



April, 2007



North American
Academy of Ecumenists

**Membership
Dues may be
paid by mail or
online:**

See our website
www.naae.net

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NAAE

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**News from the
Ecumenical Movement**

Relationships Are Key for Discernment

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

In my first letter to the members and friends of NAAE, I thought I might offer a few personal reflections. I became a member of NAAE because of Father Jack Hotchkin. He suggested that I come to a meeting. **He said that I would get to know people quickly and learn a lot.** Jack was right on both counts. After attending a daylong session at Messiah College, I decided to join.

I had recently [August 1998] become executive director of the Washington Theological Consortium. I had applied because my predecessor Dick Abbot, an Episcopalian, had encouraged me. Dick was retiring. Jack was a Consortium Board member.

I find that relationships are a key element for me in discerning God's will. Friends often speak God's word for me. I believe that in my relationships with Dick and Jack and others, God has spoken to me. [In the November issue of *Ecumenical Trends*, I reflect on discernment in ecumenical life.]

My experience of NAAE has been very positive. I would mention just a few things:

- The members have a great variety of backgrounds and are quite welcoming.
- The group meets regularly [every 3-4 years] in Canada—The Canadian members, who are frequently in attendance, offer a variety of perspectives not readily available in the States. These perspectives are very enriching.
- The meetings have such a reasonable attendance that everyone can ask her/his question and engage in important conversations both in the formal sessions and over meals.
- The meetings tend to have an academic focus but do not neglect pastoral implications. This is important to me as an academic/administrative person with a strong pastoral interest.

- The meetings involve courteous and frank exchange on substantive issues.

Three of the items—among many--that stuck with me from the September 2007 meeting at Saskatoon were:

- (1) Bill Tabbernee's call for attention to the now substantially documented "ecumenical tradition." This tradition should come into play in our considerations as we consider divisive/convergent theological issues in the future.
- (2) Beverly Gaventa's indication that Biblical scholars are now generally quite fragmented in their approaches. Most are not in 'an ecumenical mode' but rather tend to focus on specific issues in their field.
- (3) The practical insights of the pastoral panel indicate that local ecumenism, while experiencing some difficulties, has great strength.

On a personal note--if you heard my voice, you would know that I grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I joined my religious congregation, the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, in 1965. I was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1976. I finished my doctoral studies in moral theology at Catholic University in 1982.

I am honored to serve as president of NAAE for the next two years. Please feel free to email/call me with suggestions, questions or observations.

I hope that you will encourage your friends whom the Spirit has called into the ecumenical movement to attend our meetings. They will be warmly welcomed.

Peace,
John Crossin
NAAE President





General Membership Meeting, Sept. 29, 2007

Queen's House Retreat and Renewal Centre Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

AGENDA

- 1) *Call to order:* 4:05 p.m.
 - 2) *Approval of Minutes:* The Membership was given a little time to look over the minutes, after which the following motion was proposed:
Motion: That the Minutes of the 2006 conference be accepted. M/S: Jane Sampson/John Crossin. Carried
 - 3) *President's Remarks:* Lynne expressed pleasure at the quality of the conference presentations.
 - 4) *Committee Reports*
 - a) *Membership:* Members were urged to encourage others to join or to renew!
 - b) *Treasurer's Report:* In May a financial report was published in the Newsletter. At that time there was a \$6800 balance but now a \$1000 post-conference deficit is anticipated – the result of increases in airfares and the rise in value of the Canadian dollar.
 - c) The Board is recommending an increase in fees. Members should note that \$25 of every membership passes to *JES* for subscriptions.
Motion: That fees be increased to \$60 for regular members and \$30 for student/retirees. M/S: Board. Carried.
 - d) *Essay Contest Report* – John Huber (attached).
 This year's winner, Peter-Ben Smit, was introduced by Debra Collum (Wells), the new Essay Contest co-ordinator. Since 1997 Dr. Smit has been studying to be a priest in the Old Catholic communion, working in Scripture and Ecumenism. Now he is completing a second doctorate. He has taught on short-term professorships in Europe, USA and in the Philippines. Among his publications is "Food and Fellowship in Paradise: Studies in the Eschatological Banquet." His contest entry, "Meaning of 'Life': The Giving of Life as a Criterion for Ecumenical Hermeneutics," outlined the meaning of the criterion of "life-givingness" in *Treasure in Earthen Vessels*, drawing on how this is used in biblical studies, medical ethics and pneumatology. It will be published in *JES*. Russell Meyer presented Peter-Ben Smit with the \$250 prize. Pictures were taken! Russell noted that the word "authority" in English comes from the root meaning "that which gives life."
 e) *Journal of Ecumenical Studies:* Report by Julie Sheetz-Willard, now Administrative Co-ordinator of *JES* and of the Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue.
 A letter is currently being circulated (see attached) about offering *JES* subscribers several options for how to deal with the back issues owed to NAAE members as a consequence of the change in publication schedule of *JES*. A motion of applause for Julie was made for getting things organized.
 Julie circulated "interest profiles" to members as part of a *JES* effort to broaden the number of people writing reviews for the journal.
 A couple of *JES* back issues of historical interest were made available to members: a 1967 editorial on the NAAE by Arthur Gilbert and Joe Loya's 1998 article on the establishment of the Academy. (Appended).
 - f) *Nominating Committee* (Lynne Lorenzen, John Huber, Susan Brown) circulated the following slate:
 Vice-President: Alyson Barnett-Cowan
 To complete Alyson's Term (class of 2005-2008): Jason Donnelly
 Class of 2007-2010: Chris Agnew, Sandra Beardsall, Nicholas Jesson, Tom Ryan (pending his agreement), Eastern Orthodox person (to be named by the Board).
Motion: That the slate be accepted as proposed. M/S: Eileen Conway/Bernard deMargarie. Carried
 - g) *Constitution Committee:* No report.
- 5) *Future Planning:*
 - a) 2008 Conference 26-28 September: Hotel Crowne Plaza, Clayton, Missouri (near St. Louis) \$99/room
 Driving: Main highway (40 or 64) will be closed down. Members will be alerted about alternate travel arrangements.
 - b) 2009 Conference, Washington, DC: Something in the field of ethics is likely. Members are asked to send suggestions for speakers and more specific topics to Russell.
- 6) *New Business:* none

Business Meeting, Sept. 29, 2007, continued

7) Ecumenical Announcements:

- NCCCUA reorganization. The recent news release (indicating that the organization will operate in a way that is smaller and cheaper, not with a change in direction) was explained by Ann Riggs. Staff levels had already been reduced to about 1/3 of 2000 levels. Some of Life and Work ministries have been located in other institutions as of the end of last June. The most recent reductions involve the elimination of all senior program staff with the exception of grant-funded positions. New job descriptions are to be written and senior staff have been invited to reapply for consolidated positions (by Dec. 1). Resulting positions will involve considerably more responsibility and scope. A new general secretary will be in place as of Nov. 1. Some tasks are henceforth to be handed to committees so that volunteers will take over some of the responsibilities formerly assumed by paid staff. There will inevitably be a reduction in what is accomplished. Ultimately this is the result of reductions in funding from mainline churches.
- Ron Roberson: The first four of the USCCB's "Walking Together" series of pamphlets or bulletin inserts to inform people in parishes of what is happening in the realm of interfaith/ecumenical affairs are out. They have a Q. and A. format and have the following titles: "Christianity and Islam," "When a Catholic Marries a Protestant," "Christians and Jews," and "Who Can Go to Holy Communion."
- Jan Peck from the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism put in a request for information to add to the Centre's "Shared Ministries" data bank.
- On Oct. 1 there will be a Faith and Witness Forum on Ecumenical Dialogues at the University of Winnipeg. Some Canadian members of the NAAE will be participating.
- At the end of October, the second round of International Mennonite/Catholic Dialogue will be held. Information on Mennonite/Catholic dialogue in Canada is available from Luis Melo upon request.
- John Crossin reported on the progress of Doctorate of Ministry in Ecumenism (Wesley) through the Washington Theological Consortium. It will be

- advertised in *Koinonia* and if 15-16 applicants apply, the program will be able to run.
 - Next January marks the 100th Anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Materials are available on the Web from Graymoor. The theme is "Pray without Ceasing." Hans Frei lecture series theme is "the State of the Bible in North America."
 - John Huber spoke about his experiences at the two Oberlin Conferences and his ecumenical work in California, including responses to the recent CDF statement. He noted that a Pan-Lutheran Conference including ELCA and Missouri Synod Lutherans with the theme, "The Reformation: Past Present and Future," will be held in San Diego.
 - National Workshop on Christian Unity will be held April 14-17, 2007, in Chicago with theme of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The Workshop in 2009 will be in Phoenix at end of April; in 2010 the Workshop will likely be in Tampa..
 - Greetings were reported from Lorelei Fuchs and from Sue Dennis (formerly Director of Interchurch Facility at Riverside Drive, now of Pause, Inc. Com) who is currently organizing a study tour of Lutherland, Germany.
 - Debra Collum (Wells) announced that Luther Seminary has a professor teaching AME polity. This marks a step towards Luther Seminary offering a certificate in pan-Methodist Studies.
 - Nicholas Jesson noted that the Website "Ecumenism in Canada" is currently a joint project of the Prairie Centre and the Canadian Centre of Ecumenism. They are hoping to add articles as well as links. Members asked to send information to Ecumenism.net.
 - members were invited to complete the evaluation form and to leave it on the table from which name tags were picked up. They were reminded to return the name tags which are borrowed from the Prairie centre.
- 8) Adjournment: 5:10 p.m. (approximately)

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Brown
Recording Secretary

North American Academy of Ecumenists Board Officers , Board Member Classes and Committees

President	John Crossin	Class of 2005-08	Class of 2006-09	Class of 2007-10
Immediate Past-President	Lynne Lorenzen	Peter Baktis	Adele Brodeur	Chris Agnew
Vice-President (President-Elect)	Alyson Barnett-Cowan	Jason Donnelly	Vince Heier	Sandra Beardsall
Secretary	Susan Brown	Luis M. Melo	Richard Jeske	Nicholas Jesson
Treasurer/Membership Sec'y	Russell Meyer	Debra J. Collum	Elizabeth Mellen	Tom Ryan
Editor Journal of Ecumenical Studies,	Leonard Swidler	Bertrice Wood	Ron Roberson	
		Essay Contest:	Nominating (2007)	Local Affairs
		Alyson Barnett-Cowan	Lynne Lorenzen	2008 Conference
		John Crossin	Susan Brown	Russell Meyer
		Debra Collum	John Huber	
		Russell Meyer	Webmaster	JES Liaison
			Nicholas Jesson	Lorelei Fuchs

Academy Announces 2008 Essay Contest

Students in seminaries, theological schools and graduate schools of religion are invited to enter an essay contest sponsored by the North American Academy of Ecumenists. The essay is to be based on the theme of the next NAAE conference set for September 26-28, 2008:

We Have Come This Far By Faith, How Much Further Do We Dare Hope to Go?

Ecumenical Ecclesiology: One Church of Christ for the Sake of the World

In 1982, in Lima Peru, the groundbreaking document, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM) (<http://www.oikoumene.org/?id=2638>), was unveiled to a hope-filled church. Calling churches from around the world to demonstrate and proclaim the unity of Christ's church for the sake of the world, many anticipated the fulfillment of the Christ's prayer that "all may be one."

The winning essay will research, discuss, draw conclusions and make a logical argument around these questions:

- How has BEM helped to shape Ecumenical Ecclesiology in its present form?
- What still needs to be done within the entire body of the Church of Jesus Christ to make BEM a living document?
- Why does the current Faith and Order statement on the unity of the church call the Church of Jesus Christ to a "stage along the way"? (<http://www.oikoumene.org/index.php?id=2617&L=0>)
- Is a "stage along the way" a fulfillment of the Christ's desire for a unified body?
- What are the future joys, concerns, and challenges of Ecumenical Ecclesiology?

The winning essay writer will receive an award of \$250, will attend the 2008 conference of the NAAE in St. Louis, MO, and may be invited to present a précis of the essay. Registration and travel expenses will be covered by the Academy. The essay will also be submitted for consideration by the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. The recommended length is 20 pages, double-spaced (5,000

words), using font size 12. If applicable, students are encouraged to write their essay to fulfill a course requirement for a term paper, prior to submitting it for the NAAE contest.

The essays will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Displayed knowledge of current work in ecclesiological ecumenism
2. Appropriateness and imaginative approach to the theme
3. Use of World Council of Churches references and/or agreed ecumenical statements and official church documents
4. Logically and doctrinally sound argument for the advancement of Christian unity
5. Scholarly style
6. Publishable quality

Please note: The readers of the essays will take the academic level of entrants into consideration in evaluating submissions.

Resources for writing the essay may be found at the following web pages:

- <http://www.naae.net/>
- <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission.html>

The essayists are also encouraged to look at the sites and journal articles of those who caution for a different understanding of the unity of the church and who are suspect of the WCC and related bodies' efforts. Send the essay before June 15, 2008, together with a brief biographical sketch of the author, to the Rev. Russell L. Meyer (NAAE Treasurer/Membership Secretary), 5025 Southampton Circle, Tampa FL 33647, or by attachment to members@naae.net, with a copy to the Rev. Debra Jene Collum, NAAE Essay Contest Coordinator, Luther Seminary, 2481 Como Ave, St. Paul, MN 55108, dcollum001@luthersem.edu.

For further questions call Rev. Collum at 651-641-3434 or by email: dcollum001@luthersem.edu

Journal of Ecumenical Studies News

The second issue of 2008 (43:2) will be a creative departure from the JES norm. Initiated through the interest and generosity of one of the members of the JES Board, this issue will have a special focus on grassroots interreligious dialogue among the three Abrahamic faiths. The issue will also be published in book form, and will be a valuable resource for clergy and other religious leaders pursuing hands-on interreligious dialogue. Check the JES website (www.jesdialogue.org) in April for additional information or to order copies of the book version.

NAAE Finances
Multi-Year Income/Expense Report

Category Description	OVERALL TOTAL 2003 to Present
INCOME	
Conference Fees	32,843.50
Gift Received	350
Membership Fee	14,957.47
Other Inc	1,100.29
Bal Fwd Checking	6,986.94
TOTAL INCOME	56,238.20
EXPENSES	
Bank Charge	491.14
Board Exp	
JES	534.2
NAAE	646.44
Other Board Exp	450
Conference Exp	
Essay Prize	1,000.00
Essay Travel	1,004.63
Hospitality	253.58
Lodging	25,883.13
Material	131.98
Meeting Room	1,697.59
Refunds	1,288.50
Scholarship	114.92
Speaker Exp	4,484.10
Tour	1,078.50
Travel	659
Other Conference Exp	324
JES Subscriptions	9,540.00
Operations	
Newsletter	736.64
Office	64.79
Postage and Delivery	489.14
Printing and Reproduction	722.93
Web Site	462.6
TOTAL EXPENSES	52,057.81
TOTAL ASSETS	4,180.39

The Saskatoon Meeting generated a loss of \$2706.62, due to transportation costs, rate exchange, and low renewal rates.

Letter from the Journal of Ecumenical Studies and the NAAE

September 20, 2007

Dear NAAE Members,

For the past few years, we have experienced difficulties in reconciling NAAE membership and *JES* subscription records. There have been several reasons for this: delays in *JES* publication, different renewal schedules (calendar year for *JES*, academic year for NAAE), and other unaddressed problems in coordinating our record-keeping. We at *JES* sincerely regret the confusion and frustration that have resulted for some NAAE members who did not receive the *JES* issues to which they were entitled as part of their membership fee. Together, we have been hard at work to correct this situation and anticipate smoother sailing in the future. Meanwhile, we want to share two particular action items addressing both the past and the future.

First, we would like to offer some alternatives to those who have been affected by the past and present discrepancies. Those who are renewing their membership, and who did not receive issues of *JES* to which they were entitled (note: if you are unsure whether you fall into this category, please contact Julie Sheetz-Willard at jsheetz@temple.edu or 215-204-7520) will be offered three choices:

- Consider that portion of your past membership fee as a gift to NAAE/*JES*
- Email Julie to request that the issue(s) you missed be sent to you.
- Go to the *JES* website (www.jesdialogue.org) and select up to four available back issues. Email Julie with your request and they will be sent to you free of charge.

Second, a necessary point of clarity, going forward, has to do with the coordinating of membership and subscription schedules. To that end, the following policy has been set in place.

- New members who join before June 1 will receive the current year of *JES* (i.e., if you joined in May of 2007, you would receive all issues of the 2007 volume of *JES*).
- Those who join (or renew) after June 1 will be considered to be subscribing to the following calendar year (i.e., join at the conference in September, 2007 and receive the 2008 volume of *JES*). **As a special offer, new subscribers at the 2007 NAAE Conference will also be sent Vol. 42, No. 4 (2007) at no additional charge. This issue will include papers from prior NAAE conferences as well as from the Faith and Order Conference at Oberlin in July, 2007.**

Between now and the end of the year, we will be working steadily to regularize this process. If you have questions or difficulties related to your *JES* subscription, please feel free to contact Julie. We thank you for your patience, and look forward to a renewed level of satisfaction and mutual enhancement in our shared relationship in the years to come.

Sincerely yours,
Russell Meyer
Membership Secretary/
Treasurer, NAAE

Julia Sheetz-Willard
JES Administrative
Coordinator



One Church of Christ for the Sake of the World

**North American Academy of Ecumenists
Académie des Oecuménistes de l'Amérique du Nord**

St. Louis, Missouri
Crowne Plaza, Clayton
September 26-28, 2008
Preliminary Agenda



Friday evening

5:30 Dinner—*on own*
7:00 Opening Worship
7:15 -8:45 Presentations on
Ecclesiology
by Dr. Michael Kinnamon
and Dr. Peter Bouteneff
9:00 Reception

Saturday

8:00 Breakfast—*on own*
9:00 Morning Worship
9:15 Presentation by Dr. David
Daniels III
10:45 Break
11:15 Panel of respondents
12:30 Luncheon—*on own. Board
working lunch.*
2:30 Group Discussion of the
Third Article of the Creed
3:45 Break
4:00 Essay Winner & Annual
Business Meeting
5:15 Evening Worship
6:30 Annual Banquet

Sunday

8:00 Breakfast on one's own
9:00 Panel on Practical Living
in Communion
10:45 Morning Worship
12:00 Departure—*Board
working lunch.*

The Crowne Plaza, Clayton,
provides shuttle transportation to the
St Louis airport. Registration may
include contracted room rates.

Registration forms are available on
line at www.naae.net.