



# Ecumenical Connection

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

Volume 2, Issue 2

Fall 2007

## ICC 2007 Annual Assembly, Urbana



Forum Panelists Rev. Dr. Timothy Olson and Rev. Dr. Thomas Baima

On Friday, September 28th, The Illinois Conference of Churches convened its 2007 Annual Assembly at the First Presbyterian Church in Urbana. Forty-six people representing twenty-four of our thirty judicatories attended, in addition to several guests from the local community.

The day began with refreshments and a morning Prayer Service. Nine different judi-

catory executives and representatives participated in leading portions of the service. Rev. Bob Sherman representing Southeastern Illinois Presbytery, PCUSA delivered the day's homily.

Following the Prayer Service, the assembly began with a welcome from the ICC Leadership Co-chairs, Rev. Dr. Jane Fisler Hoffman and The Very Rev. Robert Flannery.

At that time, the Forum entitled, "What is Church?" began. Four panelists representing four faith traditions presented papers on how their particular community approached the question of "Church." Rev. Dr. Thomas Baima delivered a paper entitled, "Understanding the Church: Catholic and Ortho-

dox." Rev. Dr. Timothy Olson presented a paper entitled, "A Reflection on Ecclesiology: A Lutheran Perspective." Earl Smith presented "The Church from a Quaker Perspective." The final paper was presented by Rev. Dr. John Charlton representing the American Baptist Churches, USA. Following each paper, designated responders gave their perspective on their own approach to the question versus each panelists' approach. The Responders were Rev. Dr. Steve Shoemaker representing the Presbyterian Churches in the USA, Rev. James Bailey representing the African Methodist Episcopal Church and Rev. Ed Taylor representing the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

(continued on p. 5)

## Public Policy Team Report to the 2007 Assembly

The Public Policy Team (PPT) is guided by that portion of the ICC's mission statement which urges the ICC "to make public, prophetic witness to Christ's love for all people and to address in particular, issues of poverty and racism." While our focus has been on the public policy arena as impacted by the

Illinois General Assembly, the PPT is not limited to state issues.

The PPT will be most effective as it works in consultation with the Leadership Team, ICER and the Public Policy Coordinator, once hired. It will be the Public Policy Coordinator's respon-

sibility to serve as the liaison between the General Assembly and the ICC member judicatories to educate and mobilize the prophetic action and witness of the ICC, while staffing the PPT.

In the interim, the PPT is the

(continued on p. 2)

## Our Mission

We seek to be an inclusive community of churches that celebrates and makes visible our sacred bonds of unity in Christ. We will do this by:

- ❖ Promoting an honest sharing and understanding of both our common and divergent theological convictions; and
- ❖ Making public, prophetic witness to Christ's love for all people, particularly by addressing poverty and racism.

## Inside this issue:

ICER REPORT TO ANNUAL ASSEMBLY	2
PUBLIC POLICY REPORT TO ANNUAL ASSEMBLY	2
MORAVIAN ECUMENICITY	3
FURTHERING ORTHODOX AND CATHOLIC RELATIONS	4
ICC ON LINE	6
SAVE THE DATES	6

## Ecumenical Connection



### Breaking Through Our Barriers to Become One in Christ

## ICER Report to 2007 Annual Assembly

Since the inaugural Annual Assembly of the Illinois Conference of Churches in September 2006, Illinois Christians Encountering Racism has engaged in the following activities:

Met three times for worship, continued study, team building and organizing to fulfill our mission to dismantle systematic racism and build bridges to racial wholeness within churches, institutions and communities.

We met twice via conference call to work on the next steps of our strategy.

Proposed to the ICC Leadership Team that ICER become a separate Mission Team as defined in the ICC Constitution and By-Laws.

We developed a brochure to help promote the work of ICER.

We held a 2-hour training for the ICC Leadership Team.

Set a fee of \$500 for up to a one-day training. This fee will cover the cost of materials and travel expenses.

We are currently working with the YWCA in Pekin to hold a training of business community leaders.

We encourage member judicatories to work with ICER in setting up workshops in your area during the coming year.

## To View Bills of Interest to the ICC

### Log onto our website at:

[www.ilconfchurches.org](http://www.ilconfchurches.org)

### Click on:

1. ICC Teams
2. Public Policy Team
3. My Legislation

### Enter the following email

### address and password:

[legislative@ilconfchurches.org](mailto:legislative@ilconfchurches.org)

Illinois

### Click "View" and then

### "Preview"

## Public Policy Report to the 2007 Assembly (cont. from p. 1)

eyes and ears of the ICC mainly on the state level. From time to time PPT prepares informational materials for distribution to the wider membership's established grassroots organizations. To date, about ten notices have been distributed from the ICC office regarding legislative and other public policy matters. The goal of the PPT is to work in partnership with the public policy advocates and the grassroots organizations of our judicatories. We want to speak with one voice as often as possible and make our witness more effective.

Consequently, the PPT would like public policy leaders to contact the ICC office or Rev. Gary McCants at (217) 793-3565 or by email at [garymccants@insightbb.com](mailto:garymccants@insightbb.com) about how together we may improve our grassroots

lobbying and better engage in the public policy debate.

The PPT has utilized the established ICC user file on the Illinois General Assembly's webpage to allow any member of the ICC to access a list of bills in the Illinois General Assembly followed by the ICC. The user file may be accessed two ways: First at the ICC website on the Public Policy Team page (go to [www.ilconfchurches.org](http://www.ilconfchurches.org), click on ICC Teams, then Public Policy Team). Second at [www.ilga.gov/](http://www.ilga.gov/). Click on "My Legislation" at the top of the bar and then type [legislative@ilconfchurches.org](mailto:legislative@ilconfchurches.org) as the email address and "Illinois" as the password. Then click on "view" and then "preview" to see the status of bills from the 2007-2008 legislative sessions.

The PPT along with the Co-chairs or other members of the Leadership Team plan to meet with the Governor and legislative leaders or their top staff at least once every two years. The purpose is to ensure that our governmental leaders are acquainted with the new Illinois Conference of Churches and its concerns.

More specifically the PPT has been or will continue to be involved and vocal on several issues of concern. Those issues range from expanded health care for all our citizens, increasing the minimum wage, capital punishment, torture and the Clean Car Campaign. For a complete report on PPT issues of interest, see the Public Policy Team Report on the Public Policy Team page on our website.

# Ecumenical Connection



“WHEN  
SIMPLICITY WE  
CHERISH, THEN  
THE SOUL, IS FULL  
OF LIGHT. BUT  
THAT LIGHT WILL  
QUICKLY VANISH  
WHEN OF JESUS  
WE LOSE SIGHT.”

## Moravian Ecumenicity

“When simplicity we cherish, then the soul, is full of light. But that light will quickly vanish when of Jesus we lose sight.”

Moravians probably express who we are best when we sing. Moravians are a worldwide fellowship of a little less than a million people, the majority on the continent of Africa, the fruit of our mission heritage. In 1741 we officially designated Jesus Christ as the Chief Elder or CEO of the Moravian Church.

While our church started 550 years ago in 1457, we got along without our own clergy for ten years. The key figure in our history, Count Zinzendorf, imagined we would be a leaven and mission society within larger European churches, not a denomination.

For various reasons, we have become a denomination. But we work with other denominations in Alaska to support work in Siberia. We support an interdenominational seminary in Jamaica. Our one US seminary serves many denominations. We have easily received clergy from other bodies. We are members of the National Council of Churches of Christ (“NCCC”), Christian Churches Together (“CCT”), and the World Council of Churches (“WCC”). We welcome all believers to our Table when we celebrate Communion.

The spirit of our church is well expressed in the paragraph on creeds that appears in our official doctrinal statement,

“The Ground of the Unity”: “The Unitas Fratrum [the official name of the worldwide Moravian Church, Latin for Unity of Brethren] recognizes in the creeds of the Church the thankful acclaim of the Body of Christ. These creeds aid the Church in formulating a Scriptural confession, in marking the boundaries of heresies, and in exhorting believers to an obedient and fearless testimony in every age. The Unitas Fratrum maintains that all creeds formulated by the Christian Church stand in need of constant testing in the light of the Holy Scripture. It acknowledges as such true professions of faith the early Christian witness: “Jesus Christ is Lord!” and also especially the ancient Christian creeds and the fundamental creeds of the Reformation.” A note then lists ten creeds, from the Apostles’ Creed to the Barmen Declaration of 1934, written in the context of Nazi Germany.

Our church seal has a drawing of a lamb with the words “Our Lamb Has Conquered; Let Us Follow Him.” Our hope is that we are faithful followers of the Lamb.

We have a full communion agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and it is the hope of the church at our next synods will consider similar agreements with the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA).

This information comes with the help of our ecumenical officer, Herman Weinlick.

Rev. Terry Weavil,  
Moravian Church, Western  
District of the Northern Province

*This article is the second in a series which will highlight the perspective of different traditions on Ecumenism.*

*If you have an interest in contributing to this particular series, please contact Andrea Wilson at:*

[awilson@ilconfchurches.org](mailto:awilson@ilconfchurches.org)



### 2008 Ecumenical Women’s Gathering

June 19-22, 2008  
Independence, MO

Sponsored by  
Church Women United

For more information, log  
on to:  
[www.gathering08.org](http://www.gathering08.org)

## Ecumenical Connection

### Furthering Orthodox and Catholic Relations

“...ALL OF US, EACH FROM OUR OWN POSITION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST, MUST REACH OUT TO OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS IN AN EFFORT TO OBEY THE WILL AND FULFILL THE COMMANDMENT OF OUR LORD, ‘THAT WE MAY BE ONE’”

One of the pathways to further ecumenical understanding and progress for the Orthodox and Catholics during the last ten years has been the establishment of the Orientale Lumen Conferences begun in 1997 by the Eastern Catholic layman, Mr. Jack Figel, of Fairfax, Virginia. The Latin words, “Orientale Lumen,” mean “The Light of the East” and are taken from an apostolic letter from Pope John Paul II in 1995 regarding the importance of the Churches of the Christian East in our overall heritage of Christianity.

The Orientale Lumen Conferences are part of a lay-organized and run ecumenical movement working to achieve unity among the historic Christian churches that became divided in the year 1054. It is the only such movement to have the blessing and support of Eastern

Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Catholic bishops and patriarchs. As an offshoot of his work for Eastern Catholic Publications, Jack Figel realized that by bringing together on a regular basis Orthodox, Roman and Eastern Catholic clergy and laity, in the context of worship, scholarly presentations, and fellowship each group would better understand and appreciate one another’s common roots, similarities and be a means for promoting future unity. Conferences over the last decade have been held in Washington, D.C. and San Diego, USA; Birmingham and London, England; Melbourne and Sydney, Australia; and Istanbul (Constantinople), Turkey.

One of the several ecumenical hats I wear is as president of the national Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers--which includes both the Roman and Eastern Catholic churches. In this capacity, I had the opportunity to attend the recent Orientale Lumen Euro-East II Conference held in Turkey this past May 2 to 14, 2007. Besides the main conference, which was held in Istanbul, excursions were also made to the early Christian sites of Ephesus and Cappadocia. The highlight of the conference was having several meetings with His All Holiness Bartholomew I, Orthodox Patriarch and Archbishop of Constantinople. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gave formal greetings and a presentation at our opening conference, hosted an audience for the forty conference participants

at the Patriarchate in Istanbul, and invited our group to celebrate Vespers and the Divine Liturgy with him in Cappadocia in two of the ancient churches which are still being used for liturgy. While in Ephesus, an Eastern Catholic Divine Liturgy was celebrated by our group at the House of the Virgin Mary, and a visit was made to the ruins of the Basilica of Saint John the Theologian.

In part of his remarks, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew applauded the work of the Orientale Lumen Conference, and said: “your own presence and participation ... further confirms our belief that all of us, each from our own position in the Body of Christ, must reach out to our fellow-Christians in an effort to obey the will and fulfill the commandment of Our Lord, ‘that we (his disciples) may be one—John 17:11.’”

The Patriarch emphasized the primacy of liturgy in the Church: “It is in liturgy that all aspects of Church faith and spirituality, of Church life and practice, of pastoral ministry and canon law, derive their essential source and find their ultimate significance.”

Plenary speakers during the conference included Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia from Oxford, Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ, of the Pontifical Orientale Institute in Rome, Father Peter Galadza of the Sheptytsky Institute in Ottawa, Father Andrew Dudchenko of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Kiev, Father



Orientale Lumen Euro-East II Conference, Turkey  
May 2—14, 2007

### Furthering Orthodox and Catholic Relations (cont. from p. 4)

Paul McPartlan of the Catholic University of America in Washington, Professor Gabriele Winkler of Tubingen University in Germany, and Professor Richard Schneider of York University in Toronto. For the conference, bishops, priests, religious and laity from several Orthodox and Catholic Churches, gathered from two continents and eight countries. Catholic Cardinal Lubomyr Husar from Ukraine was one of the participants and offered to host a similar

conference in his archeparchy (archdiocese) of Lviv, Ukraine in the Spring of 2009.

As co-chair of the Illinois Conference of Churches, I was pleased to attend this conference since we have a number of Orthodox and Eastern Catholics that are residents of our state and members of our Conference of Churches. More information about the Orientale Lumen Conferences can be obtained from the website:

[www.Olconference.com](http://www.Olconference.com). The conferences are open to the public and, from my own experience, are extremely worthwhile attending.

*The Very Rev. Robert B. Flannery, ICC Co-chair and Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer, Roman Catholic Diocese of Belleville*

### 2007 Annual Assembly Urbana...(continued from p. 1)

The discussion both among the Panelists and Responders and the members sparked so much useful dialogue that the Forum was extended through the lunch hour.

After lunch, the Leadership Team Co-chairs initiated the governance portion of the Assembly. The members received financial reports for 2006, 2007 to date and a comparison between where the ICC stood this time in 2006 and its current standing. The 2008 proposed budget was accepted. A discussion on how a judiciary's pledge amount is determined resulted in several suggestions for an equitable formula. The Leadership Team will discuss those suggestions at their December 4th meeting. Motions to extend terms of the initial ICC officers by one year, to add ICER as an official Team under the ICC Constitution and By-Laws, and to empower the Leadership Team to name a

new Judiciary Leader to the Leadership Team all passed.

Members received reports from the Leadership, Public Policy, ICER and Bi-Annual Statewide Gathering Teams.

Members were asked to carefully review the Baptism Survey document produced informally by the ICC for accuracy as well as to consider whether they would approve of an optional uniform baptismal certificate. The document will be formally published soon and those working on the document want to be certain that all responses are conveyed accurately.

Following several announcements, the Assembly members participated in a Closing Worship Service and dismissed at 3:30 p.m.

If you are interested in reviewing any of the Forum Panelists' papers, you can access those on our website

at the "News and Events" page. Rev. Dr. Thomas Baima's paper is due to be published in another periodical and will not be available on our website at this time.

The Illinois Conference of Churches would like to extend its utmost gratitude to First Presbyterian Church Urbana for its gracious offer to host our Assembly. Thank you to Rev. Don Mason for making that possible and to Rev. Bob Sherman for hosting the event.

If you are interested in more details of our 2007 Annual Assembly, please contact the ICC office and we can provide you with minutes from the meeting.

The Leadership Team will begin planning the 2008 Assembly at their December meeting. Please watch for a Save the Date announcement.

#### 2007 Pledge Support

Pledged: \$108,191

Received to date:  
\$81,810

Thank you all for your support. Please continue to remember the ICC as we have transitioned to a member supported body.

## COME TO CHICAGO 2008

Celebrate Christian Unity in  
our Wonderfully Diverse City



National Workshop on Christian Unity

2008 NATIONAL WORKSHOP  
PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

April 14 - 17, 2008

Chicago Marriott O'Hare  
8535 West Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631

For more information and online registration, go to [www.nwcu.org](http://www.nwcu.org).



2160 S. 6th Street, Suite D2  
Springfield, IL 62703

Phone: 217-522-7099  
Fax: 217-522-7105  
[awilson@ilconfchurches.org](mailto:awilson@ilconfchurches.org)  
[www.ilconfchurches.org](http://www.ilconfchurches.org)

## Save the Dates!

**2008 National Workshop for Christian Unity—April 14-17, 2008**

**Chicago Marriott O'Hare**

**8535 West Higgins Road**

Log on to <http://www.nwcu.org> for information.

**Living Faithfully in a Violent World: Congregations & Community Working**

**Together to End Violence—November 16-17, 2008**

**Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago**

Log on to [http://www.elca.org/nonviolence/living\\_faithfully\\_event.html](http://www.elca.org/nonviolence/living_faithfully_event.html)

for information.

## Introducing

**Katharine Grace Wilson**



Born on July 4, 2007

Placed with us for adoption  
on July 8.

Thank you all for your prayers  
and for celebrating with us.

*Ryan & Andrea Wilson*

## Illinois Conference of Churches—On-Line

The ICC website is up and running once again. I want to thank you for your patience with us as we redesigned the site. Our goal with the new site was to make it relevant to our new structure, cost-efficient and as user-friendly as possible.

Our hope is that you will find what you're looking for when you visit the site. When visiting our website, here is some of what you can expect to find:

Links to upcoming ecumenical events (News & Events)

Team members and their contact information (ICC

Teams)

Team meeting agenda and directions (under individual team pages)

Links to ICC publications (Publications)

Member judicatory information (Members)

How to become a member (Members)

ICC Newsletters (Newsletter)

Access to Illinois General Assembly bills of interest to the ICC (Public Policy Team page)

Resource Links (Resources)

While our site is ready to be viewed and used, it is a work in progress. If you have comments or suggestions regarding the site, please send them to me at the ICC office. Our web address is the same as it always was:

[www.ilconfchurches.org](http://www.ilconfchurches.org)

If you have an announcement, event or a link you would like added to our site, please email me at:

[awilson@ilconfchurches.org](mailto:awilson@ilconfchurches.org)