



August 15, 2024 - The Messenger



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Thoughts: Co-Creators? God Without Us?

Rev. Dr. Barry W. Szymanski, Interim Executive Director



Are we co-creators of our fate? Rollo May thinks we are. He points out that "though it is

arrogance to say we are the 'masters of our fate,' we are saved from the need to be the victims of it." Then he continues to tell us that "We are indeed the co-creators of our fate." Edmund A. Steimle builds on May's view when he states, "that although we can do nothing without God, there are vast areas in our world where he can do nothing without us!" [Emphasis his.] He continues by stating that the biblical demand for repentance includes the "seizing of the divine opportunity." St. Paul was an individual who, once confronted by Jesus, understood what his role was in and for God's Kingdom and began to preach and plant churches. He implored the congregation at Thessalonica to "not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake." Why? Because he insists, we belong to the day, and we should encourage one another and build one another up. When St. Paul's words are read aloud in church, he reminds us why we are church. Yes, we need God, but we, because we are the Body of Christ, are His eyes to see what is near us, ears to hear what is close to us, hands to help those around us. We are to animate, inspire, and support everyone we encounter to bring about what we pray for (at least weekly), 'that Your Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.' Who or what can diminish the faith, hope, and love of a strong congregation?

Note: "Thoughts" are Barry's musings based upon scripture and remain his own opinions and not those of the National Association, though he prays that they are meaningful to all.

References: 1 Thessalonians 5; Death to Birth by Edmund A. Steimle

The Boston Seminar

Rev. Dr. Gerry Krupp, Director of Programs



What is The Boston Seminar? The Boston Seminar is the capstone experience of the [Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies](#) (CFTS) that grew out of a need to orient CFTS students in the Congregational Way. Recently, the NACCC has broadened the reach of the event to serve our Lay Ministry Training Program graduates, ministers who are New2Us, and CFTS students. The change of focus has also opened the door to experimenting with new patterns. This year, the Congregational Library welcomed our participants, several Congregationalists from the UK, some International Congregational Fellowship officers, as

well as area NACCC pastors. We had an immersive encounter with Congregational history and culture and bonded as we explored and learned as a group. We are so grateful to all our instructors, Margaret (Peggy) Bendroth, Norm Erlandson, and Kyle Roberts & Tricia Peone from the Congregational Library and Archive. A very special note of appreciation for Richard Pickering, Deputy Executive Director of the Plimoth Pawtuxet Museums, who was our guide for much of the day because "we are a congregational family."

Hosanna Industries: Spirit-Fueled Service

Julie Robie, Missions Coordinator



In late June, twenty Wisconsin Congregationalist teens and adults from OCC and Wauwatosa traveled to Johnstown, PA, to spend five days working with NACCC mission partner Hosanna Industries on home repair and relief projects. During their time together, they scraped, painted, and sided homes, performed a major home clean-out and dumpster fill, and installed new appliances for homeowners in need of assistance – providing approximately \$110,000 worth of services at market value.

Though the Hosanna team are experts at stretching every dollar and maximizing impacts for those they aid, they say they aren't in the home repair business. They're in the people business. What they truly excel at is caring compassionately for the homeowners they are helping and really getting to know each volunteer so they can best allow them to contribute and shine. To the Hosanna team, what matters most in their work are the "Three S's": safety, sensitivity, and spirit – three words that constitute a sound philosophy, positive approach, and easily remembered rallying cry.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Hosanna Industries and how you can support their work.

Event Calendar

October 17, 2:00pm-3:30pm CT
Webinar: Cultivating Generosity

An interactive seminar offered by Lake Institute on Faith & Giving. To sign up, please contact [Kristin Ward](#).

Article Submissions for The Congregationalist

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