



THE FORESEE

Conservative Congregational Christian Conference

September/October 2007 Volume 39, No. 5

Around The Conference A Vision for Church Health in North Dakota

John Fanella, Great Plains Area Representative

After the departure of their pastor, New Bethel Congregational Church in Hazen, North Dakota decided to take some time to address issues of church health within the body. The leaders of the church contacted Titus Task Force International of Bakersfield, California to ask for assistance. After an eye-opening weekend assessment New Bethel contracted with Titus Task Force to bring them through a revitalization and training process with the hope of preparing them for a fruitful future of ministry and outreach.

An intentional interim ministry team consisting of Rev. George Fraser, Rev. Bill Vibe, and Rev. LaRue Goetz from Titus Task Force has led the pastoral interim training process. Titus Task Force has been working with New Bethel for eighteen months. The church has experienced dramatic transformation and is now searching for its next pastor.

The training process led by Titus Task Force has included:

- Resolving conflict among church members with a strategy to bring reconciliation and restoration.
- Restoring servanthood and integrity to church leadership
- Refocusing the congregation to be a Biblical community of obedience.
- Revitalizing worship to be focused on God and ministry to one another.
- Refining and enhancing the ministry organization for future growth and effectiveness
- Restaffing to help the church through the pastor search process
- Disarming combatants with the body.
- Peacemaking training emphasizing accountability and reconciliation.

Titus Task Force also uses the acronym TITUS to define their work:

- **T**ransformational leadership restored
- **I**ntegrity re-established
- **T**actical leadership refocused
- **U**nity strengthened and restored
- **S**trategies Redressed

As New Bethel has gone through the TITUS process of “setting in order what remains” (Titus 1:5), it is now better prepared to call a pastor. The congregation is looking forward to that opening Sunday of a new pastorate, with the anticipated hopes, joys, and expectations of new beginnings. It has been exciting to watch the people of New Bethel pursue their vision for church health. They have shown tremendous faith and courage, and have been a model for other churches in the area. As they seek to call their next pastor they do so knowing who they are and what their responsibility is as a congregation.

If you or your church are interested in contacting Titus Task Force, you can contact Rev. Bill Vibe at 661-257-1514. Or email him at billvibe@ca.rr.com.



*New Bethel Congregational Church,
Hazen, North Dakota*

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From the Conference Minister

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Commitment

“*Setting Apart Christ as Lord*” was the theme at our CCCC Annual Meeting this year, and it remains our high calling! I recently read a great book that I commend to you, as a good reminder of what living this theme looks like.

On Helen’s and my way home from England in June, where we attended meetings of the World Evangelical Congregational Fellowship, the Lord put us next to William MacKenzie, Director of Christian Focus Publications, Ltd in England. We enjoyed good conversation and fellowship while several miles above the Atlantic Ocean. After arriving home I received a package from Mr. MacKenzie, enclosing a personal letter and two gift books. As I was then reflecting on our theme, I was led to immediately read one of the books entitled *The Cambridge Seven* by John Pollock. This story vividly reminded me that the Lord uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things when we give ourselves wholly to Christ.

Pollock tells of Harold Schofield, a brilliant Oxford doctor, who labored as a missionary in China for many years. Giving his all for Christ, he went to his



Rev. Dr. Stephen A. Gammon,
CCCC Conference Minister

knees and prayed, “Lord, give me missionaries from British Universities to help in China.” On the day Schofield died the first of seven men applied to Hudson Taylor for mission work in the China Inland Mission (now called Overseas Missionary Fellowship). These seven inspired thousands of others to think seriously of missionary service — to lay all on the altar for Christ, committing themselves to go wherever the Lord would send them so

others might also know the One who gave His all for us.

One of these seven was the greatest professional cricket player in England, the captain of the national team, C. T. Studd. When this young man gladly left all behind for the sake of Christ, people took notice and many began to

consider the depth of their own commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

What does “*Setting Apart Christ as Lord*” look like? It includes admitting with our minds, submitting with our hearts, committing with our whole being, and transmitting with our mouths the glorious news of Christ our Lord. As individuals, congregations, and as a Conference may this theme be ours in practice.



Treasurer’s Tidbits from Tay

Rev. Tay Kersey, Treasurer of the CCCC

It has been my privilege to serve as your Treasurer for the past nine years. The Constitution prohibited my being re-elected again at the past Annual Meeting. However it is possible that I will continue to have articles in the Foresee (under a different title) being I am working part time in the office.

The URGENT need of churches to assist us in meeting the increased budget for 2007 needs to be prayerfully considered by all.

I hope to extensively list out in another issue of Tidbits all the blessings/advantages that have come to us by being united as we are in the CCCC. The list on page 161 of the yearbook is only PART of the benefits. The two new staff positions added in 2007 adds many fold to this list.

THE FORESEE

A bi-monthly publication of the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

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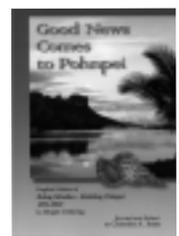
Deadline for the November/December 2007 issue is September 10, 2007.

New Book Chronicles Micronesia Mission

Good News Comes to Pohnpei is the title of a new book relating the story of Congregational missions in the islands of Micronesia. The book was written by Birgitt Gehring (originally titled *Rhong Mwahu leledohng Pohnpei*) and revised and edited by Christine A. Jones, with graphics and layout by Kim Gardell.

The book presents the thrilling account of how God brought Congregational missionaries to these remote Pacific islands a little more than 150 years ago, when few from the outside world even knew of their existence. Death, fire, storms and tribal warfare are only a few of the hardships these first missionaries faced in their early years. How God sustained them, answered their prayers and performed amazing miracles on their behalf makes for fascinating and exciting reading.

Good News Comes to Pohnpei is available for \$14.99 plus shipping and handling. Order from the CCCC office, 8941 Highway 5, Lake Elmo MN 55042.



From the Northeast Regional Minister

Rev. Terry H. Shanahan, Northeast Regional Minister

Developing Healthy Churches in the Northeast

As the newly appointed Northeast Regional Minister, I will be the pastor/mentor for the 101 churches in the Northeast region of our country.



Almost ten years ago I was called to the Nottingham Congregational Christian Church in Nottingham, New Hampshire. With membership at about 30 and attendance less, this loving congregation of sincere people stepped out in faith to call a salaried pastor. The church challenged me to grow the church as quickly as possible, as they only had enough funds to pay a small salary for a limited period of time.

Although I didn't know it at the time, and had never heard the term before, I had just become a "redevelopment pastor." I have completed nine and a half years there, and the church's largest population is now young families. There are weekly Bible studies, weekly prayer-and-praise services, youth groups, fellowship events, etc.

By trial and error — often more error than trial — I discovered quite by accident what it meant to be a redevelopment pastor. Then, at our Area Representative meeting in Minnesota in January 2006, Ken Priddy of United Front Ministries gave us his basic training on church

redevelopment. And I thought, *Yes!* We now have known strategies to grow healthy churches in ways that far exceed my feeble attempts. And with great vision, the CCCC wisely created the position of Director of Church Redevelopment and called Dr. John Kimball to that position.

Redevelopment is what is needed in our Northeast churches today. If the statistics hold true for our Conference, for every healthy vibrant growing church in the Northeast there are four that are not healthy, growing or vibrant. Part of my responsibility, as the Northeast Regional Minister, will be to identify those churches that would benefit from church redevelopment strategies and help them grow as vibrant churches that make a difference for Christ in their communities.

Developing healthy churches in the Northeast will further the cause of Christ in important ways. It is the healthy churches that can contribute to our church multiplication goals. It is the healthy churches that can reach out effectively to their area fellowships to encourage and strengthen them. It is the healthy churches that can support the discipleship of those seeking our Lord within and without their assemblies.

As I begin this new calling in my life, I am elated to be involved in this exciting ministry that God has already blessed through the tireless efforts of Dr. Carlton Walker. May God bless us richly as we move forward in His service in the Northeast.

In His Joy,
Terry

Around the Conference

Encouraging Functional Unity at the "Vicinity" Level

Ronald E. Sylvester, Greater Hudson Valley Area Representative

Is there a decline in attendance at regional gatherings in your area? There has been in the Greater Hudson Valley Congregational Fellowship (GHVCF). At our fall 2006 meeting in East Glensville, New York, Moderator Jim Hale preached a message challenging us to "know one another" better, and specifically to know what God is doing in each of our churches. This message sparked a new emphasis in our midst to do just that. We are seeking to learn about each of our churches and increase the level of *functional unity* among us.

As Congregationalists, we sometimes find that our "drumbeat" for autonomy can drown out the need for interdependence. That cannot be allowed. Jim and the executive committee, along with a few other interested persons began to meet and to pray that God would show us how to learn about one another, and share with one another the blessings He has afforded our individual churches.

As a result of these discussions, our spring meeting held at Saratoga Chapel in Malta, New York became an opportunity

to exhibit and talk about some of the ministries in our respective churches. Each church represented there was encouraged to share specific needs or weaknesses that perhaps others in the fellowship could advise upon, or help to meet.

This fall (2007) we hope to divide our area into three vicinities: Syracuse, the Capital District, and Pittsfield, Massachusetts. We'll work to bring to three separate meetings the churches in each of these vicinities, with as many lay people from each as possible. Over a meal we'll share stories of what the Lord is doing. People who are involved in common ministries will sit together for prayer. In preparation for this gathering, a member of this special committee who has the passion to see this vision of genuine fellowship happen will visit each church. They will bring with them flyers and encourage members of the congregations to attend.

We believe God is doing wonderful acts of grace and salvation through a myriad of ministry forms. It is in our best interests to learn about them, rejoice together, and learn from them.

59th Annual Family Conference

July 16–19 at Garden Grove, California

Theme Verse

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have...

1 Peter 3:15



Conference Minister Stephen Gammon launched the conference by challenging us from the theme verse to "set apart Christ as Lord."

Lord, reign in me,
Reign in Your pow'r;
Over all my dreams,
In my darkest hour.
You are the Lord of all I am,
So won't you reign in me again.

(from our theme chorus, "Lord, Reign in Me," by Brenton Brown, ©1998 by Vineyard Songs CCLI# 1008048)



Charles Youngkin, senior pastor of Carlsbad Community Church, directed our thoughts Tuesday evening to "How to Live the Rest of Your Life," from Philippians 1:20–21. Jesus Christ must become our "magnificent obsession."



Worship Leader Dr. Phil Hoyer used a blend of hymns and praise choruses to unite us in worship and support the theme of the conference and of each service.



Mary Ellen Chanco added to our worship experience at the piano and keyboard for all the services.



John Kimball, Director of Conference Care and Church Redevelopment, leads a seminar on "Hamster Wheel Ministry."



The Praise Team from Carlsbad Community Church sang for us on Wednesday morning. We were blessed by special music from other musicians throughout the conference.



The Children's Choir practiced each day and sang for us Thursday morning.



The Michigan delegation gathered for breakfast on Thursday. Other regions also had fellowship/meetings during the week.



David Bryant led the morning Bible Study hour with his "firehouse delivery." He challenged us from our theme verse to make Christ not only central, but supreme in our lives.



Envoy Financial introduced a new retirement program for 4C's pastors.



The program for teens feature both fun times and local ministry opportunities.



Terry Shanahan was consecrated to his new position of Northeast Regional Minister, replacing Carlton Walker, who retired following seven years of faithful service in that capacity.



The Children's Program, led by Saskia Van Leeuwin, combined fun times with remarkable spiritual challenges.



Dr. Gregory Waybright brought the Wednesday evening message on making our churches more effective by our priorities, our attitudes and our relationships.



The Women's Luncheon Tuesday featured potter Carole Wolaver; the Men's Luncheon Wednesday featured Chaplain R. Wayne Hall.



Ed Veldhuizen was a frequent sight scurrying about solving problems and making announcements, as he and Wayne Bitter served as Local Arrangements Chairmen.

Official Actions Taken at 59th Annual Family Conference

- Accepted a 2008 budget of \$584,100, an 8.75% increase.
- Received seven new churches into membership
- Noted the completion of applications for 49 ministers and other Christian workers by the Credentials Committee
- Proposed Constitutional Amendments for 2008 were read regarding Conference documents and ministerial membership
- Amended Bylaws on the nature of Conference documents, standards for membership of Churches, and the establishment of a Church Redevelopment Committee (initial members of which will be appointed by the Board)
- Received and adopted the reports of all officers, committees and area representatives
- Declined to adopt the proposed constitutional amendment to expand the Statement of Faith (but approved a motion to for the Board to establish a committee to study specific concerns raised)

We were also blessed to set apart Terry & Karlotta Shanahan, installing Terry to his new work as Northeast Regional Minister. We honored Carlton and Gay Walker for their seven years of wonderful service.

This year's Annual Meeting was blessed with a strong presence of the Holy Spirit as we centered our meetings and plenary sessions on "The Supremacy of Jesus Christ." The messages from our speakers, Steve Gammon, David Bryant, Charlie Youngkin, Greg Waybright and Nick Granitsas were particularly effective — and our last morning session together ended with an altar call of complete devotion to Jesus, bringing pastors and other leaders to their knees at the front of the meeting room. The gathering was smaller in number, but will likely have a huge impact on the life of our Conference for years to come.

Back To Basics

Dr. Ron Hamilton, CCCC Director of Church Multiplication

The mission of the church multiplication movement of the CCCC is “to birth and develop healthy reproducing churches by resourcing CCCC pastors and churches.” We are strongly committed to plant churches that will be strong and healthy. Healthy churches are built on a biblical model, reflecting the ministry of Jesus.



The Church Multiplication Committee hosted a church planting seminar in the Boston area in early June. The sessions were led by Tom Johnston and Mike Perkinson from the Praxis Center for Church Development. The committee was encouraged by their teaching that focused on starting churches based on a biblical model, not a business model.

In their book *A New Testament Trilogy*, Tom and Mike state that the irreducible core of Christianity is “love God, love others, and as you go make disciples.” This truth is based on the commandments of Jesus in the Gospels.

“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40 NIV).

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20 NIV)

We want to build churches of vision and purpose. We challenge our church planters to establish milestones or goals that they pursue as they develop their ministry. There is always room for publicity and promotion within the church. But we are committed to build churches with a strong biblical foundation that reflects obedience to the commands of Jesus. Without that foundation, all other efforts of the church are in vain.

Artificial Appreciation

Dr. John Kimball, CCCC Director of Conference Care and Church Redevelopment

Thankfully, most of our CCCC member pastors serve in churches and ministries where they are fulfilled and sense affirmation from those to whom they minister. But that is not the case for all pastors. For those who serve in more difficult ministry venues, Pastor Appreciation Sunday can be a painful and frustrating experience.

Consider, for a moment, the pastor who serves a dysfunctional church family—one where there is little ministry fruit and where a handful of self-centered, even ungodly, people wield control. Consider the ongoing challenges such a pastor faces: having to defend his use of time, his doctrine, and even the décor at the parsonage to members of a congregation that called him and vowed to love him. Consider his frustration in leading a congregation where power brokers undermine nearly everything he attempts. Consider the resistance he faces when taking the gospel into a community that is not welcomed by church families. Consider the pain he and his family endure at caustic tongues that gossip about them.

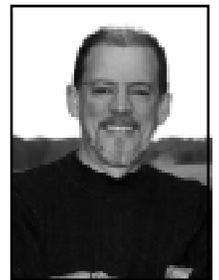
Then comes October. For a pastor who generally experiences the gratitude and ministry fruit of a loving congregation, Pastor Appreciation Sunday is a valued and anticipated celebration. But for the pastor who is regularly opposed and battered it can be an empty and painful experience, especially if the very people who counter him the other 364 days of the year are those who bestow the tokens of “appreciation.”

The issue is not the annual Pastor Appreciation celebration, but the lack of love and support throughout the rest of the year. A congregation that expresses appreciation one Sunday

in October, but otherwise doesn’t follow, support or defend its pastor, is self-deceived. The case is similar to the drunken, abusive husband who fawns all over his wife on their anniversary. The congregation may have warm feelings on that day, but the pastor and his family may not. Artificial appreciation is worse than no appreciation at all.

As your church plans for Pastor Appreciation Sunday on October 14, stop and consider whether your pastor truly experiences your love and appreciation throughout the year. Are there difficult people in your church that commandeer his ministry? If so, how does the rest of the congregation back him? How does the leadership protect him? Do people stand *with* him in business meetings when he’s the target of antagonism? If you know your pastor and his family are wounded or frustrated by such circumstances, perhaps Pastor Appreciation Sunday should be a time when the congregation asks for forgiveness and reaffirms its corporate commitment to support and love her shepherd. It is a shameful thing for a church to “go through the motions” on this.

I encourage you to use 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 as your theme for this year’s Pastor Appreciation celebration. Show your pastor genuine love and gratitude for the sacrificial investment he makes into your church family. This not only honors your pastor, but it honors the Lord who sent him to you.



Promotions to Glory

James E. Wright

The Rev. James W. Wright went home to be with the Lord on December 19, 2006. James served in the ministry for over 50 years. He graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and was ordained with the CCCC. He served churches in Scottsbluff, NE and in New Rockford, ND.

K. Leslie Van Vorst

The Rev. K. Leslie Van Vorst died on June 3, 2007. Born in 1934, he was active in the East Glenville Community Church in Scotia, NY. He pastored the Kiantone Congregational Church, Jamestown, NY. In the mid-1960's, Leslie answered a four-year call to pastor a church in Sydney, Australia and continued in Australia for the rest of his life. He was instrumental in forming the Fellowship of Congregational Churches in Australia, which like the CCCC is a member of the WECF. His wife, Judy, four sons and seven grandchildren survive. Leslie was a cousin of Carlton Walker, outgoing CCCC Northeast Regional Minister.

Raymond C. Ortlund



Dr. Ray Ortlund passed away at age 84 on July 22, 2007. Ray pastored in Christiana, Pennsylvania and Schenectady, New York before accepting the call to Lake Avenue Congregational Church in 1959, where he remained until 1979. He also served as CCCC President from 1968 to 1969. A well-known author and broadcaster, Ray and his precious wife Anne were still blessing the kingdom of God through Renewal Ministries in Newport Beach, California when the Lord called him home. He is survived by Anne, his four children, 13 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. Ray's final words were a blessing on his family taken from Numbers 6:24-26.

Changes and Opportunities

Pastoral Changes:

Atlanta MI	Big Rock Congregational Church* called Brian Tidd
Ellsworth ME	First Congregational Church called Nick Davis
Greenville OH	First Congregational Christian Church* called Doug Krauss
Bernville PA	St. Thomas called Bill Miller
Suffolk, VA	Cypress Chapel* called John Wolfe*

Pastoral Openings:

Santa Barbara CA	Bethany Congregational Church*
Longmont CO	Christ Congregational Church*
Chaplin CT	Chaplin Congregational Church*
Middletown IN	Sulphur Springs Christian Church*
Winchester IN	Winchester Congregational Christian Church
Emporia KS	First Congregational Church* (Associate)
Carthage ME	Carthage Union Church* (Part time)
Honor MI	Honor Congregational Church*
New Haven MI	First Congregational Church* (Part time)
Brownston MN	Brownston Congregational Church* (Part time)
Eden Prairie, MN	Wooddale Church (Church planter)
Woodbury MN	Woodbury Community Church*
Laurel MT	First Congregational Church*
Denton NC	Pleasant Union Community Church*
Hazen ND	New Bethel Congregational Church*
Taylor ND	Taylor Parish
Scottsbluff NE	Emmanuel Congregational Church*
Candia NH	Candia Congregational Church
Greenville NH	Greenville Community Christian Church
Lake View NY	Lake View Congregational Church*
Vermilion OH	Vermilion Evangelical & Reformed Church*
Shattuck OK	St Paul Congregational Church
Duncansville PA	St Clairsville Joint Charge
Odessa WA	Heritage Church
Beloit WI	Shopiere Congregational Church

* = Conference member

+ = In process

Health Tips

Bone Density

There are no symptoms of decreasing bone mineral density or osteopenia. Dietary changes that can help decrease the progression to osteoporosis include increasing calcium from dairy products and green vegetables, as well as calcium supplements combined with vitamin D found also in eggs and various fish. Weight bearing exercises, walking, hiking or dancing, will aid in the formation of bone. Stopping smoking and avoiding use of excessive alcohol, caffeine and colas reduces your risk. Encourage your children to eat properly for their continued bone health.

Source: www.webmd.com

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Committed To Christ

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15



New Logo Polos

From \$20.00 to \$29.00 (Please call for sizes and colors)

Men's & Ladies' polos with our new logo

Available in many sizes & colors

2007 Annual Family Conference

Theme tee shirts.....\$10.00

Long sleeve Denim shirts,

with our new logo.....\$25.00

Available in many sizes

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