

NEWS from NAEIS

National Association
of Ecumenical and
Interreligious Staff
November 2010

From the President

Our Future

About ninety of us from local and regional ecumenical and interreligious organizations were present in New Orleans this month for the NCC Centennial Ecumenical Gathering and the one-day consultation focused on the future of local and regional ecumenism. We represented about a fourth of the total Centennial Gathering, an impressive percentage!

The entire week was an inspiration. We know we are facing a challenging future. Yet, the spirit of the gathered faithful in New Orleans was anything but dejected. It seems to me that the stresses of the present moment have unleashed a wave of out-of-the-box thinking and creativity. And God knows we will need plenty of both in the coming decades.

I was energized by the many young people who were present to challenge us and engage in our discernment about the future of the ecumenical movement. I was also heartened by the many new faces of leaders from the local and regional levels who bring fresh energy and enthusiasm for this work.

We will all have time to digest the results from these gatherings and to consider their implications for the future -- including at our annual NAEIS gathering in February where we will be picking up the theme of "the promise of community."

In the meantime, I'm still riding the "high" of the New Orleans experience and am feeling hopeful. I hope you are, too.

-Scott Anderson

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**

- Welcoming the ecumenical and interreligious 'other'
- Welcoming young adults into ecumenical and interreligious work
- Welcoming immigrants and poor persons into our communities
- Welcoming board members into deeper engagement

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Bible Study Resources Focus on Millennium Development Goals

By Meagan Manas, NCC Program for Women's Ministry

In a recent summit on the Millennium Development Goals, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that "Mothers are the foundation of our society. When mothers are healthy, families are healthy. By focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable, we lay the foundation for a more sustainable and prosperous tomorrow." Most people of faith in the United States would agree with the Secretary-General that these most vulnerable members of our global community are indeed a priority but often we are left feeling hopeless-overwhelmed by the enormity of the problem-and it can be easy to forget about struggles that seem unimaginable in our daily lives. How can we address MDGs, working for the health of every mother and child in our world?

[Read more here](#) and download an advent Bible study at www.FistulaStories.org/USMaternalHealth.

- And more...

More information to come.

Find NAEIS on Facebook!

To join the 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!

Having Trouble Viewing this E-Mail?

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

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Send to a Colleague

New Name for Austin Area Interreligious Ministries

Starting in January, Austin Area Religious Ministries will become known as **Interfaith Action of Central Texas (iACT)** with the mission of cultivating peace and respect through interfaith dialogue, service and celebration. A [reflection on this change](#) by CEO Tom Spencer is on the AAIM home page.

The Abundant Community: Awakening the Power of Families and Neighborhoods

This [book](#) from authors Peter Block and John McKnight discusses "a growing movement of people with a different vision for their local communities. They know that real satisfaction and the good life are not provided by organizations, institutions, or systems. No number of great CEO's, central offices, or long range plans produce what a community can produce. People are discovering a new possibility for their lives. They have a calling. They are called. And together they call upon themselves." There is a companion website at <http://www.abundantcommunity.com/>.

Materials Available for 2011 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Worship resources and promotional materials for the 2011 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity are now available at the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute site at www.geii.org. The theme for 2011 is *One in the Apostles' Teaching, Fellowship, Breaking of the Bread, and Prayer*, based on Acts 2:42. The theme was chosen by Christians in Jerusalem who seek to promote a spirit of ecumenism grounded in the experience of the early church.

Obituary - Ginny Wagener

The Rev. Virginia "Ginny" Wagener, former Director of the South Coast Interfaith Council (SCIC) in Long Beach, California, died peacefully on October 27 after a long illness. She is missed by her colleagues who respected her greatly. Rev. Wagener was among the first women ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church and served in Long Beach from 1991-2008, transforming the council from an ecumenical one into an thriving interfaith council in 2004 with over 140 member faith communities.

[Full Obituary from the San Jose Mercury News.](#)

Faith in Action - Events and Resources Around the Nation

From the Arizona Ecumenical Council:

As Christians We are Responsible for What We Know

This [essay](#) by Billie K. Fidlin, Chair of the AEC Public Policy Commission, challenges us all to stay committed to transforming public policy in an effort to better care for the vulnerable in our midst.

From Austin Area Interreligious Ministries:

Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

View [photos from AAIM Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebrations](#) - an annual event that brings together more than 1000 people. Starting in January, AAIM will be known as iACT - Interfaith Action of Central Texas.

From Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania:

PBS Documentary 'The Calling'

Christian Associates is [co-hosting a viewing and panel discussion](#) of 'The Calling,' a [documentary film in the PBS Independent Lens series](#) which follow the stories of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Muslim Americans training

for religious leadership. Check for local listings by searching the TV schedule for 'Independent Lens' at www.pbs.org.

From the Florida Council of Churches:

A Watershed Moment in the History of Florida Agriculture

The Florida Council of Churches and Interfaith Action of Southwest Florida celebrate [an historic agreement between farmworkers and tomato growers](#) which will serve to ensure fair treatment of workers and just wages, with both sides working together for the common good.

From Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska:

Resources for Returning Military Members

These [Web-based resources](#) support ministries of caring and support for veterans as they return from war, facing many challenges along with their loved ones.

From the North Carolina Council of Churches:

NC Faith Leaders Support DREAM ACT

The Council lifts up this [statement by ecumenical religious leaders supporting the DREAM Act](#) which supports a path to citizenship for undocumented children and youth. The statement is being sent to the North Carolina congressional delegation to urge passage of this important immigration reform legislation.

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