

NACCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FY2023

As in other years, our Moderator will host a gathering to orient First Time Attendees to the Annual Meeting and Conference. That get-together is emblematic of a trend in our Association. The Nominating Committee compiled a commendable slate that includes five individuals who have not served as elected members of our Leadership Team. These first timers join seasoned participants in carrying us forward. The Vice Moderator's report summarizes staff changes comprising new names, updated job descriptions, and collaborations with "outsourced" specialists for whom the NACCC is one of several clients.

Whether in the Association for a few months, years, or decades, we have experienced newness and change. A year ago, the Planning and Action Committee introduced three objectives, a source of continuity amid widespread change.

Foster Collaboration: I accepted invitations to be in conversation with educational and programmatic partners: Andover Newton Theological School, Congregational Library and Archives, Interim Ministry Network, International Council of Community Churches, Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, Olivet College, and Piedmont University. Attending two regional association meetings acquainted me with collaboration among member churches.

Increase Professionalism: By engaging a consulting director of programs, we expanded the scope of what we can provide to congregations in transition. Our Congregational Leadership Team meets weekly to review the needs of member churches and clergy. Of particular interest are new-to-us ministers and congregations. Outsourcing meeting planning and accounting brings the benefit of expertise, releasing staff time for activities more closely associated with our mission. Individual staff members completed training and webinars to enhance their effectiveness in their respective areas. Between October and May, I prepared four job postings and descriptions, enlisting guidance from an HR Consultant. With approval from the Personnel and Administration Committee, we updated the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Statement. We made the following a requirement for each role: Promote and uphold an inclusive, diverse culture within the Association, respectfully interacting with people of various backgrounds.

Expand Visibility: The initiatives related to collaboration and professionalism also reflect this goal. Further, the Listening Tour, launched following last year's AMC, expanded the visibility of the NACCC among 37 member churches. I was often greeted as the first staff member from the Association to visit a church in recent memory. My participation in one ordination, one installation, and as a guest preacher also heightened visibility among our local churches.

Assessing another potential change, the Board of Directors appointed a task team to evaluate whether to maintain the current national office location in Oak Creek. They concluded that our space is suitable and affordable and will now consider improvements.

With gratitude for the steady support of staff and volunteers, I rejoice in our capacity to sustain the Congregational Way for future generations!

Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere
Executive Director