

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

TO: NACCC MEMBER CHURCHES

FROM: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

RE: Nominations for positions to be filled by vote of the delegates at the Annual Meeting & Conference, June 2025 and current terms. Respective terms begin at the conclusion of the meeting.

## **MODERATOR, Two-Year Term:**

[Two-year Term to end 2026; served two years as Vice-Moderator]

### **Jodee Lord, Oakwood Heights Community Church, Staten Island, New York**

Jodee Lord is a member of Oakwood Heights Community Church on Staten Island, N.Y. She is actively involved in life at Oakwood and its community, serving on the Board of Deacons, Church Council, Pastoral Search Committees, Board of Trustees, Church Choir, and a food pantry volunteer. Jodee serves as 1st Vice President of S.I. Council of Churches and as Co-Chair of Congregational Support and Outreach. She has a deep dedication to the NACCC. She is currently serving as Vice Moderator and chair of the Board of Directors. Jodee serves on the Planning and Action Committee. She was also Chairperson for our most recent search for an Executive Director, and served on the Racial Justice Task Team, and the Bylaw's Task Team. Jodee has served on the NACCC's Women's Commission, Division for Ministry, Transition Team, Nominating Committee, Annual Meeting & Conference Committee, and Sexual Abuse Task Team. Jodee is a retired Preschool Director with a degree in Education and Psychology. She and her husband Fred of forty-eight years are the proud parents of daughters Sarah and Julia.

## **VICE-MODERATOR, Two-Year Term:**

[2024-2026, as Vice-Moderator, serves two years as Vice-Moderator; may be nominated for two years as Moderator]

### **Rev. Dr. Martin (Marty) Hall, North Shore Congregational Church, Fox Point, Wisconsin**

A cradle Congregationalist, Marty has spent his life in and around the NACCC and its member churches. After obtaining a B.A. from the College of Wooster, Marty graduated as a CFTS Fellow from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1999 (later receiving a D.Min in Church Transformation and Revitalization from McCormick Theological Seminary in 2007). Marty previously served NACCC churches in West Bloomfield, MI, Clarkston, MI, and Fall River, MA. Currently, he is the Sr. Minister of North Shore Congregational Church in Fox Point, WI, where he has served since 2015. Marty has been active in regional and state associations throughout his time in ministry, and has served the NACCC in multiple ways, including the Nominating Committee, the 2010 Symposium Steering Committee, three bylaw revision teams, various financial teams, the Sexual Abuse Task Team, the Board of Directors, and most recently as a member of the Annual Meeting and Conference Committee and chair of the Host Committee for the 2023 AMC in Milwaukee, WI. Marty and his wife Sharon have three children: Becca (19), Megan (18) and Jay (15).

## **SECRETARY, One-Year Term:**

### **Dr. Kathleen (Kate) O'Dell, First Congregational Church of Anchorage, Alaska [Re-elected this year]**

Kate O'Dell has lived in Alaska since 1981 and has been a member of the First Congregational Church of Anchorage (FCC) since 1997. She has served the congregation in many roles including as Moderator, Clerk, chair of various boards and ministries, and as a member of the Host Committee for the 2010 NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference in Anchorage. She was the FCC Administrative Assistant for eight years, retired, but is now in that position again (retitled Church Secretary). In 2022, Kate was reelected as Clerk of the Pacific Northwest Association of Congregational Christian Churches, and she is FCC's Year-Round Delegate to the PNACCC. Kate is a member of the Host Committee for the 2024 NACCC Annual Meeting and Conference in Spokane, WA. In 2006, Kate retired as Professor Emerita of Teacher Education with the University of Alaska Anchorage College of Education. Her specialty was English Language Arts. Kate has served on boards of several nonprofit organizations, frequently as the secretary or chair of a communications committee. The Irish Club of Alaska just elected her their secretary for 2024.

## **TREASURER, One-Year Term:**

### **Patrick Stewart, First Congregational Church of Marshalltown, Iowa [Re-elected this year]**

Patrick served as the volunteer Youth Leader at his member church, LaMoille Congregational Church, for nearly 20 years and is currently serving as the Chairperson of the Iowa-Nebraska Association Youth Task Team. Patrick has attended NAPF-HOPE conferences since 2005 and served as either an attendee, CIT, or counselor/small group leader. He has served as the Youth Representative on NACCC Leadership Council and is currently on the Annual Meeting Committee and is serving his fifth year on the NAPF-HOPE Planning Team. In September 1999, Patrick received his associate's degree in accounting with Honors from the American Institute of Business in Des Moines, IA. He has over 20 years of bookkeeping, budgeting, and finance experience. Patrick is currently a Staff Auditor with the State of Iowa's Auditor's Office-Finance Division in Des Moines, IA. He enjoys listening to music, singing, playing co-ed softball and men's church league basketball, and watching the Iowa State Cyclones, Kansas City Chiefs, and Chicago Cubs. He really enjoys spending time with the church youth group doing fun activities and giving them the same experiences he had as a youth. Patrick looks forward to once again serving as the NACCC Treasurer for the next year.

**HISTORIAN, One-Year Term:**

**Rev. Norm Erlendson, First Congregational (Road) Church of Stonington, Connecticut** [Re-elected this year]

Rev. Norm Erlendson has pastored Congregational churches in the NACCC since 1990. He is currently pastor of the historic Road Church, First Congregational, Stonington, CT, founded in 1674. He holds a master's degree in history from the University of Washington, and a master's degree in Christian theology and Ethics from New College, Berkeley, California. He has taught Congregational History and Theology at the Boston Seminar and also teaches the New Testament and Church History Survey courses in the Lay Ministry Training Program. He and his wife Barbara live in Pawcatuck, CT.

**YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE – LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, One-Year Term:**

**Melinda Jaster, First Congregational Church of Elkader, Iowa** [Re-elected this year]

Melinda Jaster has been serving on the Christian Ed Committee and as a Youth Leader for almost 20 years starting in high school. She has also served on the Diaconate Committee for almost 15 years. For the past several years she has been part of the Iowa-Nebraska Youth Committee. Melinda first attended NAPF in 2003. Since 2009 she has attended NAPF-HOPE as either an attendee or counselor. For the past several years she has been videoing and taking pictures at the conference, making a video for those attending the conference. Melinda served as the Youth Representative for the year 2022-2023. Melinda is employed by BassPro/Cabelas at the Distribution Center in Prairie du Chien, WI working in the inventory department and cross-trained in other areas to help as needed. She enjoys reading, listening to music, spending time with family and friends, and traveling.

**MINISTRY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES SERVING ON THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

**One-Year Term as Nominated by their Elected Council**

**Growth Ministry Council Reps:**

**Rev. Irven Gammon, Florence Congregational Church, Florence, Massachusetts** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Dr. William R. "Ron" Toliver Th.D., Crystal Congregational Church, Crystal, Michigan** [term to end 2028]

**Vitality Ministry Council Reps:**

**Rev. Robb Tarr, Gahanna Community Congregational Church, Gahanna, Ohio** [term to 2028]

**Mission and Outreach Ministry Council Reps:**

**Joanne Simpson, First Church of Christ Congregational, Lynn, Massachusetts** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Richard Miller-Todd, Berwick Congregational Church, Berwick, Iowa** [term to end 2026]

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS [Staggered Terms, as indicated]**

**New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2025-2028]**

**Rev. Sarah Terlow, First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, Michigan**

Rev. Sarah Terlow has been in joyous ministry partnership with the good people of the First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, MI for 10 years. She is a proud graduate of CFTS (2012) and a lover of mint chocolate-chip ice cream. She has served on the Vitality Council from 2017-2023, acted as the Camp Co-Director of the Michigan Congregational Summer

Camp since 2019 (minus the COVID hiatus), and has been delighted to advocate for the Congregational Way in many other capacities. She lives in Holland, Michigan with her husband Tim and rambunctious toddler, Isla.

**Continuing Members on the Board of Directors [no vote necessary]**

**Curt Schmidt, Congregational Church of Bound Brook, Bound Brook, New Jersey** [term to end 2026]

**Robert Weers, Congregational Church of Soquel, California** [term to end 2027]

**Carol Taylor, United Church of Beloit, Wisconsin** [term to end 2028]

**ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT LARGE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

**Continuing Members-At-Large on the Annual Meeting & Conference Committee [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Joyce Acree, Demorest, Georgia** [term to end 2028]

**Rev. Dr. Karen Robu, Plymouth Congregational Church, Wichita, Kansas** [term to end 2026]

**Robert (Bob) Labadini, Deacon, Union Congregational Church of Amesbury, Amesbury, Massachusetts** [term to end 2027]

**MINISTRY COUNCILS:**

**GROWTH MINISTRY COUNCIL**

**Continuing Members of the Growth Ministry Council [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Dr. William R. "Ron" Toliver Th.D., Crystal Congregational Church, Crystal, Michigan** [term to end 2028]

**Rev. Irven Gammon, Florence Congregational Church, Florence, Massachusetts** [term to end 2026]

**Sharon Brown, Meadowbrook Congregational Church, Novi, Michigan** [term to end 2026]

**Lisa Van-Alst, Preston City Congregational Church, Preston, Connecticut** [term to end 2027]

**Pastor Michael K. Freeman, Hampshire Colony Congregational Church, Princeton, Illinois** [term to end 2028]

**VITALITY MINISTRY COUNCIL**

**New Nominee [One-Year Term 2025-2026 Finishing up Robin Carden's term]**

**Laura Francisco, First Congregational Church, Burlington, Iowa**

Laura Francisco has been faithfully attending and serving at First Congregational Church in Burlington, IA since 2011. As a pastor's wife, mother of 4 grown children, and recently retired Christian School Administrator, she understands the challenges families, non-profits and churches deal with on a daily basis. For over 40 years, Laura has willingly served in positions on the local, regional, and national levels; not all in the NACCC. She has a passion to see the local church grow, for training up new leaders, for serving our communities, and spreading the good news of Jesus. She has served the Iowa-Nebraska Association in various positions, and the NACCC as an At-Large Member of the AMCC and various sub-committees. She loves to read Gods word, prayerfully seeks His ways, and desires nothing more than to see Jesus Christ proclaimed to a dying and hurting world.

**New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2025-2028]**

**Rev. Dr. Chris Suber, First Congregational Church of Naples, Florida**

Pastor Chris Surber serves First Congregational Church of Naples, where he combines his dedication to faith with a heart for missions and community service. Through his organization, Supply and Multiply, he and his partners lead impactful outreach in places like Haiti and Honduras. Known for his inspiring teachings, he encourages others to embody Christ's love through resilience, compassion, and practical action.

**Continuing Members of the Vitality Ministry Council [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Mark Tanner, Skowhegan Federated Church, Skowhegan, Maine** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Dr. Robin Carden, Suttons Bay Congregational Church, Suttons Bay, Michigan** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Julie Sheridan-Smith, First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, Wisconsin** [term to end 2027]

**Rev. Robb Tarr, Gahanna Community Congregational Church, Gahanna, Ohio** [term to end 2028]

## **MISSION AND OUTREACH MINISTRY COUNCIL**

### **New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2025-2028]**

#### **Rev. Marilyn Danielson, First Congregational Church, Lake Odessa, Michigan**

Pastor Marilyn Danielson would be honored to serve on the MOMC. She has been on many mission trips including trips to Mexico, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Alabama, and as she pastored the First Congregational Church of Portland, Michigan, hosted missionaries from Mexico, Argentina, and Africa. Last year, she enjoyed going with the International Congregational Fellowship to Fiji. She is excited about learning about other people and especially about bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. She is widowed, healthy, and willing to serve my Lord and this Commission. Marilyn's children are grown, and she serves First Congregational Church of Lake Odessa, Michigan part-time. She has been a pastor for over 25 years.

### **Continuing Members of the Mission and Outreach Ministry Council [no vote necessary]**

**Joanne Simpson, First Church of Christ Congregational, Lynn, Massachusetts** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Richard Miller-Todd, Berwick Congregational Church, Berwick, Iowa** [term to end 2026]

**Ann Goecke, La Moille Congregational Community Church, Marshalltown, Iowa** [term to end 2027]

**Amana Talala Mbise, Anchorage, Alaska** [term to end 2028]

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE Nominated by Board of Directors**

### **New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2025-2028]**

#### **Cynthia Hardy, Congregational Church of the Valley, Chandler, Arizona**

Cynthia Hardy is a member of Plentiful Gifts Grant, Vitality Ministry Council, Year-Round Delegate, Ambassador, Congregational Retreat Society, and a former member of Racial Justice Task Team. She is a mother of three adult sons and married to Pastor Victor Hardy. Cynthia held many different responsibilities at the Congregational Church of the Valley, currently serving as local historian. In the Chandler community, she is appointed to Maricopa County Board of Supervisor's Board of Health, member of Citizens Police Academy Association of Chandler, American Legion Post 91, Chandler Interfaith Group, and Arizona Faith & Community Collective. Past memberships with the Chandler Coalition on Youth Substance Abuse & Chandler-Gilbert Task Force for drugs, alcohol and suicide prevention, among many others.

### **New Nominee [Three-Year Term 2025-2028]**

#### **Doug Loux, Florence Congregational Church, Florence, Massachusetts**

Douglas Loux received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and MBA from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He worked as an Operations Supervisor and Area Systems Coordinator at the Social Security Administration, from where he retired. Since retirement, Doug has devoted himself to working with charitable and church organizations. He currently serves as treasurer of the Fellowship of Northeast Congregational Christian Churches and its Ecclesiastical Society. He has attended several annual National Association meetings and is a member of the Finance Committee; he previously was a member of the Board of Directors, Congregational Investment Trust, Account Consolidation Committee, Church Services Commission, and the Church Services Research Team. Since 2020, he has served as Parliamentarian at the NA annual meetings. Doug and his wife, Kerry are the proud parents of two daughters, Katie and Mary Ann, and four granddaughters. They live in Florence, Massachusetts, where he serves the Florence Congregational Church as treasurer.

### **Continuing Members of the Nominating Committee [no vote necessary]**

**Rev. Justin Nierer, Sandstone Congregational Church, Jackson, Michigan** [term to end 2026]

**Rev. Patrick Hunt, Heritage Congregational Church of Berea, Ohio** [term to end 2027]

**Rev. Doug Gray, First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City, Utah** [term to end 2027]

**Rev. Kay Miller-Todd, Berwick Congregational Church, Berwick, Iowa** [term to end 2027]