



Interfaith Committee

2013

Vision for 2013

Summer Study Session focused on Interfaith study of the World's Religions and Faiths.

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Jesus - A Multi Faith Perspective

Workshop proposal for the Parliament of the World's Religions in 2014.

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Projects 2013

NAIN

The North American Interfaith Network conference in Toronto is August 11th -14th.

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What is religion? What is faith? What is interfaith?

Religion is a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and world views that relate humanity to spirituality and, sometimes, to moral values. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion> - cite note-0

Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe. They tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature.

The word *religion* is sometimes used interchangeably with faith or belief system, but religion differs from private belief in that it has a social aspect.^[2] Many religions have organized behaviors, clergy, a definition of what constitutes adherence or membership, congregations of laity, regular meetings, or services for the purposes of veneration of a deity or for prayer, holy places (either natural or architectural), and/or scriptures. The practice of a religion may also include sermons, commemoration of the activities of a god or gods, sacrifices, festivals, feasts, trance, initiations, funerary services, matrimonial services, meditation, music, art, dance, public service, or other aspects of human culture. However, there are examples of religions for which some or many of these aspects of structure, belief, or practices are absent.



Interfaith Committee

Cristina_Seaborn, Chair

Gary Deinstadt, CLP,
Interfaith Minister

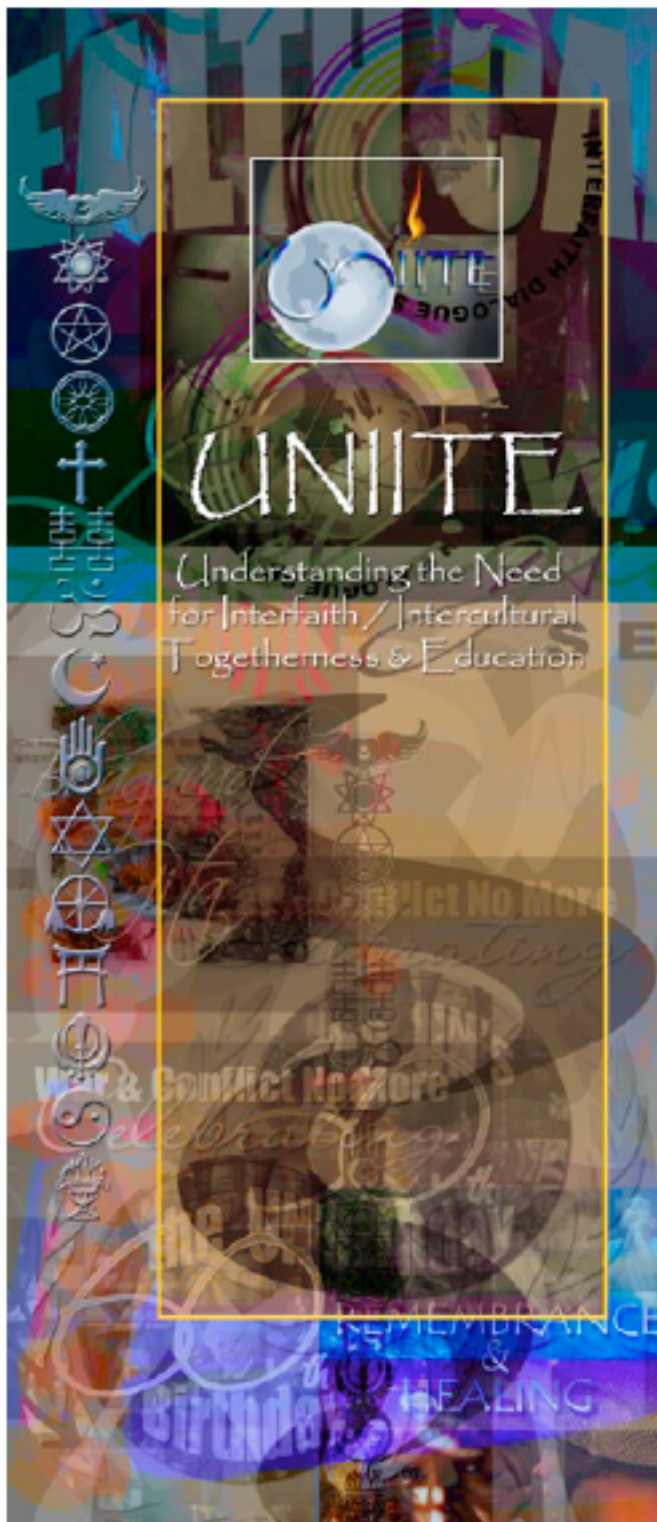
JoAnn Wiedman, Interfaith
Minister

Pamela Chaddock,
Emergent Christian

Peter Laurence, co-
founder of NAIN

Steve Rohrbach,
photographer for
Parliament of the Worlds
Religions & NAIN

Stevie Shaefer, Councilor



The term **interfaith dialogue** refers to cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions (i.e., "faiths") and/or spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels.

It is distinct from syncretism or alternative religion, in that dialogue often involves promoting understanding between different religions to increase acceptance of others, rather than to synthesize new beliefs.

Throughout the world there are local, regional, national and international interfaith initiatives; many are formally or informally linked and constitute larger networks or federations.

The often quoted ^[1] *"There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions"* was formulated by Dr [Hans Küng](#), a Professor of Ecumenical Theology and President of the Foundation for a Global Ethic.

[The United States Institute of Peace](#) published works on interfaith dialogue and peacebuilding^{[2][3]} including a Special Report on Evaluating Interfaith Dialogue^[4] Interfaith dialog forms a major role in the study of religion and peace building.

To some, the term **interreligious dialogue** has the same meaning as **interfaith dialogue**. Neither are the same as [Nondenominational Christianity](#). The World Council of Churches, though, distinguishes between 'interfaith' and 'interreligious.' To the WCC, 'interreligious' refers to action between different Christian denominations.

So, 'interfaith' refers to interaction between different faith groups such as Muslim and Christian or Hindu and Jew for example.^[5]



INTERFAITH COMMITTEE VISION and PROJECTS FOR 2013

Pamela Chaddock

My joy is sharing the good news of the evolutionary changes occurring in Christianity-- specifically Emerging and Integral Christianity. In attending progressive Christian conferences and the Wild Goose Festivals I've found its increasingly inclusive embrace of other religious perspectives stimulative for promoting Jesus' transcendent and unitive concept of the religion of the Spirit within the greater Family of God.

Recommended reading: Paul R. Smith, *Integral Christianity – The Spirit's Call to Evolve*; Brian D. McLaren, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? - Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World*

Gary Deinstadt

My vision is that the Urantia community pursues a greater experiential understanding of the religious foundations of the world so that they can better build, learn, and work more effectively in all faiths. I'd like to see Urantia Book students participate in the effort of keeping the fertile ground of evolved religion fertile enough for the Fifth Epochal Revelation to take root.

Steve Rohrbach, as President of an Interfaith Council, ran an Interfaith food program, produced Interfaith Festivals that had a music stage and a dialogue tent, and has been a photographer for every Parliament of World's Religions except the first one 100 years ago.

Peter Laurence

The Urantia Project invites students of The Urantia Book to join interfaith organizations in order to have the book and its teachings occupy a place at the interfaith dialogue table. The "Big Questions" workshop is a format for using Urantia Book material for interfaith dialogue to occur with common themes such as Truth, Good and Evil, Free Will, the Purpose of Life, Death, Creation and Evolution, and Personal Religion.

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Stevie Shaefer

My vision is encouraging and providing training for Urantia Book readers to join interfaith organizations in their neighborhoods. The Urantia Book is such a wonderful tool. It gives us a language to talk about spiritual/religious concepts and focusing on what various faiths have in common.

Cristina Seaborn, Chair

- 1) Prepare a proposal for a Summer Study Session on the Major World Religions.
- 2) Prepare a proposal for a workshop on
"Jesus: A Multi Faith Perspective"
for the Parliament of the World's Religions.
- 3) Attend the North American Interfaith Network Conference (NAIN) August 11-14 2013 in Toronto.

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JoAnn Wiedman

Become members of the United Religions Initiative. Become active in churches with one on one outreach. Participate in one faith events.

Jesus: A Multi Faith Perspective

At the Parliament of the World's Religions in Melbourne 2009, there was standing room only for the workshop on the *Life of Jesus: Non-Christian Perspectives*. Even nuns were turned away because of lack of space!

Paula Thompson, Buck Weimer, Cristina Seaborn, and Peter Laurence decided that *Jesus: A Multi Faith Perspective* would be a great proposal for the next Parliament of the World's Religions in 2014.

The Interfaith Committee is working on creating this proposal / workshop and

welcomes interested people to participate with us.

Contact Cristina Seaborn at seaborn@cloudnet.com or Peter Laurence at peterll@concentric.net

He gave his Spirit of Truth to all people of all faiths.

The unfailing kindness of Jesus touched the hearts of men, but his stalwart strength of character amazed his followers.

He was truly sincere; there was nothing of the hypocrite in him. He was free from affectation; he was always so refreshingly genuine.

Urantia Book [100:7.2](#)



He gave his Spirit of Truth to all people of all faiths. The unfailing kindness of Jesus touched the hearts of men, but his stalwart strength of character amazed his followers.

Does Jesus exist outside of Christianity?
Workshop to be presented at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Brussels, Belgium in 2014.

*He was constrained to
proclaim saving truth to
his generation, even
though such sincerity
sometimes caused pain.
He was unquestioningly
loyal to all truth.*

*100:7.2 The
Urantia Book*

HINDU MARRIAGE BLESSING

- 1. May this couple be blessed with an abundance of resources and comforts, and be helpful to one another in all ways.*
- 2. May this couple be strong and complement one another.*
- 3. May this couple be blessed with prosperity and riches on all levels.*
- 4. May this couple be eternally happy.*
- 5. May this couple be blessed with a happy family life.*
- 6. May this couple live in perfect harmony... true to their personal values and their joint promises.*
- 7. May this couple always be the best of friends.*

North American Interfaith Network Conference

The North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) Conference 2013 is looking for young adult volunteers (age 18-35) to help plan the young adult programs of the conference.)

August 11-14, 2013 in Toronto.

NAIN Conferences bring people of various religions together, building understanding, knowledge and friendships.

The Theme is for NAIN 2013 is "In Diversity is Our Strength."

If you are interested, please contact Vivian at vkwok@archtoronto.org or (416) 934-3400 ext. 506.

"There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions".^[5]

Dr. Hans Küng

GREAT INTERFAITH WEBSITES

Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/>

United Religions Initiative <http://www.uri.org/>

North American Interfaith Network <http://www.nain.org/>

Wild Goose Festival <http://www.wildgoosefestival.org/>

Emergent Christian blog <http://www.emergentvillage.org/>>



Look for *World Interfaith Harmony Week* in February 2013.