

THE FORESEE

Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

March/April 2003 Volume 36, No. 2

American Christians Worship in a Russian Church

by Vera Vergatti, Emmanuel Bethel Congregational Church, Royal Oak, MI

Last year many lay people in our CCCC churches went on short-term missions trips with Rev. Clair Longuevan to such places as Brazil, France and Russia. Vera Vergatti and her team of fourteen did reconstruction work at St. Petersburg Christian University in Russia. Each one who went, was touched and challenged. Here is Vera's testimony.

Outside Moscow in an old building there is a seminary, and a technical school and on the second floor there is also a Baptist Church! When we reach it we are almost out of breath and there is a middle-aged woman holding the door open for us. She hugs us and kisses us on both cheeks as if we were some long-lost, but now found, relatives. Of course she had never met us before but she knew we had come from over the ocean to worship with her (with them) in this rented auditorium: their church for the day.

High above the empty stage, in the middle of the white wall facing the entrance, there is a huge banner: a faceless white angel on a black background says in Russian – in words spelled vertically in black ink on a white background – “HE IS NOT HERE” on the left and “HE IS RISEN” on the right.

Soft music comes from a group of twenty-five year olds, a choir accompanied by three musicians playing on electronic guitars and a pianist playing at a very small but sophisticated organ. The congregation and the choir were singing hymns in Russian; sometimes we would sing along since they were the same hymns we used to sing in our home churches.

Yes, we sang together and we smiled at each other. Then another small choir was formed and they also praised God in Russian. A third group sang and then the sermon was given in English by an American pastor. Yaroslav, our interpreter and a pastor himself, translated the sermon into Russian so the congregation could understand it. Then the time for testimonies came and our leader, Clair Longuevan, introduced each one of us by name and home state. Asked if we had any prayer requests we answered by thanking God for our Russian brothers and sisters and the hospitality they had shown us.

We were moved by the very passionate, personal prayer of our hostess who, red in her face, with tears in her eyes, was holding her left hand over her chest praying out loud: “My Dear God, Oh, My God, Oh Almighty God” while she crossed herself with her right hand. We were also touched by the determination of very old ladies who could hardly walk alone to the Communion table, by the young men and women, Russian missionaries, who prayed and sang at the service.

The technically advanced musical



Mickey and Vera, Teammates

equipment of the three-person orchestra and choir spoke volumes about the depth of these young Christians' belief. They live in a country where Christianity had been introduced twelve hundred years ago, but Communists had tried to kill it for seven decades. It is resurrecting now, under our very own eyes, and it is powerfully sung by a new generation of believers!

“Vera's story from her heart”

Powerful images forever printed on our hearts and minds!

Vera is a Gospel Missionary Union missionary appointee to Bologna, Italy. Please keep her in your prayers.

If you would like to contribute to Vera's mission trip, please send your contribution to: Attention: Pastor Larry Wood, Emmanuel Bethel Church, 4000 Normandy, Royal Oak, MI 48073

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From the Conference Minister



From time to time it is good to be reminded of the nature of our fellowship. One of our position papers is entitled, "The Nature of Our Fellowship", and serves as that reminder. Dr. Lloyd Dean, the author, wrote in part:

"To include as brothers and sisters those with greatly diverse convictions in certain theological areas is not a weakness but a strength and in harmony with Biblical truths. The architects of the Congregational Way labored for the freedom to be ruled by God. This means that Jesus Christ alone is Head of the Church and Lord of the conscience. He directs His Church through Scripture, speaking in this manner to officers and individual members.

"This freedom requires an environment of unity and liberty, cultivated in the context of honestly differing theological viewpoints. Thus we must seek continually to maintain a true balance. To this end, we recognize that as Congregational Christians we do not have to agree on everything to achieve Biblical respect and spiritual health. In the spirit of Acts 15, we seek to promote maximum freedom for the rule of God in our churches. This is the merit of the Congregational conscience.

"There is freedom in the CCCC today to believe and practice the strictest Reformed theology of our early fathers, as well as other essentially Christian theology which differs in certain ways from the Reformation perspective. Should either be denied in a forced

unity, contrary to the ecclesiology of the original founders, we would no longer be fully Congregational."

It is easy to support this statement when it means others must accept us. It is more difficult to support it when it means we must accept others. The Congregational Way can never work without genuine humility, gracious love, and generous acceptance. One of the mysteries of the Church that will only be fully known or experienced in Heaven is that all who are in Christ are truly One. We should long for that here!

Cliff

News From the Women's Ministries Committee

'Twas a long time after Christmas
And the year no longer new
The decorations were all tucked away
There was almost nothing for us to do.

Women's committees were planning
To go to exotic places far
When along came this reminder
Of the need to buy Kim's Kar.

If Matchbox was the kar of choice
Then we could buy a slew
And Tonka trucks are built to last,
But they certainly will not do.

Fred Flintstone's kar has "central air"
And at least it's got a seat
But we want Kim to have a kar
Where Gary won't have to use his feet.

So plan a night for giving
And give as you've been blessed
And watch God bless them with a kar
That's better than the best!

Send your gifts for Kim's Kar to:
Mrs. Sandy Stewart, P.O. Box 249,
Avon, MN 56310.

Thank you!
Elizabeth Eklund

Remember the beautiful banners in Michigan? You will have an opportunity this summer in Virginia to learn about beginning a Banner Ministry and to make one for your church. Be watching for details. See ya'll in Virginia!

THE FORESEE

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Deadline for the May/June 2003
issue is March 10, 2003.

News From Romania

After reading the article regarding the Tanners in Romania and being able to correspond with them in Romania virtually instantly via e-mail, we were able to get a donation to them through their home church, First Congregational Church in Greenville, OH very shortly thereafter. By the way, Sandie told me via e-mail that they can purchase the diapers, etc., locally, so that if funds are wired instead of diapers being mailed, there will be a lot more leverage from each donation. However, if e-mail capability had not existed, I would never have been able to ask her about wiring funds and get a turnaround answer shortly thereafter.

"Just thought you'd want to know how the article in THE FORESEE plus e-mail teamed up to work with missionaries on the other side of the world in just a few days."

Marshall Pierson
Pilgrim Fellowship,
Bellefontaine, OH

Carlton's Comments



In August I had the privilege of preaching at the Community Bible Church of Inwood, NY located on the edge of Kennedy airport in Queens. While there I heard about a ministry that the congregation has had over a twenty-five year period. In the 1970's the church had become instrumental in settling Vietnamese and Thiopian refugees but that changed to Cambodian refugees beginning in 1981. In the next two years, Community Bible Church resettled over 250 people, receiving only \$250 from World Relief Refugee Services for each one. The congregation was responsible to house them, clothe and feed them, place the children in school, and find English as a Second Language classes and employment for the adults. Since the Cambodians came from a poor country with little western influence, there was a wide cultural gap with Americans. The refugees had to be instructed in doing just about everything, even in using a toilet.

When what had been a steady stream of Cambodians into the country began to dry up, the ministry of Community Bible Church changed. Most of the Cambodians moved to other parts of the country, but one family stayed in Inwood as members of CBC – Nang Tol, her daughter, Nay Kong, and her children, Syna and Chenda. Syna married and went back to Cambodia as a missionary with the Christian Missionary Alliance. Nay became the leader of a Cambodian women's ministry while she continued to faithfully attend Community Bible Church. At the same time, Nang Tol began sending items back to Cambodia

to help those who had not immigrated to the United States.

In 1992 Cambodia's doors once again opened so Nay Kong, who had become a registered nurse, took several short trips back to do medical ministry work among her people. In 1997 Nang Tol also returned and as a result decided to build a church in her own village styled after Community Bible Church, her church here in America. In 1999 CBC and an African American congregation raised over \$2,000 from a joint Christmas play which when coupled with \$8,000 raised by Nang Tol, provided what was needed to build a church, a school and a home for the pastor in her village. Bake sales provided funds for several homes for the poor and one of the young boys in CBC sold cakes and raised \$150 to dig a well in a neighboring village.

In January 2002 five members of CBC traveled to Cambodia to see the results of their ministry for the Lord. They met several pastors who had been refugees who were helped by the congregation and Pastor David Haberer preached in a church in Phnom Penh pastored by one of them. Amazingly over 150 churches directly or indirectly came out of the resettlement work and many pastors as well. Think your congregation is too small and doesn't have the resources to accomplish much? Community Bible Church has only thirty-five members but all of God's resources were available to them because they decided to serve and obey Jesus no matter what!

Thank you,
Rev. Carlton Walker
Phone: 518-346-3538
E-mail: cgwalker@cccusa.org

A Book For Your Library

Countdown to The Mission Field
By Dr. John Kimball

If you haven't gotten a copy of this book, order it now through Foresee Publications at a cost of \$12.95. In the Forward Brian Eckheart says, "Are you faced with anxious thoughts,

Bryan's Bytes

by Bryan Burrell

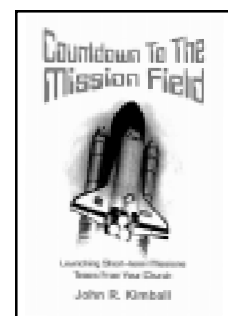
Not long ago a virus was a living organism capable of making a body ill. Today, computer viruses can erase all your files and actually stop your computer from operating.

In today's technological world, everyone needs antivirus protection to protect their computer files and programs. In addition, this protection should be updated every day to provide full protection. The cost of these programs and updates has increased as computer viruses have proliferated.

A free antivirus program is available to you at: <http://www.grisoft.com>.

The AVG Free edition has received a 100% detection rate and is fully certified by the independent ICSA Labs. The software is free and so are all the updates. There is no technical support for the product, but if you are without antivirus software or antivirus updates, you now no longer have a reason to risk a virus infection. I have used the product for 2 years now and have had every virus identified by the program. I highly recommend it. The price is right.

sweating palms and fear of the unknown because you have been given the task of launching a short-term missions program for your church?



This (manual) is an outstanding starting place. (It) addresses common fears and takes the guesswork out of planning and preparing a short-term trip. How to begin, where to go, how to fund the trip, what type of ministry you can have are all issues that are addressed."

“Faith of Our Fathers” Annual Meeting Schedule

Founders Inn, Virginia Beach, VA July 21-24, 2003

| Sunday July 20th | Monday July 21st | Tuesday July 22nd | Wednesday July 23rd | Thursday July 24th |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| | | 7:00-7:30 a.m. Prayer | 7:00-7:30 a.m. Prayer | 7:00-7:30 a.m. Prayer |
| | | 7:00-8:30 a.m. Breakfast | 7:00 a.m. – Missions Breakfast 7:00-8:30 a.m. Breakfast | 7:00-8:30 a.m. Breakfast |
| | | 9:00-10:00 a.m. Bible Hour Walter Kaiser <i>Speaker</i> | 9:00-10:00 a.m. Bible Hour Walter Kaiser <i>Speaker</i> | 9:00-10:00 a.m. Bible Hour Walter Kaiser <i>Speaker</i> |
| | | 10:00-10:45 a.m. Exhibits & Coffee | 10:00-10:45 a.m. Exhibits & Coffee | 10:00-10:45 a.m. Exhibits & Coffee |
| | | 10:45-11:45 a.m. Seminar Session | 10:45-11:45 a.m. Seminar Session | 10:45-11:45 a.m. Seminar Session |
| | | 12:00-1:30 p.m. Ladies’ Luncheon Linda Vaughn Hope Haven | 12:00-1:30 p.m. Men’s Luncheon Charles Wickman Pastors-In-Residence* | 12:00-1:30 p.m. Area Representative’s Luncheon |
| | | 1:30 p.m. Conference Business | 1:30 p.m. Conference Business | 1:30 p.m. Conference Business |
| | 4:00 p.m. Check-in at Founders Inn & Conference Center | 3:00 p.m. Free Time | 3:00 p.m. Free Time | 3:00 p.m. Free Time |
| | 5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner On Your Own | 5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner On Your Own | 5:00-6:00 p.m. Dinner On Your Own | 6:00 p.m. Banquet |
| 7:00 p.m. CCCC Past Presidents & Board of Directors Dinner & Meeting | 7:00-8:30 p.m. Evening Worship Cliff Christensen <i>Speaker</i> | 7:00-8:30 p.m. Evening Worship Dave Baer <i>Speaker</i> | 7:00-8:30 p.m. Evening Worship Dave Baer <i>Speaker</i> | 7:00-8:30 p.m. Evening Worship & Communion Larry Scovil <i>Speaker</i> |
| | 9:00 p.m. Ice Cream Social | 9:00 p.m. Church/Pastor Placement | | |

Note: There will be many useful workshops each morning of the Annual Meeting hosted by the Ministry Committees of the CCCC. See the next issue of THE FORESEE for details or reference the Annual Meeting Brochure.

*If you would like to contact Pastors-in-Residence, e-mail them at PIR@juno.com or call them at 757-495-7889.

55th Annual Family Conference: Make It A Family Vacation!

By Dr. John Kimball, 2003 Local Arrangements Chairman

There are few places in our great nation that offer families so much when it comes to combining learning and fun into a family vacation - but the 2003 Annual Family Conference happens to be in one of those places.

In addition to what we believe will be a blessed time together for the Conference on July 21-24, 2003, you will want to plan some time either before or after the meeting to take in the great historic and recreational opportunities the Mid-Atlantic Region has to offer.

To help you in your planning, we have put together the following list (not exhaustive by any means) of things to do and see while staying in Virginia Beach this summer.

Virginia Beach

The Christian Broadcasting Network
(www.cbn.org)

Regent University

(www.regent.edu)

The Virginia Beach Oceanfront

(www.virginiabeach.com)

The Virginia Marine Science Museum

(www.vmsm.com)
Norfolk (15 Minutes Away)

The Chrysler Museum of Fine Art

(www.chrysler.org)

Nauticus - The National Maritime Center

(www.nauticus.org)

The Norfolk Botanical Garden

(www.virginiagarden.org)
Portsmouth (20 Minutes Away)

The Virginia Children's Museum

(www.childrensmuseumva.com)

Hampton (30 Minutes Away)

The Virginia Air & Space Center

(www.vasc.org)

Williamsburg is less than an hour away, and both the Blue Ridge Mountains and the nation's capitol are within four hours of the Conference Center. Be watching your mailbox for the Annual Meeting brochure, which will have a full list of things to do while traveling to and from the Annual Meeting. Why not make it a family vacation!

Washington, DC



Blue Ridge Mountains



*Governor's Palace
Williamsburg, VA*

Wanted

**Vocal & Instrumental
Solos & Ensembles**

For 55th Annual Meeting
July 21-24
Virginia Beach, VA

Please send a demo tape of your
music by May 31st to:
Claire Whitehurst,
P.O. Box 96,
Corapeake, NC 27926

Ideas in Ministry at Cliftdale Congregational Church

by Pastor Bob Leroe, Cliftdale Congregational Church, Saugus, MA

Bible Study at Saugus Senior Center

I visited the Saugus Senior Center and was impressed with the many activities and classes offered, but it dawned on me that there was nothing religious in nature offered. I approached the director of the center and offered to do a weekly non-denominational Bible study. I explained that I wasn't trying to steal people from their churches - I simply wanted to reach out to the senior community and felt this might meet a need.

The program has been a big success and an average of twenty people attend regularly. The senior center publicizes the study in their newsletter, in the newspaper, and on cable TV. The local Catholic Priest even thanked me for providing the study and was pleased that several of his parishioners were attending it. A few seniors who weren't attending a local church have visited my church, though I do not push my congregation on anyone.

I encourage all CCCC pastors to approach their senior centers and offer to be a part of their program.

Quilt Making

Cliftdale Congregational Church dedicated their church quilt on December 1, 2002. The quilt, made by over twenty women of the church, depicts the history and ministries of the church. The women were inspired by the CCCC quilt displayed at the Annual Meeting. The quilt hangs on the back wall of the sanctuary.



Rediscovering Your Purpose

Over the last several years, pollsters like George Barna have found that the typical American church is in serious decline. I used to question that conclusion, but more and more my own experience is proving it true. Fewer and fewer local congregations are growing by Kingdom growth (i.e. new believers). Real, effective evangelism by the local body is diminishing. And missionary activity (cross-cultural evangelism and outreach beyond simply support) is becoming almost an anomaly. How does your church fare?

Would you like to make an investment into your congregation that will help her rediscover her God-given purpose? Would you like the people of your church family to gain clarity in what God expects from them in missions and evangelism? Consider hosting the Missions Committee's two-day seminar, *The Harvest Connection*.

With proper planning, and the vital participation of your church's leadership, *The Harvest Connection* can be the tool to help your church see clearly where she stands (evaluation) and tangible ways she can increase her ministry effectiveness for God's Kingdom (strategy). The emphasis is missions, but the results will impact every aspect of your church's ministry.

For information about hosting *The Harvest Connection* in your church or regional fellowship, contact us at missions@cccusa.org. For CCCC member churches the \$500 seminar fee is waived.

by Dr. John Kimball, Missions Chairman
Cypress Chapel Christian Church,
Suffolk, VA

Measure Your Lifetime in Blessings

*Measure your lifetime in blessings,
not in the years you have known.
Count up the number of people you've touched,
add up the love you have shown.
Measure your days in the gladness
that you and your loved ones have shared,
Tally the smiles on the faces of friends,
total the times you have cared.
Yes, measure your lifetime in blessings,
and you'll always remain in your prime -
For youth is a feeling you keep in your heart
whether seven or seventy-nine.*

Thoughts from Ellen Kalenberg,
Volunteer Coordinator, written for
Take Time, a monthly newsletter for
a Hospice in Orlando, Florida

New Conference Minister

We are delighted to know that our next Conference Minister has already been selected, chosen by God Himself.

After all, Congregationalism is not supposed to be a democracy, but rather a theocracy with the Lord God Almighty ruling His Church!

Our challenge as a Conference is to prayerfully discern whom God has already appointed. Our CM Search Committee is now in the midst of that process.

We are soon to conclude the review and revision of the Job Description and Personal Profile for Conference Minister. Since our committee was formed, we have received the names of suggested candidates. Anyone can suggest a candidate from within the CCCC and we look forward to hearing from you. We covet your prayers!

Our Search Committee may be reached by mail (Rev. Nicholas G. Granitsas, First Congregational Church, 230 Beach Street, Revere, MA 02151), fax 781-284-1580, or e-mail NGranitsas@FirstCongRevere.org.

by Rev. Nick Granitsas, Search Committee Chairman,
First Congregational Church, Revere, MA

Obituaries

The oldest member minister of the CCCC, Rev. Gustav Hannevik, went home to be with the Lord on January 4, 2003. He was 100 years old.

Gustav was born in Bergen, Norway on March 27, 1902. He joined the CCCC in 1967 while pastoring the Congregational Christian Church in Britton, Michigan.

At the time of his death, he was Pastor Emeritus of the Lake View Church in Stoughton, Wisconsin, a church he founded in 1946 as the Calvary Evangelical Free Church.

He died at the Skaalen Home in Stoughton where he was a resident. He is survived by his wife, Pearl.

Changes and Opportunities

Pastoral Changes:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Pittston ME | First Congregational Church* called Richard Freeman* |
| Lancaster MA | Evangelical Congregational Church* called Joseph Cardamone* |
| Zelienople PA | St. Peter's Reformed Church* called David J. Gross* |

Pastoral Openings:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Carlsbad CA | Carlsbad Community Church* |
| Eaton CO | First Congregational Church of Eaton/Ault* |
| American Falls ID | American Falls Congregational Church (Ind) |
| Seward IL | Seward Congregational Church* |
| Forest City IA | First Congregational Church (Ind) |
| Newburg IA | Newburg-Chester Congregational Church* |
| Pleasanton KS | First Christian Church (DHF) |
| Limington ME | The Congregational Church of Limington* |
| SW Harbor ME | Manset Union Church* |
| SW Harbor ME | SW Harbor Congregational Church* |
| Boxford MA | First Church Congregational* |
| East Douglas MA | Second Congregational Church* |
| Kingston MA | Mayflower Congregational Church* |
| Medway MA | Medway Village Church* |
| Medway MA | Community Church of W Medway* |
| Grandville MI | Grandville-Jenison Congregational Church* |
| Britt MN | Sand Lake Chapel* |
| Scottsbluff NE | Plymouth Congregational Church* |
| Schenectady NY | Christ Community Church* |
| New Rockford ND | First Congregational Church* |
| Beavercreek OH | Mt Zion Church* (Min. of Christian Ed) |
| Hollansburg OH | Hollansburg Christian Church (MCCF) |
| Vermilion OH | Vermilion Evangelical & Reformed Ch* |
| Rural Valley PA | St Paul Congregational Church* |

* = Conference member

+ = In process

Health Tips

• Car Safety

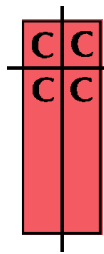
Recent reports by the Petroleum Equipment Institute have shown there is an increased risk of fires associated with static electricity from getting into your car while the gas is being pumped. When you get out of the car to remove the nozzle, a fire may start when the gas vapors contact a static spark. Please do not get back into your car while it is being filled with gas, and do not use cell phones when pumping gas.

• Naps

A nap during the middle of the day is good for you. It helps relieve mental and physical stress and may even help to regulate the body's metabolism. Try not to nap too close to bedtime and do not nap for more than 90 minutes – a 20-30 minute nap is best. Enjoy your nap!

Source: MCHD Healthy Lifestyles

by Betty Mitchell, RN, Parish Nurse
Emmanuel Bethel Church
Royal Oak, MI



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Gospel Light
Son Harvest
Starter Kit - \$49.99

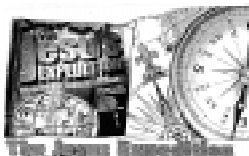
2003 Vacation Bible School



Group
Scuba Super Cool Undersea Bible Adventure
Starter Kit - \$59.99



Gospel Light/Big Idea
3.2.1.
Bible Academy
Complete Kit - \$199.99



David C. Cook
The Jesus Expedition
Starter Kit - \$79.99



Standard Publishing
Treasures of the Nile
Starter Kit - \$49.99

Think about it - - -

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