Interchurch Families: “Listen...with the ear of your heart”~ Theme for the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference

CONTENTS:

Pages 2 - 8  Details for “The 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference”: to be held from July 13 - 15, 2012 in Collegeville, MN;
Registration Forms, costs, and Required Waiver of Liability Form included

Pages 9 - 10  Changed through patient waiting for the Lord
Page 11  John 17:21 & 20:21
Page 11  “The soul, in its loneliness, hopes only for "salvation." The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry
Page 12  “Changed through patient waiting for the Lord” - a prayer
Pages 12 - 15  “Last of All”- reflection over the meaning of MARK 9:35-37; a book review from “Bread of Angels” written by Barbara Brown Taylor
Page 16  Prayer for Forgiveness “Hear us, O Lord!” A reflection is offered by Sarah Eagle Heart,

JOHN 17:21 ...SO THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE

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The 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference  
July 13 (5 PM) - 15 (1:30 PM), 2012  
Collegeville, MN

Theme for the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference:  
Interchurch Families: “Listen...with the ear of your heart”

Tentative Time Schedule

Speakers for the Plenary Sessions:

Friday July 13, 2012  
7:30 PM "Living with Limits and a Sense of Humor:  
A Lutheran View of Intra-Christian Relations."  
Speaker: Dr. Darrell Jodock;  
Drell and Adeline Bernhardson Distinguished Professor of Religion Gustavus Adolphus College  
Faith & Learning Resources: Speeches by Darrell Jodock can be found at this link:  
www.gustavus.edu/faith/resources.php.

Saturday July 14, 2012  
9 AM “Ecumenism in a World of Change”  
Speaker: Dr. Donald Ottenhoff,  
Executive Director, Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research Collegeville, Minnesota  
The Institute is an autonomous part of the Saint John’s community, which includes Saint John’s Abbey and University,  
the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library and the Liturgical Press. The women's community of Saint Benedict’s  
Monastery and the College of Saint Benedict in nearby St. Joseph further expand the resources for residents of the  
Institute.

Saturday July 14, 2012  
7:30 PM "How Interchurch Family Prayer 'Happens':  
Models for Negotiating Our Differences"  
Speaker: Daniel J. Olsen, Ph.D.  
Dr. Olsen received his Ph.D. in Constructive Theology from Loyola University Chicago in 2008. Since that time he has taught  
at several Catholic Liberal Arts Universities in both Minnesota and Illinois. He currently resides in suburban Chicago with his  
wife, Tracy, and two children Abigail and Matthew.

Please Note:  
To be guaranteed housing, anyone wishing to attend the AAIF 2012 Biennial Conference is encouraged to  
register as early as possible. Other events will be going on elsewhere on campus. Housing will be  
available on a first come, first serve basis.
### Tentative Agenda

**“Protestant Worship Opportunities are still being finalized; this may affect the timing of other scheduled events.”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Friday July 13, 2012</strong></th>
<th><strong>Saturday July 14, 2012</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sunday July 15, 2012</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYI: Arboretum Open all day</td>
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<td>FYI: Liturgical Press 8 AM - 4:30 PM</td>
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<td>FYI: Liturgical Press 8 AM - 4:30 PM</td>
<td>Breakfast 7AM - 8:30 AM</td>
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<td>Registration/Sign In at St. Mary’s Hall 8 AM - 8 PM</td>
<td>&quot;Ecumenism in a World of Change&quot; Speaker: Dr. Donald Ottenhoff 9 AM - 10 AM</td>
<td>Mass 10:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Campus</td>
<td>Business Meeting 10 AM - 11AM</td>
<td>Lunch 11 AM - 1 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYI: Hill Museum and Library Hours 8 AM - 4:30 PM</td>
<td>Pottery Tour 3 PM - 4 PM</td>
<td>Hill Museum and Library Tour 1 PM - 2:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liturgical Press Tour 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM</td>
<td>&quot;Protestant Worship Opportunities are still being finalized; this may affect the timing of other events.”</td>
<td>Lunch 11 AM - 1 PM Farewells; End of the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference</td>
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<td>Buildings on National Register of Historic Places at Collegeville, MN Tour 4 PM - 5 PM</td>
<td>Dinner 5 - 7 PM</td>
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<td>Dinner 5 PM - 7 PM</td>
<td>Prayer: Vigil of Sunday 7 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prayer; Abbey Church 7 PM</td>
<td>&quot;How Interchurch Family Prayer 'Happens': Models for Negotiating Our Differences&quot; Speaker: Dr. Daniel J. Olsen 7:30 PM</td>
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<td>&quot;Living with Limits and a Sense of Humor: A Lutheran View of Intra-Christian Relations.&quot; Speaker: Dr. Darrell Jodock 7:30 PM</td>
<td>Social Gathering 8:30 PM</td>
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Flying into the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Airport? Need Shuttle Service
Please phone Executive Express to make those arrangements directly with them Phone Number: 320-253-2226

Also, reservations can be made online for the shuttle between the MSP airport and Saint John’s University https://executiveexpress.hudsonltd.net/res

It will be about 1 hour 40 minutes driving/riding time from the Minneapolis - Saint Paul area to Collegeville, MN at Saint John’s University. Further information about the shuttle service can be found at: http://www.executiveexpress.biz/City/43/St.%20John's%20University.aspx

Attendees will be in charge of their own travel expenses and arrangements
- This information is only to help people plan in case you will be flying into MSP (Minneapolis-Saint Paul, MN) The more people in the van, the cheaper it is per person.

Saint John’s University
31802 County Road 159
Collegeville, Minnesota 56321
(320) 363-2011

Sign in and receive room keys along with room assignments for pre-registered AAIF Conference Attenders at Saint Mary’s Hall SJU on the Upper Campus; housing will be at the Vincent Court Apartments on the Lower Campus Hours for Saint Mary’s Hall are 8 AM to 8 PM

Other Helpful Information for Registrants for the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference:

AAIF Conference Attenders will be housed at the Saint Vincent Court Apartments http://www.csbsju.edu/SJU-Archives/SJUHistory/SJUBuildings/VincentCourtApartments.htm

http://www.csbsju.edu/SJU-Residential-Life/Vincent-Court.htm


Campus Map: Please sign in upon arrival at St. Mary’s Hall which is open from 8 AM to 8 PM daily http://www.csbsju.edu/About/At-a-Glance/SJU-Campus-Map.htm

The ARK       June 2012

The 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference
Collegeville, MN
July 13(5 PM) - July 15, 2012 (1:30PM)

Registration Form ~ Page 1:  Contact Information
Please copy and paste this page to be mailed in
with your registration form and payment in the same envelope

Please print clearly
Name:_______________________________________/_________________________

Special Dietary Needs
Denomination:__________________________
Email Address: _____________________________
Phone Numbers:_______________________(cell) _______________________(other)
Please include area code                Please include area code
Name:_______________________________________/_________________________

Special Dietary Needs
Denomination:__________________________
Email Address: _____________________________
Phone Numbers:_______________________(cell) _______________________(other)
Please include area code                Please include area code

Child’s Name:_____________________________/______________        Age:_________

Special Dietary Needs

Child’s Name:_____________________________/______________        Age:_________

Child’s Name:_____________________________/______________        Age:_________

More than three children? Please insert the information needed for registering any children in this space as you copy and paste. To do that, please, re-copy the information immediately above, and simply insert it here.

Child’s Name:_____________________________/______________        Age:_________

Mailing Address:____________________________________________Apt.#_____

House Number + Street Name or P.O. Box Number

Name of City + State/Province + Zip Code + country

Do you plan to arrive early and wish to stay on campus?    Date of arrival:  July_____2012
Do you plan to stay after and wish to stay on campus?    Date of departure: July_____2012

Those people who have indicated their interest either in arriving early or in staying on after the end of the 2012 AAIF Conference, may contact CSB/SJU to make those arrangements directly. CSB/SJU has asked that AAIF provide them with a list of those people from our registration forms. After you have sent in your AAIF Registration: Please contact:  jwubbels@csbsju.edu

Interchurch Families: “Listen...with the ear of your heart”
Registration Form ~ Page 2 : Optional Tours Interest Form

Please copy and paste this page to be mailed in with your registration form and payment in the same envelope.

To help conference planners to make the necessary arrangements
Please indicate which, if any, of the following tours or visits are of interest to you by writing the number of people from your family who wish to visit that site in the box to the left.

Thank you!

☐ The Pottery

http://www.csbsju.edu/saint-johns-pottery/about-the-pottery.htm
http://www.csbsju.edu/Saint-Johns-Pottery/Artist-in-Residence.htm

☐ Saint John’s Liturgical Press


~ The Arboretum:
The Arboretum adds to the retreat and calm ambiance to be found at CSB/SJU: It is open all day. Families may go there to enjoy nature on their own.

Please see the links below for a self-guiding map and a brochure:

~The self-guiding tour of the buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its nature, can be done at any time using a guide book and campus map.

☐ However, if there is enough interest we will ask about a guided tour (Not all buildings are open to the public, but may be viewed from the exterior) Please see the links:
http://www.csbsju.edu/SJU-Archives/SJUHistory/SJUBuildings/SJU-Buildings-on-the-National-Register.htm
http://www.csbsju.edu/about/at-a-glance/sju-campus-map.htm

The Hill Museum and Manuscript Collection Guided Tour will be scheduled in the afternoon on Saturday July 14, 2012

☐ Hill Museum and Manuscript Collection:Tour to include seeing the newly created Saint John’s Bible http://www.hmml.org/ http://www.saintjohnsbible.org/
Registration Form ~ Page 3 : Costs

Please copy and paste this page to be mailed in with your registration form and payment in the same envelope.

Please print clearly

Fees are all inclusive and per person, beginning with supper at 5 PM on Friday, July 13, 2012 and going through lunch, 11 AM - 1 PM on Sunday, July 15, 2012

Conference fees include: Housing, Meals and AAIF Membership dues for July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013

Add together the column at the far right to find your total amount due

Adult
Conference Fees per person: $195 USD X ________ Number of Adults = __________

Children age 10 and younger
Conference Fees per person: $45 USD X ________ Number of Children = __________

Babies who sleep in a pack 'n play that their parents bring for them and who are not eating table food (ex. under age three): No Charge

To find your grand total due, Please add up your totals from the right hand column. Then enter the amount due on the line for “Total amount due” at the right.

Total amount due =___________________

Please make checks payable to: AAIF and mail them to:

c/o Lamar Burton, AAIF Secretary
1124 Grazing Meadows Lane
Louisville, KY 40245-4594

Kindly have your envelopes with payment enclosed post marked on or before: June 28, 2012
- Please include all the registration forms with your check. Thank you.

Baby sitting services may be arranged upon request.


Genesis 2: 1-3

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.
Waiver of Liability for the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference
Member and/or Participant
(Must be executed by All Registrants)

EVENT: AAIF 2012 Biennial Conference in Collegeville, MN
DATE: July 13-15, 2012

I understand that I am a participant in this event. I release the American Association of Interchurch Families and/or its officers from all liability for accident, injury, illness, or loss of property for myself and/or my dependent(s) and agree to indemnify and save harmless the sponsors from accident, illness, or injury to others or loss of their property caused partly or wholly by me and/or my dependent(s) while engaged in any voluntary activity supported by the sponsors.

Please note: In most states an individual may accept a particular risk of harm resulting from another party’s conduct. An express release by which one party agrees to assume the risk of harm arising from another party’s negligent conduct will be enforced by the courts so long as it does not release liability for willful or gross negligence and does not otherwise offend public policy.

By signing this release, you are not only agreeing that you will not sue the American Association of Interchurch Families or its officers should one or more of its members or officers cause you harm; you are also protected from being held liable as long as your conduct is not grossly negligent or intentional.

Signatures: __________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________
__________________________

Date: _______________________
Theme from day two of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:

**Changed through patient waiting for the Lord**

**Text:**

Let it be so now, for it is proper to fulfill all righteousness

(Mt 3:15)

**Readings**

1 Sam 1:1-20 Hannah’s trust and patient waiting

Ps 40 Patient waiting for the Lord

Heb 11:32-34 Through faith they conquered kingdoms, administered justice

**Commentary**

Victory is often associated with immediate triumph. Everybody knows the taste of success when, after a difficult struggle, congratulations, recognition, and even tributes are paid.

At such a joyful moment, hardly anyone realizes that from a Christian perspective victory is a long-term process of transformation. Such an understanding of transformative victory teaches us that it occurs in God’s time, not ours, calling for our patient trust.

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**Will Kemp, the photographer, encourages us to “Find interest in the Ordinary”.... This advice applies quite aptly to many aspects of our lives.**

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*Finding that of God in the world around us ... in the ordinary*

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*Photo by Will Kemp: Still Life of Onions in a bowl*
Hannah witnessed to such patient trust and hope. After many years of waiting to be pregnant, she prayed to God for a child, at the risk of having her weeping prayer dismissed as drunkenness by the priest at the doorpost of the Temple. When Eli assured her that God would grant her prayer, she simply trusted, waited, and was sad no longer.

Hannah conceived and bore a son, whom she named Samuel. The great victory here is not that of nations or armies, but a glimpse into the realm of a private and personal struggle.

In the end, Hannah’s trust and hope results not only in her own transformation, but that of her people, for whom the God of Israel intervened through her son Samuel.

The psalmist echoes Hannah’s patient waiting for the Lord in the midst of another kind of struggle. The psalmist too sought deliverance from a situation which remains unknown to us, but which is hinted at in the language of the “desolate pit of the miry bog.”

He gives thanks that God has transformed his shame and confusion, and continues to trust in God’s steadfast love.

The author of the Letter to the Hebrews recalls the patience of people like Abraham (6.15) and others who were able to be victorious through their faith and trust in God.

The realization that God intervenes and enters into the narrative of human history eliminates the temptation to be triumphant in human terms.

In the gospel, the voice from heaven at the baptism of Jesus announcing This is my Son, the Beloved, seems to be a guarantor of the immediate success of his messianic mission. In resisting the evil one, however, Jesus, does not succumb to the temptation to usher in the Kingdom of God without delay, but patiently reveals what life in the kingdom means through his own life and ministry which leads to his death on the Cross.

While the Kingdom of God breaks through in a decisive way in the resurrection, it is not yet fully realized. The ultimate victory will only come about when the second coming of our Lord.

And so we wait in patient hope and trust with the cry “Come, Lord Jesus.” Our longing for the visible unity of the Church likewise requires patient and trustful waiting.

Our prayer for Christian unity is like the prayer of Hannah and the psalmist. Our work for Christian unity is like the deeds recorded in the Letter to the Hebrews.

Our attitude of patient waiting is not one of helplessness or passivity, but a deep trust that the unity of the Church is God’s gift, not our achievement.

Such patient waiting, praying and trust transforms us and prepares us for the visible unity of the Church not as we plan it, but as God gives it.

Prayer

Faithful God, you are true to your word in every age.

May we, like Jesus, have patience and trust in your steadfast love.

Enlighten us by your Holy Spirit that we may not obstruct the fullness of your justice by our own hasty judgements, but rather discern your wisdom and love in all things; You who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Questions for reflection

1. In what situations in our life should we have a greater trust in God’s promises?

2. What areas of church life are particularly at risk from the temptation to act hastily?

3. In what situations should Christians wait, and when should they act together?

“Changed through patient waiting for the Lord” is a study created for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2012. Further details can be found at their website. It works well all year long.
“The soul, in its loneliness, hopes only for "salvation."

“And yet what is the burden of the Bible if not a sense of the mutuality of influence, rising out of an essential unity, among soul and body and community and world? These are all the works of God, and it is therefore the work of virtue to make or restore harmony among them.

The world is certainly thought of as a place of spiritual trial, but it is also the confluence of soul and body, word and flesh, where thoughts must become deeds, where goodness must be enacted.

This is the great meeting place, the narrow passage where spirit and flesh, word and world, pass into each other. The Bible's aim, as I read it, is not the freeing of the spirit from the world. It is the handbook of their interaction.

It says that they cannot be divided; that their mutuality, their unity, is inescapable; that they are not reconciled in division, but in harmony.

What else can be meant by the resurrection of the body? The body should be "filled with light," perfected in understanding.

And so everywhere there is the sense of consequence, fear and desire, grief and joy.

What is desirable is repeatedly defined in the tensions of the sense of consequence.

( pg.104, "The Body and the Earth")

- Wendell Berry, The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry

“There are no unsacred places; there are only sacred places and desecrated places.”

- Wendell Berry, Given: Poems

“Healing is impossible in loneliness; it is the opposite of loneliness.”

“Conviviality is healing. To be healed we must come with all the other creatures to the feast of Creation.”

( pg.99, “The Body and the Earth”)”

- Wendell Berry, The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry notes the sacred nature of our lives in the world that God created. Creation is equally sacred; we are part of God’s Creation.

We are asked to work side by side, one with the other to keep the land sacred from which we cultivate and grow all of our food, including bread and wine.

Even in the ordinariness of our daily activities, there is a sacred connectedness. We should not run from these human interactions because it is within these interactions where we can find that of God. It is also in how we work together to protect God’s Creation where we find that of God in our ordinary lives.

We are called to serve on behalf of our God, to be God’s “hands” and “feet” in the world and to serve one another as Christ served us. And to heal as a community of believers together.

Comments about the work of Wendell Berry by Mary Jane Glauber

John 17:21 ...so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

John 20:21 “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”
Prayer for a gathering of Christians seeking Christian Unity:

L = Leader
C = congregation

“Changed through patient waiting for the Lord”

L: Lord, we pray to You.
For the gift of looking at our life in the light of Your wisdom, we ask You!

C: Hear us, O Lord!

L: For the divine gift of patience in situations when human justice fails, we ask You!

C: Hear us, O Lord!

L: For the ability to pray and wait in those situations where only Your gift can meet our need, we ask You!

C: Hear us, O Lord!

L: Hear us as we call, O God, and grant that we may discern the fullness of Your justice, through Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

“Last of All”

Jesus sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”

Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

MARK 9:35-37

Taylor notes that children were considered more like “fillers” and “not the main event.” Taylor explains that children, “were gifts of God who would be useful someday - to look after their parents, to hold responsible jobs, to have children of their own - but meanwhile (the children) were non-entities (like) fuzzy caterpillars to be fed and sheltered until they could turn into butterflies.”

Taylor points out that Jesus seemed to like children “the way they were.” Taylor observes that Jesus “never asked their parents please to take them to the nursery. On the contrary, when his disciples scolded people for bringing their children to church, Jesus was indignant,” Taylor notes, and adds that Jesus explained to his disciples that “The kingdom belongs to such as these... They are full-fledged citizens of God’s realm - not later but right now.”

Taylor notes that sometimes “Far
from ignoring children, middle-class Americans tend to idealize children” Taylor explains this as being when we “dress them in Ralph Lauren fashions or when we set a place for them at adult dinner parties.” Taylor explains that “maybe we lavish attention on children that we wish someone had lavished on us, but in any case children are much more visible and audible in the adult world than they have ever been before.”

Taylor notes that while this phenomena may exist in America that there are also “some limits to our tolerance for children.” Taylor points out that children are “innocent, playful, vulnerable, honest, fresh-faced and loving, especially if you are only around them for about 15 minutes a day.” Taylor adds, “But if you spend more time with them than that, then you know that children are also noisy, clinging, destructive, self-centered and surprisingly cruel.” Taylor explains that “The best of them will pluck the whiskers right off a cat if you do not keep an eye on them, or knock other children down for trying to play with their toys.” I had to laugh when I saw this image in my mind’s eye.

Then Taylor shares with us something someone named Nancy Mitford wrote about the nature of her fondness for children, “I love children especially when they cry, for then someone will take them away.”

Taylor explains that she doesn’t think that “Jesus was holding them up as moral examples when he took children in his arms and blessed them. He did not say we should imitate them, after all. He just said that when we welcome them in his name we welcome him, and that when we welcome him we welcome God.” Taylor finds that to be “a pretty amazing equation, if you think about it.”

Taylor asks us, “Do you want to spend some time with God?”

“Then get down on the floor with that child over there. Get finger-paint all over your clothes and laugh at her dumb jokes and never mind that you have more important things to do, like finishing the laundry or earning a living. That child isn’t a filler; she is the main event. Opening yourself up to her is better for your soul than finishing a project or getting a raise or even reading a whole book of the Bible,” Taylor explains.

“There will be no payback. Oh, the child may shout your name next time she sees you and run to hug your knees, but you can’t list the child as a job reference or ask her to lend you a hundred dollars to get your car fixed.” Taylor explains that “The child is not good for anything like that.”

Taylor adds that “The child is not in charge of anything, she cannot buy you anything, she will not even remember your birthday or invite you over for supper with some friends.” We may note to ourselves that this is true.

Taylor explains that “The child has no status, no influence, no income which makes her great in God’s eyes,” and the child “is just what you need.”

Taylor clarifies that “It is what we do when we think no one is looking with someone who does not count, for no reward, that ushers you into the presence of God.” This imagery really caught my attention.

Taylor explains that “this is one more of the lessons” Jesus gives us “in the topsy-turvy kingdom of God, where the first shall be last
and the last shall be first and everyone who thinks he or she is on top of the heap is in for a big surprise.” I also see that there really is no Christian need to create any kind of those who should be first hierarchies; it simply doesn’t connect well with Christianity.

“Jesus isn’t just talking about children, either,” Taylor explains. “He is talking about all the little ones in this world with no status, no influence, no income. Jesus is daring us to welcome them as bearers of God, to believe that God’s hierarchy is the reverse of ours and that greatness is only available to those with no ambition to be great.”

And how did this topic come about? Taylor notes that “the whole lesson came about because Jesus caught the disciples playing “Who’s Greatest” on the road to Capernaum.”

Taylor explains that “If you were ever caught passing a note in elementary school, then you know how they felt.”

“What were you arguing about on the way,” Jesus asked the disciples. Taylor explains that “no one said a word, because they had been fighting about who was the best, the most faithful, the most likely-to-succeed disciple.” Taylor notes that Peter thought he would be chosen, “but the others reminded him that he was also the one whom Jesus had called Satan, for refusing to accept Jesus’ forecast of his death.” Taylor explains “that was the heart of the problem, really. The disciples were arguing about who was the greatest because they could not stand what Jesus had said about being killed.”

The disciples “did not understand and they were afraid to ask, so they got as far away from it as they could by playing status games instead,” Taylor explained. “Who is first, who is best, who is greatest”… ”When you are scared of something, don’t ask. Act like there is nothing wrong. Change the subject and talk about something instead, something that makes you feel big and strong.” Taylor explains “That is what the disciples were doing, which is why Jesus had to sit them down and give them a leadership seminar right then and there.”

“Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all,” Jesus told the disciples. Then Jesus took a little child in his arms to show them what he meant.

“They wanted to know who was the greatest, so Jesus showed them: twenty-six inches tall, limited vocabulary, unemployed, zero net worth, nobody…..God’s agent. The last, the least of all,” Taylor notes.

“Our hierarchies are so subtle that half the time we are not even aware of them,” Taylor observes. She gave an example of an older brother who always was first and a younger brother who always had to be second. The younger brother felt that he was always being told no and that he would just have to wait for his turn while his older brother always got the first chance at everything; it just seemed so unfair to the younger brother who had grown tired of the never-ending dynamics. Taylor explains that she doesn’t “know what the answer is nor how to operate a church or a business or society by turning it over with the least to offer,” but Taylor does “know that God’s values are not our values, and
that knowledge alone may be enough to keep us humble.” Taylor observes that “however we choose to organize our life, we have this little child to remind us that God organizes things otherwise, and that if we want to welcome God into our lives then there is no one whom we may safely ignore.” Taylor observes that “in the topsy-turvy kingdom of God, the most unlikely people are most likely to be agents of God - the ones who live in the world below our kneecaps, the ones who are stuck at the end of the line, the ones who are sobbing on someone’s shoulder because they are always, always last.”

“In God’s world, things are different.”... “second sons get to go first” ... servants sit down at the tables they used to polish and the greatest disciple is the one who waits on them, the one whose name you can never remember,” Taylor observes and then asks, “Was that Thaddeus or Bartholomew?” by way of an example.

Taylor concludes that “if you want to enter this kingdom, there is a way: go find a ‘nobody’ to put your arms around and say hello to God.”

I found hope both in the Bible verse and in Barbara Brown Taylor’s discussion of MARK 9:35-37 with examples from lived experiences that are from our time period with which we can easily identify. Once again, we discover that it is within our very ordinary lives that we can find that of God. This is true for all Christians, and perhaps for all people, so it is also true for interchurch families as well.

I especially enjoyed this chapter of Taylor’s book. However it should be noted that all of the book was excellent. I highly recommend Bread of Angels to all ecumenists and interchurch families who are seeking a path toward Christian Unity.

Bread of Angels by Barbara Brown Taylor has twenty-nine chapters. Her book is divided into five categories which Taylor has entitled as: Bread of Angels; God’s Daring Plan; Deep in Christ’s Bones; Chickens and Foxes and Apocalyptic Figs. Bread of Angels was published by “A Cowley Publication Book” of Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. in 1997.

Book Review With a Commentary For Interchurch Families and Ecumenists by Mary Jane Glauber

Our lived experience as being interchurch may provide us with some insights into the lives of other Christians and ultimately a mutual respect one for the other from a humble position. This is the experience of hope that we, as interchurch families, live also based on John 17:21 ...so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. The Christian Unity we seek will be based on the patterns that God has established and not humanly created patterns.
O Great Spirit, God of every people and every tribe, we come to you as your many children, to ask for your forgiveness and guidance.

Forgive us for the colonialism that stains our past, the ignorance that allowed us to think that we could claim another’s home for our own.

Heal us of this history. Remind us that none of us were discovered since none of us were lost, but that we are all gathered within the sacred circle of your community.

Guide us through your wisdom to restore the truth of our heritage.

Help us to confront the racism that divides us as we confess the pain it has caused to the human family.

Call us to kinship. Mend the hoop of our hearts and let us live in justice and peace, through Jesus Christ, the One who came that all people might live in dignity. Amen.

This prayer is offered by Sarah Eagle Heart, Missioner - Indigenous Ministries of the Episcopal Church

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, Lord. (The Litany of Penitence, BCP) When we reflect upon the history of the United States, few are aware the actions of our ancestors included a colonizing and assimilating mentality that ultimately ended in the massacres of hundreds of indigenous tribes...families, men, women and children. Centuries of promises made and broken form part of the heavy links between the history of our nation and the present a painful reality for many Native people.

Those left behind were forcibly removed to reservations where a previous "way of life" was altered entirely and forever...leaving a legacy of intergenerational trauma whose effects are still being felt today. One example is the forced separation of children from their families to boarding schools, beginning in the 1880's with enrollment reaching an all-time high in the 1973 at 60,000 annually. These government schools were run by various church denominations to assimilate Native American children. The slogan for the more than 65 U.S. boarding schools was: "Kill the Indian. Save the man." Shocking stories now being shared include rape, mutilation and death. Today we forget these actions had and still have an impact on these now grown children and the generation of today. Native American communities experience poverty with epidemic suicide rates, extreme levels of unemployment, alcoholism, drug addiction, gang violence, rape, and domestic violence. Forgiveness is not words; it is action. To acknowledge its regret for this history of domination and violence, in 2009 the Episcopal Church adopted resolution D035 for the explicit purpose of repudiating and renouncing the Doctrine of Discovery. The healing journey for both the oppressed and the oppressor lead beyond the mere alleviation of poverty into the abundant provision of a generous creator that seeks only that all creation would grow to its fullness of possibility and hope.

While we can say that no one living today generated these destructive abuses in the name of Christ, never the less, the structural world we have been adopted into has been undeniably shaped and determined by the historic forces of empire.

Will you decide to reinforce those worldly structures or will you reshape those structures to better serve Christ and all your brothers and sisters?

This reflection is offered by Sarah Eagle Heart, Missioner - Indigenous Ministries of the Episcopal Church. As Americans, this message affects us, we need to become a single community of humanity. However, it needs to be noted that this aspect of our history also has impacted the lives of interchurch families in America. We have this present moment in which we can begin to make a positive impact on the future. Christian Unity and a unity of all humanity may be one in the same goal.

~ Prayer provided by the Episcopal Church with commentary by Sarah Eagle Heart. Comments for interchurch families by M.J. Glauber
“Loving and Being Loved; These two things may be the most difficult tasks we are ever asked to take on and to accomplish.”

quote by an American Quaker (The Religious Society of Friends)

Much in the same way as if this message had been delivered during a silent meeting for prayer, please take a few moments to consider what this may mean for you no matter who you are or where you are on your journey toward that unity we seek.

It may take great courage to love and to be loved. It may take great courage to see that of God in the faces of others who may seem to be so different than we are.

AMERICAN JOURNEYS

Many Americans will be traveling by vehicle to go to the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference which will take place in Collegeville, MN from July 13-15, 2012. You will be welcomed upon your arrival.

Have you planned your driving route yet? Many “back roads” have been designated as “Scenic Byways.”

Below is a photo image of a view from one of America’s Scenic By-Ways. Sometimes the journey is just as important as the destination.

Allowing ourselves the luxury of getting lost in God’s Creation from time to time can be a delightful and healing experience. There is so much beauty in the world around us.

At the following link, you will find listed alphabetically by states, the U.S. Scenic By-Ways http://byways.org/explore/byways

That list is then expanded to include even more scenic byways in the USA at this link: http://byways.org/explore/byways/other

The list is then expanded to highlight specific areas of interest and activities for travelers who may be planning to drive this summer to the conference: http://byways.org/explore/activities/

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

Sunset as viewed from the Loess Hills Scenic By-Ways
- The Loess Hill Formation only occurs in two places in the world: in China and Iowa
The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.

Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has funded 3,049 projects for state and nationally designated byway routes in 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.

Learn more about the National Scenic Byways Program: http://byways.org/learn/program.html

What does the term America's Byways® mean?

America's Byways® is the umbrella term we use for marketing the collection of 150 distinct and diverse roads designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. America's Byways include the National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads.

List America's Byways® Please see: http://byways.org/explore/byways

Why "Scenic" Byways?

Our definition of "scenic" reaches beyond breathtaking vistas. All of America's Byways® are "scenic", representing the depth and breadth of scenery in America--natural and man-made panoramas; electrifying neon landscapes; ancient and modern history coming alive; native arts and culture; and scenes of friends, families and strangers sharing their stories.

America's Byways® are gateways to adventures where no two experiences are the same. The National Scenic Byways Program invites you to come closer to America's heart and soul...

http://byways.org/learn/

http://byways.org/

Minnesota: America's Byways®

• Edge of the Wilderness
Travel this spectacular, winding byway by many pristine lakes, forests, swamps, rolling hills, and other unique features. Outdoor recreation, interpretive sites, and other exciting opportunities await the traveler. During fall, the northwoods is adorned with the brilliant colors of red sugar maples, bronze oak trees and glowing gold aspen and birch.

• Grand Rounds Scenic Byway
The country's longest continuous system of public urban parkways, this has been the preeminent urban parkway system for more than a century. Lovely parks, trails, lakes and parkways surround the city of Minneapolis. Enjoy the Chain of Lakes, Lake Nokomis, Lake Hiawatha, Minnehaha Falls, and much more.

• Great River Road
Throughout history, the Mississippi River influenced many lives: the Dakota, Chippewa, and Hopewell cultures; early French voyagers; African-Americans seeking freedom on the Underground Railroad; and many more. Through its charming river towns and metropolitan cities, historic sites and cultural artifacts, today's Great River Road still links resources, people, and history.

• Gunflint Trail Scenic Byway
The Gunflint Trail is best known as the eastern entrance to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA), a unique wilderness of more than a thousand lakes and streams joined by short overland trails called "portages."

• Historic Bluff Country Scenic Byway
In the small communities and scenic beauty of this byway, visitors find art galleries, antique shops, Amish tours, historic sites, cave tours, and museums. Parks, forests and the Root and Mississippi Rivers provide opportunities for many recreation options, including canoeing, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, cycling, wildlife watching, fishing, and photography.

• Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway
The Minnesota River Valley is rich with stories of American Indian lifestyle changes entangled with the struggles of Euro-American immigrants making a home in this unfamiliar land. The establishment of agricultural cooperatives, railroad and river transportation, and
land stewardship practices make this one of the most productive agricultural civilizations anywhere.

- **North Shore Scenic Drive**

  This byway follows the majestic shoreline of Lake Superior, the world's largest freshwater lake. Experience some of the most spectacular scenery in the country.

  The drive provides access to eight state parks, and the Superior National Forest and offers unlimited opportunities to enjoy the outdoors in all seasons.

- **Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway**

  Like nature's table of contents, the lakes and woods of the Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway are chapters filled with many recreational opportunities and adventures just waiting to be discovered. With the wink and wit of Paul Bunyan lore slipped in for fun, sites and events turn easily into sparkling memories.

### Other Byways in Minnesota

As a service, we strive to include information on all byways or backways in Minnesota on this website. This list may be incomplete or contain byways that overlap.

- **Apple Blossom Scenic Drive**
- **Avenue of Pines - TH 46, Deer River to Northome**
- **Glacial Ridge Trail Scenic Byway**
- **Highway 75- King of Trails Scenic Byway**
- **Lady Slipper Scenic Byway**
- **Lake Country Scenic Byway**
- **Otter Trail Scenic Byway**
- **Shooting Star Wildflower and Historic Route Scenic Byway**
- **Skyline Parkway Scenic Byway**
- **St. Croix Scenic Byway**
- **Superior National Forest Scenic Byway**
- **Veterans Evergreen Memorial Drive**
- **Waters of the Dancing Sky Scenic Byway**

National Park Service Discover Our Shared Heritage Travel Itineraries

- **Aviation**
- **Pipestone**

Please, Enjoy the journey

http://byways.org/explore/states/MN

Sunset over the prairie, near a Scenic By-Way
The purpose of the Collegeville Institute is to support research, publication, and education on the important intersections between faith and culture. Participants seek to discern and communicate the meaning of Christian identity and unity in a religiously and culturally diverse world.

**Words Making Worlds: The Ecclesial Literature Project** is a multifaceted program designed to encourage the writing and disciplined reading of serious literature that engages matters of the spirit. The project aims to help congregations again become the kinds of intellectual centers that informed and benefited from writers as varied as Thomas à Kempis, John Milton, John Bunyan, G. K. Chesterton, Georges Bernanos, Graham Greene, Shusako Endo, and Flannery O'Connor, among many others. These writers addressed matters of faith both directly and indirectly, and from perspectives that ranged from skepticism to apologia. Despite their great differences, their work holds this in common: it has appealed to broad audiences and helped general readers attend more carefully to spiritual realities.

Writers like Milton and O'Connor represent a literary genius both rare and unique; yet, throughout its history the church has also been fed by unnumbered writers, many of them pastors, whose writing has had a more local, yet no less significant, impact. The Collegeville Institute hopes to provide time, space, and opportunity for new cohorts of writers who have the inclination and ability to serve the church through the written word. Their contributions can take various forms--from a poem for the ages to a compelling pastoral letter that meets the particular needs of a particular congregation at a particular time.

The Ecclesial Literature Project, funded by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., will convene writing and reading groups at the Institute during the summer months; award prizes for exemplary works of religious literature; and, through its writer-in-residence program, bring noted writers to the Institute and Saint John's campus for varying lengths of time during the academic year. The Institute will also sponsor occasional lectures, readings, and panel discussions about matters that relate to a broad theological literacy within church and society.

The Institute is blessed with resources that offer writers the time, encouragement, and instruction necessary to inspire and support their work. It provides fine residential facilities, generous gathering and workspaces, a retreat-like environment, access to the full resources of a major liberal arts university, and a connection to the deep heritage of the Benedictine tradition.

It has an established record of encouraging the production of both academic and ecclesial literature, and an ecumenical commitment to furthering the purposes of the varied parts of the body of Christ. Writers such as Kathleen Norris, Henri Nouwen, Don Saliers, Lewis Smedes, Parker Palmer, and Joan Chittister have already produced solid works of ecclesial literature during their stays at the Institute. Through their own successfully published works, these writers have demonstrated that the Institute is a place where writers from various denominational and vocational backgrounds can convene, converse, worship, pray, behold God's handiwork in the natural world, and work hard.

Through the Ecclesial Literature Project the Institute hopes to provide a place where pastors, academics, and laypersons--anyone interested in writing that illumines and feeds the religious life--can live together to write, read one another's work, and talk about that work. The Institute hopes to serve as an incubator for all sorts of ecclesial writing--fiction, drama, poetry, theological essays, memoir, children's books, biography, history--and offer instruction in the skills of writing.

By helping to generate vital, contemporary forms of writing for people of faith, the Institute seeks to contribute to the vitality of faith within congregations.

[http://www.collegevilleinstitute.org/elp](http://www.collegevilleinstitute.org/elp)
[http://www.collegevilleinstitute.org/programs](http://www.collegevilleinstitute.org/programs)
“Together with other Christians whose theology, worship traditions and local contexts may be quite different from our own, we are called to discipleship that has transformative potential,” said the World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit on Tuesday 1 May at the General Conference 2012 of the United Methodist Church in the United States.

“It is time to follow Jesus Christ into the unknown, even into what might cause fears.”

Tveit said these words in the conference’s “ecumenical day” sermon on the theme “Discipleship by the Sea” in Tampa, Florida, USA.

Tveit shared theological reflections on the concept of ecumenical discipleship and shared examples of churches’ struggles working for justice and peace.

“Ecumenical discipleship strives to balance seeking to know and making peace with not fully knowing all the mystery of Christ. The common journey causes us to recognize that we can move before knowing everything,” he said.

In his sermon Tveit also introduced the theme of the upcoming 10th Assembly of the WCC, “God of life, lead us to justice and peace.” The WCC assembly will be held in Busan, Korea in 2013.

Mark 6: (45)48-51

*         *         *

"Discipleship amidst the unknown"

United Methodist Church General Conference 2012
Ecumenical Service
Worship Service Theme: “Discipleship by the Sea”—Encourage

Dear fellow disciples! Dear bishops of the church, delegates and participants of this general conference, ecumenical guests, brothers and sisters, I greet you with the ancient greeting of our faith for this Eastertide season, “Christ is Risen!”

This is the time for all disciples of the church to take heart. The risen Jesus is coming to us, even when he sends us in adverse winds and we have to learn more about the mystery of Christ. It is time to follow Jesus Christ into the unknown, even into what might cause fears. There we shall discover that Christ is in our boat.

The symbol of the ecumenical fellowship is a boat, a ship. We are in this together, with the risen Christ. You belong to the fellowship of the World Council of Churches. We are 349 member churches in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 560 million Christians, including most of the world’s Orthodox churches, scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.

Eastertide is a very appropriate season in which to have a general conference. As you discern your common future and God’s will for this church, you are today reminded that you are not alone in the boat. You are called again to be connected to all disciples, to all who need the word of the mystery of Christ and him calming the sea.

I am honoured by your invitation to come and share the Word of God with you. I have long felt a close connection to Methodists, beginning with my dear sisters and brothers of the Methodist church in my homeland, Norway. The agreement between them and my own Lutheran Church of Norway was my first ecumenical experience and effort as an ecumenical officer more than 20 years ago. Inspired by an important document about the Holy Spirit from this type of gathering, we found the way forward to the “Fellowship of Grace” (the title of the report).

Moreover, this gives me an opportunity to really thank the United Methodist Church for your strong and faithful commitment to the World Council of Churches. Through your generous and reliable support of the work of the WCC, you have proven that you are a vested member of this fellowship, striving to be the church to bring about grace, justice and peace in a world so desperately in need of them. I must especially name our strong partnership with the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, the Women’s Division and the General Board of Global Ministries. The gifts the UMC shares have far-reaching effects. Your gifts make me and many of us able to take heart and move on, with hope and courage.

We need one another to understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On this day in the life of the general conference when we recognize the ecumenical commitments of this church, the Gospel according to Mark is giving us one of its many unpolished stories. The disciples are really struggling in their boat. We can hear the wind, feel them being wet; we sense the sore arms and hands at the oars; we are in their darkness and fear. They really struggle also to understand the mystery of Christ, which Jesus is revealing to them bit by bit. These words we have heard are indeed very relevant for disciples at all times, challenging, and encouraging. Fear often is manifested when we encounter the unknown, and it is to some extent understandable.

The symbol of ecumenism is a boat with the cross as its mast. The cross is the climax of the mystery of Christ in the Gospel of Mark. We are also sailing or rowing, even, with adverse winds. We are not always strong or fully understand all the mysteries. However, in the light of the resurrection
the cross remains forever the symbol showing that God is the one who overcomes evil, sin and death.

**Forgiveness and new life is possible.** Those powers shall not have the last word. The cross remains a mystery, even today, a way to see and carry what we do not know and do not understand. The cross reveals that the loving God can be with us in any situation of our human experience, even death. Therefore, the cross unites us, in its mystery and in its revelation, and in our struggles in our ministry of discipleship. We belong to the ecumenical movement of the cross.

The ecumenical boat and we who travel within might find ourselves with the wind against us and we make headway painfully. **However, we are where we should be: In the reality of life, even when it might be rough or frightening. This is where we will meet Christ.** The disciples were in the boat together, facing the unknown together; then Christ comes into their boat.

**We can only be disciples of Christ together.** One of the hallmarks of Methodism is its understanding of ecclesiology and commitment to Connectionalism and Mutual accountability.

I was inspired by Methodists in Argentina, USA and Norway to explore what “mutual accountability” means in the life of the World Council of Churches in my doctoral studies. **If we define mutual accountability as an ecumenical attitude, we see how this is crucial for our life as disciples together in our local churches and in the ecumenical family.** We should be sharing and testing our gifts, our concerns, our visions, our work, even our fear. We are in this together. We need you as Methodists. And I believe; you need us.

Christ asked the disciples to move on, together, not to remain where they were. You have affirmed that making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world is your mission. You do so amidst many unknowns.

**We are compelled by the call of this Saviour who we know, yet who is not fully known to any of us in isolation.** This call to costly discipleship and mutual accountability is an ecumenical call. Together with other Christians whose theology, worship traditions, and local contexts may be quite different from our own, we are called to discipleship that has transformative potential. We pray together with confidence and courage with you the words of the theme of the upcoming 10th assembly of the WCC to be held in Busan, South Korea next year, “God of Life, lead us to justice and peace.”

As general secretary of the WCC, I have the privilege of experiencing faithful disciples bearing witness to the transformative power of the gospel. While in Manila, Philippines a few weeks ago for the WCC conference on mission, I heard a new ecumenical affirmation of mission. We need mission in and from the many margins, where Christ reveals himself, in the reality as it is.

I also heard painful and powerful testimonies from women and youth (many of them United Methodists) who faced the contrary winds of oppression and uncertainty, some of their dear ones have disappeared in mysterious ways. As disciples of the church, they offered a prophetic word for justice and peace against their fear, through grassroots advocacy, educational programmes, and common prayer.

Last week in India I met people who were HIV positive. They have been empowered to help others to come out of stigmatization, and to share the reality of the Gospel. This is what I see and hear in so many places, what happens when people are inspired by the visions and involvement of the ecumenical movement.
Christians around the world are called in these days to accompany the Christian minority communities in the Middle East in their particular witness, preciousness, and fragility. Our living faith has its roots in this region, and is nourished and nurtured by the unbroken witness of the local churches who have their own roots from the apostolic times.

Without this Christian presence, the conviviality among peoples from different faiths, cultures, civilisations, which is a sign of God’s love for all humanity, will be endangered. In addition, its extinction will be a sign of failure of the ecumenical family to express the Gospel imperative for costly solidarity.

You are also responding to the call for justice and peace in Palestine/Israel. The WCC’s Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine/Israel offers the ministry of presence to the people and the city in the mundane of the every day. The witness we as WCC are called to give should not be polished but rather to encourage all in power to see and change what is the reality of so many ordinary people in their daily life: Occupation, fear, harassments, even violence. We as churches cannot speak about balance where there is no balance, when one part is occupying and another has been occupied. But we shall always try to understand more the complexities, show empathy to all, and therefore call for a just peace.

Jesus who walks on troubled waters would have us to work with him all the more as Christians and also with those of other faiths to calm the seas of the world. The WCC is engaged with interfaith partners to address these concerns of violence and violations together, for example in Nigeria these days.

The WCC with the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church and the World Evangelical Alliance produced last year a joint document called, Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct. There we say together that we are called to share the Gospel of Christ, meeting everybody with respect and the attitude of Christ.

Discipleship amidst the unknown is at time tedious and even messy work. In its history, the WCC has come under fire for its engagement for example in the earlier work of the Programme to Combat Racism, particularly the anti-apartheid work, the statements and stances taken by the WCC were made even while not agreeing among all about the ramifications and outcomes, yet knowing only the essential kernels of the gospel—justice, peace, and love. Now on this side of history, we see that the prophetic witness of our ecumenical forebears was necessary and right to name the racism which ruled that time as sin to be opposed.

Ecumenical discipleship strives to balance seeking to know and making peace without fully knowing all the mystery of Christ. The common journey causes us to recognize that we can move before knowing everything. Moses sought to fully know God; but, even his partial knowing was enough to lead the people out of oppression. John Wesley made the gospel of justification, as it was rediscovered by Luther, even more a call to face the needs of the world. He taught sanctification and the longing for perfection because the world needs more holiness.

What we do know are the words of our Saviour to us as we struggle in the boat together, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear!"

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit,
General Secretary, World Council of Churches
Canterbury hosts multi-faith dialogue on international development  
May 10, 2012


This year the event was co-hosted with Islamic Relief Worldwide, Catholic Overseas Development Agency (CAFOD), Progressio and the Tony Blair Faith Foundation.

Participants from over 30 UK faith-based organisations explored how the values and beliefs contained in different faith traditions can offer fresh perspectives and innovative responses to development.

Building on relationships and knowledge generated by previous meetings, the seminar provided a space for a range of development organisations, from across the respective faith communities in the UK, to engage in dialogue around the contribution faith communities and faith-based NGOs make to poverty alleviation and social justice.

Quoting Pope John Paul II, the Archbishop drew on the theme of ‘being more and having more’ in his reflections on the morning session. He spoke about international development as more than simply economic growth:

“Running through all that we have been saying, running through all that we do, as people of faith [working in international development], is that notion of what a Christian would call life in abundance – ‘I have come that they may have life and may have it in all its fullness’ (John 10:10)

And I think that the whole of our development discourse needs to be shot through with that sense of what abundant life is, not just a life of sufficiency but a life of abundance, not in the sense of material abundance but in the sense of a powerful and rich solid sense of who I am in communion with my neighbour. That’s abundance, that’s what I believe we’re about here.”

The Archbishop went on to discuss the shared moral responsibility those of faith have for others:

“Living with a sense of being answerable to my neighbour’s good, living with a sense that we are genuinely in one condition, one situation, can feel quite risky. There is going to be no safe place to stand as long as one of my neighbours is at risk.

Their lack, their danger, their insecurity is mine and...however much we may want to live in the moral equivalent of a gated community, with all the unstable and difficult people somewhere else, religious faith of whatever kind simply does not allow that and that can feel a bit insecure, because it is.”

In the afternoon, participants worked in small groups to consider how to establish collaborative platforms for action on key development priorities, such as the economy, the environment and the MDGs, which are due to be completed in 2015.

I found great hope within the proposed plan by the Anglican Church.

Other Lay people such as John McCann, whose comment follows below, have responded favorably to this proposed way forward by the Episcopal / Anglican Church on a global scale for our shared global economy as an action plan.

“To an American member of the Trinity and St. Paul’s Parish, interfaith issues are of great importance and within my year as a member, I have discerned that interfaith dialogues are my mission within the Anglican faith.

I feel it very important that a paper or transcript of this conference be made available, to church,
mosque, and synagogue members at all levels, so this message can be shared at the community level, for action. This dialogue sounds terrific, but there are lay ministers like myself who want to benefit from the level of many well funded faith communities and faith-based NGOs involved in spreading the word on what conclusions are drawn and can be implemented at the parish level.”

John McCann adds, “The conference (at Canterbury) sounds like a very positive beginning on a long-overdue blueprint for action.”

I see that of God most easily in the garden spaces we may find in our world around us. However, God exists everywhere. Where do you most notice God at work?

Living in a World with Change Always Imminent

Technological advances have brought about some of the greatest changes for how we go about our ordinary life. My grandmother was amazed by all of the changes that she had observed between the late 1800’s and the 1970’s. I remember her telling me that as a student nurse, in the biggest city that was relatively close to the farm where she had grown up with her surviving eight brothers and sister, that all of the nurses would run to the window to look at the single automobile coming up to the hospital. One of the doctors had one of the first automobiles in that American city. We have all observed rapidly changing technologies in the late 1900’s and early 2000’s.

Historically, change has happened regarding technologies that we use. This enabled us to move from being hunter-gatherers to become farming communities. Then the industrial revolution occurred, and the world’s populations experienced big changes in their life styles.

Regarding change, sometimes we decide to make changes, to get new technologies or to view things from a new perspective.

The work of leading a faith community will require us as a community to focus on the challenges and dangers inherent in leading through change, as well as the danger of keeping the status quo.

“Doing nothing” is a choice although we may tend to forget that. What will be required of us as we encounter and continue to encounter new paradigms. Learning about the existence and function of power and authority as they relate to and influence the roles, tasks, and relationships of those exerting leadership and those who are being led will continue to be important.

We may be required to take a deeper look at the theories of a faith community as an emotional system, in so much as to how they influence how a person acts and relates to others in the emotional system, at the conscious and unconscious level.

With changes in technology happening all the time all around us, we will need a framework for diagnosing and addressing tough problems, and understanding the concepts of change and adaptation. Political science and social psychology offer insights into the dynamics of groups and social systems for examining the functions of power and authority, and for distinguishing these from leadership.

By considering all of the varied aspects affecting the “Challenges of Leading A Faith Community,” we may be able to find that of God and Christ at action through the spirit.

~ M.J. Glauber
Have you ever read a cookbook created by preschool children?

Frequently at Thanksgiving time, Kindergarten teachers ask their students to share their favorite recipes. Sometimes, local newspapers publish these recipes for everyone to enjoy. Since they come out each year, adults must really enjoy reading them.

Remember the age of children who are being asked to share their favorite recipes. They aren’t worried that their recipe won’t be exactly right. From their perspective, it may seem that the Thanksgiving meal happens without fail each year. It is therefore nothing to worry about from their perspective. Boldly, they share a recipe. Many of them can’t read yet, and they may have only seen the preparation of this annual banquet from the periphery while they focus on watching the parade on TV.

Often the children provide simple recipes such as: “Get a turkey, put it in a pan, and put it in the oven for a long time. The oven needs to be hot first. Really hot!!! Cook the turkey for 2 to 3 minutes.”

Time always seem the most variable factor in these recipes. The turkey can cook from one to two weeks or for only 2 to 3 minutes. The children actually have observed some of the cooking process. There will always be an element about the cooking process that is right, but almost always the amount of time required to roast a turkey may vary according to the child’s own vocabulary.

The concept of time isn’t really so easy to grasp. Recently, while spending time with a young mother and her little ones, if a well-liked babysitter was leaving, the little ones would weep. Their mother would tell them that this well-liked baby-sitter would be back on Friday. This made the little-ones happy.

Although, the little ones may at first accept and feel glad to hear that the well-liked baby-sitter will return, over the next few days, they begin to ask if this is the day that the well-liked baby-sitter is to come back to be with them. I observed that the mother, in an effort to explain time, had to explain how many times they would have to go to sleep at night before the baby-sitter would come back. Sometimes, that explanation for time also requires that after they eat lunch, do something in the afternoon, have their supper, have a bath and then what they are asking about, and hoping will happen, will take place, but not before all of those things happen first. Fortunately, they have a rather regular daily routine so to the little ones, this is the basis for how they will come to understand the concept of time.

With modern technology, there is an alarm clock for little ones. You know those little ones who tend to wake up early and who are so joyful when they see the sun barely glimpsing over the horizon in the eastern sky that they wish to get everyone up in the household so that they can all enjoy this glorious new day with them. Their parents may have been up often in the night with a newborn, and they aren’t as keen about seeing the sunrise as the newborn’s older sibling may be. For moments like these, an alarm clock exists that changes colors to show the toddler that it is either too early to wake up when the clock is still blue or that it is time to wake up when the clock has turned orange.

Even then, the temptation to share their joy upon seeing the sun rise once again in the east over the horizon can be such an amazing thing that the little ones feel compelled to awaken the entire household to observe this amazing event. Their awe is almost contagious.

Having observed in little ones an incomplete understanding of time, other than that things happen in a sequence of some kind, I wonder then if humanity also struggled to understand the concept of time as we understand it now as grown-ups living in an era where everyone lives by a tightly scheduled calendar broken down by the hours and minutes in the day? (Certainly, humanity didn’t always live like this.) Still, even with this understanding of time, it seems like some days move so slowly while the years go by so fast.  

~ M.J. Glauber

Matthew 18: 1-4

1 At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 He called a child over, placed it in their midst, 3 and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
Psalm 40

King James Version (KJV)

40 I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.
4 Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.
5 Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.
6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.
7 Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,
8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.
9 I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest.
10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.
11 Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me.
12 For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me.

1 Kings 19: 11-13

King James Version (KJV)

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind:
12 And after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:
13 And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire:
14 And after the fire a still small voice.

15 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?
Commentary on 1 Kings 19:11-13

Howie Baker a member of the Religious Society of Friends explains 1 Kings 19:11-13 KJV as follows: “I equate the wind with one’s own intellect. It tends to wander during worship, you start imagining things. Both intellect and imagination are import for solving problems, but they’re not the voice of God.”

“I equate the earthquake with earthly needs. Hunger, thirst, lack of sleep, car maintenance, grocery lists, etc. It’s also very important to keep track of these, but they are also not the voice of God.”

Howie Baker explains, “‘Mantle’ is a catch-all term for an outer garment. It could have been a cloak, could have been a coat, could have been waist length or knee length or it could have reached the ground. I wouldn’t worry too much about the mantle itself. There are two reasons to talk about Elijah wrapping his face in his mantle. One is that, according to Jewish understanding (and Elijah was Jewish), one’s mind is not capable of handling the full glory of God. To look on the face of God is death, literal physical death. Elijah was protecting himself, and his mantle was a handy piece of cloth big enough to cover his head. The second is that he hid his face because he knew he wasn’t worthy of such attention, to show humility before his Creator. Listening in humility is also an important aspect of unprogrammed worship” (used by the Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers).

Howie Baker notes that Moses, Elijah and Jesus Christ are three significant role models from the Bible. Howie Baker explains, “Waiting Patiently for the Lord; Listening With the Ear of Our Heart:

God calls us to “Listen with the ear of our heart” - exploring what that means in our daily life....
course leaves out a LOT of content, but I think gets the essence pretty well. "We figure if God's talking to us, we should sit quietly and listen. So that's what we do."

Howie Baker, the Quaker, explains, “Scripture is full of verses that provide guidance on worship. This is just the one that everyone finds useful to tell about unprogrammed worship."

Please note that contemplative worship is how this practice is referred to in Christian Churches.

**Commentary on 1 Kings 19:11-13 and Psalm 40 for Interchurch Families and Ecumenists:**

I sat quietly reflecting on these Bible Verses. In Psalm 40, we are encouraged to do the will of God. Our God is of "Loving Kindness." We are reminded of the things that may have distracted us from doing the will or work of God.

In 1 Kings 19:11-13, we are reminded again of all of those things that serve to distract us, and rightfully so because we have responsibilities. These things are necessary and a part of being human, but God is not in those things. We are called to listen for that "still small voice," that is God speaking to us in the midst of our busy lives that are filled with turmoil.

Other translations refer to the Still Small Voice of God as “a gentle whisper,” “a sound of sheer silence,” “a murmur” or as “a whistling of a gentle air.”

It may be that we find God’s will for us by slowing down and taking the time to listen. We are distracted by thoughts, imagination, earthly needs to survive, and an array of emotions as we go about living our routine and ordinary lives. These things are necessary.

However, God exists on another level from the ordinariness that distracts us from finding God. God is there with us; we simply need to sit quietly seeking to discern God’s will from our ordinary needs.

From out of that time of sitting quietly and of waiting expectantly, I came upon:

**In 2 Timothy 1:7, we learn:** "For God has **not** given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, peace and sound mind"

"Listen... with the ear of your heart" comes from the Rule of Benedict.


Sister writes, “LISTEN!

To whom do we LISTEN?”

Benedictine, Sister Antoinette Traeger explains, “I have been a waiting patiently for the Lord; listening with the ear of our heart.”

**God calls us to “listen with the ear of our heart” ~ Exploring what that means ...**
member of Queen of Angels Monastery since 1942; sixty-eight years of learning and practicing the sacred act of LISTENING. St. Benedict begins his Rule with the word LISTEN. With that one word, LISTEN, he put me on a path that has constantly been challenging and also rewarding."

"Challenging because I seem by nature to be more inclined to be the talker and not the listener. Rewarding because after all these years of practicing I find joy and peace in my daily personal listening to God's Word in scripture and prayer."

"I am more engaged in community discernment when I listen attentively to the suggestions of other members. I am called to be a supreme LISTENER as I answer the call to be a spiritual director. I enjoy God's presence in nature when I listen to the sounds of waves in the ocean and the wind in the trees."

"So I hope to continue to respond to the invitation of the Prologue to the Rule of Benedict: "Let us open our eyes to the light that comes from God, and our ears to the voice from heaven that every day calls out, 'If you hear God's voice today, do not harden your hearts.'"

"For the rest of us, actually for all of us, this is sound advice to "Listen ... with the ear of your heart." Benedictine, Sister Antoinette Traeger indicates that this isn't always so easy, but that this has allowed her to become more engaged in community discernment. I suspect that most of us are more accustomed to being the speaker rather than the listener. For anyone who has ever endeavored to tell someone something and who has come away from that encounter feeling as if they had been heard feels valued."

All of us like to feel valued and loved by our own community. Sister Antoinette Traeger speaks about God as being the Light. In this sense our enlightenment. In a spiritual sense, it is God who leads us out of those periods of great darkness.

We must be willing to "listen... with the ear of our heart" so that we may move our communities along in positive life affirming ways.

The theme for the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference is Interchurch Families: “Listen ... with the ear of your heart” Please plant to come to the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference to explore this topic further with us.

Registration materials are included in this edition of the ARK.

~ Mary Jane Glauber

We are called to “Listen with the ear of our heart” and “to be more like children”
- How do we apply these concepts in our daily lives?
MANY THANKS:
To all the people who worked to create the material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; for the wisdom found in the Bible Scriptures; for God who has been faithful to us throughout the generations; for communities at prayer; for the natural curiosity of children and those adults who strive to be more like children; for the spiritual insights of Wendell Berry; for the spiritual insights of Barbara Brown Taylor; for the work and insight of Sarah Eagle Heart, Missioner - Indigenous Ministries of the Episcopal Church; for the sacredness of forgiveness; for America’s Scenery and for the beauty of the earth, the sky and the seas; for our shared journeys which more often than not are really spiritual journeys toward enlightenment; For the insight of Howie Baker of the Religious Society of Friends; For the Rule of Benedict for the diligent and great effort of the planners of the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference; For the on-going work of the World Council of Churches; For the AAIF Board Members; For our pastoral advisors: Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS; Father George Kilcourse and Pastor Elaine Hall; For our communities near and far and our membership in them; For my family, especially for my husband, Peter, whose on-going and ever present support makes the creation of the ARK Possible.

Many thanks to all the people who share our journey in seeking unity and endeavoring to find their best gifts so that they might best be able to serve our Creator.

~ M.J. Glauber, Volunteer Servant Editor of the ARK

“People always make the wolf more formidable than he is.”
~ French Proverb

Looking forward to the 2012 AAIF Biennial Conference: July 13- 15 in Collegeville, MN - Please join with other AAIF members at this biennial event - Conference Registration forms can be found in this issue of the ARK and at www.aifusa.org