

NEWS from NAEIS

National Association
of Ecumenical and
Interreligious Staff
August 2010

From the President

A Teachable Moment

As I write this article the mainstream media, not to mention the cable news chatter and blogosphere, are abuzz about the construction of a mosque near "Ground Zero" in New York City.

I don't have much sympathy for the critics. Their anger is misplaced. Instead of focusing on the twisted version of the Islamic faith which characterizes the theology/ideology of terrorists, critics of the mosque have directed their outrage towards the entire religion, intimating that all Muslims advocate violence. It's nonsense.

There seems to be a rising tide of "Islamophobia" in the United States these days. The construction of mosques is under criticism in several cities around the country. Virulent anti-Islamic rhetoric is making its way from right wing Web sites into mainstream public discourse.

I'm glad Christian leaders like NCC General Secretary Michael Kinnamon are speaking out so clearly and forcefully about the New York situation. I hope others of us at the regional and local level will follow suit.

This is a teachable moment: not only focused on the religious freedom embodied in our nation's founding documents, but also calling forth the best of our own faith traditions in advocating for openness, tolerance, and mutual respect.

-Scott Anderson

Updates on November Gatherings

The [planning committee](#) has been meeting regularly and is beginning to design the visioning process that will lead up to and flow from the November 11-12 visioning

NAEIS President



Scott Anderson
Executive Director
Wisconsin Council of Churches

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2011 NAEIS Annual Gathering

**"Welcoming One Another:
The Promise of Community"**

Feb. 4-7, 2011

**Oblate Renewal Center
San Antonio, Texas**

- Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations
- Welcoming Young Adults
- Immigration Reform
- And more...

More information to
come in the fall.

consultation for the local and regional ecumenical community. The Web site for the event is www.nccusa.org/lre/visioning.html.

Here are a few updates:

-Online registration for this event and the Centennial Ecumenical Gathering will be available by September 1. If you have requested to be notified of updates, you will receive an e-mail when registration is available. Send e-mail to aripple@nccusa.org to be added to the list for updates.

-Registration fees for the Centennial Ecumenical Gathering have been established and are online at www.nccusa.org/witnesses2010.

-There are several cheaper hotel options near the meeting hotel which can be found using online travel sites. See the event site for some options.

-We are looking for people who plan to attend the consultation who would be interested in planning and leading 3 brief worship services, or contributing musical gifts. Please send e-mail to NAEIS Board member Carlos Malavé at carlos.malave@pcusa.org if you can contribute in this way.

Keep checking in at the event site for updates and feel free to direct any questions or suggestions to Ammon Ripple at aripple@nccusa.org or 212-870-3417.

2010 NAEIS Speaker on YouTube



-from Carlos Malavé

Sam Daley-Harris is founder of RESULTS, a citizen lobby on ending global poverty, and founder of the Microcredit Summit Campaign. Sam is also a friend who spoke at this year's NAEIS gathering in Baltimore. In May 2010 he gave a talk titled: "Purpose, Poverty, Pitfalls, and Redemption." Please listen to Sam's remarks and pass it on to friends if you enjoy it. Here's the link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_LLQUQB5E.

Find NAEIS on Facebook!

To join the new NAEIS Facebook group, simply:

- 1) log in to Facebook;
- 2) search for 'National Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Staff' and select our group; and
- 3) click on the "Request to Join" button.

All NAEIS members and others who want to relate to NAEIS are more than welcome!

Receiving this newsletter for the first time?

NAEIS is in the process of updating its national database. In the last four months we have added over 200 new local, regional or national ecumenical/interreligious staff people with e-mail addresses. Welcome to our on-line community!

Having Trouble Viewing this E-Mail?

A PDF version of the NAEIS newsletter is online at www.naeis.org.

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Local Centennial Festival Engages Congregations



The Central Maryland Ecumenical Council is sponsoring an afternoon festival on November 14 as a way of marking the 100th anniversary of the modern ecumenical movement. The festival will also engage local congregations with area ecumenical and interfaith organizations.

The newsletter invitation notes that the event will "include a remarkable display of the local ecumenical and interfaith service organizations that are an extension of your congregation; in your name they feed the hungry, provide housing for the homeless, and serve in a vast array of ways to care for those in need. You will find them in church centers, legislative halls, working out of vans, going door to door to check on the elderly, visiting the sick and the dying, and putting faith into action. We invite you to "Come and See What We Can Do Together!"

For more information, connect with the council via www.cmecouncil.org.

Create an Online Profile for Your Ecumenical or Interfaith Community

The National Council of Churches is developing a comprehensive online directory of local and regional ecumenical and interfaith communities at <http://www.nccusa.org/lre/communities.html>.

What is currently a list of links will be expanded into a searchable database of online profiles which will facilitate networking, community involvement, and fundraising. The database will include profiles of local and regional ecumenical or interfaith organizations as well as less formal groups, including neighborhood initiatives, youth groups, and clergy alliances.

It takes 20-40 minutes to create a profile using an [online survey](#). The survey is also linked from the above Web page.

Please create a profile for your group by October 1 if you want it to be shared at the November visioning consultation.

Local and Regional Ecumenism Visioning Consultation

The Promise of Ecumenical Community: Visioning Our Future

Thu. Nov. 11, 2010 at 12:00 noon
through
Fri. Nov. 12, 2010 at 3:30 p.m.

New Orleans, Louisiana

More information at www.nccusa.org/lre.

Organized by State Ecumenical Executives, NAEIS, and the NCC Ecumenical Networks Committee.

Associated with the Centennial Ecumenical Gathering convened by the National Council of Churches, Nov. 9-11, 2010.

To sign up for e-mail updates, contact Ammon Ripple at aripple@nccusa.org or call 212-870-3417.

Call for Nominations: NCC Local and Regional Ecumenism Committee

A new Local and Regional Ecumenism Committee of the National Council of Churches is forming. If you would like to nominate someone to serve on this committee, please view the call for nominations at <http://www.nccusa.org/lre/committee.html>. Nominations are open through September 22, 2010. Feel free to nominate yourself!

The committee is charged to facilitate relationships among and between local, regional, and national expressions of the ecumenical movement in the U.S. It will be representative of the diverse local and regional ecumenical community and will meet twice a year, adjacent to the NAEIS gathering and the NCC/CWS General Assembly. The first meeting will be February 3-4, 2011 in San Antonio, TX-prior to the NAEIS Annual Gathering.

News From NAEIS is published monthly. News items should be sent to newsletter editor [Scott Anderson](mailto:sanderson@wichurches.org) at sanderson@wichurches.org.