



January 1, 2024 Community Connections



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Looking Both Ways

Rev. Arthur Ritter, Moderator



The month of January is named after the Roman god Janus, the god of time and transitions and beginnings. He is often portrayed with two faces, one looking forward and the other looking back. Certainly, we may feel like that ancient symbol as we approach the start of a new year. With our world and many of our churches in transition, we may yearn for the comfort of the past even as we peek uneasily at the future.

We have a valuable heritage of faith. We are grateful for the gifts of God that have been passed to us and which we are called to nurture. We know that what lies ahead will require something different, fresh solutions and new ways of being church. In our times and places of transition, I pray that we can honor what has been, while also acting toward our future with bold faith. May God be with us in a happy, healthy, and blessed New Year!

New Beginnings

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



From the hymn "New Beginnings,"

*"Come join us now as we dream and plan our lives, seeking ways to serve the ones we love,
There are so many things we want to do And with God's grace we can share the world
anew ."*

This hymn makes me think of the NACCC; always giving thanks to God for all we have and praying for a vision that will enrich the lives of those we serve and those we love. I look ahead to new and exciting possibilities and opportunities for the NACCC as we plan for the coming years. Seeking God's guidance and wisdom in all that we do and all that we say.

Wishing you a Blessed New Year!

CIT Advisory Board Meeting

Dick Davis, Congregational Investment Trust

The CIT Advisory Board met on October 16. Of note, the Board endorsed allowing electronic withdrawals by member churches to expedite disbursements. The final proposal will be presented at the CIT annual meeting in February. The Board voted to continue a 65-35 per cent balance between equities and fixed income and maintain paying out 4 per cent of funds for programs, in keeping with our fiduciary responsibility to maintain the purchasing power of the portfolio. At the meeting, our Vanguard investment officer indicated that the financial market was impacted by the Feds' continued tightening. Since then, markets have recovered and the S and P is at all-time highs. Recent signals are that rate hikes are over and there may be a few cuts in 2024. These events will positively impact our final 2023 results. The economy has been remarkably resilient.



Listening Tour

Rev. Dr. Ashley Cleere, Executive Director

Five Ohio churches, abuzz with Advent and Christmas programs, welcomed me for activities comprised of music, fellowship, and outreach. Back home in Wisconsin, I continued my Advent journey by worshipping with three congregations in the Milwaukee area.

[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](#).*

Submissions for THE CONGREGATIONALIST

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