

Supplementary Readings

To be used with *The Shaping of American Congregationalism*

Readings in the History and Polity of the National
Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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Rev. Dr. Arlin T. Larson, editor

PREFACE

Learning about the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches is not easy. No comprehensive history has been written. Only a few of the founders remain active. No seminary offers a course tailored to it. Months or years of participation, informal contacts, and overhearing the scuttlebutt are usually required. The "Congregational History and Polity" course is designed to accelerate the learning curve by immersing the student in modern Congregationalism's traditions and practices, as well as in the more comprehensive Congregational story.

We see this as essential for seminarians seeking a firm foundation in the community they are preparing to serve. Equally important is educating the many ministers who come to Congregationalism from other traditions. Church members seeking a better understanding of their faith may also appreciate a package that brings widely scattered materials together.

The first volume, for instance, *of Readings in the History and Polity of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches* collects Congregational reflections of the nature of the church(es) as recorded in the *Congregationalist* magazine. The articles collected are neither comprehensive nor definitive; we are not even certain to what extent they are representative. What can, however, be said is that the authors are men and women active in the Association whose views the magazine's editors deemed worthy of distribution.

At the very least the readings collected inform the reader of the parameters of discussion within the NACCC. They will additionally provide an introduction to leaders of the Congregational way and hopefully some insight into this movement's peculiar contribution to the Body of Christ.

This project is in its early stages. We would appreciate your suggestions and notice of our errors and omissions.

Rev. Dr. Arlin T. Larson, editor

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To accompany
Von Rohr,
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- Johnson, Edward. 1654. "Wonder-Working Providence of Sion's Savior." Catches the faith and vision underlying the Puritan migration to America. 2
- Winthrop, John. 1630. "A Model of Christian Charity." A lay sermon by the leader of the Boston Congregationalists outlining the vision behind their society.
- Mather, Cotton. 1710. "Essays to do Good." Mather commends piety and good works above doctrinal conformity. 3
- Wise, Jonathon. 1717. "Vindication of the Government of the New England Churches." Defends Congregational piety with the "light of Reason."
- Edwards, Jonathon. 1741. "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Famous sermon of the First Great Awakening. 4
- Chauncy, Charles. 1743. "Seasonable Thoughts on the State of Religion in New England." Criticism of the manipulative and emotion-laden techniques of the revivalists.
- Hopkins, Samuel. 1776. "Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans." Most influential tract of the Christian abolitionists.
- Channing, William Ellery. 1819. "Unitarian Christianity." Ordination sermon and manifesto of liberal Congregationalism 5
- Finney, Charles Grandison. _____. "Autobiography." Leading figure of the Second Great Awakening.
- Bushnell, Horace. 1861. "Christian Nurture." Still influential statement of the principals of religious education. A protest against the evangelistic emphasis on conversion.
- Herring, Hubert. 1914. "The Place of Congregationalism in Recent History." A remarkably optimistic assessment of Congregationalism's accomplishments and prospects. 6
- Gladden, Washington. 1892. "Who Wrote the Bible?" Congregationalists embrace evolution and historical criticism.
- Gladden, Washington. 1907. "The Church & the Social Crisis." Important exposition of the Social Gospel.
- Strong, Josiah. "Our Country." 1885. Manifesto of urban reform with emphasis on the idea of Manifest Destiny.
- Basis of Union. 1949. The rationale and understandings presented to Congregational churches for the proposed United Church of Christ. 7
- Pauck, William. 1931. "Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity." Interprets neo-orthodoxy from a Congregational point of view. Barthian notions of Church become influential in merger debate.
- Committee on Free Church Polity and Unity. 1954. "Report of a Study by the Committee on Free Church Polity and Unity." Study of Congregational practices by representatives of both sides of the merger debate.

