



Dear NACC members and friends:

For the last several years, I have been blessed to attend local NACC gatherings and national NACC conferences. These gatherings have been opportunities for professional development, community building, prayerful rituals, nurturing friendships and establishing new connections. The ministry demands on us as chaplains can be quite challenging. Coming together as peers has created space for us to minister to one another and to celebrate one another's achievements.

As you're well aware, COVID-19 has changed every aspect of our lives, particularly how and *if* we congregate. Like most organizations, NACC canceled this year's annual conference for public safety reasons. I anticipated this year's conference would have been quite exciting as it was supposed to gather all the members of our Strategic Partners (i.e. ACPE, the Association of Professional Chaplains, *Neshama*: Association of Jewish Chaplains, and Canadian Association for Spiritual Care/*Association canadienne de soins spirituels*). I know we acted responsibly, but I grieve this loss, nevertheless.

Part of NACC's annual conference has been the annual business meeting. The Board felt it was important to find another way for members to gather virtually in lieu of a face-to-face business meeting. As David Lichter announced in the July 6 publication of *NACC Now*, we will host a virtual meeting for all of our members on September 25th from noon – 1:30 Central time. Please mark your calendars and make every effort to attend. There is no charge to participate, and continuing education will be provided. For members unable to attend, the meeting will be recorded and posted on the NACC website. Details regarding how to register will be forthcoming from the national office.

The name for our annual meeting is, "Honoring the Mission of Chaplains." This virtual meeting will not be a typical business meeting because this has not been a typical year. Instead of focusing on business items – although those elements are certainly important – this year's annual meeting will focus on providing inspiration and appreciation to our members. This past year, many of us have found ourselves in situations we would have never dreamed of because of the pandemic. Racism and civil unrest have disrupted our communities and turned people against one another. These crises take a toll on the human spirit. We want to honor all of you and feed your spirits through this virtual meeting.

Part of our annual meeting will feature photos of our members in a presentation. Some of you may have seen on television "my 3 words campaign," where individuals hold placards of three-words to communicate a message. (You can find examples by searching "My three words GMA" for a video produced by Good Morning America.) We'd like to try the same for our annual meeting with our members holding placards and having their pictures taken.

This leads me to my request of you today: Please reflect on this question, "***What has given me hope (or strength, or meaning, or purpose) this past year?***" As answer(s) come to mind, please summarize your response in **one to three words**, but no more than three words, please! Then, print the word(s) with a marker on a whiteboard or large piece of paper/cardboard. Please mark your word(s) clearly and large enough for people to read. Then, ask someone to take your picture (***electronically***) holding your word(s) in front of you. Finally, send your photo to me attached to an email (jimlet0523@hotmail.com) by **August 31st**.

Photos that are sent to me will be included in a presentation during our annual meeting in September. By sending me your photo, it is understood that you are giving me permission to post your photo as part of our annual meeting. If you do not want your photo posted, please don't send it to me. Also, please recall that the meeting will be recorded, so by sending your photo to me, you also understand your photo will be posted on the NACC website for a period of time for our members who were not able to attend the annual meeting.

Thank you for your participation in this exciting project! I look forward to virtually connecting with you in September!

Peace,

Jim Letourneau
NACC Board Chair