Kansas)**, and **Panamerican Institute (Mexico)**. They can use backpacks, markers, pens, pencils, and notebooks.

Fishers of Men (Ohio) can use your old eyeglasses.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Yes, it’s early—but if you are giving to missions for Christmas, early is better. The cut-off to send Christmas funds to the missions is Nov. 19. **Panamerican Institute (Mexico)** gives out food baskets to all of their students. One basket costs \$40.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Typhoon season in the Philippines is now. The weather service predicts about 10 major typhoons will hit the Philippines this season. Please keep **Christian Mission in the Far East** and **National Association of Congregational Churches** in the *Philippines* in your prayers as they brace for this season.

Rebecca Mackish Memorial Mission (Kansas) is praying for work groups to help with repairs on their buildings.

Bethel International Ministries (Central Africa) asks prayers for peace and understanding between the Tutsi and the Hutus.

Bread of Life Mission (Florida) wants prayers for the children they minister to.

Morgan Scott Project (Tennessee): Project Director Ella Smith prays that people will see God in her every day.

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For more information on any of these missions, or to make a donation, contact Linda Miller at the NACCC office, 800-262-1620, ext. 13.

The Missionary Society, NACCC
PO Box 288, Oak Creek WI 53154

For a complete listing of NACCC Mission Projects, please go to our Web site, www.naccc.org, and click on “Missions.”

The Panamerican Institute:

by Juana Santos and Laura Hamby

Lighting Candles for 50 Years

It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness,” figured the Rev. Edgar Welty. It was the early '60s, and Rev. Welty had just learned that “free public education” in Mexico was not truly free, nor was it required.

Many children in the hillside colonias around the bustling border town of Tijuana managed to learn basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills in elementary school; but at age 11 or 12, these children went to work to help support the family. There was no money to buy the books, uniforms, and supplies needed for secondary school.

Ed Welty knew these children, who had a solid educational foundation, could get jobs in offices and banks if they were trained in business skills. Soon Ed had the interest and support of students' families. A woman offered the use of her backyard, and Señor Torres, a taxi driver, offered to teach typing. Three typewriters perched on an old plank, resting on a couple of barrels in a backyard, became the start of what is now called *Instituto Pan Americano*—the Panamerican Institute.

The school soon outgrew its backyard origins. In 1966, Rev. Welty wrote to

First Congregational Church of Los Angeles: “Thanks for ... [the] money and the boxes of clothing. Our typing classes now serve about 25 students and each week a few more come. Both Sr. Torres and Sr. Amezcua are working well and I would like to raise their pay to \$4.00 a day. At present we are paying them \$3.00 a day. We need more space for classes and are working to find it.”

Find space he did, and churches of the Cal-West Association chipped in a down payment and some startup money. Soon the school came to the notice of the NACCC Missionary Society. Since

1. Panamerican Institute occupies space in an unpretentious area of Tijuana, Mexico, within sight of the U.S. border. 2. Students learn in the science lab. 3. Students learn in the computer lab. 4. In this 1970 photo, the Rev. Edgar S. Welty, founder of the Panamerican Institute, explains his vision to Ike Hamby (in red shirt) and Walter Boring while the three were scouting out work projects for a future mission trip. “The picture is classic Rev. Welty,” said Laura Hamby. “He would talk and explain and dream to any and all who would listen. He was a devoted, dedicated character. He was the right man at the right time.”



From left, Alma, Johana, Lizeth, and Miriam, students of Panamerican Institute, represent the school's award-winning color guard at the 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner.

Celebrating a Golden Anniversary

Instituto Pan Americano—the Panamerican Institute—hosted its 50th Anniversary Celebration dinner July 21 at the Hotel Palacio Azteca in Tijuana.

It was an evening of reunion, homecoming, and thanksgiving, with more than 125 in attendance. Festivities started with the Panamerican Institute's award-winning color guard presenting the Mexican flag and leading the flag salute and the singing of the national anthem.

Speakers included Juana Santos, president; Silviana Soto, principal; and Laura Hamby, representing the NA Mission and Outreach Ministry Council. Speakers hailed the vital relationship of the school with the NACCC and its churches, as well as the vision, heart, and tenacity of its founder, the Rev. Edgar S. Welty.

Students in the extra-curricular guitar class treated guests to a classical guitar recital. After dinner and the program portion of the evening, the celebration continued late into the night with dancing and a toast to the next 50 years!

that time, the institute has grown to be a state-accredited *secundaria tecnica* and has served more than 1,000 students.

Longtime institute board member Ted Pendleton recalls a conversation with a former student: "I asked her what she was doing now. She replied that after her graduation from PAI she was able to work and attend preparatory school and then college. Now she was teaching an English course at one of the local Tijuana preparatory schools. I could not help but wonder how different her life would have been without the opportunity to attend PAI."

A 1986 graduate says, "Our community has changed, too. We apply Christian values where we work, study, play and live. Our relationship with the NACCC and their example of Christian giving has planted that seed in all of us at PAI."

Today, the school has 31 staff members, paid and volunteer, 21 of them

PAI alumni. They serve in true Christian spirit, which is readily apparent to outsiders. The school's relationship with NACCC, Cal-West and individual churches, encourages the staff members, who know that they are not alone in their mission.

Juana Santos, PAI class of '76, is president, chief administrator, and the face of the Panamerican Institute to many in the NA. She has been instrumental in getting accreditation for the school and has added social programs such as Christmas Baskets, Adopt-A-Student, an on-site health clinic, and meals for students, as well as an endowment program.

Special gifts have made recent improvements to the campus: Pfizer Inc. has given a grant to construct and furnish a chemistry and physics laboratory, and gifts from Mr. Marshall Sanders and the Rotary Clubs of Tijuana and of Hemet and Ramona,

Calif., made possible a new state-of-the-art computer lab.

Future goals include the establishment of a sufficient endowment fund, which will enable the school to operate a basic program even during lean years when donations are down due to a poor economy.

Rev. Welty's "candle in the darkness" has now become 1,000 points of light.



SRA. JUANA SANTOS, a 1976 graduate of Panamerican Institute is now its president.


LAURA JEAN HAMBY is a member of the Congregational Church of Soquel, Calif., a longtime volunteer for the Panamerican Institute, and a current member of its board



Tom Blakinship




Alumnae and key leaders of Panamerican Institute pose before the 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner. From left: Conchita Betancourt, class of 1972; Laura Hamby, board member and first-ever MAC volunteer; Elena Gonzalez, principal's assistant, class of 1986; Juana Santos, president, class of 1974; Susana Santos (not related to Juana), volunteer English teacher, class of 1985; Blanca Ortiz, activities coordinator, class of 1983.



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Worship at home is indispensable for the family to be authentically a church in miniature.



Continued from p. 29

Father, domestic worship is the only way that the family can truly fulfill all its obligations—to one another, to the church, and to the family's neighbors. Such prayer should lift the ordinary and significant events of family life into that world of petitions and thanksgivings that constitute divine adoration. And while not identical to the prayers offered by the Universal Church, family prayer should be compatible with the broader themes. It can honor traditions that venerate the Virgin, such as the Rosary, but it should also be aligned with the various seasons of the liturgical year as they are represented in the essential forms of the divine office.

TWO APPROACHES, ONE CONCERN

Protestants and Catholics must independently work out the proper relationship between institutional church and the family within the boundaries of their own traditions. Where a ministerial or clerical culture predominates, it will be difficult for those in authority to recognize that the families within their respective jurisdictions are entitled to be real, even though smaller, churches. When families pursue holiness within their homes, they are not merely standing in for an absent minister or priest too busy to be everywhere. It is of course also true that such families should not look upon the organized church community as irrelevant to their independent search for spiritual growth.

Even though the different denominations must work out for themselves the dynamic relations of home and church, much can be shared between the different faiths. For too long, the examination of doctrinal issues within a clerical dialogue has dominated the field of ecumenism. Greater attention should be given to how the laity of all denominations can share their experiences of faith. This is especially true of attempts to make the home the place where ordinary Christian living is, or should be, at its best. Whether Protestant or Catholic, Christians should freely exchange all their successes and failures and seek together ways of improvement. There can be many fruitful conversations between all believers on the possibilities of Christian discipline, education, and worship within the home.

Bushnell's *Christian Nurture* remains a basic reference, even though it is conditioned by its time. There is now, for

example, less emphasis upon discipline, but there will always be a need for mutual correction. The issue of moderation also should be reconsidered. Bushnell focused on food and drink, but today the problem is more the excessive resort to the mass media, computers, and other technological devices that by their constant intrusion destroy the tranquility of the home. Within the framework of *Familiaris Consortio*, Catholics will have much to share with their Protestant brethren. Such authoritative teaching can help resolve the problematic family-church relationship that has troubled the development of the Protestant tradition. The emphasis upon the sacrament of marriage as legitimizing agent of family religion can lead to greater mutual understanding between the different Christian confessions. All can agree on the importance of the nurture of children born to such union, but when the family as a whole is thought of as a community of persons, then the mutual love between the spouses becomes also central to the quest for holiness.

Christians of every denomination can acknowledge the importance of Sunday worship even though many cannot yet accept the significance of the Eucharist. Both Catholic and Protestant families can do much to restore the broader sense of Sunday as the Day of the Lord, and work together to resist the insidious profanation promoted by the secular culture. The established churches can warn their parishioners of the dangers of modernism but clergy are too isolated from the mainstreams of practical life to grasp the full extent of the peril. Only those immediately affected by the pressures to make the horizons of this life the limit of human aspirations can fully comprehend what is at stake. It will be in homes, as well as churches, that the decisive choices for faith and love will be made within the course of our future history.



CORNELIUS F. MURPHY JR. is a Catholic layman, a retired law professor, and a distinguished student of American religious thought. He is the author of six books, including *Person and Society in American Thought: A Study in Christian Humanism* (2007).



John Nichols



John Nichols



Thom Hadel

100th Centennial at Oshkosh

by Ralph and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder

The beautiful sanctuary at First Congregational Church, Oshkosh, Wis., was built 100 years ago, and the church has marked its Centennial all year with concerts, guest preachers, and drama.

Concerts included the Wisconsin State Welsh Society singing festival, faculty and students from the University of Wisconsin—Oshkosh Music Department, a handbell choir, the Oshkosh Chamber Singers, and several organ and piano concerts that showcased the church's 1911 Casavant pipe organ and 1906 Steinway concert grand piano.

The church's organist for 43 years, Joanne Peterson, teamed up with two area pianists to present a Rubenstein piano concert and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. Pianist Eli Kalman and viola virtuoso Sharon Tenhundfeld joined forces to present a concert of music by Johannes Brahms (see "100 Years, B'Gosh" in our June 2012 issue, p. 11). The highlight of the year was a concert by organist Jared Stellmacher, a Ripon native now living in Chicago, winner of many national awards.

Four special Centennial sermons were preached over the course of the year. The Rev. Robert Spalding, the church's pastor from 1977 to 1987, preached in September, and two sons of the church—the Revs. Mick McCain and Kendell Nordstrom—gave excellent sermons as well. A recent Chicago Theological Seminary graduate who attended First Congregational Church as a student at UW—Oshkosh, Eric Koepnick, helped us look to the century before us.

Left, center: The Oshkosh Chamber Singers present a concert featuring John Rutter's "Gloria" and other music to celebrate the 100th anniversary of First Congregational Church's sanctuary.

Right: September 11, 2011, the day of remembrance for 9/11, was also the beginning of the Oshkosh church's year-long commemoration of the 100th year of the sanctuary.

Other events included an illustrated lecture on the church's architecture, a reader's theater presentation of letters written back and forth between the church and the organ builders, and a presentation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* by a single, octogenarian actor!

The congregation takes pride in welcoming all people, as it works to live out the love, grace and justice of God in the world. A Stephen Ministry church, FCC Oshkosh also is an "Open and Affirming" congregation that welcomes the gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual community into the full life and fellowship of the church.

THE REVS. RALPH AND CAROL DiBIASIO-SNYDER began serving the Oshkosh church in 1988, sharing the duties of pastor. With the congregation, they have been involved in leading a number of community agencies, including Habitat for Humanity, the Community Pantry, and Day by Day Warming shelter. Carol served the NACCC as the of the chair Executive Committee in the early 1990s, and Ralph has served on the Spiritual Resources committee.

Along the Way

News from the fellowship of churches



Mark Christman

Members of Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis, view the unveiling of "Summer of the First Amendment," the last of four seasonal hanging embroideries completed by women of the church in a 40-year project, unveiled July 15, 2012, in the church's Guild Hall. THE PROJECT WILL BE FEATURED IN A MAJOR ARTICLE IN OUR MARCH 2013 ISSUE.

NEW PRESIDENT FOR PIEDMONT—*Piedmont College*, Demorest, Ga., has named **Dr. James Mellichamp** its 13th president. Mellichamp, a noted organist and music educator at Piedmont, previously served as its provost, vice-president for academic affairs, and dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.



James Mellichamp

"I am deeply grateful to the board of the college for the trust they have placed in me to lead this great institution," Mellichamp said. "We are so fortunate to have an extremely talented group of staff and faculty which, coupled with our outstanding students, makes taking on this new challenge much easier. ... I am looking forward to working collaboratively to set and attain new goals for Piedmont College."

The **Rev. Dr. Beth Bingham**, pastor of *Pilgrim Congregational Church*, Pomona, Calif., said, "As a trustee of the college, and as a Congregational minister, I was thrilled that our board chose Dr. Mellichamp. He understands and appreciates the Congregational heritage, which assures inquisitive and lively conversation among people of diverse religious perspectives. He cares primarily about the students, and encourages each along their own educational pathways."

"And he was a delight to be with at the Minneapolis meeting where he met so many of our people, was fully engaged in

the deliberations about our restructuring, and appreciated the workshops and worship which really define who we are as the National Association. And, honestly, he is great fun and has a wicked sense of humor!"

BADGER STATE LAY MINISTERS—The *Wisconsin Congregational Association*, at its spring meeting, recognized six individuals who have completed its two-year Leadership and Lay-Minister Training Program. They are: **Polly Bodjanac**, *Pilgrim Congregational Church*, Green Bay; **Jon S. Hanson**, *Fox River Congregational Church*, Pewaukee; **Gary W. Himebauch**, *First Congregational Church*, Mukwonago; **Sue Perschon**, *Fox River Congregational Church*, Pewaukee; **James A. Schuett**, *First Congregational Church*, Mukwonago; and **Diane Williams**, *Heritage Congregational Church*, Madison.

The rigorous course involves two years of study, including monthly meetings, under the supervision of the **Rev. Dr. Rick Hartley**, *First Congregational Church*, Mukwonago. Other instructors for the course have included the **Rev. Doug Gray** and **Pastor Carol Taylor**, *Second Congregational Church*, Beloit; the **Rev. Dr. Stu Merkel**, *Faith Community Church*, Franklin; the **Rev. Cindy Bacon Hammer**, *Heritage Congregational Church*, Madison; and the **Rev. Karl Schimpf**, *North Shore Congregational Church*, Fox Point.

DOCTOR, REDOCTORED—The **Rev. Dr. David C. Fisher**, senior minister of *Plymouth Church* in Brooklyn Heights, N.Y., recently received an honorary Doctor of Divinity



Piedmont College photo

Piedmont College recipients of Plymouth Partner Scholarships pose with the Rev. Dr. David Fisher. From left, Andrew Peck, who graduated in May with a B.A. degree in business; Casi Best, a senior majoring in nursing; Fisher; and Cindy Dye, who graduated in May with a B.S. in chemistry.

degree from *Piedmont College*, Demorest, Ga. During the May 5 commencement ceremony, Dr. Fisher was recognized for “his distinguished career as minister, his competence and compassion as a pastor, his effectiveness as a preacher, and his accomplishments as a scholar.” He also delivered the address at the school’s baccalaureate ceremony held on May 3 (available at www.plymouth church.org/sermons).

Since 2008, the college has been one of Plymouth’s “Christian Help” partners. Each year, a donation from the church funds the Plymouth Partner Scholarship, providing tuition support to four local students who might otherwise be unable to attend.

FRIENDLY FACE, NEW ROLE—

The **Rev. Dr. Sara E. Day**, the NACCC’s main contact point at MMBB, has been appointed director of employer relationship management for the company, Ministers and Missionaries Benefits Board, which provides employee benefits for churches. She will manage relationships with larger employers and continue to manage several ancillary programs. She remains the liaison with several of MMBB’s affiliate denominations, including the NA.



Rev. Dr. Sara E. Day

Sara has been with MMBB for more than 10 years, having previously served in pastoral ministry for Baptist churches. She holds an M. Div. degree from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and a D. Min. from McCormick Seminary and is a Certified Financial Planner.

MISIÓN MAZAHUA 2012

My journey started when Lisa Cortés visited my church, *McGraft Memorial Congregational Church* in Muskegon, Mich. My interest was piqued by the mission’s wheelchair program.

Misión Mazahua is an old hacienda, on a hill overlooking acres of corn surrounded by mountains—with a chapel, dormitory rooms, courtyards, dining rooms, pools (which we didn’t use), a basketball court, a soccer field, stables for horses, and an office area.

The weather was cool, in the upper 70s. It rained every afternoon, as clouds came across the mountains, dropping precious rain on the lush green fields of corn.

Our first client at the medical clinic wore her Mazahuan outfit—hat, long-sleeved shirt, shawl, long skirt and apron. She was concerned about her baby’s rash. Where was the baby—did she have to walk home to get him? She lowered her shawl and pulled the baby out from where it had been sleeping horizontally along her back. Were we surprised!!

An unforgettable experience was meeting **Kiké**. He was injured a fall from a tree, like my daughter—both have

by Judy Hale



Volunteers help mission clients with arts and crafts projects at Misión Mazahua.

become role models in wheelchairs! Kiké is an artist, who sells paintings and wood-burning pictures and also repairs wheelchairs. He has found a way to support himself: God is good—all the time.

It was well worth my time, energy and money. I will always remember the bonding with my church partners and my new mission friends.

“It takes the best in each of us to bring out the best in all of us.”

Every summer, the Rev. Jack Brown, Olivet Congregational Church, Olivet, Mich., leads a group of volunteers on a one-week mission trip to Misión Mazahua. This year’s short-term missionary corps of more than 40, in addition to providing medical aid to villagers, built two cisterns, performed various maintenance projects, worked with disabled campers in the Special Friends program, worshiped at a small country church, contributed \$4,000 to the mission’s needs, and climbed a mountain! If you’d like to be part of God’s work at Misión Mazahua June 20-27, 2013, contact the Rev. Jack Brown, pilgrim_pastor@hotmail.com, or (269) 749-2631.

■ Necrology

John Pearson

The Rev. John Robert Pearson, 63, of Beloit, Wis., died April 21 at his home, surrounded by his loving family. John was born in Wausau, Wis. He received his bachelor's degree from Carroll College, Waukesha, in 1970 and a Master of Divinity degree from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in 1974.



John served several churches for 15 years and then worked in the public sector with the homeless. John's love for helping people also opened doors for him to work in the addictions field as a counselor for several years.

The last congregation he served as a minister, and his most cherished, was York Community Church, Thomson, Ill. John's upbeat personality and friendly manner made him loved by many and will make him greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife, Liselotte; his son Andrew and granddaughter Kylie, Memphis, Tenn.; stepson Matthew Rude, Waukesha, Wis.; stepdaughter Lindsay Rude, Platteville, Wis.; an aunt and many cousins.

Sharon Gossett

Sharon Gossett, 71, of Indian Trails Missions passed away May 18, surrounded by her family. Sharon was born Celia Sharon Barve in Bellevue, Mich., and married the Rev. Tom Gossett in 1959. From then on they were more than husband and wife; they were partners in life and in the ministry. Sharon could always be found at her husband's side.



She dedicated almost 50 years to missionary work among Native Americans and people throughout Mexico. In the early years of Indian Trails, with Tom working full-time during the week to support the work, it was Sharon, who, with three small children, was up on the reservations overseeing the programs and the workers.

She was a dedicated wife, mother, and grandmother, and a selfless woman of great faith in God, strength, love, and beauty.

Sharon was predeceased by her mother and father. She is survived by her husband, Tom; by her children, the Rev.

Richard Gossett, Michelle D'Addabbo, and Kimberly Murphy; by her brother, Lavon Barve, and her sister, Candice Larson; and by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, aunts, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

By her wishes, memorial donations may be made to Indian Trails Missions, directed through your local church and the NACCC.

A. Ray Appelquist

The Rev. Dr. Albin Raynold Appelquist, 94, died June 20 in Mt. Dora, Fla., after a brief illness. A native of Kewanee, Ill., he was a graduate of Roosevelt University in Chicago, received his theological training at Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., and took additional studies at the University of Chicago Divinity School. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Judson College, Elgin, Ill.



Dr. Appelquist served eight years on active duty as a U.S. Army chaplain, and also served churches in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Massachusetts. He then served ten years on the National Association staff, six of them as executive secretary. Subsequently he served as pastor of Community Congregational Church of Mt. Dora until his retirement. He was known for his steadfastness and integrity, generosity, good humor and quiet dignity.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol, and is survived by two siblings, five children, nine grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and a large extended family.

William J. O'Donnell

The Rev. William J. O'Donnell, 57, died July 10. He was pastor of Bethany Union Church in Chicago and St. Phillip Evangelical Lutheran Church in Blue Island, Ill. He previously served as assistant pastor at First Congregational Church of Beloit, Wis., in the 1990s. He was ordained in 1979.



He is survived by his wife, Ann; his brother, Joseph; his sister, Rita Bielke; and many nieces and nephews.

Pastorates and Pulpits

RECENT CALLS

Sebago Lake Congregational Church, Standish, Maine, has called the Rev. Michael Glidden as associate minister.

Elijah Kellogg Congregational Church, Harpswell, Maine, has called the Rev. John Carson as senior minister.

Pilgrim Church, Toledo, Ohio, has called the Rev. Ellis Young as senior minister.

Second Congregational Church of Warren, Maine, has called the Rev. Andrew Stinson as senior minister.

ORDINATIONS

Sawyer Memorial Congregational Church, Jonesport, Maine, ordained the Rev. Phyllis Merritt for ministry, with concurrence of a May 5 vicinage council, July 7, 2012.

Oneonta Congregational Church, South Pasadena, Calif., ordained the Rev. Lincoln Skinner for ministry June 10, 2012.

IN SEARCH

SENIOR MINISTERS

Horton Congregational Church
Horton, Mich.

Tipton Community Congregational Church
Tipton, Mich.

Community of Faith and Fellowship
Limerick, Maine

University Congregational Church
Wichita, Kan.

Stuart Congregational Church
Stuart, Fla.

First Congregational Church of Kenosha
Kenosha, Wis.

Carmel Union Congregational Church
Carmel, Maine

Lakewood Village Community Church,
Long Beach, Calif.

Plymouth Congregational Church
Lansing, Mich.

First Congregational Church
Breckenridge, Mich.

First Congregational Church
Mansfield, Ohio

Pilgrim Congregational Church
Green Bay, Wis.

First Congregational Church
Clarkston, Mich.

Berkshire Community Church
Pittsfield, Mass.

First Congregational Community Church
Roscoe, Ill.

Baleville Congregational Christian Church
Newton, N.J.

• ASSISTANT MINISTER

West Gorham Union Church
Gorham, Maine

• PART-TIME MINISTER

Second Congregational Church
Jewett City, Conn.

• DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

First Congregational Church
Kingston, N.H.

Calendar

November 1-3

Congregational Youth Immersion—*Piedmont College*
Contact Chaplain Ashley Cleere, acleere@piedmont.edu

November 8-10

Eighth Congregational Symposium:

“You are my witnesses... Congregationalism Working with God through Evangelism, Mission, and Justice.”

Heritage Congregational Christian Church, Madison, Wisconsin
wiscongregational.net or contact Rev. Cindy Bacon Hammer, cabaconhammer@gmail.com or 608-274-0833

November 11

Heritage Sunday - Celebrate our Congregational Heritage
Find information at nacc.org/Resources/HeritageInformation.aspx.

February 22-23, 2013

“Religion and the Liberal Arts” Conference 2013
—*Piedmont College*

Call 706-778-8500, ext. 1174, or go to piedmont.edu/RC.

SAVE THE DATE!

June 20-27, 2013

Short-term Mission Experience

—*Misión Mazabua, Mexico.*

Contact Jack Brown,
pilgrim_pastor@hotmail.com or 269-749-2631

June 22-25, 2013

NACCC 59th Annual

Meeting and Conference—*Orlando, Florida*

July 29-Aug. 2, 2013

International Congregational Fellowship Conference—*London, UK.*

intercong.org/conference-information/the-2013-conference/