

NACCC MODERATOR'S REPORT FY2022

This has been a big year for the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. With a new Executive Director, the retirement of our CFO and many new programs in motion, we have begun a powerful pathway to the future of serving our member churches.

As Moderator, I am the Chair of Leadership Council, which includes our three Ministry Councils—Growth, Vision and Missions and Outreach. Last spring, at the request of the Board of Directors and Board of Governors, we embarked on the journey of 'dreaming big!' For at least three months we met monthly instead of bi-monthly and brainstormed what we, the NA, could do to best serve our member churches in the present and in the future. We thought about five and ten years down the road. We shared honestly and without judgement whatever ideas popped into our heads. It was a fruitful experience. And, perhaps most importantly, it created great hope among us all.

The many brainstorming ideas were then organized into groups, considering how these concepts might become reality, and where best to place them in the structure of our association to make that happen. Vitality Ministry Council became the place where Interim Ministry Training was housed. And, in November, our first offering to that end was offered. Plans for more training are in the works for this coming year. We have a great need for qualified interim ministers in our association, and this training will be of great assistance to our churches when a pastor either retires or accepts a call at another church.

Once again, the Vitality Ministry Council graciously hosted three Ministers' Convocations—East Coast, West Coast and Midwest. After two years of not meeting in person, these groups of ministers were spiritually fed by the beauty of nature, inspiring speakers and the divine joy of fellowship.

A focus on youth fell under the responsibilities of the Growth Ministry Council. They have now begun a new private Facebook page for leaders of children and youth leaders of our churches. This page is a place where these leaders—volunteer or staff—can share ideas, express their needs for NA youth programs, and support one another.

Dreaming big also led the Growth Ministry Council to offer a new opportunity for our churches. Silver Linings Grants were awarded to many churches to continue programs that were born out of necessity during Covid. This program has provided tangible assistance to churches of the NA.

Our brainstorming led to some exciting goals for Missions as well. MOMC is working hard and put it in this year's budget for increased visiting of missions by staff and ministry council members. Each mission is to be visited every five years. These visits have already begun, as well as visits to churches to educate them about the national and international missions we support. In addition, MOMC is working on larger projects for NA member churches and individuals to collaborate in person with some of our missions. These projects are set to begin this calendar year, so keep your eyes and ears open for more news in that area.

It is encouraging to me, as Moderator, that we will be meeting both in person and online this coming June. While we have done an excellent job the past two years with virtual meetings, nothing is like

meeting in person. It is also extremely encouraging to see goals set by the Leadership Council come to fruition so quickly in this past year. So often ideas are shared, but they are not followed through. This year has given us the joy and sense of accomplishment in helping our churches and missions in tangible ways, all because of the dedicated and faithful work of the Leadership Council and our three Ministry Councils, as well as the staff of the NACCC. I humbly offer my thanks and gratitude to them all.

Rev. Dr. Cindy Bacon Hammer
Moderator