

5. CONGREGATIONALISM IN AFFILIATION

SECTION 5.1: REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Congregational Fellowship

A vital part of Congregationalism is for churches to be in fellowship with one another. Around the country churches gather themselves into state and regional associations for the purposes of mutual support and encouragement, to strengthen relationships and help in understanding and responding to regional needs and issues. Often these are opportunities for education and program development, helping churches gain new ideas and skills. The NACCC encourages all of its member churches to participate fully in State/Regional Associations, whenever possible.

Moderators' Quarterly Conference Calls

The NACCC encourages communication among the state and regional associations and with the NACCC. To that end, the NACCC hosts quarterly conference calls with State and Regional Association moderators for purposes of sharing ideas and information. **There is no charge to you for these quarterly calls.**

NACCC Support

The NACCC makes available to State and Regional Associations access to our conference call provider so that you can teleconference within your region for your particular work together. The NACCC issues you a participant code and once the bill for your call is received by the NACCC, it is forwarded to you for payment. Remember, charges do not apply to the quarterly calls the NACCC hosts for regional and state moderators, only to your own conference calls if you wish to use our system.

Also, you may have access to the list of Year Round Delegates for your region as a conduit for communication for your activities.

Helpful Information for the NACCC from State and Regional Associations

To facilitate good communication, it would be very helpful if State and Regional Associations would inform us of:

- Regional meetings
 - Send us your meeting announcements and agendas
 - If you schedule your spring meeting in the fall, let us know so we can put your spring meeting on our calendar well in advance

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- Let us know if we can provide any information or personnel for your meeting
- Vicinage councils, ordinations and installations
 - Let us know if you have vicinage councils coming up so we might pray for your discernment and wisdom in the process and send letters of greeting and encouragement
- Moderators and Officers
 - Tell us when a new moderator is elected so we can include that person on our conference calls
 - Tell us who your officers are so we may publish that information on our NACCC website

For all of the above, contact Linda Miller, lmiller@nacc.org or 1-800-262-1620 x1618.

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SECTION 5.2: AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Colleges

Because they respected learning and felt the need to have educated ministers, the early New England Congregationalists founded the first colleges and universities in our country, including Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Williams, Bowdoin, Middlebury and Amherst. The Congregationalists who founded these and many other institutions took care to make them self-perpetuating colleges with their own boards of trustees, not church-sponsored institutions like their English counterparts.

Today, there are no strictly Congregational Christian colleges or seminaries. Those called to ministry in the Congregational Way study at many institutions, including those sponsored by other denominations. They can also benefit from special study programs under the aegis of the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies, a division of the NACCC.

Olivet College, Olivet Michigan

Founded by Congregationalists, Olivet College is a private liberal arts college located in south-central Michigan. The college was the first in the country by charter to accept women and persons of color. Its more than 900 students participate in a unique educational experience known as the Olivet Plan. As part of this effort, students are engaged in both classroom and practical programs incorporating real world experiences with lectures and service learning. The College's commitment to providing access to a comprehensive and diverse learning environment is reflected in all aspects of the Olivet Plan. The aspirations of Olivet College are advanced in the College's vision: *Education for Individual and Social Responsibility*.

Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia

Piedmont is a private liberal arts college founded by Congregationalists and based upon the Judeo-Christian tradition. The Judeo-Christian tradition comprises the humane values upon which Western Civilization is based. It promotes concern for others and the acceptance for individual responsibility that are essential for ethical conduct and citizenship. Through fostering understanding and acceptance of this tradition, Piedmont College strives to further develop the individual's personal growth through self-understanding and the ability to lead and work effectively with others.

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Research and History

American Congregational Association (Congregational Library and Archives), Boston, Massachusetts

“The Congregational Library and Archives are administered by the American Congregational Association, a non-profit organization founded May 25, 1853. The 1853 ACA charter stated that the organization was incorporated "for the purpose of establishing and perpetuating a library of religious history and literature of New England, and for the erection of a suitable building for the accommodation of the same, and for the use of charitable societies." It was felt that the latter should be done or the original Puritan literature would be lost. The Congregational Library now holds 225,000 items documenting the history of one of the nation's oldest and most influential religious traditions.” (from their website, www.14beacon.org)

International Associations

International Congregational Fellowship

“The International Congregational Fellowship is a vibrant global expression of a multiplicity of local Congregational churches and associational bodies across the world. For Congregationalists, how our churches are organized and run have to reflect the principles and values that Jesus taught, and the pattern we find for church life and Christian leadership in the Bible.

Congregational churches do not exist in isolation but have traditionally formed free associations or networks. ICF provides a global identity and a valuable opportunity for Congregationalists from all over the world to enjoy fellowship with one another.”

(from their website: www.intercong.org).

ICF holds a conference every four years.

American Committee of the International Congregational Fellowship (AMCO)

This organization is comprised of Congregationalists, representing the North America region of the International Congregational Fellowship. Members who attend the Annual Meeting and Conference often meet together and invite all to join them in this vibrant fellowship.

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Societies

Washington Gladden Society

The purpose of the Washington Gladden Society is to honor Washington Gladden's memory by applying the insights of the Social Gospel Movement to the important, controversial ethical and theological issues of our own times, and serving as a forum for discussion among Christians and local Churches in the Congregational tradition.

This Society was born out of the needs expressed by laity and clergy who felt it worthwhile to expand the witness of the NACCC, while keeping their decisions, actions, and resolutions independent of the Association's business. Meetings are held at the time of the Annual Meeting and Conference.

For more information, please go to the website: www.washingtongladdensociety.org

The Congregational Society for Classical Retreat Guides

This Society's mission is to offer silent retreats, days of prayer, and other useful means of lifting up the power of individual and corporate prayer life. See Section 1.5 for more information on retreat opportunities for clergy and laity.

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