

# NEWS from NAEIS

National Association of  
Ecumenical and  
Interreligious Staff  
January 2010

## From the President

### Rewards for Building the Ark

We all remember the saga of Noah and the ark. That lonely one was trying very hard to get something going with plans for the Ark God had asked him to build. He went from person to person seeking help, but it seemed like everyone was instead focused on different predictions about the FLOOD. Some thought when the flood came, it would last for years; others talked of how deep the waters would; still others were frightened about how rapid the currents would be in the great seas. Well, Noah was so put out with everyone, he said, "Alright, I don't want to hear anymore predictions about floods. In the future you will only get rewards for building the ark!

Day after day we hear about how gloomy times are, and I don't mean just the ecumenical/interfaith work-but everything. The predictions are enough to sap the energy of even the most optimistic soul. Don't you feel that way sometimes? The reports coming out about philanthropy in our current economy are not promising. Jobs are hard to find, and the rate of unemployment is very, very high. It's hard to keep on going when such thoughts weigh at the heart and soul of what we want to do. I think Noah was right to cast aside the doubters and fearful ones focused on the flood. It might be wise for those of us challenged today to take to heart his approach. What about building that ark of ecumenical and interfaith ministries? We need to focus on how to solve the problems, how we find a way forward to the solutions. Noah's attitude is essential to embrace as we attempt to lead others and as we attempt to keep our equilibrium about our professional life and the direction of our organizations, striving always to be faithful.

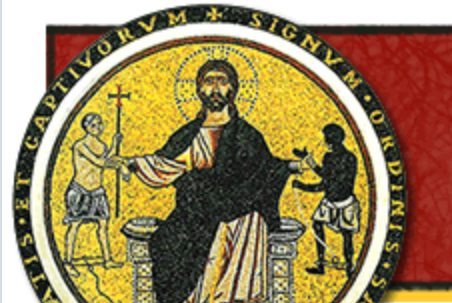
Admittedly, in our institutions forces are at work at times that seem overwhelming. It's tempting to react like the fearful ones in Noah's time who can only think of floods. Great

## NAEIS President



Rev. Dan Krutz  
Executive Director  
Louisiana Interchurch Conference

**REGISTER TODAY!**  
**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

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

concentration is needed to keep a positive attitude, and it's no guarantee of a positive outcome. Nevertheless, an attitude of trusting in the power of God to help us overcome such challenges may be a real source of strength. We also would do well to trust in ourselves and our colleagues. Focusing on solutions is the key. Of course, with Noah God offered support and blessing. Can we live with the notion that God is blessing our efforts too? One way that blessing is manifested is in the NAEIS Annual Conference. You want to hear a about solutions? Treat yourself. Come to Baltimore March 16-19, 2010. You'll be glad you did!  
Dan Krutz



**NAEIS Membership Dues  
REDUCED For 2010  
RENEW TODAY!**

As a member or friend of National Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Staff (NAEIS), you know that you are part of a community. At NAEIS you will find supportive relationships, innovative ideas, and new strategies for your work with religious communities.

Enroll or renew your membership today. It is simple and inexpensive and your continued membership in NAEIS is critical to our continued common work. As you may know, at the last Winter Retreat business meeting, NAEIS members present voted to return to a calendar year for dues so your membership will now be on an annual basis by calendar year instead of from September to August.

Annual Membership for 2010:  
\$75 for executive directors and ecumenical officers;  
\$50 for program staff; \$25 for new members;  
maximum membership dues for an organization  
\$250; those from agencies with budgets under  
\$100,000-- \$50.

[NAEIS Membership Form](#)

...and others!

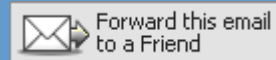
Here is the  
[retreat schedule and  
registration form.](#)

You're invited: NCC Ecumenical  
Networks Standing Committee  
meets after NAEIS Gathering

As you register for the NAEIS Gathering in March, please consider staying on through lunch on Friday, March 19 to meet with the NCC Ecumenical Networks Standing Committee. We will be discussing the current landscape of local and regional ecumenism and begin to envision the future as we prepare together for the local and regional ecumenism consultation on November 12. Lunch is provided by the Ecumenical Networks Committee.

**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 200 new local, regional or national ecumenical/interreligious staff people with e-mail addresses. Welcome to our on-line community!



**NAEIS Contact Info**



P.O. Box 95949  
Seattle, WA 98145-2949  
206-625-9790 ext. 12  
FAX: 206-625-9791  
E-mail: [info@naeis.org](mailto:info@naeis.org)  
Web: [naeis.org](http://naeis.org)

**Passages?  
Job Announcements?  
Transitions?**

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



## Local and Regional Ecumenism Consultation Nov. 12 in New Orleans

A consultation on local and regional ecumenism will be held on Friday, Nov. 12, 2010 in New Orleans. A larger gathering marking the centennial of the modern ecumenical movement will take place Tuesday, November 9 through Thursday, November 11. The National Council of Churches is convening the larger gathering and the local and regional consultation is being planned by representatives from NAEIS, the State Ecumenical Executives, and the NCC Ecumenical Networks Committee. If not able to attend from Tuesday through Friday, consider attending on November 11-12 in order to participate in discussions about the future of the broader ecumenical movement as well as the future of local and regional ecumenism. Board members and judicatory leaders are welcome to attend. More details are forthcoming.

## Passages...



Reverend Sally Abrahams Hill, the first woman ordained and installed as a parish minister in the Presbytery of the Twin Cities (1976), died on December 25, 2009 from lymphoma. A graduate of United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, Hill began her career as an ordained member of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Wayzata, MN, where she served as Minister of Education, then Associate Minister, 1973-1981.

Hill graduated from Macalester College in 1951 with majors in journalism and English. Macalester

honored Hill as a Distinguished Citizen in 1994 and bestowed upon her an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree in 2003. In addition, she was named Outstanding Woman in Minnesota in the field of religion, 1985 and given a National Hero Award by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1997.

As Director of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Church Commission, a coordinating program agency of the Greater Minneapolis, Saint Paul Area and Minnesota Councils of Churches (1981-1994), Hill worked with a vast sea of volunteers on peacemaking issues and ecumenical education. Specific programs included the Interreligious Committee on Central America, international exchanges with the U.S.S.R. and Central America, The Peace Child Project, Christian/Jewish/Muslim Dialogue, ecumenical worship celebrations, and the 2003 Re-Imagining Conference, a worldwide theological colloquium of some 2200 women (and a few men) that was developed as part of the World Council of Churches designation of the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women. The pioneering conference gathered people from 27 countries, 49 states, and 19 denominations to engage in and celebrate women doing theological work.

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Reverend Richard D. Speicher died on Tuesday December 26, 2009. He directed the work of the Mahoning Valley Association of Churches from 1972 until his retirement in 1989. Richard was ordained by the Church of the Brethren and served as a parish minister in Indiana and Ohio before becoming a campus minister at Youngstown State University and eventually the Director of MVAC. His ministry was marked by the Association's unprecedented cooperation with the late Bishop James Malone and Rabbi Sidney Berkowitz.

Throughout his retirement Dick remained active as an interim pastor and in many of the community organizations - especially the CROP Hunger Walk. Marianne Speicher, Dick's wife of 57 years, currently serves as Board Secretary of the Mahoning Valley Association of Churches and as the organist at Woodworth Church of the Brethren.

Upon hearing of Reverend Speicher's passing, Kathleen Hurty remarked: Oh, my, what a man Dick Speicher was. I remember meeting him at my first NAEIS conference and seeing him regularly thereafter -- he was always so thoughtfully present, so truly ecumenical, and so forthright in his commitment to justice. He invited me to speak in Youngstown and was such a gracious host. I could easily see how much he was appreciated by his colleagues and what an impact he had on the community -- humbly persistent and a deeply faithful leader.

### Transitions...

Long time NAEIS member Dorothy Berry has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Dorothy commented at how she just doesn't hear from many folks anymore since almost everyone has resorted to computers. So, maybe a note might help from some former colleagues and friends:

Dorothy Betty  
Brewster Place  
1205 SW 29th Street AL #10  
Topeka, KS 66611