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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.

NEWS FROM NAEIS

October 2011

Reflections from the President

The Church's Calling and Challenge

The financial difficulties in our country have deepened and the markets seem to keep us in a whirlwind of suspense. My first thoughts when I hear the news of the fall of the markets have been ones of indifference. In the past I have worried about my 401k, but there is really nothing I can do about it. If historical trends come into play, the stock market will get back on track once again.

I have to confess that to think in these terms is really a "luxury". Hundreds of thousands of our neighbors could not care less about 401k's since they don't have anything. Their concern is what and where they will eat and sleep tonight. The situation for them is really getting bad. Many of the organizations that provide services for homeless and poor people are getting the worst out of these troubling times. Increasingly states are cutting their budgets for these services. At least 31 states have projected shortages for fiscal year 2012, a sum of more than \$86 billion. Assistance for the poor is not exempt from cutbacks.

I guess this is not news for most of us; many of our agencies have been confronting this reality for some years now. I believe, in most situations, the Church will have to seriously consider its commitment to fulfill its responsibility towards the poor. A church leader has said: "Asking churches and other charitable organizations to pick up the slack won't do the job of caring for the chronic poor completely." The same leader added that the Church's financial philanthropy represents a small response to poverty. "It doesn't in any way counteract the government budget cuts that - we believe - are not in keeping with the extensive biblical mandate to care for the poor."

There is a limit to what the church can do; there is also a limit to what the government can do. One of the important questions is: Are both doing their best effort? Can our churches honestly say that they are doing all they can? Or the best they can do? Do our church budgets reflect our verbal commitment to the poor?

Our ecumenical and interfaith agencies must engage our churches in these critical conversations. It is time to set our priorities right. Our voices must not be silent.

--Carlos Malavé

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 www.naeis.org.

Scott Anderson to be Ordained

Scott Anderson, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council of Churches and immediate past president of NAEIS, has been cleared for ordination in a ruling by the top judicial commission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) on August 2nd.

Anderson is believed to be the first gay person in a long-term relationship to be approved for ordination by the denomination.



Opponents brought the case last year, arguing Anderson could not be ordained because he was in an open relationship with a man. At the time, church rules required clergy members to live "in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness."

But a monumental shift occurred earlier this year when a majority of the church's regional bodies voted to allow openly gay men and women in same-sex relationships to be ordained. The fidelity and chastity clause was dropped from the church's rules, called the Book of Order.

The judicial commission noted this shift in its dismissal, saying it would not rule on a provision of church law that no longer exists.

Anderson's ordination is set for Oct. 8 at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Madison at 10:30 am, his home congregation.

Free Program from 'Not in Our Town': Screen a PBS Documentary about Anti-Immigrant Violence in Your Area

Not In Our Town: Light in the Darkness tells the story of residents of Patchogue, Long Island taking action after a series of anti-immigrant attacks by local teenagers ended with the hate crime killing of local immigrant Marcelo Lucero. While starkly revealing the trauma of hate, the film provides a blueprint for people who want to do something before intolerance turns to violence.

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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 October 21.



As part of a national community engagement campaign, communities throughout the country are hosting screenings, events and discussions on hate crime prevention, working to develop new ways to make their towns safer.

Here's how you can get involved:

- 1) Host a screening in your community during the National Week of Action or later this year. [Request a Not In Our Town: Light In The Darkness DVD](#), and download the free [Screening Kit](#), publicity materials and [Discussion Guide](#). Loaner DVDs are available through the end of the year.
- 2) Learn about [activity ideas](#) and download free resources you can use for your events.
- 3) Visit NIOT.org for campaign updates, put yourself on the anti-hate action map, find resources, and post stories about your town.

Learn more at NIOT.org/LightInTheDarkness.

Call for Faith Communities to Stand with Disabled Persons Facing Employment Discrimination

NAEIS, the [National Council of Churches](#) and the [Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition](#) invite ecumenical and interfaith communities - and their constituent local faith communities - to sign on to a [Statement of Solidarity](#) with those who are unemployed or underemployed because they are disabled.

See the full [letter of invitation](#) and please consider requesting your community to sign this statement and encouraging other faith communities to do the same during [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#).