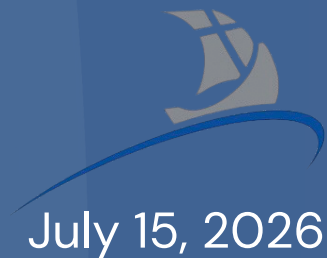


NACCC E-NEWS

THE MESSENGER



WHAT'S NEXT

REV. DR. GERRY KRUPP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Summer marches on! It reached the upper 90s in Wisconsin today. We've successfully concluded our Annual Meeting in Springfield, MA, and the next big event on my summer schedule is what is known as the Boston Seminar. The Boston Seminar is an immersive experience where we gather with graduating students from our Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies and the Lay Ministry Training Program. Additionally, we encourage ministers who are new to the Congregational Way to join us for a minimal cost. The Boston Seminar occurs at the Congregational Library & Archives on Beacon Hill. We eat and learn together in the great setting of old Boston. We visit the Plimoth Patuxet Museums, walk the Freedom Trail, and learn from qualified instructors. It's a great time to dig into our Congregational tradition! For more information, please email me at gkrupp@naccc.org.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING – VENEZUELA

JULIE ROBIE, MISSIONS COORDINATOR

Powerful twin earthquakes have devastated parts of Venezuela, causing widespread destruction to homes, churches, schools, and essential infrastructure. Families have lost loved ones, many have been displaced from their communities, and countless people are in urgent need of shelter, food, clean water, medical care, and other critical assistance.

As a result of this need, the Mission and Outreach Ministry Council is gratefully receiving One Great Hour of Sharing donations designated to Venezuela Earthquake Relief. Funds will be accepted through March 6, 2027, and distributed to Convoy of Hope - a trusted, vetted organization already on-site in Venezuela providing emergency relief and recovery assistance. Convoy of Hope's relief efforts are regularly posted on their Facebook page.

To donate now, visit the NACCC website "Donate" page. Please be sure to designate your donation to: OGHS Disaster – Venezuela Earthquake Relief.

Thank you for your compassion, your prayers, and your generous support as we stand alongside those in Venezuela during this time of great need.

APPLY FOR LAY MINISTRY TRAINING

Have you felt called to deepen your faith, grow in leadership, or explore ministry more intentionally? The NACCC's Lay Ministry Training Program offers an opportunity to develop your gifts, strengthen your understanding of ministry, and serve your church and community in meaningful ways. Want to learn more? Please reach out to Polly Bodjanac at pollybodjanac@gmail.com or Laura Wright at lwright@naccc.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL GRANTS

Is your church planning a Vacation Bible School (VBS) program this year?

The NACCC Growth Ministry Council is offering VBS grants of up to \$400 to help churches provide meaningful summer ministry opportunities for children and families. Whether you already have a VBS curriculum selected or are still exploring options, grant funds may be used to help cover curriculum, supplies, and other program-related expenses.

If your church has offered VBS in the past and could benefit from financial assistance this year, we encourage you to apply.

Applications must be submitted to NACCC Church Services Coordinator Laura Wright by August 1, 2026. All awarded funds must be used by October 1, 2026.

CALL FOR ARTICLES

The Congregationalist is now accepting submissions for our December issue, centered on the theme of *wonder*.

Topics might include moments of awe in nature, worship, or everyday experience; the mystery of God and the life of faith; the role of curiosity, imagination, and discovery in spiritual growth; and the ways beauty, joy, and unexpected grace awaken us to the sacred. We also welcome reflections on childhood wonder, resilience in the face of uncertainty, the practice of paying attention, and how wonder can deepen our relationships with God, one another, and the world.

Contributions can be emailed to Editor [Maggie Helmick](#).

HOPE AND A FUTURE HYMN

A special hymn, *Hope and A Future*, was commissioned for the 2026 Annual Meeting and Conference - and now it's available for everyone to enjoy!

Sheet music and recordings of this beautiful piece are available on the [NACCC website](#).

We encourage you to share this inspiring hymn with your church's choir directors, music leaders, and worship planners!

2026 J.J. RUSSELL PREACHING AWARD RECIPIENTS

Congratulations are due to our two 2026 J.J. Russell Preaching Award recipients - Ashton McDonald and Thomas Burke. Thomas's sermon, "Your House is Left to You," and Ashton's sermon, "Why Give?" both embody excellence in preaching while bringing the rich tradition of the Congregational Way into continued relevance for our faith lives today.

We hope these sermons inspire thoughtful conversation in congregations across the Association. If you hear a sermon that faithfully engages our Congregational heritage in ways that speak to today's church, we encourage you to [nominate](#) it for next year's award. Together, we can celebrate and share the faithful preaching that strengthens and encourages our churches.

To watch or listen to these award-winning sermons, visit the [NACCC Facebook page](#), where you can find them in our recent posts or under "Reels."

