



April, 2007



North American
Academy of Ecumenists

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online:**

See our website
www.naae.net

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Interpreting the Scriptures Together: Seeking the Visible Unity of the Church

The 2007 Annual Meeting of the North American Academy of Ecumenists will be held at Queens House Retreat and Renewal Centre (www.queenshouse.org), September 28-30, 2007, in Saskatoon, SK, Canada.

The theme of the meeting will focus on the quest and challenges of identifying a common ecumenical hermeneutic. The meeting uses as its backdrop some of the groundbreaking interpretative work being done internationally.



The keynote presenter is Beverly Roberts Gaventa, Princeton Seminary's Helen

H.P. Manson Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Exegesis. Dr. Gaventa specializes in the Pauline epistles, and literary and theological interpretation of Luke-Acts. She holds an M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary in New York, a Ph.D. from Duke University. An ordained elder in the Presbyterian Church, she is currently co-editing the *New Interpreter's Commentary on the Bible* for Abingdon Press.

Dr William Tabbernee, Stephen J. England Distinguished Professor of the History of Christianity and President of Phillips Theological Seminary will give the response to the keynote address. Dr Tabbernee holds degrees from Melbourne College of Divinity, Yale University, and the University of Melbourne. He teaches Church History, specializing in the history of Christianity up to the Reformation. He also co-

directs an archaeological surface survey in Turkey exploring the ancient sites of settlements associated with an early Christian movement named Montanism.



Ordained in the Churches of Christ in Australia, he is a past president of the North American Patristics Society and served on the World Council of Churches Commission on Faith and Order for more than twenty years. He currently co-moderates the Disciples of Christ/Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue.

This area is for mailing address



2006 Gathering of the North American Academy of Ecumenists

Minneapolis, MN was the venue for the September 2006 conference of the North American Academy of Ecumenists. "The Eucharist: Sign and Source of Unity?" as theme elicited a multilateral exchange which included Roman Catholics, Lutheran and Orthodox speakers, and a panel of Protestants from churches with agreements of interim eucharistic sharing. From the perspective of one participant, this report highlights the theme and discussions of the three-day gathering.

The plenary address was given by the Rev. Dr. James Massa, Executive Director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs. Fr. Massa opened his presentation with the late John Paul II's reference to the Christian Eucharist happening "on the altar of the world" and closed it with a suggestion that such an image found a certain realization in the late pope's funeral. Drawing attention to the Eucharist as defining the Church's essence, and therefore its unity, Massa reviewed an ecclesiological debate that took place between the two cardinal theologians, Joseph Ratzinger and Walter Kasper, during the years 1999-2002. At the heart of this debate was the question whether and how the one universal Church precedes ontologically and temporally the many particular churches. Ratzinger's position, says Massa, preserves "Church as sacrament" as the underlying ecclesial model that best preserves the central value of unity. Kasper's argument, on the other hand, upholds the notion of the one Church existing *in and from* the many churches, conveying a foundational model based on the ancient idea of inter-church fellowship (*communio* or *koinonia*). After summarising key points of agreement and disagreement between Ratzinger and Kasper, Massa identified some implications of the debate for ecumenical dialogue. First is the problem of ecclesiological relativism, which can be obviated only when partners in dialogue remain steadfastly committed to doctrinal reconciliation and the goal of sacramental fellowship. Second is the *perichoresis* between the one Church and the many churches, which, as Massa contends, is a relation characteristic not of the Church at its beginning, but of the Church in the period from Pentecost to Parousia. Massa referred to full communion

agreements among some Protestant churches as possible signs of *perichoresis*. Before concluding, Massa referred to the Rev. Dr. Paul McPartlan's idea that an understanding of the Church of the heavenly kingdom in Vatican II's *Lumen gentium* may help to transcend the Kasper-Ratzinger dilemma.

Responding to Fr. Massa's address was the Rev. Dr. Paul Schreck, Executive Assistant to the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Dr. Schreck opens with a heartbreak: "Father Massa's lecture", he says, "broke my heart, not because of what he said, but because of what he could not say". Schreck found himself outside and excluded from the Kasper-Ratzinger debate. Because the Roman Catholic Church does not recognise Lutheran churches as 'churches', the

As the Massa-Schreck exchange unfolded, not only were more hearts broken than one Lutheran's. The exchange transformed the Catholic Cardinal debate of yesteryear into an ecumenical dialogue.

cardinals' discussion is an in-house one, referring only to the Roman Catholic Church. And so Schreck raises a neuralgic ecumenical ecclesiological question: 'What would it take to be recognised as church, and what difference would such recognition make?'. The respondent gives no answer but shares his living of the question as a Lutheran, theologian and pastor, and as an ecumenist and interlocutor in the US Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, as is Massa. He appeals to the twofold understanding of unity in the Lutheran confessions: *vera unitas* and *concordia*, which seemingly translated, respectively, in ecumenical terms as unity as gift and unity as calling. *Vera unitas* is grounded in our baptism into Christ as members of his body. *Concordia* is fractured by sin, our failure to be that body for one another. Translating this in terms of the Catholic debate of which Massa speaks, baptismal *koinonia* cannot yet be fully realised in eucharistic communion.

As the Massa-Schreck exchange unfolded, not only were more hearts broken than one Lutheran's. The exchange transformed the Catholic Cardinal debate of yesteryear into an ecumenical dialogue. An Orthodox perspective on the Eucharist as sign and source of unity was given by Dr. Despina Prassas, Assistant Professor at Providence College. Convinced that the 'ecumenical winter' was short-lived, evinced by so much going on ecumenically,

Academy Announces 2007 Essay Contest

Students in seminaries, theological schools and graduate schools of religion are invited to enter an essay contest sponsored by the North American Academy of Ecumenists, based on its annual conference theme:

Interpreting the Scriptures Together: Seeking the Visible Unity of the Church

Prizes for the Winning Essay:

- \$250.00 (USD)
- Travel, accommodation and registration to attend the Annual Conference of the NAAE in Saskatoon, Canada (September 28-30, 2007)
- May be invited to present a précis of the essay.
- The essay will be submitted for consideration by the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*.

Essay Details:

- Length: 20 pages, double-spaced (5,000 words)
- Assessed on the basis of:
 - general content
 - scholarly style
 - appropriateness to the theme
 - use of ecumenical texts
 - advancement of Christian unity
 - publishable quality
- The academic level of entrants will be considered in evaluating submissions.

Submission:

- Email to members@naae.net with a copy to john.huber@ecunet.org. Include a brief biography.
- The deadline is June 15, 2007.

Further Information

Rev. John George Huber
NAAE Essay Contest Coordinator
john.huber@ecunet.org
858-459-8855
www.naae.net

Resources for writing the essay may include:

“Report on Section II: Scripture, Tradition and Traditions,” Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order, Montreal 1963, accessible in Kinnamon, Michael, and Cope, Brian E., eds.

The Ecumenical Movement: a An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997, 139-144.

“Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*),” 1965, Vatican II Documents.

Flesseman-van Leer, Ellen, ed. *The Bible: Its Authority and Interpretation in the Ecumenical Movement.* Faith and Order Paper No. 99. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1980.

Skillrud, Harold C., Stafford, J. Francis, and Martensen, Daniel F., eds. *Scripture and Tradition:*

Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue IX. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.

A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: An Instrument for an Ecumenical Reflection on Hermeneutics.

Faith and Order Paper No. 182. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1998.

Cartwright, Michael G. **“Hermeneutics,”** in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, 2nd edition, edited by Nicholas Lossky, et al. Geneva: WCC Publications.

Weber, Hans-Ruedi. **“The Bible in the Ecumenical Movement,”** in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, Vol 3, 1968-2000. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2004, 195-215.

Bouteneff, Peter and Heller, Dagmar, eds. *Interpreting Together: Essays in Hermentetics.* Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2001.

Mullins, Patrick, O.Carm., STD. **“The Ecumenical Movement and the Transmission of the Word of God in Vatican II’s *Dei Verbum*.** *Ecumenical Trends*, (July/August 2006):1-15. Also available in the October 2005 issue of *The Ecumenical Review*, 406-432.

(Continued from page 2)

Dr. Prassas used the Faith and Order document *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* in a rather creative way as grounding the Orthodox rationale against eucharistic sharing. Referring to BEM’s many approaches to the eucharist (trinitarian, eschatological, ecclesiological and relational), she focused on eucharist as personal and relational. Those who receive eucharist become the image of Christ, said Prassas, quoting Cyril’s understanding that in receiving communion we become partakers of the divine nature. Inherent is the ecclesiological nexus which grounds Orthodox eucharistic theology. Because eucharist is the fulfillment of unity, one receives communion in the ecclesial body to which one belongs, i.e., to which one is in unity.

Giving another perspective was a panel of Protestants who participate in interim eucharistic sharing. Rev. Alyson Barnett-Cowan of the Anglican Church of Canada highlighted union initiatives in Canada and the full communion agreement between the ACC and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Rev. Wells of the United Methodist Church (USA) mentioned the participation of the UMC in Churches Uniting in Christ and also spoke of the recent advance of interim eucharistic sharing between the UMC and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

A closing essay by Ms. Sherri Vallee was read, entitled “The Complexities of Eucharistic Sharing in Homes for the Aged – A Study in Pastoral Ecumenism”. A doctoral candidate at St. Paul University, Ottawa, Ms. Vallee was the winner of the NAAE 2006 essay contest. Her essay has been recommended for publication in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*.

Hosted by its president, Rev. Lynn Lorenzen, at Central Lutheran Church, NAAE 2006 closed with Sunday worship at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Sr. Dr. Lorelei F. Fuchs, SA
The Interchurch Center, New York

Business Meeting, Sept. 24, 2006

Business Meeting
North American Academy of
Ecumenists
Académie des Oecuménistes de
l'Amérique du Nord
Sept. 24, 2006,
DoubleTree Guest Suites Hotel,
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Minutes

- 1) *Call to order*: Lynne Lorenzen called the meeting to order at 8:50 a.m
- 2) *Approval of Minutes*: Motion: that the Minutes of the Meeting of Sept. 24, 2005 be approved. M/S: Russell Meyer/Len Swidler. Passed
- 3) *Report of Executive Committee Meeting*: None
- 4) *President's Remarks*: None
- 5) *Committee Reports*:
 - a) Nominating Committee Report: It was noted that Ron Roberson had submitted his resignation from the post of Vice-President because of staff reductions and increases in workload at the USCCB. The following slate was nominated:
 - i. Class of '06-'09: Liz Mellen, Vince Heier, Adele Brodeur, Ron Roberson. Richard Jeske was nominated from the floor.
 Motion: to accept the slate nominated for this year's class.
 M/S: Lynne Lorenzen/Alyson Barnett-Cowan. Passed
 - ii. Nomination for Vice- President: John Crossin
 Motion: that John Crossin be elected as Vice-President.
 M/S: Liz Mellen/Joe Loya. Passed
 - iii. Nomination for *JES* representative. After some discussion of candidates who live close enough to Philadelphia that their travel costs could be covered by the \$400 allowance for this, the following motion was moved:
 Motion: that the NAAE Executive be asked to propose someone to represent the Academy on the *JES* Board.

M/S: Margaret Thomas/Len Swidler. Passed

- b) Student Scholarship (Boney Scholarship): The Treasurer indicated that there was nothing further to report from what was noted at the last meeting. It was suggested that this award be given to a doctoral student as an encouragement to him/her to join the Academy.
- c) Essay Contest Committee: John Huber's report on the 2006 contest was circulated. Members were encouraged to assist in circulating information about the contest. The difference between doctoral level and masters level submissions was noted and members were informed that henceforth readers would be taking the academic level of entrants into consideration in evaluating submissions.
- d) Journal of Ecumenical Studies: It was noted that Liz Mellen is the incoming Chair of the *JES* Board. One of the major challenges for the Board of the near future is to secure for the journal a stable home base for the future. Until now it has enjoyed the hospitality of Temple University, thanks to Len Swidler, but this situation may change.
- e) Treasurer's Report: (This was an oral report with a printed one to follow in the Fall Newsletter.) At the end of 2005, the NAAE had \$11,000, of which a small amount was owed. Since then about \$4300 has been received in membership and conference registrations. About \$1500 of that will go to *JES* for subscriptions and the rest should more or less cover the costs of the conference, although the precise figures are as yet not known. In short, the Academy is in about the same financial situation as it was in when the books were taken over from David Hurty. The Treasurer has been working with Nick Jesson to set up a system for online membership and conference registration, including payment of fees.

With regard to membership, this has remained more or less constant (50-60) over the past few years. Attempts are being made to encourage people to join the Academy by making additional services available to members: an online membership directory and some sort of Chat Group or List Serve to facilitate conversation between members. Additional ideas would be welcome. Liz Mellen also invited members to suggest ways in which *JES* could be made more useful to them. For the benefit of those who had not attended an NAAE conference before, all present were invited to introduce themselves.

6) *Ongoing Business*:

Venue and Theme of 2007 conference:

- a) Various Canadian venues were considered. Saskatoon was proposed as a good venue and the possibility of coordinating the NAAE meeting with the fall gathering of the network of Western Canadian Ecumenical Officers was raised. The importance of choosing a topic of interest to people from the region of the conference and also to new academics was stressed. Among the topics proposed were the following: Bi-lateral agreements: consensus or conflict?; Hermeneutics: The Bible and Ecumenism; How Can Our Ministries be Reconciled?; Called to be One Church; The Nature and Purpose of the Church (using the WCC F and O. Text); How to Pass the Ecumenical Torch; Theology of the Local Congregation; the Presbyteral Ministry.

7) *Announcements*: Directions given to Sunday Worship in Westminster Presbyterian Church at 10:30 a.m.

8) *New Business*: none

9. *Adjournment*: 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Susan Brown,
 Recording Secretary

**NAAE Finances
Multi-Year Cash Flow Report**

Category Description	3/13/2003- 4/28/2007
INFLOWS	
Conference Fees	25,514.50
Membership Fee	13,007.47
Other Inc	955.29
TOTAL INFLOWS	39,477.26
OUTFLOWS	
Bank Charge	308.61
<i>Board Exp</i>	
JES	534.20
NAAE	408.92
TOTAL Board Exp	943.12
<i>Conference Exp</i>	
Essay Prize	750.00
Essay Travel	1,004.63
Hospitality	253.58
Lodging	18,788.78
Meeting Room	1,697.59
Refunds	1,288.50
Scholarship	114.92
Speaker Exp	2,803.59
Tour	1,078.50
Travel	623.00
TOTAL Conference Exp	28,403.09
JES Subscriptions	8,465.00
<i>Operations</i>	
Office	64.79
Postage & Delivery	481.07
Printing & Reproduction	722.93
Web Site	262.60
TOTAL Operations	1,531.39
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	39,651.21
OVERALL TOTAL CASHFLOW	-173.95
Cash on Hand Balance	\$6812.99

Agenda Set for Saskatoon, Plans Underway for St. Louis

On a conference call on February 28, the NAAE Board firmed up the meeting agenda for Saskatoon and agreed on meeting in St. Louis in 2008 with a focus on ecclesiology. In addition, initial conversation for the 2009 meeting proposed Washington DC with a theme on ethical issues in ecumenism. These discussions reflect a growing intention to invest more in planning ahead for meetings.

Sandra Beardsall, local arrangements coordinator for Saskatoon, reported that the Keynote Speakers (Beverly Gaventa and William Tabbernee) and a tentative Agenda have been confirmed and that the panel of scripture scholars has been organized (including David Jobling, an Old Testament scholar from the United Church of Canada; Mary Ann Beavis, a New Testament scholar from the Anglican Church of Canada and Richard Jeske, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). Lynne Lorenzen and John Crossin will collaborate on a pastoral panel.

Luis Melo noted that a gathering of Roman Catholic Ecumenical Officers from Western Canada (WDECE) would be concluding their conference at Queens House just as the NAAE meeting began. The Board decided to issue a special invitation to WDECE members to attend NAAE at the student/limited income rate. Brochures about the WDECE meetings will include information about the NAAE gathering. The Prairie Centre for Ecumenism will handle registrations. Beardsall and Melo will arrange for the sharing of information between WDECE and NAAE.

Liz Mellen, the new chair of the board for the Journal of Ecumenical Studies, urged that NAAE assume greater editorial agency for getting conference presentations submitted to *JES*. She suggested that we

restructure the Board executive so that someone function as Program Chair prior to becoming Vice-President and that the Program Chair's duties include the preparation of a "designated package" of materials to be sent to *JES* after each conference. She will send Crossin more information about what she has in mind, and he will follow up by consulting with the committee under Bill Petersen, which is currently revising the NAAE constitution.

A sub-committee met at the National Workshop on Christian Unity and proposed that the 2008 conference be held Sept. 26-28 in St. Louis with a focus on ecclesiology. The group also affirmed the invitation from Crossin to consider Washington as the venue for the 2009 conference with a focus on ecumenical ethics. Members of the Board were in general agreement.

Vince Heier, as local arrangements coordinator for 2008, is seeking a suitable St. Louis venue for the conference. Lorelei Fuchs has communicated with the WCC about possible speakers for 2008 and is following up on the possibility of a more formal relationship between the NAAE and the WCC. Input for this meeting will also be sought from Patrice Rosner of Churches Uniting in Christ, currently headquartered in the St. Louis area.

Russell Meyer noted that a lapse in subscription remittances to *JES* had been corrected. In general, renewal memberships in the NAAE had slipped as well as the number of participants at meetings. This has led to a flat balance sheet, and if the trend is not reversed, could require increased conference fees. He agreed to develop a conference fee policy proposal for presentation at the 2007 meeting.

A follow conference call is scheduled for sometime in May.

North American Academy of Ecumenists
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News from the
Ecumenical Movement

The goal of the **North American Academy of Ecumenists** is to inform, relate, and encourage men and women whose profession or ministry in the church involves them in ecumenical activities and studies. Its unique contribution is to provide ecumenists with an open structure for exploring issues too important to be left exclusively to official ecumenical agencies and projects.

Founded in 1957, the Academy meets annually in September. Its conferences are professional and scholarly in substance and informal in style.

The membership of the Academy includes ecumenically active clergy and laity as well as professors and students. It is an "Academy" by virtue of its members' shared concern for the theological reflection and scholarship that must accompany the movement toward mutual religious understanding and the unity of the Christian churches.

The Academy is affiliated with the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies (JES)*. NAAE membership includes a subscription to the JES.

The Academy is led by a twenty-one member board which plans the annual conference. Attendance at the conference is open to all who are interested in discussing the proposed theme.

North American Academy of Ecumenists Board Officers , Board Member Classes and Committees

President	Lynne Lorenzen	Class of 2004-07 Christopher Agnew David Anderson Keelan Downton Jean Goulet John Huber	Class of 2005-08 Peter Baktis Alyson Barnett-Cowan Luis M. Melo Debra J. Wells Beatrice Wood	Class of 2006-09 Adele Brodeur Vince Heier Richard Jeske Elizabeth Mellen Ron Roberson
Immediate Past-President	William Petersen			
Vice-President (President-Elect)	John Crossin			
Secretary	Susan Brown	Essay Contest: Alyson Barnett-Cowan John Crossin John Huber Russell Meyer	Nominating Lynne Lorenzen Susan Brown John Huber	Local Affairs 2007 Conference Sandra Beardsall
Treasurer/Membership Sec'y	Russell Meyer		Webmaster Nicholas Jesson	JES Liaison Lorelei Fuchs
Editor Journal of Ecumenical Studies,	Leonard Swidler			



Vallee Wins Essay Contest

Sherri Vallee, the 2006 essay contest winner, wrote of the ecumenical challenges in making Holy Communion available to the infirm in residential

facilities, in her paper *The Complexities of Eucharistic Sharing in Homes for the Aged - A Study in Pastoral Ecumenism*.

In the month before the NAAE meeting, Sherri's family suffered an auto accident that injured her severely, and from which she continues to recover. In consideration of the circumstances, the NAAE decided to present to her along

with her award prize the additional sum of the budgeted cost for bringing her to the meeting had she been able to attend.

This Spring, Sr Jean Goulet made the presentation to her in person and forwarded these words following her visit to Sherri: "Today we did connect and Betty [her mother] was there with another friend and more importantly, Sherri was awake and alert. They were thrilled with Russell's beautiful certificate and John's sensitive letter - and now both adorn the wall of her hospital room! I will find suitable frames for them since they want them to be visible. But they were even more thrilled with the cheque - truly a gift for

them!

Thank you so much for all you have done for Sherri. I could tell that she was really happy. She is progressing far faster than anyone had predicted and is now on the list waiting to go to rehab. She spoke little but did seem to be following the conversation well. This was such a tragic accident but let us pray that her healing will be complete."

We look forward to the day that Sherri might be able to attend an NAAE meeting.

Sherri has her own website at: <http://www.sherrivallee.ca>.

In Memoriam: George Vandervelde (+January 19, 2007+)

George Vandervelde, Th.D. (Vrije Universiteit) and B.D. (Calvin Seminary) joined the Institute of Christian Studies faculty in 1977 and taught systematic theology there and at Wycliffe College. He was the Co-chair of the World Evangelical Alliance - Roman Catholic International Consultation. He authored *Original Sin: Two Major Trends in Contemporary Roman Catholic Reinterpretation*, and other books and published articles on Karl Rahner, Edward Schillebeeckx, native spirituality, Evangelical-Roman Catholic issues, and on the nature, mission and unity of the church. He also researched and wrote in the area of "the openness of God" theology. He retired in 2004. In 2006, a book of essays in his honor on mission and unity was published, *That the World May Believe*, edited by Margaret O'Gara and Michael Goheen.

