

THE ARK



A·A·I·F®

American Association of
Interchurch Families

A Publication of the American Association of Interchurch Families

AAIF IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION,
REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA

Earlier editions of the ARK may be found at

<http://www.interchurchfamilies.org/>

Select "Other Publications" ~ Then scroll down to find the ARK
AAIF is an official affiliate of the Interchurch Families International
Network - IFIN

Interchurch Families: Christian Unity Made Visible in our Households

The ARK©
Copyright 2013
AAIF
all rights reserved



Interchurch Families

**"Listen with the
ear of your heart"**

- Carrying Forward the
theme from the 2012
AAIF Conference held in
Minnesota until we
gather again in 2016

Passing on our Faith Traditions to Future Generations while living in a Culturally Diverse and Globally Oriented Society ~ We Reflect.

"I Give Thanks for Our Diversity"

"I was in Cheyenne country last night, gathered around the Drum as the ancient songs rose into the night sky. I was there with people from many Native nations, attending an Honor Dance for a revered elder, my own spiritual mentor of many long years past. The Great Spirit enfolded us in a shawl of starlight, the sliver of the moon a pale eye sleeping.

All people have a tradition to share. All cultures have a beauty within them. I give thanks for our diversity, for the songs we sing, the circle of our proud memory."

~ The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Choctaw

Contents

Page 1	Theme: Passing on our Faith Traditions to Future Generations while living in a Culturally Diverse and Globally Oriented Society ~ We Reflect
Page 1	“I Give Thanks for Our Diversity” by The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Choctaw
Page 2	Contents; AAIF Contacts: AAIF 2013 OFFICERS
Pages 3 & 4	“Passing on our Faith Traditions to Future Generations while living in a Culturally Diverse and Globally Oriented Society” ~ Implications for Interchurch Families by M.J. Glauber
Page 4	<u>All Things Bright And Beautiful Hymn</u> - lyrics upon which we may reflect
Pages 5 & 6	<u>Interfaith Marriages: Religious Tolerance or Religious Dilution?</u> by Martin E. Marty; The Martin Marty Center for the Advanced Study of Religion The University of Chicago Divinity School
Pages 7 & 8	How do we pass on our faith to children? Implications For Interchurch Families
Pages 9 - 12	<u>Passing on the Faith: Teaching the Next Generation</u> by Rabbi Brad Hirschfield with Implications for Interchurch Families
Pages 12 - 17	<u>Just Imagine: Considering the Theological Insights of Children</u> by Ivy Beckwith with Implications for Interchurch Families
Pages 17 - 20 ...	<u>Less Talk, More Action</u> by Mark Yaconelli with Implications for Interchurch Families
Pages 20 - 23 ...	<u>My Six Essentials for Passing on the Faith</u> by Phyllis Tickle with Implications for Interchurch Families
Page 23	<u>Considering How To Be Centered On That of God</u> by The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Choctaw
Page 23-24	The Ecumenical Corner: Fr. Ernest Falardeau, SSS Report on the National Workshop on Christian Unity 2013
Pages 24 - 25 ...	Save the Dates for the 2014 NWCU and the Ecumenical Advocacy Days
Pages 26-27.....	Interchurch Couple to mark 75 years of marriage by Marnie McAllister
Pages 28-29	The Diane Rheem Show on NPR ~ <u>Religious Traditions And Challenges For Interfaith Families</u> with Implications For Interchurch Families and Ecumenists
Page 30	Many Thanks

AAIF Contacts: AAIF 2013 OFFICERS:

CO-CHAIR = Libbye & Guy Montgomery aaif.co.chair@gmail.com

VICE CO-CHAIR = Lynne & Doug Wragge lynnewragge@hotmail.com

SECRETARY = Diane & Lamar Burton lamarb52@hotmail.com

TREASURER = Elaine & Clint Hall l.elaine.hall@gmail.com

The current term of office will be from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014, at which time another election will be held. Please contact any of the above mentioned officers if you would like to have information about how to become more actively involved with AAIF.

“Passing on our Faith Traditions to Future Generations while living in a Culturally Diverse and Globally Oriented Society” with Implications for Interchurch Families

An online Facebook page posted the following, *“There is a longing in our hearts for something more than the surface and boundaries of everyday life. We want to know that we are guided and not alone in the universe. We have the potential to turn towards subtler realms and to regain contact with guardian forces, celestial beings that have a compassionate awareness of our existence and seek to assist us in our evolutionary development.”*

In spite of the findings of a recent Pew Study on Religion in the USA that reported that the Non-affiliated numbers are increasing dramatically while membership in mainline American Churches has declined, USA Today has observed that many with no religion are still open to spirituality. For a number of years, I have often heard people state that they are spiritual, but not religious. The findings of the recent Pew Report on religion reflect precisely what many of us may have heard in passing while now we can note the greater implications and impact that the Pew Report findings hold for our American Society.

Professor Martin Marty poses the question regarding the impact of interchurch/interfaith marriages in a recent edition of “Sightings” asking if marrying across denominational lines promotes greater “Religious Tolerance or Religious Dilution?”

Professor Martin Marty observes that many people are reflecting on intermarriage at this time. He says, “Years ago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin introduced himself to a Protestant gathering upon his arrival in Chicago. He told the audience that he read the appeals by couples to enter into interfaith marriages, Catholic rules being tough. He surprised all when he said that he was cheered when couples took the issue seriously, and his spirit sagged when they were casual and unknowing. For good reason. Bernardin's is not the only reaction or response, but it invites reflection.”

In this edition of the ARK, I will include the “Reflections” of other other people regarding how we pass on our faith tradition to the next generation.

by M.J. Glauber

Many interchurch couples and their extended families have asked about the religious education of the children. The reality is that even for “same church families” how to pass on their faith to the next generation is also asked.

At the 2010 AAIF Conference our plenary speaker noted that all marriages are a form of blending of two family systems; even if the couple comes from the same denomination each of the partners bring their own family traditions with them into the marriage. All families are called to reflect on their own religious traditions and beliefs as well as how these will be passed onto the next generation.

Wikipedia explains that “Patheos (an online website) is used for learning about other religions, while people use Beliefnet (another online website) to explain their own religion.” In this edition of the ARK, we will take into consideration some of the entries posted by “Patheos.”

We are keenly aware that we come from a church that has a long history. It would mean doing a lot of research and perhaps then the writing of a doctoral dissertation so that we could begin to analyze how that collective church history has affected our American society both in the past and now in the present moment. However, it may simply have to serve for the moment that we are aware that how we understand church history may vary from person to person based on their own unique experiences even among people who are in the same denomination.

Through “Patheos”, We read that Ivy Beckwith observes that Walter Bruggeman’s concept of prophetic imagination gives us the task to evoke an alternative community that knows it is about different things in different ways from the culture at large. Religion gives us a sense of hope.

Mark Yaconelli explains that, “In my town, children and youth are looking for people with mischief in their eyes, people willing to say “yes” to the active pursuit of love.”

Phyllis Tickle indicates that “one of the things we as

Continued on the next page

“Passing on our Faith Traditions to Future Generations while living in a Culturally Diverse and Globally Oriented Society” ~ Implications for Interchurch Families

mentoring Christians need most urgently to turn our energies toward is adult classes in teaching each other how to be good storytellers and then in learning in detail the stories of both the Hebrew and the Christian scriptures that most need our telling.” She also observes the importance of the ordinary aspects of our daily life, which many of us perceive to be our own “Domestic Church” or our “Little Church of the Home.” Family meals take on a great importance for how we raise our children in our beliefs.

The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Choctaw, observes that God is love in action in our lives and he expresses gratitude to God for our diversity.

All of these are reflections on religion in the U.S.A. at this time in history. Perhaps because we are interchurch families, we feel a need to reflect on how we share our faith with the next generation. The important point is that we need to actively reflect on how we live our lives. What is the on-going self-talk that seeps out in how we live our lives?

God is so great that we need to consider and reflect on every personal glimpse that each reflection in this edition of the ARK may provide to us.

Whether we are interchurch, same church families or now even if we consider ourselves to be among the “non-affiliated or nones,” may we feel further encouraged and inspired to reflect on that of God as we encounter that of God in the world around us. May we find hope and love to inspire our actions and beliefs.

~ M.J. Glauber

All Things Bright And Beautiful Hymn

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colors,

He made their tiny wings.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The sunset and the morning,
That brightens up the sky;

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one;

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all

The tall trees in the greenwood,
The meadows for our play,
The rushes by the water,
To gather every day;

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

We sang this hymn frequently when I was a child. The lyrics greatly impressed me then and they may well have helped to shape my values. I am still moved by the lyrics as an adult that speak in praise of God's Creation.
~ M.J. Glauber

Interfaith Marriages: Religious Tolerance or Religious Dilution?

by Martin E. Marty
The Martin Marty Center
for the Advanced Study of Religion
The University of Chicago
Divinity School
Monday; June 10 2013;
“Sightings”

Reprinted with permission
from Professor Marty and
Editor, Myriam Renaud,
editor of “Sightings”

“Every living and healthy religion has a marked idiosyncrasy” wrote philosopher George Santayana, and its power comes from the “special and surprising message and the bias which that revelation gives to life.” He preferred to see religions interact positively, but he also knew the difficulties based on difference. A religion “offers another world to live in,” and “another world to live in. . . is what we mean by having a religion.”

Intense religious groups isolate themselves in cells and can create problems for the health of their members and “the others” to whom they must relate. Americans see the worst of this in inter-faith and intra-faith conflicts the world around.

American citizens have the luxury of conversing, arguing, testing, and experimenting with challenges to our tentative and sometimes tense resolutions. Talk about all this at a distance is a luxury; when it comes close to home, everything is more complicated. In the free ways of citizens in this free society the most “up close” problem area is interfaith marriage, which hits at the most intimate and demanding relations, under one’s roof or over one’s fence or on the other branches of a family tree.

This late spring much discussion is prompted by Naomi Schaefer Riley’s much-noticed book, *Till Faith Do Us Part: How Interfaith Marriage Is Transforming America*, and transforming America it is. *The Economist’s* headline on the book admirably condensed the issue; is it “A Welcome Sign of Tolerance, or Dangerous Dilution?” People who care about civility in a civil society have to care about the “tolerance” side and people who care about religion in a religious—not all that, and not only, “secular”—society have to care about the “dilution” side.

Riley herself and many

reviewers are in “interfaith” marriages, and find much to affirm in many of them, but they are also aware of what social scientific data says about the causes of changes in marriage trends. Some data suggests that, among large communities, Mormons and Muslims are the most successful at holding off marriage “across the aisles,” to use *The Economist’s* terms.

Ask, in polls, which religion “other than your own” you view most positively, and the largest set of respondents lists Mormon and Muslim as problematic. Years ago Jews and Catholics were most feared and despised, but today they are most readily accepted by others! One reason for the change is interfaith marriage, and, alongside it, many other means of getting to know “the other.”

One little e-column cannot begin to canvass such a broad field of inquiry and issues as this; my file of print-outs on the subject bulges, and, in effect, whispers: “Mention me, even if you can’t do me justice.” So here is a mention, and a hope that people rejecting, entering, living with, suffering because of, and setting examples in interfaith marriages will keep telling their stories and the rest of us will keep reading about them, learning from them, and remembering *The Economist’s* tagline.

Years ago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin introduced himself to a Protestant gathering upon his

Continued on the next page

arrival in Chicago. He told the audience that he read the appeals by couples to enter into interfaith marriages, Catholic rules being tough. He surprised all when he said that he was cheered when couples took the issue seriously, and his spirit sagged when they were casual and un-knowing. For good reason. Bernardin's is not the only reaction or response, but it invites reflection.

We reflect.

References:

"Across the Aisles: A Welcome Sign of Tolerance, or Dangerous Dilution?" *The Economist*, April 13, 2013. <http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21576125-welcome-sign-tolerance-or-dangerous-dilution-across-aisles>.

Riley, Naomi Shaefer. "Interfaith Marriages are Rising Fast, But They're Falling Fast too." *The Washington Post*, June 6, 2010. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/04/AR2010060402011.html>.

Santayana, George. *Reason in Religion*. Quoted in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Fish, Stanley. "Marrying Out of the Faith." *The New York Times*, April 1, 2013. <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/04/01/marrying-out-of-the-faith/>.

Niebuhr, Gustav. "The Church and the State of Matrimony." Review of *Till Faith Do Us Part: How Interfaith Marriage Is Transforming America* by Naomi Shaefer Riley. *New York Times*, May 23, 2013, Sunday Book Review. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/26/books/review/till-faith-do-us-part-by-naomi-schaefer-riley.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

"When Two Traditions Wed." Review of *Till Faith Do Us Part: How Interfaith Marriage Is Transforming America* by Naomi Shaefer Riley. *The Wall Street Journal*, March 22, 2013, Bookshelf. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324281004578356504212098368.html>.



Author, **Martin E. Marty**, is the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School. His biography, publications, and contact information can be

found at www.memarty.com.



Editor, **Myriam Renaud**, is a Ph.D. Candidate in Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She is a 2012-13 Junior Fellow in the Martin Marty Center.

What Is Sightings?

The cliché about polite conversation is that there are two things never to discuss: religion and politics. We at Sightings know better (at least about religion). We seek out and comment on the events, agents, and trends in public life where issues of religion are writ large, in plain view—or are simmering under the surface.

Under the sponsorship of the Martin Marty Center, Sightings reports and comments on the role of religion in current events...



MJG©

How do we pass on our faith to children?

This is a question most religious traditions care about deeply.

We are concerned, perhaps, for our children's spiritual well-being, their moral grounding and behavior, and perhaps for the ultimate state of their souls.

Without the commitment, creativity, and zeal of the next generation, our own values and beliefs may die with us. But what is the best way to communicate faith? If faith is "caught, not taught,"

then what can we do to make our spirituality contagious?

At the blog site found at <http://www.Patheos.com/Topics/Passing-On-The-Faith/> they invited scholars, practitioners, teachers, and parents from diverse traditions and perspectives to share their wisdom, insights, and best practices on this important topic. (See more at: <http://www.patheos.com/> or at <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Passing-on-the-Faith/>)

Implications for Interchurch Families

Perhaps one of the foremost questions that couples, their extended family and their churches of origin ask when the young couple is about to marry across traditional denominational barriers is precisely, "How do we pass on our faith to the children in an interchurch marriage?" The fact that two people have bridged an historic division is a good and a positive action may elude the very community that the interchurch couple must rely upon for their very support and nurturing.

What is an interchurch Family or Interchurch Marriage?

Some people refer to interchurch marriages as mixed marriages whereas "interchurch" refers specifically to the marriage of two Christians from different

Christian Denominations who continue on with their own Christian Faith after marriage.

Historically, in the United States, when the term “Mixed Marriage” was used, it referred to a racially mixed marriages. “Interchurch Marriages” refer to the marriage of two people across across traditional Christian Denominational divisions within the church; these couples may also be from two racial backgrounds.

An interfaith marriage is between a Christian and someone who comes from a religious experience that is not Christian. There may be some universal truths that assist couples who enter into an interfaith marriage which helps to guide them toward a form of unity in their own domestic religion within their own newly created family. These marriages have merit and value for humanity.

AAIF has intentionally kept our focus on the marriage of couples coming from two Christian Denominations and most often on those between a Roman Catholic and someone who is from one of the churches that grew out of the Reformation and/ or the Orthodox Churches.

As Christians we share a common heritage and beliefs. We may see variances in the emphasis of certain cultural traditions even within the same Christian denomination; we also may see and take note of the difference in emphasis between different Christian

Denominations. Yet, all Christian Denominations come from the same source.

Frequently, interchurch couples and interchurch families are looking for ways to be a part of each church from where their parents are active members.

Upon marrying, interchurch couples are faced with having to decide how they will create their own domestic church in their own newly forming family. There seem to be several paths that couples who marry across denominational lines see as a potential solution. Some convert to the denomination of their spouse; the conversion seems to go equally either way. Some drop out from attending any church at all. Others seek out a third church which seems to be a neutral choice between either of their churches of origin.

Interchurch Couples stay active in their church of origin and try to participate in their spouse’s church as much as possible. It is common for many interchurch families to wish to receive the eucharist, holy communion, with their spouse in their spouse’s church. Many families find comfort in being able to worship together. Many spouses want their church to welcome their other kind of Christian spouse without pressing their spouse to convert.

Many years ago now, at an interchurch conference in Ireland, one of the speakers mentioned that “Interchurch

Families’ Children may become confused.” Ellen Bard was quick to speak up and to explain that she was an interchurch child and that she wasn’t confused. I was impressed.

Over the years, I have observed that children brought up in an interchurch family know both traditions quite well. It is the children who have learned the language of both churches in which they have been raised. They frequently explain and clarify for the greater community who may have never considered the possibility of marrying across Christian Denominational lines any questions that the uninformed may have. It is as if interchurch children are bi-lingual so that they can negotiate the intricate and nuanced differences between the two Christian denominations that have nurtured them all of their lives and then be able to answer questions fluently in either domain. It is beauty in action.

Yet, I believe that it is an important question, especially given the results from a recent Pew Report on religious affiliation in the United States, to ask how and to consider what contributes to a positive spiritual religious communal experience, both within the home and in any church community, so that we can pass the faith onto the next generations who follow us.

At Patheos.com they ask us to “Please consider doing a

discussion of the following ideas.”

Because Christianity is built on a Judeo-Christian Heritage, I am including a selection from www.patheos.com by Rabbi Brad Hirschfield.

~ M.J. Glauber

Passing On The Faith: You Shall Teach Them

We build the brightest future, not by worrying about the future, but by living our faith in the present.

By [Rabbi Brad Hirschfield](#), July 31, 2013

Note: *This article is part of a special Patheos Symposium. See more at: <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Passing-on-the-Faith/Teach-Them-Children-Rabbi-Brad-Hirschfield-08-01-2013.html>*

Passing on the Faith: Teaching the Next Generation.

[But “How?” You may wonder.]

“Rabbi, how do I make sure that my children believe in God?”

“How do we make sure that our kids will carry on our traditions?”

“How can we assure a successful future for our community?”

If these are not the most common questions that I hear in the contemporary Jewish community, they are certainly near the top of the list. And people want answers! In fact, people often want *the* answer. They want to know the magic bullet response, and of course there isn't one.

Human beings are simply too complex, and the journey of one's soul to infinite, to ever be reduced to a finite response.

There are, however, approaches that can help us respond more productively to these often asked questions.

When it comes to believing in God, I am reminded of the words of the famous singer and outreach worker, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, who said that he too was always asked by parents about how make sure that their kids believed in God.

“Better,” the rabbi observed, “that you should make sure they know that God believes in them.”

Reb Shlomo, as he was known, stood in line with those Jewish sages who question whether or not one can even count the first of the Ten Commandments—“I am the Lord your God”—as a commandment. He appreciated that genuine faith can neither be assured nor commanded.

Genuine faith is something far more profound than verbal assent to an agreed upon dogma. It arises out of life experience, and among the most important of those experiences are those that help people—especially young ones—to know that they are loved, that their aspirations are sacred, and that they are believed in. In other words, faith in God is best thought of not as a goal, but as a by-product of loving and trusting experiences created by those who themselves already possess deep faith.

In terms of continuity of practice, the most natural thing in the world is to hope that those we love will do the things that we ourselves most love doing. In fact, it is difficult not to feel the sting of rejection when our kids don't follow in our footsteps. **That said, we might do well to widen our definition of what it means to follow in our footsteps.**

Don't get me wrong, I am quite traditional in my practice, and certainly hope that my children will be so as well. **But I don't imagine that they must**

always look as I look on the outside in order to meaningfully carry on a 5,000-year-old tradition which has looked quite different at different times in its unfolding history.

In fact, when Deuteronomy 6:7 famously commands us to "teach them to our children," the definition of "them" is not entirely clear. As the verse continues, Moses says that it refers to the "instructions which I (he) teach you (the Israelites) this day." But what does that include?

The commandments found in the immediately following verses? Those which subsequent generations of rabbis understood to be implied by these verses—commandments including tefillin (phylacteries) and the mezuzah hung on doors of people's homes? The entire speech that is basically what makes up the Book of

Deuteronomy? I think the answer is probably "yes."

What we are meant to teach our children is both the specific practices and an entire worldview or story. Sometimes the principles that animate the second express themselves in ways that differ from the practices of past generations.



Listed three years in a row in Newsweek as one of America's 50 Most Influential Rabbis, and recognized as one of our nation's leading Preachers & Teachers by Beliefnet.com,

think tank President, talk show host, interfaith activist, and diversity expert Brad Hirschfield is the author of You Don't Have To Be Wrong For Me To Be Right: Finding Faith Without Fanaticism (Harmony, 2008).

Implications for Interchurch Families:

Rabbi Hirschfield wrote, "What we are meant to teach our children is both the specific practices and an entire worldview or story. Sometimes the principles that animate the second express themselves in ways that differ from the practices of past generations."

Our religious and spiritual lives are naturally in a constant state of questioning and growth. Our understanding of the Divine is evolving and growing as we live. Our faith is lived and it is dynamic. However, I want to emphasize the Rabbi's insight into the importance of "making sure they [our children] know that God believes in them."

Rabbi Hirschfield shares a story with us. He said, "When it comes to believing in God, I am reminded of the words of the famous singer and outreach worker, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, who said that he too was always asked by parents about how make sure



Church Window depicting "The ARK"

MJG©

that their kids believed in God. **"Better," the rabbi observed, "that you should make sure they know that God believes in them."** It is important to know that God loves us.

Here is just a sampling of some of the many Bible verses explaining that God loves us and believes in us:

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,

Proverbs 8:17 I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me.

Psalms 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

1 John 4:7-8 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by

the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Isaiah 38:19 The living, the living, he thanks you, as I do this day; the father makes known to the children your faithfulness.

Matthew 7:12 "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Habakkuk 1:5 (KJV) "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days which ye will not believe, though it be told you."

1 John 4:10 *ESV* In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Isaiah 41:13 *ESV* For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I am the one who helps you."

1 John 4:1-21 *ESV* Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.

Those are only a few Bible verses about God's love for us and God's belief in us.

"Better," the rabbi observed, "that you should make sure they (children) know that God believes in them."

We must show our children all of the ways that God loves us and that God believes in us. This we must do on a daily basis through our actions and interactions. Our belief system is learned by doing and by our daily actions. This is one way that we pass on the faith. Our Domestic Church, that is our Little Church of the Home, may be the most important place where values are transmitted to the next generations. In our interchurch homes when we say yes to that of God, it is

noticed, learned, and absorbed in such a way that it passes the faith onto the next generations.

Our faith is in a constant state of growth in understanding, we pass that concept allowing for growth in the faith on to the next generations because we want them to fully experience that of God in their lives. Whether we are a part of an interchurch or a same church family, knowing that God believes in us and loves us inspires our continued spiritual faith development.

The physical and technological world in which we find ourselves has been in a rapid state of constant change. It seems natural that how we interact with God's people, all of humanity, may take on new or different forms, but that some underlying truths will still exist. Seeing their own parents actively grapple and deal with how to encounter that of God in their lives may be the best example for how to be religious well into the future.

We may come to a profound conclusion that we are human, and by being fully human that we have limits to our understanding. God's plan may often be beyond our understanding, but to know that God loves us all of the time is important. Humanity grows in understanding and changes over time. We will be constantly seeking that of God. Is not that of God eternal?

~ M.J. Glauber



"I was struck by the way he (the child) phrased his question and its theological implications."

Just Imagine: Considering the Theological Insights of Children

Perhaps we should be thinking about how to do Children's Ministry in the way of Jesus, by taking our children's theological questions and observations seriously.

By Ivy Beckwith, July 31, 2013

Note: This article is part of a special Patheos Symposium, **Passing on the Faith: Teaching the Next Generation**. Read more perspectives here: <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Passing-on-the-Faith/Just-Imagine-Ivy-Beckwith-08-01-2013.html>

"What happened in the Bible while I was away?" asked the eight-year-old boy sitting in the pew next to me.

He'd been absent a few Sundays and was asking me what he'd missed. I knew this was what he meant, but I was struck by the way he phrased his question and its theological implications.

Without even knowing so, perhaps, he had characterized the Bible as a living, breathing book full of stories happening, moving, and morphing when we are not even looking.

I sat there in the pew in the sanctuary of my church once again marveling at the spiritual and theological insight and imagination of children.

About a decade ago I stood on the floor of a national pastor's convention and declared the way North American churches go about their Children's Ministry to be broken. I cited things like the lack of meaningful intergenerational experiences and the preeminence of the idea that church, **first and foremost, must be fun, wild and crazy even, for children to want to follow Jesus**. In the intervening years I still believe what I said about the brokenness of church based Children's Ministry to be true. But I've added at least one more sign of this brokenness to my list—lack of imagination.

Continued on the next page

We, the adults who parent and pastor the children in our midst, must unleash our imaginations to first see children as able to contribute as equal partners to our discussions and understandings of God, the Bible, and the good news of Jesus. We must open up our hearts and eyes to see the insights children bring. We must allow them to have these insights, listen to them, and allow ourselves to learn from them. When that eight-year-old asked me that question about the Bible I could have just smiled at him and chalked it up to one of those cute things children say about the Bible because they have limited theological knowledge of the biblical literature. But I chose not to see it that way.

Yes, it was a cute way to ask the question about what he had missed in Sunday School, but to me it had a deeper meaning of how this child understood this special book God gave us, and **enhanced my view of the Bible as always speaking in new ways to us.**

cultivating the "prophetic imagination" while using imagination

But it is difficult to allow children to contribute to our discussions of God, Jesus, and the Bible when we are always telling them what the biblical stories mean and how they should apply these stories to their lives. This stunts their burgeoning

theological imaginations and ours, too.

Second, we who pastor and parent children must redeem and re-energize our own imaginations to help our children envision and claim for

themselves what life in the Kingdom of God looks like—to *vision and eventually put feet to a different, better, and hopeful way to live*

- *where neighbors are loved,*
- *burdens are carried,*
- *cups of cold water are given,*
- *and where everyone is invited to the banquet.*

Walter Brueggemann has called this **cultivating the "prophetic imagination."**

The task of the prophetic imagination is to evoke an alternative community that knows it is about different things in different ways from the culture at large.

The prophetic imagination seeks to penetrate our despair so that new feelings can be named and embraced. And it seeks to stun people out of business as usual and to believe a different way is possible.

And ultimately to infect God's people with the joy of the

kingdom of God—to turn our mourning into dancing and live out the words of the Psalmist that joy comes in the morning.

Over the last year I've read many articles, blogs, and studies about the millennial generation and its relationship or non-relationship with the institutional church. What I find interesting about this is that church-based millennials came of age in what might be called the "golden age" of church-based Children's Ministry. From the 1980s onward, churches hired children's pastors, spent time and money refurbishing their children's ministry areas, and curriculum publishers churned out programs and resources at record speed. Yet, all these blogs, articles, and studies chronicle how disillusioned the millennial generation is with the church. While the church's concern for its children is commendable, perhaps we have botched our sincere attempts at the spiritual formation of our children.

Perhaps, instead, we should be thinking about how to do Children's Ministry in the way of Jesus, taking our children's theological questions and observations seriously and offering them the imaginative blueprint of the very real option of living hopefully in God's kingdom.

"...willing to say "yes" to the active pursuit of love."



Ivy Beckwith has spent many years in church based Children's Ministry. She is the author of Postmodern Children's Ministry (Zondervan), Formational Children's Ministry (Baker) and the soon to be released, co-authored with Dave Csinos, Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus (IVP).

+++++

Implications for Interchurch Families

Ivy Beckwith suggests that **“We must open up our hearts and eyes to see the insights children bring. We must allow them to have these insights, listen to them, and allow ourselves to learn from them.”**

“Small and domestic though they may be, it is nonetheless by means of them that we begin to instill into the young the faith of our fathers and mothers.”

This observation reminds me of a Sunday School Class that I attended in elementary school. We were to discuss the story of “Moses in the Bullrushes” and then in the “Morning Circle,” where all of the elementary school aged classes gathered, our class would present a re-enactment of that Bible Story. The teachers had brought in a doll to serve as “Moses.”

However, one of the boys thought that using a baby doll to portray Moses would be all wrong; he was quite vocal about this. The teachers asked him if he would like to take the role of Moses in our re-enactment, and he readily accepted that role. I was given the role of Miriam, his older sister; I had to wait in hiding for the Egyptian Princess to come down to the water where she would bathe and also find Moses floating in a basket. The teachers had brought a basket in that would work well for a baby doll, but my classmate who wanted to take on the role of Moses was far too big for the basket. As I waited for the Egyptian princess to arrive and find the baby which she would adopt, I saw this huge Moses using his hands to paddle along in the imaginary water.

At the time, I remember thinking that he was simply far too large to be Moses. I was perhaps more comfortable using a baby doll to portray the baby Moses, whereas it is most likely that my male peer wouldn't have even been given a baby doll to play with

and perhaps he considered baby dolls to be girl's toys. At this point in time, I can only guess what factors made my young male peer decide to take on the role of being Moses.

Finally the girl who was playing the role of the Egyptian princess came out and found the baby Moses floating in a basket in the water. This was my cue to come out in the staging area to offer to find a wet nurse for the baby that the Egyptian princess was about to adopt for her own son.

Over the years, I have changed my mind about this re-enactment. First, my understanding of the nature of art and knowing that theatrical plays are a form of art has evolved. The dictionary defines “Art” as : something that is created with imagination and skill and that is beautiful or that expresses important ideas or feelings.

Also, over time, I have become aware of the concept of “artistic license” which About.com defines quite simply as “doing whatever you wish in a painting, without regard to artistic conventions, art critics, theories, or history, or what reality looks like. It's applying your own vision and views in your work, without worrying about whether it's realistic or not, nor about what other people may think or say. You can apply it in varying degrees, from only a little to oodles.”... “Artistic license is the “creative juice” that comes from the artist's mind, the interpretation and selection of what to convey and how.”

Second, Moses is a very significant and important figure in the Bible. One on-line Bible commentary explains, "This godly man towers above all other persons in the Old Testament period because he was God's instrument for the introduction of covenant law in Israel."... "Moses is so strongly interwoven with the religious tradition involving God's plan for human salvation through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and ultimately the Davidic Messiah, and attested to as an authoritative figure for Hebrew culture even in the New Testament period.".... "Perhaps out of deference to his stature there was nobody else in the Old Testament named Moses."... "From what has been said already it will be clear that Israelite life under Moses and his successors was grounded upon divine revelation and its accompanying theology." ... "In dealing with the chosen people, Moses periodically acts as an intercessor with God, so as to avert divine displeasure with Israel (Exodus 33:12-16; Numbers 12:13). The call that he had received from God involves his acting in the capacity of prophet to the nation, wherein he serves as God's spokesperson to Israel. So effective is he in this function that God promises to raise up other prophets after his death who will also serve as spokespersons (Deuteronomy 18:15-18), thus indicating that God regards Moses as the standard by which his successors will be judged." [The Bibliography given for this on-line discussion includes: O. T. Allis, God Spake by Moses; M. Buber, Moses; R. A. Cole, Exodus; R. K. Harrison, Numbers; F. B. Meyer, Moses the Servant of God.]

The conclusion that I came to overtime is that Moses, although human like the rest of us, was of such importance that if we were to take "artistic license" in an attempt to show how important Moses is to our Judeo-Christian heritage that having a physically over-sized, huge baby Moses would be an excellent way to indicate that Moses is very important. Children may have a greater insight into what is truly sacred, important, and holy than we may have previously considered.

I now believe that through his own innocence that my elementary Sunday school classmate, who



was so oversized in the basket that was to be for a baby doll to portray Moses, may have given us some visual image of the magnitude of the importance Moses in our Judeo-Christian Tradition.

In their openness and innocence, children may be able to see a purer form of that of God in our world, the ordinary world that surrounds us. When Ivy Beckwith suggests that "We must open up our hearts and eyes to see the insights children bring. We must allow them to have these insights, listen to them, and allow ourselves to learn from them," I believe that she has uncovered an important insight, one that as adults, we should endeavor to encourage with our own openness of our hearts and eyes.

How does this impact interchurch families? We share most of the same Bible stories between our different Christian Denominations. Bible stories and a study of the Bible can be shared easily across historical denominational traditions or divides. Some combinations of Interfaith families also share some of the same Bible stories. Certainly same church families would share the same Bible Stories.

As an interchurch couple, we have been fortunate to be able to participate in a Bible study that encourages the use of different editions of the Bible over the past few years. Every person brings a Bible or Bibles of their own choosing. We usually

examine one Bible chapter per gathering. After that, in our small group Bible Study, we answer five questions about the verse we have just read; each person answers each question:

1. What is the author's main point in this passage? **(MAIN POINT)** It often helps to state the question again in another form: "What is the author saying about God?" Each person must address the text directly in a relationship formed between reader and author.
2. What new light do I find in this particular reading of this passage of the text? **(NEW LIGHT)** This question reminds us of the continuing revelation in our lives from both unfamiliar and familiar passages. The focus here is on each member's new insight, observation, or understanding during this particular reading of this passage on this particular occasion.

Each reading can bring some new or renewed insight. That insight may be small or great. This answer may grow with more and more points as the group works through the passage with other questions.

The new light may be something that is seen now, but had never been seen before. It may be a new understanding of a word or phrase. It may be a new way of seeing a particular problem that this passage triggers in a

member's mind. It may be the last in the sequence of questions answered in the silence. It may grow with more and more points as the group works through the passage with other questions.

3. Is this passage true to my experience? **(TRUTH)** The focus here is on comparing the message of the Bible passage with each person's experience in life. Our spiritual journeys are "experimental" as we search toward fuller understanding. Our personal experience and our community experience are sources of authority which we bring to the study to understand and supplement the Biblical text.
4. What are the implications of this passage for my life? **(IMPLICATIONS)** "What difference, if any, does the passage make for my life?" It brings the role of ethics and daily living practices to our attention.
5. What problems do I have with this passage? **(PROBLEMS)** Here we identify problems of language in the text, of interpretation, of meaning, or of applying the text to our lives. These problems may generate interest in seeking answers from other sources during the days before the next Bible study.

Problems can be identified without being solved. This question reminds us that study of a passage is a continuing process. Like life, understanding is never complete at any one time. It is a continuing dialogue between the text and life. This format for Bible Study was originally developed by Joanne and Larry Spears

As a Bible study group, we have found it helpful to see how various Biblical texts are translated and specifically which words are used in different translations. This form of Bible Study tends to create a collaborative search for meaning in



Chihuly
Art Glass:
Creativity
in glass

Continued on the next page

the Bible Verses. Each person in the small group contributes a response to each of the five questions. However, sometimes we simply note that we agree with what a group member has already stated for an answer. Other times, I have heard group members say that they hadn't yet considered what another group member has uncovered within the Biblical and they have appreciated the other person's input and insight. This format is affirming while getting the group members to become actively engaged in the Bible Verses. This Bible Study format helps to create a sense of community.

As noted before, Ivy Beckwith suggests that "We must open up our hearts and eyes to see the insights children bring. We must allow them to have these insights, listen to them, and allow ourselves to learn from them."

Ivy Beckwith says, "The task of the prophetic imagination is to evoke an alternative community that knows it is about different things in different ways from the culture at large.

The prophetic imagination seeks to penetrate our despair so that new feelings can be named and embraced. And it seeks to stun people out of business as usual and to believe a different way is possible. And ultimately to infect God's people with the joy of the kingdom of God—to turn our mourning into dancing and live out the words of the Psalmist that joy comes in the morning..." ... She then concludes by way of suggesting that, "we should be thinking about how to do Children's Ministry in the way of Jesus, taking our children's theological questions and observations seriously and offering them the imaginative blueprint of the very real option of living hopefully in God's kingdom."

The Bible Study format created by the Spears, and presented above in this discussion, could be used by High School aged students and anyone older. Younger children are accustomed to using forms of "imaginative play" to help them better understand the world around them.

The Spears suggest that the "Tests for Sound Bible Study Methods" should include:

First, a Bible study method should recognize personal experience as a central part of our spiritual lives.

Second, a Bible study method should recognize the equality of all believers in the study process. It should remove the centrality of an authority figure as leader, thereby affirming that the Spirit works through everyone out of the open silence of even the few seekers gathered together.

Third, a Bible study method should recognize the availability of continuing revelation of God in our spiritual lives.

Fourth, a Bible study method should affirm the connection of the Biblical witness to our lives in our present world.

It is a matter of connecting the Bible Stories to our own lived experience so that we can expand our knowledge and continue to growth in our faith traditions. For children, we must allow them to explore and become personally involved with a Bible story so that they can apply their natural imaginative play skills.

This system should work well for all Christian traditions and it holds a greater potential for allowing members from different Christian denominations to study the Bible together as we seek a path toward Christian Unity that is guided by our Divine Creator and that Holy Light we call God. ~ M.J. Glauber



Less Talk, More Action

In my town, children and youth are looking for people with mischief in their eyes, people willing to say "yes" to the active pursuit of love.

By Mark Yaconelli, August 01, 2013

Note: This article is part of a special Patheos Symposium, **Passing on the Faith: Teaching**

Continued on the next page

the Next Generation. Read more perspectives here: <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Passing-on-the-Faith/Less-Talk-More-Action-Mark-Yaconelli-08-02-2013.html>

So much of religious education is abstract—stories, beliefs, ideas about how life works. Meanwhile youth long for experience. They long to *do* something. If we could listen to the restless yearning hidden within the hearts of the young, we might hear something like, "No more talk of love. No more tales of suffering. No more cautionary fables. Give me someone to kiss. Give me a road to walk. Give me ashes to grieve. Help me make my own regrets." This kind of raw desire is troubling to parents and manipulated by advertisers, and yet it's exactly this honest ache for life and relationship that Christian communities should cultivate and address.

What my children want from religious communities are opportunities for the direct exploration of real living. They don't want to talk about God, they want to live God. They don't want to hear about great deeds, they want to be asked to do great deeds. For religious communities to aid the spiritual growth of young people in the future, they need to find ways to encourage, bless, train, and support young people in the active pursuit of real life. It is in that pursuit that God is discovered.

The youth of this age carry the same hurt and prayer and visions and spiritual ache that all of us harbored when we were young. They long to fall in love. They long to discover and pursue and develop their own gifts. They long to be overcome by the Great Mystery we call "God." They long to be seen and known, accepted and celebrated by people with warm hearts. Although the culture shifts and technologies invade, the desires of children and youth remain the same.

The challenge for me, and the struggle for those called to tend the spiritual essence of children and adolescents, is to remember what we know—remember what is needed. Young

..practices
that heal
suffering..

people are looking for living people who take the soul's desires seriously. They are looking for people who care about what matters; people struggling to pursue loving relationships (with God, others, enemies, self); people willing to struggle for freedom and healing; people willing to risk new forms of living that resist the frantic, isolating, and violent culture that surrounds us.

In my town children and youth are looking for people with mischief in their eyes, people willing to say "yes" to the active pursuit of love. Four examples of what this might look like from my own town, none of which were initiated by local youth ministries:

Overwhelmed with worry and sadness following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, a group of local adults invited eight Haitian middle and high school students (as well as other interested students) to spend a weekend exploring a Christian approach to suffering.

Thirty students signed up. For two days we experimented with various practices that heal suffering (silence, prayer, singing, art, storytelling, solitude). The final night the kids held a prayer vigil that lasted into the wee hours of the morning.

For over twenty years two members from my church have volunteered with Witness for Peace, accompanying families and communities in Nicaragua and Honduras who face persecution. On one trip they invited youth and families with children to join them. Two youth from our community and three families participated. These trips continue.

Upset by the loss of salmon in our local rivers, a college woman in town began an art project to raise awareness and funds to help the salmon. A church member invited this young woman to speak about her project in worship. At the end of her presentation the speaker invited the children and youth of the church to help her create the public art protest. Twenty teens and children signed up and the church created

Bergamot



MJG©

youth and children classes to help prepare them understand and prepare for the event.

A former theater teacher in our church asked a local teenage girl if she might write a play for a church Christmas pageant. She did and the teacher helped her put it on. On the night of auditions, a woman in our church brought in a young teenage boy whom she had heard singing around her neighborhood. The boy became the primary singer in the play. The show (with a hard hitting message on the suffering of military families) was a hit and the boy now sings regularly at church and community events.

What real activities can churches and religious teachers do with youth and children? How can we help the children and youth of our town live out the faith first, and then learn the theology and beliefs second? It begins with people listening to the yearnings and needs of the young and then prayerfully, imaginatively, and even courageously responding.

Implications for Interchurch Families:

Mark Yaconelli observes that “it’s exactly this honest ache for life and relationship that Christian communities should cultivate and

address” in our religious formation classes for youths. “They are looking for people who care about what matters; people struggling to pursue loving relationships (with God, others, enemies, self); people willing to struggle for freedom and healing; people willing to risk new forms of living that resist the frantic, isolating, and violent culture that surrounds us.” Yaconelli points out that “What our children want from religious communities are opportunities for the direct exploration of real living. They don’t want to talk about God, they want to live God.” An experiential format for living God is needed, but how will that look?

Yaconelli indicates that “for religious communities to aid the spiritual growth of young people in the future, they need to find ways to encourage, bless, train, and support young people in the active pursuit of real life. It is in that pursuit that God is discovered.” Youths don’t want a lecture and lectures simply won’t work if we are to engage youth in our faith traditions. Yaconelli encourages religious communities to engage youths actively so that they may learn by doing. In this way, the adults serve more as a support system helping youths to find answers to the questions that face them most directly in their lives. Yaconelli observes that youths, “long to discover and pursue and develop their own gifts. They long to be overcome by the Great Mystery we call “God.” They long to be seen and known, accepted and celebrated by people with warm

hearts. Although the culture shifts and technologies invade, the desires of children and youth remain the same.” Of course, technology and the way we use media has changed rapidly and it is in a constant state of change, but the point that Yaconelli is making is that the needs of youth are consistent from generation to generation and through the centuries.

We must remember as adults working with youth that what we do must be initiated by the youth themselves. Once that is established then, we, as the adults in the religious community may ask questions to help to guide the youth as they delve into trying to find a better understanding of the world we live in at this time and help the youths to find Bible stories that also address these experiences so that they may be able to find a universal truth.

No matter what religious tradition we may come from and which traditions we encourage in our homes, in our own Domestic Churches, we all live in the same American cultural. We are most likely exposed to the same media inputs and information simply because we live in the same country.

Within Yaconelli’s suggestions for how we should proceed forward, there is great potential for creating dialog across historically religiously divided denominational traditions that is respectful of our differences and the insight our varied life experiences bring to each of us. I find a sense of hope in the path that Yaconelli suggests for passing on our faith traditions.

~ M.J. Glauber



My Six Essentials for Passing on the Faith

What we want to implant is an easy and natural affection for the holy, an inherent

connectedness to an on-going story, and a sense of membership within a sustaining community that is always there to hold all of us as well as demand some things of us.

By Phyllis Tickle, August 01, 2013

Note: This article is part of a special Patheos Symposium, **Passing on the Faith: Teaching the Next Generation**. Read more perspectives here: <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Passing-on-the-Faith/Six-Essentials-Phyllis-Tickle-08-02-2013.html>

Train up a child in the way s/he shall go etc., etc. may be the oldest cliché that parents are subjected to in this world. It certainly is the most annoying when it is laid upon one by an overweening grandparent. Yet there is— isn't there always!—a rock-solid truth in the whole thing.

In this case, what it means is that the **first** thing we must do in teaching and forming our children is to become dreadfully honest with ourselves and our mates and/or extended family about just how Christian we want this youngster to be and in what ways.

Most of us, if we're honest, eventually conclude this preliminary work by realizing that what we really want to form is not so much a code of conduct, though that is obviously important, as it is an intimacy with God and the things of God. What we want to implant is an easy and natural affection for the holy, an inherent connectedness to an on-going story, and a sense of membership within a sustaining community that, being larger than any of us, is always there to hold all of us as well as demand some things of us.

And to do these things, the **second** step is to pray earnestly together as parents and/or extended family and without the children present, for them and for the progress of their souls. That, too, seems like a no-brainer, but it is an adult or mentoring habit often overlooked and almost never routinized in the press of other, more immediate duties.

Continued on the next page

The **third** on my short list of a half-dozen essentials is a bit easier to accomplish. Children respond (as do we all) to the very business of routine, and here the flow of the week itself helps.

Judaism long ago discovered the informing necessity not just of observing Sabbath...really observing it, that is...but also of wrapping it in prayerful preparation and prayerful conclusion. What that translates to for us is a time of evening prayer as a family on the eve of Sabbath and again on the evening of the Sabbath itself, the former to be a time of preparation for communal worship, and the latter to be a time of family thanksgiving for having been granted the gift thereof.

The **fourth** in my short-list of essentials is storytelling, but there is a trick here, too. It is a good and joyful thing to read to children (or watch a DVD rendition thereof with them), but it is not nearly as instructive as is the business of telling them a story without benefit of books or discs. Implied in telling is the authenticity of what is being told. The underlying message is that this story matters. It matters because Daddy or Grand-daddy or Uncle Bill knows it all the way through. It matters because Mama or Granny or Aunt Sue loves it enough to know exactly what happens next. Of course, what that also means—and this is the source of the child's perception of authenticity—is that Daddy and Mama et al. have valued this story enough to know it in detail and have also thought about it before telling it. What telling rather than reading or watching also means, of course, is that the stories of the faith can be pulled out spontaneously when their words and plot lines are apropos of some conversation or situation other than bedtime.



ART, a sculpture, at the Joslyn Museum, Omaha

MJG©

All of that is to say that I suspect that of all the things we do in shaping our children in the faith, it is the storytelling that is most formative over the long years of their adult lives.

I also think (which is far beyond "I suspect," obviously) that one of the things we as mentoring Christians need most urgently to turn our energies toward is adult classes in teaching each other how to be good storytellers and then in learning in detail the stories of both the Hebrew and the Christian scriptures that most need our telling.

The **fifth** thing in my short-list of ways and means is music. In religion, it is, always and finally, the music that instructs the spirit and rides with it through the years. If we need adult classes in the stories of the faith and the art of their telling, then just as surely we need training sessions with one another about the beloved songs that are our heritage, about intentional ways to bring them seamlessly into domestic life, about family song fests, certainly, but even more about tunes woven artlessly into the mundane business of our lives together.

And last in my half-dozen is something even more basic than storytelling and singing.

That is, if there is anything that appeals to a child more than those, it is food. In fact, food manages to leave a fairly lasting impression on all of us, and this is especially true of food that is tied, on an on-going basis, to special events.

We hear "Easter" and think "eggs," whether we want to or not. Of course, the other side of that associative process is that, because we all love Christmas candy, when we see a peppermint stick, we inevitably think "Christmas" whether it's Christmas or not. Our forebears in the faith used to use that double reinforcement of food and event more or less un-self-consciously; but it is an art, a grace, and a legitimate ploy that we have somehow lost or misplaced along the way.

The story of the Church herself, the grand narrative of the beloved community and the body of Christ on earth, is tied to more events than Christmas and Easter.

It is tied to Shrove Tuesday with its pancakes for supper and the tale behind the pancakes.

It is tied to a lovely cake in early January from the midst of which colored ribbons rise and trail along the sides, just waiting for the lucky child who will be the one to pull out the wondrous streamer with the tiny, tiny baby doll attached....just waiting for the happy remembrance of this day when Mary and Joseph took their baby son to the Temple and gave him there, before the priest, his Holy Name of Jesus.

It is cinnamon buns on Good Friday, bearing their cross as they come to us bittersweet in their remembrance, etc.

These, then, are for me the sacred half-dozen from which all other efforts and intentions and programs must depend.

Small and domestic though they may be, it is nonetheless by means of them that we begin to instill into the young the faith of our fathers and mothers.

And of course, it is by the employment of them for our children that we teach and renew ourselves, even as we are teaching them.

Implications for Interchurch Families

Phyllis Tickle notes the importance of being able to have "an intimacy with God and the things of God." All of us wish for this for ourselves and for our children.

Tickle asks us not to forget our role as mentor. She notes that children thrive in routine and that our own routine should wrap our religious observations with prayerful preparation and a prayerful conclusion. She points out that telling stories are very important especially when those stories are very important to us. Our enthusiasm for the stories we tell are "contagious." The more spontaneous a story is, the more powerful it can be for conveying a message, the message we want our children to hear. Tickle suggests that adults in any church community should be focusing on improving their story telling skills. Then Tickle points out that connecting our religious experience with music and our active participation in that church music is very effective. She encourages singing. Tickle encourages us to tie the events of the church calendar year, the history of the church with activities beyond Easter and Christmas that reinforce our denominational traditions and beliefs as Christians.

Phyllis Tickle says that "Small and domestic though they may be" (such as eating specific foods for various important events during the church calendar year), it is nonetheless by means of them that we begin to instill into the young the faith of our fathers and mothers. And of course, it is by the employment of them for our children that we teach and renew ourselves, even as we are teaching them." Interchurch Families will recognize that what Phyllis Tickle is talking about has to do specifically with our understanding of what Domestic Church, that is Our Little Church of our Home, means for us as Interchurch Families. This is how we pass on the faith to the next generation as interchurch

families. Of course, most Christians, and actually, also people from other religious traditions most likely also have some form of a Domestic Church, that is their own Little Church of the Home, being actively practiced in their homes too.

In this way, Interchurch Families are like all other families. The difference is that as Interchurch Families we seek to encourage the faith of our spouse while we continue to follow our own spiritual growth. Our children have become bi-lingual in an interchurch sense because interchurch children often can transition smoothly from one of their parent's church to the other.

The issue of being able to share communion, that is the Holy Eucharist, together as a family in each of our churches continues to be an issue because we often feel rejected by the same church that nurtures our spouse and even our children. Nobody likes to feel rejected. Any reason given for why we, as Christians, while attending a eucharistic mass or service held in another Christian denomination's church building can receive the eucharist doesn't seem like we are being shown the kind of love that Christ wished for us as one body of believers.

The Vatican Document which we often simply call "the Ecumenical Directory" provides for and allows other Christians to take communion, to receive the host, by exception. Many interchurch families believe that we live a life that is exceptional; this concern and a feeling of being repeatedly rejected are often verbalized by Interchurch Couples. This is one advance forward that we, interchurch families, wish to see happen as we work toward our shared goal of Christian Unity. ~ M.J. Glauber

+++++

Considering How To Be Centered On That of God

"Extremism is a centrifugal force. It constantly seeks to draw what is in the center out toward the edges. It pulls societies, communities, apart.

It divides through the pressure of fear. It seduces through suspicion.

Love is a gravitational force. It holds the center together.

Even in the fast spin of change and diversity, it keeps community possible.

It unifies opposites. It works through shared respect.

The physics of faith is at work around us each day.

We can be pulled to the edges or we can hold the center."

~ The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston,
Choctaw

+++++

The Ecumenical Corner: Fr. Ernest

Falardeau, SSS (July 2013)

Report on the National Workshop on Christian Unity 2013

This year's National Workshop on Christian Unity, an annual meeting of networks of ecumenical representatives from Catholic and Protestant dioceses, was held from Monday, April 8-11 in Columbus, Ohio. These workshops began shortly after the Second Vatican Council and continue to update those responsible for promoting the unity of Christians at the state and local levels. The National Council of Churches and directors of agencies from across the country are participants, as well as bishops and others responsible for continuing progress work toward the goal of visible unity.

This year's workshop again explored the impact of the Second Vatican Council on the Catholic Church and other Christian churches. The keynote speaker for the Tuesday morning Plenary Session, Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker (United Methodist) explained the impact of the document on Liturgy (Sacrum Concilium) on the Catholic Church and on Protestant communions, and developments since the Council. She stressed the influence of Vatican II and the Liturgical Movement on all Christian churches of the West.

The National Workshop on Christian Unity and The Ecumenical Advocacy Days are two annual events that allow Christians to work together in the United States

FRIDAY, MARCH 21 – MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2014

DOUBLETREE HOTEL, CRYSTAL CITY, VIRGINIA | WASHINGTON, D.C.

Come to the 12th annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days and join hundreds of other Christians in **“Resisting Violence, Building Peace.”** Guided by the image of Jesus weeping over a capital city that turned from the true way of peace (Luke 19:41-42), we will expose the violence that pervades our culture and world: **THEME: Jesus Weeps – Resisting Violence, Building Peace**

THEME BACKGROUND for 2014 Ecumenical Advocacy Days ~ Today we too weep over the culture of violence that impacts our cities, our nations and families, which too often turn from ways of peace. Violence in its various manifestations impacts our lives in direct and indirect ways. Around the world, families are forced from their homes; they cower from bombs and dodge land-mines. Official government policies maintain interrogation practices that amount to torture, wars rage around the world, and weapons manufacturing is a multi-billion dollar industry. Millions endure abuse at the hands of those whom they expect to trust, and many are traded for labor and sex as if they are simply commodities. Lenient gun rules allow horrific massacres to occur on a shockingly regular basis and policy makers lack the political will to change course. Economic systems perpetuate cycles of poverty and disempowerment that prove violent to the human condition, and ecological systems are threatened and destroyed for the sake of monetary profit and temporary human comfort.

Eucharistic Liturgies

A special feature this year was the Eucharistic Liturgy. For the first time all the participants were encouraged to attend the same Eucharistic Liturgy together. On Tuesday evening the Catholic Mass was celebrated at St. Joseph’s Church and on Wednesday evening an Episcopal Eucharistic Liturgy was celebrated at Trinity Episcopal Church. In the early years of the National Workshop on Christian Unity, each church had its own Eucharistic celebration, usually early in the morning. Having everyone attend the same Liturgy showed visibly the growing unity of the churches. Abbé Couturier, the founder of the Groupe des Dombes near Lyon, France in the late 1930’s, was convinced that such sharing of prayer together with other Christians, with due regard for church rules, would give visibility to the unity we seek and strengthen our efforts to promote the unity Jesus Christ desires.

Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS.
(reprinted with permission)

+++++

**Save the Dates for the NWCU
April 28 to May 1, 2014
2014 Workshop in
Albuquerque, New Mexico
at the Hyatt Regency - Albuquerque**

<http://nwcu.org/>

+++++

Save the dates for the

2014

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

The ARK, a Publication of the American Association of Interchurch Families
Volume 24; Edition 4
October, November and December 2013



Our culture and media is saturated with images and stories of violence. If we look at the statistics, we indeed have ample cause to weep:

- *Nearly 3,000 children in the U.S. killed by guns each year;*
- *A quarter of U.S. women experiencing domestic abuse at some point in their lives;*
- *A decade of war, nearly 1,000 civilians killed by drones, and Pentagon spending dominating our federal budget over poverty protections, healthy job creation, economic revitalization and true international human security;*
- *More than 45 million refugees worldwide uprooted from their homes by persecution and armed conflict; and*
- *Deadly conflicts over natural resources erupting around the world.*

Despite the many examples of violence in our world, **as people of hope** we are consoled by the promise that “justice and peace shall embrace” (*Psalms 85:10*). This embrace is demonstration that without peace justice is illusory and without justice peace is deceptive. This image is the embodiment of God’s vision for our world- God’s shalom.

Shalom is often translated as “peace,” but its Hebrew roots imply a deeper meaning of peace that goes beyond cessation of violence toward a holistic vision of true security, healing, and restoration involving all areas of social and economic life. It is this vision of “peace with justice,” or “Just Peace” which many of our religious traditions have embraced and continue to strive toward.

The image of an “embrace” in the Psalm also reminds us that our hope is not passive, but active. As people of faith we are called to join with God in this active work and are reminded that justice requires peace-making and that peace requires justice-making. Many of our congregations already work for justice by serving those in need, embracing the stranger, advocating for equality and just economic systems. Others are active in peacemaking efforts and conflict transformation, challenging

the violence of domestic abuse and gun violence, reforming the unjust prison system, or working for U.S. foreign policy that will aid peace in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, or Latin America. All of these efforts are needed and together we must explore the relationship between working for justice and building peace. Throughout the conference, the relationship between justice and peace will be explored in four areas:

- ***Peace in the Community-*** *So that all may live free from fear (Micah 4:4)*
- ***Peace with the Earth -*** *So that life is sustained*
- ***Peace in the Marketplace-*** *So that all may live with dignity*
- ***Peace among the Peoples –*** *So that human lives are protected**

Through prayer, worship, speakers, workshops and advocacy training we will discover a faith-based vision for national policies that will “guide our feet into the path of peace” (*Luke 1:79*). This “Path of Peace,” much like the life of John the Baptist referenced in the context of this passage, will require us to embrace a path not only of personal transformation, repentance, and forgiveness – but a vision for how these principles can take root in the social and political realities of our world. Like John, we are called to preach (through words and action) that vision of repentance, and prepare the way for God’s reign of justice and true peace to enter our world. As the Body of Christ today, we will take these messages of love, repentance, and hope with us as we go to Capitol Hill on Monday’s Lobby Day to call for change in public policy and together lift up a holistic vision of a more just and peaceful world. **This formulation is from the World Council of Churches’ “Ecumenical Call to Just Peace” issued prior to its International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in 2011.*

<http://advocacydays.org/2014-resisting-violence-building-peace/>

Interchurch Couple Celebrates their 75th Wedding Anniversary

Reprinted with Permission from Marnie McAllister and "The Record" <http://therecordarchlou.wordpress.com/2013/09/26/couple-to-mark-75-years-of-marriage/>

Couple to mark 75 years of marriage

Posted by [The Record](#) on [September 26, 2013](#) in [Archdiocesan News](#)

By Marnie McAllister, Record Assistant Editor



© Marnie McAllister

Cecil and Mary Irene Semones reminisced about their 72 years of marriage in their Springhurst home Sept. 23. (Record Photo by Marnie McAllister)

Mary Irene and Cecil Semones have encountered tremendous challenges during more than 72 years together. They weathered the flood of 1937, World War II and the death of a child.

They are among about 150 couples being honored by the Archdiocese of Louisville for milestone wedding anniversaries this year. The archdiocese holds a special annual Mass to honor couples marking 30, 40, 50 and 60 or more years of marriage. This year's celebration is set for 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 29, at the Cathedral of the Assumption. The Semones were married nearly 75 years ago on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 26, 1938, in

the vestibule of the old St. George Church. Both were 20 years old and prepared to face life together, come what may.

By that time, they had already experienced the Great Flood of 1937 together. Their families lived on the same street in West Louisville and were shuffled to various shelters together during the 10-day evacuation, Irene Semones, the former Mary Irene Bartley, recalled during an interview at their home on Sept. 23.

"I kind of enjoyed it," she said, smiling at her husband. "He was with me." Cecil Semones, who was less gregarious than his wife during the interview, noted, "I could reach over and grab her hand from the cot I was lying on."

They were quick to add that their families were close at hand, too.

The couple no longer clearly remember the things so often romanticized in films — the first date, the proposal, or even why they liked each other to begin with. They've made a 75-year marriage a good one by respecting each other, they said.

Respect is especially important, they noted, because she is Catholic and he is Baptist. Both have faithfully practiced their own traditions these 75 years.

"We respect each other and we respect each other's churches," said Cecil Semones. "I'm sure there was some stress, but we overlooked it. "When we were married, the priest asked me to promise not to break (his wife's) relationship with the church," he noted. "I promised, which was kind of lonely for me. But I kept my promise."

They started a family soon after their wedding but lost their first child, a son they named Donnie, when he was just eight months old. When their second son, Jerry, was eight months old, Cecil Semones was drafted into the Army. He served in Europe during World War II as a company clerk in the 397th Infantry Division.

Continued on the next page

Interchurch Couple Celebrates their 72 th Wedding Anniversary (continued from the previous page)

“We had 194 men,” he said he recalls. “I was eight to 20 miles from the front lines (during most of the war). Our company was in three battles.” During the war, Irene Semones lived in a second floor apartment with her baby Jerry and a photo of her husband. When he returned after three years at war, his son was, by then, a toddler. “He didn’t remember his dad when he came home,” Irene Semones recalled. “He said, ‘That’s not my dad; there’s my dad.’ And he pointed at the picture.”

The couple sent their children, Donna and Jerry, to Catholic schools. Cecil Semones attended Baptist services while his family attended Mass each Sunday.

Later in life, when the children were grown and Mr. Semones’ eyesight began to deteriorate, Mrs. Semones drove the car and together they attended her church, St. Margaret Mary, on Saturday evenings. Then they attended services at Westport Road Baptist Church together on Sundays. Now neither drives, but they watch Mass of the Air and a Baptist service on Sundays.

Their early years, especially the war years, were lonely and stressful times, Irene Semones said. But now they’re part of a lifetime of memories that serve as examples to their children and 14 grandchildren.

“Dad was a very good provider and always took care of his family first. And she was a very good mom. They were really a team I think,” said Jerry Semones, who celebrated his 48th wedding anniversary on Sept. 11. He and his wife, Marita, are members of St. Gabriel Church. “I’ve always been impressed by the longevity of their marriage. They’ve presented the example that it’s something you have to work through.”

“They are great role models for us,” said Donna Weber, who married her husband Steve more than 42 years ago. They are members of St. Patrick Church. Donna Webber and her brother said that religion — and the differences in their parents’ religion — always interested them.



Cecil and Mary Irene Semones, seated, are pictured with their children, Jerry Semones and his wife Marita, left, and Donna Webber and her husband Steve, during an interview Sept. 23. (Record Photo by Marnie McAllister)

“I used to love talking religion around the table,” she noted. “It gave me a different perspective on religion. I remember Dad telling us, you don’t have to agree with another person’s religion, but you have to respect them.”

Irene and Cecil Semones said they never considered the difference in their religions a substantial stumbling block. “Our religion is quite a bit alike,” said Irene Semones, matter-of-factly. “We believe in Jesus Christ, that he died on a cross for our sins.”

Implications for Interchurch Families:

Here is the lived example of one interchurch family and of a married couple who have lived as an interchurch couple for 72 years. Many marriages in the USA end in divorce. Also, today couples are also opting simply not to marry, but to co-habitate and raise children. Then we have this lived example of a deeply spiritual interchurch family that emphasized the concept of respect for other people’s religion and religious beliefs. The key word that we may all take from their lived example is “Respect” because that seems to have been a foundational building block for a successful interchurch marriage. ~ M.J. Glauber

Tuesday, November 26, 2013 -

The Diane Rheem Show on NPR ~ Religious Traditions And Challenges For Interfaith Families

Nearly a quarter of Americans attend religious services of more than one faith or denomination. More than one-third are now married to a person of a different religion. As American society becomes more open and tolerant of diversity, a growing number of interfaith couples are raising children in both religions. They say this encourages open-mindedness and gives extended family equal weight. But others caution that these mixed-marriages can be strained by conflict over religious practices and are more prone to divorce. As the holiday season approaches, a look at the growing trend of interfaith marriage and what it means for family life.

Guests

Alan Cooperman deputy director, Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project.

Susan Katz Miller journalist, former reporter for Newsweek and author of "Being Both: Embracing Two Religions in One Interfaith Family."

Naomi Schafer Riley former editor, The Wall Street Journal and author of "'Til Faith Do Us Part: How Interfaith Marriage is Transforming America."

Related Links

["Interfaith Unions: A Mixed](#)

[Blessing" by Naomi Schaefer Riley \(NYTimes Op-Ed\)](#)

["The Case for Raising Your Child with Two Religions" by Susan Katz Miller \(TIME\)](#)

[Pew Research Center on Religion and Public Life](#)

Related Items

[Being Both: Embracing Two Religions in One Interfaith Family](#)

['Til Faith Do Us Part: How Interfaith Marriage is Transforming America](#)

Source

<http://thedianerehmsshow.org/shows/2013-11-26/interfaith-marriage-america> (Please listen to this program on line. ARK readers would like to hear your stories about your own lived experience of being interchurch.)

Implications for Interchurch Families and Ecumenists:

In this segment from the Diane Rheem radio program, we are cautioned not to generalize, but to ask people what their actual beliefs may be. I would encourage you to listen to this segment online now and to read the comments, some of which are helpful and others which show the complete unawareness that some people still have regarding what it is like to marry across traditional religious divides. We see great potential in interchurch families and the need for their proper pastoral care especially at this point in history.

Raising interfaith children is compared to raising bi-lingual children. Will those children be confused? Callers who have been raised in an interfaith

family see themselves as peace makers and bridge builders. We have observed that the children raised in two church traditions can flow from one to the other and explain the customs and rules with greater understanding and clarity than many clergy simply because they have lived as interchurch.

Callers to the radio program indicate that religious beliefs didn't factor into being problematic for their families. How money is spent did factor in as a problem? We have discussed this in the past. Tithing to two church denominations can be a real problem. This becomes especially highlighted when the mother may be staying at home with children and has no income of her own, but who wishes to continue to be faithful in her religious tradition of her family of origin.

One of the guests noted that our religious beliefs are malleable and that they evolve over our life time.

Learning about the religious tradition and beliefs of the spouse's religion seems to be an essential component for the success of interfaith families/couples.

The challenges facing interfaith families is a bit different from those that interchurch families must face.

It is acknowledged that when couples marry across historic religious divisions that the couples usually first get to know each other before the topic of religion is even addressed. Often the couple is already attached and committed to each other before their personal faith traditions even enter into their

Continued on the next page

own discussions; this was pointed out on the radio program. It would seem then that remote marriage preparation is imperative; the fact that interchurch/interfaith marriages happen and are happening at what may be an increasing rate in the USA should be a topic that is considered by faith communities so that those communities may be pastorally supportive of interchurch/interfaith couples. On the radio program, it was pointed out that interfaith/interchurch couples can manage their own domestic church and personal spirituality within their home quite well. The problems may arise when the interchurch/interfaith couple tries to become part of their denomination of origin, but as an interchurch/interfaith couple in this newly formed interchurch/interfaith marriage. They have found that the churches haven't yet caught up so that they can be pastorally helpful to them at one of the most crucial and important phases of their lives.

When the couple encounters two non-supportive communities, what realistic choices do potential interchurch couples face at that point? Have the churches failed them at the point in their lives when they most need pastoral care?

The choices that we have observed is that some couples simply drop out from being affiliated to any denomination at all because it just seems so much simpler for them. This may seem to be the preferred option at this time. Others may choose a neutral church or what may seem to be a neutral church for them as a couple so that they can worship together as a family.

Some couples choose to convert. The conversion rates seem to be 50-50 as to which denomination will be the choice for conversion. We have also observed that in some cases these conversions are in name only to please a spouse and their family who believe that the conversion is essential.

Some couples try to become what is known as interchurch. Each spouse remains active in their own tradition. Many couples indicate the pain they feel when their spouse is rejected by their own church. This mostly occurs around the sharing of communion. Not all churches allow non-members to have communion; it feels like a rejection and to be an act that is inhospitable. It seems to affect the member spouse the most when they see their spouse being rejected by their own church.

Some interchurch couples have observed that because the religious practices are different in the other spouse's family that this may give the impression that the other family isn't as religious. Being different doesn't mean being less. This is a topic that needs to be explored further. One Protestant pastor told us that she simply tells the young couple who is coming in for marriage preparation that they should select the religion of the more devout parent in which to raise their future children; this is horrible advice because it then sets up a great debate where none should exist and prevents the couple from exploring the potential of being interchurch. Couples, all couples, need to be equal partners if the marriage is to be a healthy relationship.

In the radio program, it was brought up that interfaith/interchurch marriages are on the

rise and will continue to be a predominant factor in the religious landscape in the USA well into the future. It would seem then that it would be in the best interest of our American religious institutions that they seek the best practices for the proper pastoral care of interchurch/interfaith families.

As a spouse in an interchurch marriage of 40 years, I can assure you that the pastoral care of interchurch families has yet to be considered adequately. Any difficulties that we may have encountered 40 years ago when we chose to marry seem to still exist or to have increased which seems strange to us. Remote marriage preparation, for the church community, is needed that takes into consideration how the community should support the married couple.

The churches shouldn't become the thorn in the side of the interchurch couple but the pastoral care givers and support for the gifts that these couples may have so that their gifts as peacemakers and bridge builders can be nurtured by both denominations of origin. The problem isn't that two people love each other across what has been a great historic division, but that the churches haven't reached out to support these interchurch couples so that the newly formed family can reach their full potential as the peace makers and bridge builders which we believe that God has required of us by God's role in bringing us together to become one interchurch family.

~ M.J. Glauber

John 17:21 (ESV)

21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us,..... http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/That_they_all_may_be_one

Many Thanks !!!

We would like to express our gratitude to those people who have made this edition of the ARK possible:

We give thanks for:

the work of Dr. Martin E. Marty; the work of Myriam Renaud, who is a Ph.D. Candidate in Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School; The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, Choctaw and for all of our American First Nations, Indian Tribes; the work of the AAIF Officers who volunteer their time and efforts for AAIF; the hymns that nurture us spiritually; the blog site at <http://www.Patheos.com/Topics/Passing-On-The-Faith/>; the insight of Rabbi Brad Hirschfield; the work of Ivy Beckwith; the work of Mark Yaconelli; the work of Phyllis Tickle; the on-going ecumenical work of Father Ernest Falardeau, SSS; for "The Ecumenical Corner" by Fr. Ernest Falardeau, SSS and his Report on the National Workshop on Christian Unity 2013; the annual efforts of the Ecumenical Advocacy Days; the National Workshops on Christian Unity where dialogue and worship occur; for the ecumenical work of Father George Kilcourse; for "The Record" Newspaper in Louisville, KY, for Marnie McAllister's work; For NPR and Diane Rheem; for the American Association of Interchurch Families; for the Interchurch Families International Network; for the website created and maintained by Ray Temmerman; for our families who encourage and nurture us, for my husband, Peter, whose support and encouragement allow me to work as a volunteer editor of the ARK.

~ M.J. Glauber

The ARK,
a Publication of the
American Association
of Interchurch Families;

Volume 24; Edition 4;

**October, November,
December 2013**

**AAIF IS A NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION,
REGISTERED IN THE
STATE OF NEBRASKA**

**International Standard
Serial Number:
ISSN 1943-6467 (print)
ISSN 2160-682X (online)**

THE ARK,

The ARK© Copyright 2013 AAIF all rights reserved

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF INTERCHURCH FAMILIES

MARY JANE GLAUBER, VOLUNTEER & SERVANT ARK EDITOR

THEARK.AAIFPUBLICATION@GMAIL.COM



TO:

The ARK,
a Publication of the American Association of Interchurch Families
Volume 24; Edition 3 October, November & December 2013

**AAIF IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION,
REGISTERED IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA**

**International Standard Serial Number: ISSN 1943-6467 (print)
ISSN 2160-682X (online)**

**The ARK©
Copyright 2013
AAIF all rights reserved**