



December 1, 2023 Community Connections



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Our Christmas Role

Rev. Arthur Ritter, Moderator



When I was growing up in Stanton, Michigan, I was involved in every Sunday School Christmas program. For whatever reason I was always cast in the same role. I recall complaining that I had to be a “stupid” wise man. Matthew’s account of Jesus’ birth describes the wise men as important visitors to the newborn Son of God. They traveled from afar, trusting in the guiding light of a star. They brought gifts to honor the babe, acknowledging the importance of this gift from God. And they went home changed, using a different road.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus this Christmas, I pray we might trust the light of God revealed. May we bring our gifts to honor him in our words and deeds. May we be changed by our encounter with him, living our lives differently because of what we have experienced.

I thank all of you for your support of the NACCC. Merry Christmas to you!

HOPE * PEACE * JOY * LOVE

Jodee Lord, Vice-Moderator, Chair, Board of Directors



Advent has always been a very special time for me. It's a time of reflecting and preparing. We reflect on what the true meaning is and prepare our hearts and home for Christ birth. I especially enjoy the prayers spoken and the special hymns sung during the lighting of each advent candle.

This year the four purple candles and the white Christ candle are speaking to me with a different message. I'm reflecting on the world we live in. I find myself looking more now than ever for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, asking when wars will end, and people live in peace and share joy and spread love to all. I pray today that in this Advent season we will remember the true meaning of Christ's birth.

Wishing you a very Blessed Christmas!

Faith of Our Fathers Living Still

Bob Smith, Vice President, Congregational Foundation

The season of Advent is a time to enjoy rich traditions, and commit ourselves to use those gifts to forge a future of generosity and gratitude. I have just visited Leiden in the Netherlands, the last home of our Pilgrim forbearers before their voyage to the North American shores. By seeing how they lived, and what they read, I gained a deeper appreciation of their faith and dreams.

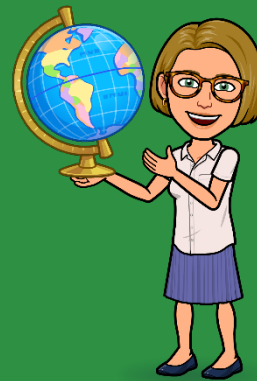
The National Association helps keep their faith and dreams alive in our rapidly changing world. In the season of Advent, please remember your local church, the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and the Congregational Foundation as together we build on that faith and those dreams to forge, a vibrant and faith-filled future.



Listening Tour

Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere, Executive Director

November included visits to **La Mesa, California**, in conjunction with the **Cal West regional meeting**, and to **Royal Oak, Michigan** on the day the congregation installed a new pastor – two occasions that embodied the voluntary fellowship that characterizes the Congregational Way. [Read more](#) about these recent visits on our website.



Upcoming Webinar



**Keeping
Children
Safe!**

Join us for a webinar on **January 4, 2024, at 2pm (CDT): "Child Safety - Abuse Prevention"**: The church must develop means beyond background checks to protect children. We will discuss policies to prevent the possibility of groomers gaining access to children in the church. There is no cost to attend. **For more**

REGISTER

information and to RSVP click on the button. *This webinar is organized by the NACCC Director of Programs, [Rev. Gerry Brannon Krupp](#).*

Our Contact Information

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