



NEWS FROM NAEIS

June 2011

Reflections from the President



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Save the Date

The 2012 NAEIS Gathering
will be held at
Pendle Hill,
a Quaker retreat center in
Philadelphia, PA
from the evening of
Sunday March 18
through the morning of
Wednesday March 21
2012.

See www.pendlehill.org
for more about the site.

It is Saturday, May 21 when I write this short reflection. It is not an ordinary Saturday because some people believe today to be a day of judgement. On the other hand, I am getting ready for a seven-day trip to Cuba. I will join the churches in the Caribbean nation for a celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Cuban Council of Churches.

What in the world will move someone to predict a date of the end of time? Is it fear, anxiety or simply a need for recognition? There are all sort of reasons why people may experience fear and anxiety these days. Many of the people we serve and minister with feel the pain of the struggle to stay afloat financially. Others wonder what kind of world our children and grandchildren will live in. So many others could care less, because they have more than enough to enjoy life in the barbecue at the backyard. We are called to love and be friends to all. We must challenge all; some to lift up their heads and fight the good fight, others to be merciful and see the Christ in the one who suffer and struggles.

There are many who suffer and struggle in Cuba. But I have learned that they do so with dignity. They have resisted the imposition of a foreign way of life. They have been willing to pay a high price for that luxury. But they are who they are, not who others want them to be. The church in Cuba is strong and continues to solidifies its reach and influence in their country. The last week of May, they gather to celebrate the struggles, but also the joys of their faithfulness and endurance. There is much that we can and should learn from their stubbornness to stay put and resist the temptations of "greener pastures."

It is a beautiful day as I sit and write at the bleachers of the little league ball park where my son is playing today. The game will start in a few minutes. I always ask my ten year old to focus, work hard and have fun. We should do likewise and let the outcome be in the hands of the one who will one day return and set everything right.

--Carlos Malavé

Help Plan the 2012 NAEIS Gathering

The 2012 NAEIS Gathering will be held at Pendle Hill, a Quaker retreat center on a 23-acre wooded campus in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania -- see <http://www.pendlehill.org>. The gathering will take place from the evening of Sunday, March 18 through the

Join NAEIS or Renew Your Membership

NAEIS depends on individual member contributions to provide much-needed networking, resource-sharing, and professional development opportunities to the ecumenical and interfaith communities which serve our nation.

Please join or renew today!

<http://www.naeis.org/aboutnaeis/membership.htm>

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!

Trouble Viewing This Email?

A PDF version of the NAEIS newsletter is online at

morning of Wednesday, March 21.

Grant Abbott from the St. Paul Area Council of Churches is serving as Program Chair. If you would like to serve on the program planning committee for the 2012 Gathering, please contact Grant at GAbbott@spacc.org. Initial ideas for themes for the gathering include interfaith partnerships, engaging evangelicals, and continuing the conversation on developing a new generation of ecumenical and interfaith leaders.

Local and Regional Ecumenism Intern Sponsored by NAEIS and NCC

The NAEIS Board is happy to announce that Minister F. Romall Smalls will be working as an intern to help NAEIS and the National Council of Churches in our shared mission of building up national community among those doing ecumenical and interfaith work. Romall will be doing this as part of his requirements for the Master of Divinity degree at Union Theological Seminary in New York City during the upcoming academic year.



Minister F. Romall Smalls

The internship is co-sponsored by NAEIS and NCC and he will be supervised by Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon and Ammon Ripple. Romall is a licensed minister in the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. and is an active member of Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, New York. He has over a decade of professional experience in journalism and media relations. We welcome the many gifts he has to offer!

Sister Sylvia Schmidt Added to the Circles of Names

At the February gathering, NAEIS members made contributions to name Sister Sylvia Schmidt, longtime ecumenical and interfaith

www.naeis.org.

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leader, to the Circles of Names. Among her many accomplishments, Sister Sylvia served as Executive Director of the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry and as a member of the NAEIS Board.

This project honors women of faith who have been significant in the ecumenical movement, our faith communities, and our lives. Contributions support the gender justice and women's ministries work of the National Council of Churches. You can name a woman who has inspired you at www.circlesofnames.org.



Sister Sylvia Schmidt

Offering *The Welcome* to Returning Military and Families

Many of our communities are seeking ways to be in ministry to returning military and their families. The documentary film, "The Welcome," offers an opportunity for creating awareness, understanding, and action in our ecumenical and interfaith councils or in local faith communities.

"The Welcome offers a fiercely intimate view of life after war: the fear, anger and isolation of post-traumatic stress that affects vets and family members alike. ... We begin to understand that all of us are a vital piece of the Welcome as Veterans try to find the way back home. Their examples of unflinching honesty, courage and love lift us up, inspiring all of us once again to feel our common humanity, always the first casualty of war."

You are invited to consider a screening and discussion/panel as a program - please contact Producer Bill McMillan at mcmillan@ccountry.net or 541-821-4798 to make arrangements. For screenings open to the general public, a \$200 fee is requested. The film can be used as part of a fundraiser with special arrangements.

Please help spread the word to local faith communities who might be able to sponsor a screening.

For more information, including a trailer, and a list of Web resources, see <http://www.thewelcomethemovie>.

Link to the NCC Poverty Initiative

by Shantha Ready Alonso

The National Council of Churches Poverty Initiative is a growing network of Christian organizations and individuals committed to end poverty, working with interfaith partners. We invite local and regional ecumenical and interfaith organizations to consider this network as your own so that your distinctive voice is part of this national connectional network.

The Poverty Initiative's mission is to bring a loud and clear message to our nation: we must place a high priority on working for the well-being and dignity of all who Jesus called "the least of these" in our churches, communities, and our nation.

To join the network and receive our e-newsletter, which regularly features the work of local and regional ecumenical and interfaith organizations, go to

<http://www.nccendpoverty.org/join%20network/join%20network.php>.

Please send us your stories, ideas, book recommendations, and more by email to info@nccendpoverty.org. You can also link to us on Facebook (National Council of Churches USA Poverty Initiative) or Twitter (@nccendpoverty). Also, please know that you are welcome to create links to anything on the Poverty Initiative website in any of your own publications and social media.

To ask President Obama to re-state his pledge to work to cut domestic poverty in half by 2020, please go to

<http://www.nccendpoverty.org/take%20action/postcardaction.php>

and spread the word to others.

Faith Advocates for Jobs: Help Local Faith Communities Support the Unemployed and Underemployed

Your ecumenical or interfaith organization is invited to become a coalition member of Faith Advocates for Jobs, a campaign initiated by Interfaith Worker Justice to support congregation-based initiatives which provide personal support to the unemployed and underemployed, educate about the causes of joblessness, and encourage advocacy on public policy issues which impact the availability of jobs in our nation.

Members of the coalition already include Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, the West Virginia Council of Churches, the Poverty Initiative of the National Council of Churches, the Arkansas Interfaith Alliance, Bread for the World, and a number of national religious bodies and local Interfaith Worker Justice groups.

For more information, including the organizational and congregational pledge forms, download the toolkit at: <http://www.iwj.org/doc/jobs-toolkit.pdf> .

Please contact Rev. Paul Sherry for further information: psherry@iwj.org or 202-525-3055.

Help Your Congregations Connect Gardeners to AmpleHarvest.org

Many gardeners are beginning to reap the harvest of their work. However, most gardens produce more food than is needed and much produce goes to waste. Help your congregations spread the word to gardeners about donating their fresh produce to local food pantries by connecting them to AmpleHarvest.org.



For more information, see the National Council of Churches press release at <http://www.nccusa.org/news/110214ampleharvest.html> or go straight to <http://AmpleHarvest.org>. Note that they also have a page for Christian faith groups at <http://www.ampleharvest.org/LFish-Loaves.php>.

Register for the 2011 NAINConnect Gathering

The North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) will gather in Phoenix, Arizona July 24-26, 2011 with the theme "*Many People, Many Faiths - One Common Principle, THE GOLDEN RULE.*" The keynote speaker will be Mussie Haillu, an international advocate and activist for a culture of peace and interfaith harmony.

For more information, go to <http://nain.org/connect11reg.htm> .

Share Your News

Please send articles with news, events, or resources that may be of service to the NAEIS community to Newsletter Committee member Ammon Ripple at aripple@nccusa.org. The deadline for the next issue is July 31.

