

From the President

The Birth Pangs of a New Age

There are several images that come to mind in my reflections. One is how snakes shed their skin as they grow a new outer covering. From my understanding in order for the snakes to survive, they go through this transition in their growth and maturity. Every few years we humans have garage sales and clean out our attics and other places we store those possessions we don't need anymore in order to make room for more stuff.

Organizations also from time to time must shed the old skins of yesterday in order to breathe and continue to flourish. Ways of doing business, delivering services and implementing the purposes of the organizations that used to work are no longer effective. The population is shifting from reading the traditional hard copy newspapers and instead are reading online and watching the news on television or getting it from their cell phones. Some of the long held traditions of faith communities are no longer observed because they're not any longer seen as relevant.

What's happening in our world and in the realm of Faith? It seems to me that we're in a time of epochal transition. It does seem to be true what some of our modern prophets are saying: we are on the cusp of a new age.

In a powerful passage of *A Painted House*, author John Grisham describes the birth of a child to a young girl in a dilapidated house surrounded by the cotton patch as another teenage girl and a young boy secretly listened from rows of cotton to the screams and cries during the birth process-the new birth coming in the dead of night. Out of the darkness came the cry of a newborn entering the world. It is as though the institutions including faith communities in our society await a new birth. What shape the ecumenical and interfaith landscape will take we do not know. We need as best as we can to prepare ourselves, welcome the new life, and grow with it. All the while we are called to trust in the One who is the source of life itself, as we experience birth pangs of this new age coming.

Dan Krutz

(more on next page)

NAEIS President



Rev. Dan Krutz
Executive Director
Louisiana Interchurch Conference

SAVE THE DATE!
**NAEIS Annual
Gathering**
March 16-19, 2010
Holy Trinity Spiritual Center
Baltimore, MD



You and your staff are invited to our next annual gathering. The general theme will be

Ministries that Work Towards Ending Poverty: A Moral Call to Care for the Poor.

Location: Holy Trinity Spiritual Center -
Baltimore, MD

(continued on next page)

Parliament of World's Religions Convenes Dec. 3



Since 1993, a Parliament of the World's Religions has convened every five years in a major international city (Chicago 1993, Cape Town 1999, Barcelona 2004). Sponsored by the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, the 2009 Parliament will take place in Melbourne, Australia.

A multi-religious, multi-lingual, and multicultural city, Melbourne offers an ideal location for the 2009 Parliament. Culturally vibrant and global in vision, Melbourne and Victoria are home to indigenous and Aboriginal spiritualities as well as the major world religions - Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism among others. Over 10,000 participants will come to Melbourne for the Parliament. The 2009 Parliament will turn worldwide attention to Melbourne as a destination city with international appeal.

The Parliament will run for seven days with approximately 450 events including keynote addresses, seminars, conferences, debates, performances, concerts and exhibitions. Parliament participants will work with others and within their own traditions to craft faithful responses to:

- indigenous reconciliation
- global poverty and global warming
environmental care and degradation
- education of the young and the challenges of social
disengagement
- voluntary and forced migration
- artistic expression and spirituality and
- the value of sports

In today's world, understanding between people of different traditions is not optional. It is essential. The 2009 Parliament will give people of faith, spirit and goodwill new reason to say that peace is still possible.

(more on next page)

Among the presenters are:
David Beckman - President Bread for the World
Michael Kinnamon - General Secretary National Council of Churches
Joan Rosenhauer - Catholic Relief Services, Executive Vice President for U.S. Operations
Shannon Daley-Harris, author of *Our Day to End Poverty: 24 Ways You Can Make a Difference* ...and others!

More information and registration materials are available at www.naeis.org

Receiving this newsletter for the first time?

NAEIS is in the process of updating its national data base. In the last four months we have added over 150 new local, regional or national ecumenical/interreligious staff people with e-mail addresses. Welcome to our on-line community!

NAEIS Board Retreat a Success

The NAEIS Board of Directors met for a two-day retreat in October to conduct a thorough assessment of the organization, to review input from member surveys and to make plans for the next few years.

A mailing will go out soon to current and prospective NAEIS members with more information and a revised dues structure.

NAEIS and the Ecumenical Networks Committee to Hold Joint Meeting

The Ecumenical Networks Standing Committee, a group based in the National Council of Churches with representation from various manifestations of local and regional ecumenism, will meet with NAEIS members on Friday, March 19, 2010 from 9am-noon. All are invited to stay a little longer after the NAEIS retreat to participate in and help shape a visioning process for ecumenism in the U.S. which will be directed toward the November 2010 gathering. The process will unfold throughout the intervening months, allowing broad participation and input. Lunch will be provided.

NAEIS Member Installed as NCC President



The Rev. Peg Chamberlin, executive director

of the Minnesota Council of Churches, was installed as President of the National Council of Churches on November 12, in a public service at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Minneapolis

Chemberlin is the 25th president of the National Council of Churches since 1950. She is the second Moravian, the fourth woman, the first Minnesotan and the first head of a state council of churches to hold the office.

The installation featured a sermon by the Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Jr., the nationally known president of the Healing of the Nations Foundation and former pastor of the Riverside Church in Manhattan.

In 2009, Chemberlin was appointed to President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. On the council, she serves on the task force focused on economic recovery and fighting poverty. Chemberlin has led the Minnesota Council for 14 years.

"The National Council of Churches will be blessed by the leadership of the Rev. Peg Chamberlin, a woman whose very soul is filled with ecumenical passion and whose adult life has been invested in building bridges and relationship within the Christian Church, and in interfaith circles, as well," said The Rt. Rev. James L. Jelinek, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota and former president of the board for the Minnesota Council of Churches. "She is both a professional and a volunteer, with the gift of leadership and the gift of inspiration."

From the NCC News Service

(more on next page)

Employment Opportunity

The Council of Churches of the Ozarks, based in Springfield, Missouri, is seeking an executive director. The job posting is available at <http://ccoark.org/> -- click on "Employment Opportunities" from the home page.

NCC Seeks Input on New Staff Position

The National Council of Churches is seeking funding to help reestablish a staff position focused on local and regional ecumenism, in close collaboration with NAEIS and the State Ecumenical Executives. If you would like to have input into this process, please contact Ammon Ripple at aripple@nccusa.org.

You will be added to an e-mail communications list for that purpose and will be invited to participate in conference calls and brief surveys. The goal is to have any funding proposals reflect accurately the needs and priorities "on the ground" to the extent possible. This process will begin in early January, so please respond by December 31.

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NCC Centennial Assembly in 2010

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, effectively marking 100 years of the modern ecumenical movement. The National Council of Churches is hosting a movement-wide centennial assembly from November 9-11, 2010 in New Orleans. Participants will include representatives from the World Council of Churches, Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and local and regional ecumenical organizations.

All are invited to look back over 100 years with a critical eye, to identify together the changing landscape in which we find ourselves now, and to envision the next 100 years of the ecumenical movement together.

A special consultation on local and regional ecumenism is also being discussed--the still-tentative date is Friday November 12, following the larger assembly. Please save the dates and stay tuned for more information.

Job Announcements? Staff Transitions?

Send info to NAEIS E-News editor [Scott Anderson](mailto:sanderson@wichurches.org) at sanderson@wichurches.org.

NAEIS E-News is published six times a year (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, and Nov). Articles and news items should be sent to newsletter editor Scott Anderson at sanderson@wichurches.org .