



A TIME TO REFLECT

JODEE LORD, MODERATOR

This year, when we entered the season of Lent, I thought more about its meaning and how I would deepen my relationship with God. One thing I committed to doing was to incorporate the Lenten Devotional booklet into my time of prayer and meditation.

Reading the co-editors' letter made me stop and reflect on their message. I began thinking of the NACCC, the diversity of our churches, and how we share a commonality of "Our Love of Jesus Christ." I reflected on the many volunteers who help make up this Association - the people who serve on boards or ministry councils and the writers of this Lenten Devotional.

I am forever grateful to be part of this Association, to be surrounded by people who lift each other in prayer and love, and for boards and councils that have thoughtful conversations on how to provide quality resources for our member churches.

During this season of Lent, please join me in reading the Lenten Devotional and praying for our many churches. Blessings to each of you.

HELP US GATHER SUPPLIES

Aid us in gathering supplies for our 2026 Intergenerational Mission Project in support of NACCC global mission partner Seafarers' Friend!

From chapstick to deodorant, socks, playing cards, and much more, there are many items your church can collect. Prefer to be a bit more hands-on? We'd love for you to hand-make hats, scarves, balaclavas, or bags for the project, or to get your youth involved by writing encouraging letters for the mariners or crafting colorful pictures to be included in the bags.

THE 'IN-BETWEEN' OF LENT

REV. DR. MARTIN HALL, VICE MODERATOR

I find that the Lenten season is a unique and powerful time of being caught 'in-between.' As those who know 'the rest of the story,' as Paul Harvey used to say, we are able to lean into the hope, promise, and wonder of the resurrection. We know where the story is headed, we know what comes after the cross, and we know the glories that surround us, both today and always, because of those very events. At the same time, Lent calls us to cling to that hope of what can be by naming the truth of what is. Our frailties, brokenness, strife, sorrow... Lent calls us to own such things before God as we await the promise of that which can and will be in God. It is a time of both brutal honesty and soul-inspiring hopefulness. It is a time of resting between the darkness of what has been and the light of that which is to come. It is a time of claiming who we are in and of ourselves, and who we can and will be in God. As brothers and sisters in faith, I pray that, wherever we find ourselves in that in-between this season, we may find God's peace and love at the heart of it all.

JOIN US AT MINISTERS' CONVOCATION!

The 2026 Ministers' Convocation will be held at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake from April 13-16. We hope to see you there!

THE CONGREGATIONALIST – MARCH EDITION

The March edition of *The Congregationalist* magazine is out now! Focused around the theme of thresholds, this issue speaks to those in-between spaces where what has been gives way to what is to come. The pieces within its pages range from an article about Lay Ministry Training Program students discerning where God is leading them to a story of a pilgrimage that becomes a meditation on the gate of Christ that swings both ways, and a reflection on loss as a doorway to awareness of God's nearness and promise. We hope this edition of *The Congregationalist* invites you to notice what is stirring at the thresholds of your own life.

Love *The Congregationalist* and want to help sustain its mission? Consider supporting *The Congregationalist* Campaign, an effort to strengthen the magazine's endowment and secure its future for years to come.

SHARING VITALITY IN ACTION – CHURCH OF THE CHIMES

Through an NACCC Sharing Vitality Grant, the Church of the Chimes has launched a Church Garden project with the intention of nurturing body and spirit. The project provides fresh produce for fellowship, ministry, and outreach while creating space for learning and intergenerational connection. Rooted in Christian stewardship and community, the garden reflects the church's enduring commitment to faith and service. It's a living example of vitality growing from a shared vision.

AMC REGISTRATION

Registration for the 2026 Annual Meeting and Conference will open on April 1st! Mark your calendars and make your plans to join us in Springfield, Massachusetts, from June 27-30.

Also, plan to bring a banner that directly represents your church for decorating our space (and a stand to put it on)!

STEWARDS OF THE PAGE

What does it take to steward a publication that's been connecting Congregationalists since 1849? Join us on Monday, March 9, at 6:00 pm CT to find out!

In a behind-the-scenes conversation with current and former editors of *The Congregationalist* - Maggie Helmick, Marianne King, and Larry Sommers - you'll hear how each editor found their way to the editor's chair, how they feel the magazine has evolved and in what ways it remains the same, the challenges the magazine has faced under their leadership, and the role of *The Congregationalist* in the wider Congregational tradition.

RSVP on the event page on the NACCC site.

CONGREGATIONAL INVESTMENT TRUST FOR 2025

VARN PHILBROOK, CIT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The CIT held its annual meeting on the 17th of February, 2026, to review last year's performance and receive our financial advisor's forecast and recommendations for next year's budgeting cycle. We experienced a third banner year (16.74%), bringing the last three years' average to slightly less than 15% (net of fees). At \$33.5 million, last year's growth was \$4 million plus a new member investment of \$.5 million (we started Jan 25 at \$29 million). We all know that past performance is no indicator of expected growth and returns. However, the CIT Committee, Community Bank, and Mercer Investments LLC have been good stewards of our National Association and NA member church investment funds. Consider giving us a try; the buy-in is relatively low, \$2,500, and see if we can help your finances, also.

CHARLES RUSH AWARD

Do you know a minority person working with Congregational Christian churches to accomplish worthwhile social and personal goals? Nominate them for the Charles Rush Award!