

“Building International Bridges of Witness and Fellowship”

THE FORESEE

Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

September/October 2005 Volume 37, No. 5

Around The Conference

Renewal by Retreat

by Larry Wood, Michigan Area Representative

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5

One of the greatest challenges of our age is using the gifts God has given, instead of lusting after the gifts someone else has. In Michigan we not only have abundant personnel but we have natural resources as well. The combinations of Reverend Jeff Meyers’s vision and the Cedar Campus of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship have made for a powerful time of spiritual renewal for Michigan pastors and their wives. Each September for the last four years we have gathered at this magnificent facility in the Upper Peninsula on the shore of Lake Huron for a time of fellowship, instruction and relaxation.

A serious issue that all of us face is the question of connectedness. We have our own churches, engaged in constant ministry, beset on every side by difficulties yet we are called to a wider fellowship. We are part of each other as a Conference and as brothers and sisters ministering in nearby areas. We have sought to address this issue by intentionally setting aside four days in the fall to come apart for the purpose of being renewed together.

We use our time for Biblical reflection, prayer, encouragement, consideration of new ideas, rest and recreation. Most importantly, we use the time to be together before the Lord. We learn of Him and of each other. We leave strengthened in our commitment to serve Him and share each other’s burdens and joys.

Challenges are seldom overcome without intentional effort. If we are serious in addressing the problem of connectedness, it requires directness in setting aside the time, expending the effort and waiting upon the Lord. Satan always tries to use the temptation of busy schedules and/or fatigue to derail this time of blessing for us. Knowing that the Lord will bless our efforts, we have persevered year after year and He never fails us. His blessings always amaze. The fall retreat of Michigan pastors and wives in Cedarville, is a time of tremendous blessing in our attempt to minister together in the Lord.

Help for Forced Exit Pastors and Their Families

by Dr. Phil Corr, Pastor
First Congregational Church
Charles City, Iowa

In 2000, Cliff Christensen, as Conference Minister, worked with the Pastor in Residence (PIR) organization to survey CCCC pastors with regard to forced exits. The results of that survey, along with other PIR materials, were presented to and discussed with Area Representatives in January 2001.

Steve Gammon has continued to monitor and be concerned about this situation, and in March 2005 Steve contacted Jay Warren, head of the Ministry Committee. Jay, Doug

Tofteland, and I (all Ministry Committee members) have discussed this situation with each other, Steve, and others, and a three-part proposal was developed, which was presented to the CCCC Board at their meeting prior to the Annual Family Conference. The Board approved the establishment of the Ministry Crisis Response Team (MCRT), which has two purposes: (1) “coming alongside” member pastors who are going through, or have experienced, a forced exit; and (2) encouraging ministry to member churches involved in forced exits.

In addition to helping those in need, the MCRT will be a resource for CCCC members. Please know that the CCCC is committed to helping pastors, their families, and churches affected by

forced exits. If you have questions or comments, feel free to e-mail me at dphilcorr@yahoo.com.

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From the Conference Minister



The gospel of Jesus is a life-transforming story people throughout the world need to hear. I was often reminded of this when I was in Australia in June. As a member of the Navy Reserves I was tasked to be Senior Chaplain for a combined training exercise with forces from all branches of our military and the Australian military. During this time I had many conversations with people who had never heard a clear presentation of the gospel. A scripture that often came to my heart was the words of Jesus in John 15:13, "*Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends.*"

While visiting an Australian Army chapel, I noticed a railroad spike mounted on the wall from the "railroad of death", built during WWII from Burma to Siam. This project claimed the lives of over 27,000 indentured slaves and allied POWs. Perhaps you've seen a movie or read a book based on this project called "Bridge over the River Kwai." Another part of this story was told by a POW survivor, Capt Ernest Gordon., and is revealed in a movie called "To End all Wars." Capt Gordon's story portrays POWs experiencing hardships, and different ways people responded. In the story, as in life, some become self-focused, others become filled with bitterness - fighting one another and plotting revenge. But those who know Jesus can choose to love as Christ has loved them!

One of the most moving characters of this story is Dusty Miller who taught the gospel of Christ about forgiveness and love and turning the other cheek. He lived what he taught. One of the men (Ernest Gordon) was sick and left to die. Dusty

Miller took care of him and nursed him back to health, sacrificing his food and water rations to save Capt Gordon's life.

One man in the prison camp had continually ridiculed Dusty Miller for his views, but Dusty continued to love him. After a failed escape attempt the guards began systematically killing all who were involved, including the man who had ridiculed Dusty Miller. Just as this man was about to be shot, Dusty Miller stepped forward and asked to take the place of the condemned man. The guards consented, but because Dusty Miller had preached Christ crucified, to ridicule his Christian faith, they nailed him to a cross and hung him to die in full view of the camp - including the man for whom Dusty had offered to die!

One evening in Australia when I had asked God for an opportunity to share the good news of Christ with someone, I was led to tell a young Australian soldier the story of Dusty Miller. Tears came to his eyes as he described how his uncle, for whom he had been named, had died as a POW in Burma, working on the Burma-Siam railroad. As he heard the story of Dusty Miller's act of ultimate love expressed in such horrible circumstances, I was able to open the scriptures and remind this young soldier that that is how Jesus Christ loves him! The Lord met us that day, as this young man consecrated his life to the One who died for him! Thank God for the life-transforming gospel we have been given to live and proclaim!



Book Review

Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God Made Easier to Read
by Pastor John Fanella, 1995

In 1741 Jonathan Edwards preached the sermon that sparked the second wave of New England's "Great Awakening" - "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God." In 1995 John Fanella, pastor of Beulah (North Dakota) Congregational Church, produced a



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modern language edition of Edwards' famous sermon.

Since then, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers have sold more than 30,000 copies of the book. In addition, an audio drama version has been made available on CD. Narrated by Max McClean, it is entitled, *Jonathan Edwards' Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*.

Both book and CD are available through the CCCC on-line bookstore at www.cccc.spreadtheword.com. The book sells for \$1.94 and the CD for \$8.96, plus shipping. Both can also be obtained through your local Christian bookstore or via other online sources.

Jonathan Edwards is a key figure in Congregational history, and his works deserve a wider audience. His message of the absolute sovereignty of God, the danger and extent of sin, and the imperative of conversion is needed in the contemporary church, where these "old paths" are often sorely neglected.

Carlton's Comments



Saturday morning dawned with a steel gray sky and a soft mist lightly coating everything it touched. Certainly it did not look like a very wonderful day to walk the streets of the community, knocking on doors and passing out materials. However, this was the day that had been scheduled and the pamphlets needed to be distributed so Alyssa, Jackie, Andrew, Rachel and Tabitha met Joe Kenyon at the East Glenville Community Church at 8:30 AM. Joe is the Minister to Junior and Senior High Youth there and he was ready to drive the youth across town for the morning task of distributing flyers.

Joe and his youth have taken on a summer service project of planning, preparing and presenting a Vacation Bible School along with members of the Christ Community Church. In spite of the damp conditions, a group of adults from Christ Community Church and the five youth and their leader met together for instructions and prayer before dividing into teams and going house to house in several selected neighborhoods. Gay and I along with Alyssa and Jackie set out to cover as many houses as possible in the two hours we had available.

We encountered all types of situations. Some people were not at home so we left the information flyer which had been designed to hang on a doorknob. Some took the flyers and wanted to chat with us about the program. A few, gruffly responded with a "We're not interested." Others did not have any eligible children of their own but said they would like to take the information

and give it to someone with whom they worked.

I am very excited about what is happening with this project. No, the main reason is not because I am personally involved although I am. What excites me most is that this Vacation Bible School program taking place the week of July 17 to 21 in Rotterdam, NY is an example of what can happen when one CCCC church with a need can pair together with another CCCC church with some needed resources. Because two churches decided to work hand in hand, an outreach for the Lord will happen when it otherwise would not and some youth will have a meaningful work project as well.

It is time that we as a Conference become much more active and much more creative in the way we assist our fellow churches in reaching their communities for Christ. I would not for a moment suggest that we should cease all mission projects in other countries around the globe or with organizations other than the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference, but let's not overlook some great opportunities which might be of great benefit to our Conference churches. If our congregations begin to pray together, work together and touch lives for Christ together, I am certain we will be amazed at how the Lord will use our efforts to the benefit of each participating church and even more importantly to His glory!

Rev. Carlton Walker

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Bryan's Bytes

by Bryan Burrell

A Different Kind of Conversion

If you have been computing for a few years it is highly likely that you have files from an older software program on a floppy or two. These files may have even made it onto your new computer but are worthless without the original program. Your files need to be converted. The first way is to use the Microsoft Office Converter Pack. The latest pack can be found at www.office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA011513581033.aspx

Lotus Smart Suite, a program now owned by IBM, comes with significant converters installed and requires no additional effort or downloads. If neither of these options works for you, open the original files in their original programs if possible. After opening the documents save them as RTF (Rich Text Format) or TXT (Text) files. These two types of files are readable on a variety of word processing programs. In fact, if you send MS Word documents or documents from your favorite word processor in any email attachment, you should send the attachment in the TXT or RTF format.

This type of conversion is not as exciting as the conversion that comes with new life in Christ. However, the time and effort saved from converting older documents to a current program is time that can be given to sowing Gospel seeds of love.

Annual Conference Takes On International Flavor

By Sylvia Heidemann, Union Church of Monroe Center, IL

The 57th Annual Conference in Harrisburg was blessed with 10 international attendees who share the vision for bringing Christ to the world. Eric Zander of the Belgian Evangelical Mission summarized this vision in stating, "Jesus is waiting on us. We must continue evangelizing; the mission is at our door, and so many are lost."

From Micronesia came Pat and Linda Chiles and Bethany (Chuuk), Ivann Tenry, and Kohne Ramon (Pohnpei/Saipan). Other attendees included Georgi and Jordanka Jeleu (Bulgaria) and Roland Rose (Mexico).

Jim Potter, former president of the Congregational Christian Churches in Canada, represented his nation. Attending our annual conference, he stated, was like "old home week" because of the love and friendship he sensed.

2005 Annual Family Conference, Harrisburg, July 25-28

"The Nearness of God is Our Good" - Psalm 73:28



Worship time was led by Pastor Steve Weibley of Carlisle (MA) Congregational Church. Indian Creek Praise Team from Christ Reformed Church at Indian Creek, Telford, PA, provided music for most services.



Dr. Stephen A. Gammon, Conference Minister, brought the message during the opening worship on Monday evening. *We can't ignore the "stink under the sink." We have to deal with sin TODAY—whether it be the sin of self-idolatry, self-reliance or unbelief. . . . Repentance means we RETURN to where we belong, to the "tent of meeting" to talk with God and be changed by Him.*



Dr. Richard Owen Roberts, president of International Awakening Ministry, addressed the Conference on Tuesday and Wednesday evening.

It is a mistake to assume that the essential presence of God and the manifest presence of God are one and the same. . . . Whenever an entity sins and will not repent, God brings that entity under judgment. . . . The most frequent occurrence of God's remedial judgment is the withdrawal of His presence.



The morning Bible Hour featured Dr. David Midwood, president of VISION New England.

"You don't know like I know what Jesus done for me." We need to tell the story. . . . Are you touching Jesus, or watching from a distance? . . . The essence of sin is saying to God, "I don't need You!"



Speaker for the Ladies' Luncheon was Lucinda Secrest McDowell, pastor's wife from Connecticut.

God is the divine Quilter—He uses everything, nothing is wasted! . . . When everything in your life burns up, it sends a smoke signal. . . . New growth comes from controlled burning.



Tom Telford, former baseball umpire turned missions consultant, was the speaker for the Men's Luncheon on Wednesday.

The greatest threat to world mission is the church preoccupied with its own existence. . . . You can't get excited about the Muslim world or the Hindu world unless you're burdened for your neighbor.



Belgian Evangelical Mission was one of several mission organizations exhibiting at the conference. Eric Zander, French-language director of the mission, speaks with a visitor at the organization's display.



Military and institutional chaplains were the ushers and communion servers for the conference. Lt. Wayne Hall (CHC,USN) and CH(MAJ) Al Hardy, USA are pictured at the Thursday evening banquet



Cliff Christensen, former Conference Minister, leads in prayer for international attendees during the Tuesday business session (see article on page 3). Conference President Nicholas Granitsas and Secretary Peter Murdy are at right.



Seminars each morning offered a broad choice of topics for study. Here, Joe Moravec of Urbandale, Iowa, makes a point during the seminar on "Great Commission Disciplemaking."

Children and Youth at the Conference



Theme of the children's program was "Celebrating Jesus — Christmas in July." In keeping with the conference theme, the children sang "Be near me, Lord Jesus, and help me to stay close by thee for ever, and love me, I pray." Dedicated workers gave their time to minister to the children, allowing parents to participate in conference events.



"Rally in the Valley" was the title of the youth program. Both children and youth made a field trip to nearby Hershey Park and Chocolate World. At right, young people are coached for their part in the conference's concluding event by the Maranatha Drama Team.



Conference Action

Board of Directors Action at the Annual Meeting

Meeting before and during the conference, the Board of Directors

- approved the site for the 2008 annual conference in Buffalo, NY
- approved the Vision Statement for the Conference (see below)
- approved a set of guidelines for exhibitors
- approved the creation of the Ministry Crisis Response Team (see article on page 1)
- approved the final draft of a paper on Bible Translation in English, to be presented for adoption at the 2006 annual meeting
- authorized further research and input regarding a name change for the Conference
- approved designation of Westminster Theological Seminary as an additional seminary of choice for CCCC students
- empowered the Conference Minister to appoint a task force to study options for additional Conference office space.

Conference Action at the Annual Meeting

During the daily business sessions, the Conference

- received one new regional fellowship: Iowa Fellowship of the CCCC
- received eight new member churches
- recognized nearly 80 newly Conference-credentialed individuals
- approved a 2006 budget of \$359,540
- adopted three constitutional amendments, including one that folds the work of the Foresee Publications Committee into other committees
- heard the Conference Minister's presentation of the Vision Statement, "We Are Biblical Christians "Honoring Jesus Christ Together".
- received the reports of all officers, committees and area representatives.

CCCC People to Pray For

Some Matters For Prayer:

- CCCC Area Reps and Committee Members as they do the Lord's work
- CM Steve Gammon as he travels and ministers in Bulgaria September 23 – October 3, and in Micronesia October 22 – October 31.
- Churches who are seeking pastors and pastors seeking churches
- CCCC Missionaries who faithfully serve (pray through the list in the yearbook!)

CCCC Missionaries

CCCC Send Youth to Belize

by Pastor Scott Koop, Daybreak
Community Church, Carlsbad, CA

On August 5, 2005, 26 CCCC youth and adults traveled to Belmopan, the capitol of the Central American country of Belize. Members of the group from Maine, Connecticut, Virginia, Minnesota, and California worked with Avant Ministries missionaries, Kent and Marion Fuller, doing children's outreach and construction work on a school and youth camp facility.

The work had a two-fold purpose. First, it brought much needed support to local ministries in an economically underdeveloped area of Central America, where the ability to grow ministry programs and build facilities depends on outside help. Secondly, it gave the team the opportunity to step out in faith and put actions to the words they have been taught. How many future CCCC pastors, missionaries, or full-time ministry workers were on this trip? Only the Lord can answer that question, but it is exciting to see how God uses a few willing hearts to reach this generation for Christ.

Who's Who & Who's New on the Micronesia Ministries Committee (MMC)

by Dick Trosak, Carlsbad
Community Church, Carlsbad, CA

The Micronesia Ministries Committee (MMC) is the group responsible for the oversight and administration of the CCCC's ministry in Micronesia. The MMC members have been Max Vague, Bob & Marilyn Wilber, Marv Eyler, Dick Trosak, and Chairperson George Allen. The group oversees the work of the "Brother to Brother" ministries' fraternal workers and meets three times a year along with ex-officio members Barry Jones and Steve Gammon. In April 2005 two of the members, Max Vague and Marilyn Wilber, felt God's leading to move to other areas of service.

Max Vague, Associate Pastor of Carlsbad Community Church for thirty years, felt led to step down in order to

better serve in other church-related service. Max has served on the MMC for six years and has been one of the most faithful servants and teachers of the Morning Star Institute (MSI). While Max will be leaving the MMC, he will still be teaching at the MSI. Max's position on the committee will be taken over by Bill Brandon.

Bill, a long time member of Carlsbad Community Church, is a retired VP of Longs Drug Stores and has an excellent business administrative background and will be a wonderful asset to the committee.

The other member leaving the MMC this year is Marilyn Wilber. Marilyn, along with her husband Bob, has served in the "Brother to Brother" Ministry for years and more recently as resident fraternal workers on the island of Chuuk. Bob is now serving as an associate pastor in Fort Meyers, FL. Marilyn's replacement on the committee is Diane Lepior, who has been to Micronesia on many occasions and has worked as a teacher for the children there and has taught at Mizpah Christian High School.

Marv Eyler has served on the MMC for five years and brings his administrative skills and missionary field experience to the job.

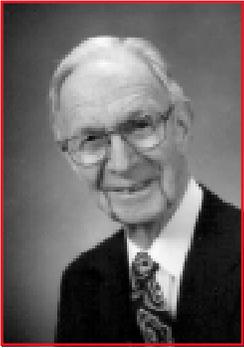
Dick Trosak loves the people of Micronesia and has made six trips there, working in his trade as a cabinetmaker while there.

Chairman, Rev. George Allen has been the committee's leader for the last five years and brings a vast knowledge and wisdom to the position

The MMC works to provide help to those who are in the field through annually establishing and approving the budgets for the fraternal workers and Mizpah Christian High School. Gary and Kim Gardell and their daughter Lisa are on the island of Pohnpei where Gary serves as the Administrator for the MSI. Pat and Linda Chiles serve on the island of Chuuk, where they serve primarily as administrative advisers and teachers at Mizpah Christian High School.

The MMC is always looking for qualified volunteers to serve as resident high school teachers at Mizpah and pastors or bible teachers to serve for two weeks at a time instructing the local pastors at MSI. If you are interested in serving in Micronesia, please contact any of the committee members.

Promotions to Glory



Samuel T. Hemberger, CCCC conference president 1965-1968 and Conference Minister 1968-1981 passed into glory on June 27, 2005 at his home in Aurora, IL.

Born in 1921 in Atlantic City, NJ, he was educated at Bryan College, Dayton, TN and Reformed Episcopal Seminary, Philadelphia, PA. His earlier pastorates included Tremont Larger Parish, ME; St. Lawrence Congregational Church, Portland, ME; and Union Congregational Church, Tuckahoe, NY.

After serving as Conference Minister, Rev. Hemberger functioned briefly as the CCCC area representative for northern Illinois. He was interim minister of First Presbyterian Church, Aurora, 1982-1990, and pastoral associate at Union Congregational Church, North Aurora, 1993-2001. In retirement he also operated the Book Nook in Batavia, IL.

Rev. Hemberger is survived by his wife of 60 years, Anna, and daughters Janice Hardester and Karen Davis and their families. A memorial service was held on July 9 at First Christian Church, Aurora, IL.

Rev. Hemberger had dealt with heart disease for many years. During his final days he spoke freely and joyfully of his impending passing into the Lord's presence. When asked about this, he replied emphatically, "By God's grace, by God's grace!"

Changes and Opportunities

Pastoral Changes:

Lockport IL	Homer Congregational Church called Frank Volpe
East Brady PA	Trinity UCC of Christ Brady's Bend PA, Inc (UCC) called Brian Snow
Philadelphia PA	St. Mark's Reformed Church* called David G. Williams*

Pastoral Openings:

Brighton CO	Zion Congregational Church*
Greeley CO	St. Paul's Congregational Ch*
Freeport IL	Zion Church*
Garner IA	Zion Evang & Reformed Church*
Pownal ME	First Parish Congregational Church
Westford MA	Westford Bible Church (Ind)
Upper Peninisula MI	Cooks, Fayette & Garden Congregational (Ind)
Avon MN	Avon Community Church*
Edina MN	Colonial Church of Edina*
Scottsbluff NE	Emmanuel Congregational Church*
Wolfeboro NH	First Christian Church*
Rye NH	Rye Congregational church (Ind)
Newburgh NY	First Congregational Church*
S Berne NY	S Berne Congregational Christian Church* (Part time with housing)
Canton OH	Canton's First Church (UCC)
Lima OH	First Evangelical & Reformed Church*
Sardis OH	St Paul's Church Trail Run*
Fredonia PA	Christ Community Church*
Jacksonville VT	Jacksonville Community Church
Orwell VT	First Congregational Church (Ind)

* = Conference member

+ = In process

Dr. Roger K. "Bud" Lark of Oceanside, CA passed into the Lord's presence on June 24, 2005. Born in 1931, he was educated at Barrington College and Gordon Divinity School, and received the Ph.D. from California Graduate School of Theology. His CCCC pastorates included Phillips Congregational Church, Boston, and Vista (CA) Community Church (associate). In retirement he was involved in jail ministry in San Diego County. He is survived by his wife Mary. A memorial service took place at Carlsbad (CA) Community Church on July 8.

From the Editor

This will be my last issue of THE FORESEE. The new Co-Editors are Richard and Shirley Anne Leonard. I know they will do a wonderful job and I hope that you give them the same support and encouragement you've given me over the last three years. I will keep the CCCC and the many friends I've made in my prayers. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you and honor God through THE FORESEE. God bless you!

In His Love,
Carol Wells

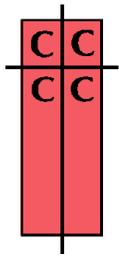
Health Tips

Radon

Radon is a colorless, tasteless and odorless gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today (second to smoking). Radon comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in the soil and enters your home mainly through cracks in the cement floor, walls, joints or gaps around service pipes. High levels of radon have been found in about one in 15 homes. The only way to know your radon level is to have your home tested. Testing kits may be purchased at hardware stores or through your local health department. Repairs can be made to your home by qualified contractors.

Source: www.epa.gov

by Betty Mitchell, RN, Parish Nurse
Emmanuel Bethel Church
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The Nearness of God is Our Good

"But as for me, how good it is to be near God!" Psalm 73:28a

Did You Miss Our Family Conference? It's Not Too Late!

Theme T-shirt - **\$10.00**

Men's & Ladies' golf shirts - **\$27.00**

Long sleeve logo denim shirts - **\$27.00**

Tote Bags (red or blue) - **\$7.00**

Ball Hats - **\$10.00**

Coffee Mugs - **\$5.00**

All items have our CCCC Logo, please call
Gayle for colors & sizes.

Remember October is Pastor appreciation month.



Remember, when ordering materials on the new CCCC online bookstore at
<http://www.cccc.spreadtheword.com> you're contributing to the Conference.

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