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Fall Appeal Underway

The North Carolina Council of Churches has launched its fall appeal seeking continued financial support from people of faith statewide who are committed to the work of the Council.

In recent years, individual support has become increasingly important to the Council, making up a significant percentage of total income. The day-to-day operations of the NCCC could not happen without support from individuals.

In his letter that has accompanied the Council's mailed appeal, Program Associate for Peace David LaMotte explained that he moved his family from Australia to join the Council staff because he believed in the NCCC's work. He wrote in part, "the Council is still seeking to be

faithful, and is therefore still ahead of the curve on social justice issues. Through its work on environmental sustainability, immigration reform, health and wellness, interfaith dialogue, farmworker advocacy, racial and economic justice, peace work and many other issues, the NCCC is seeking to put our faith into action. I believe in the NC Council of Churches enough to have moved to Raleigh with my family to do this work. If you believe in it too, the Council welcomes your contributions."

To make an online donation, visit www.nccouncilofchurches.org and click on the "Donate Now" button. Contributions can also be sent to the NCCC at 27 HORNE St., Raleigh, 27607.

*Save the Date
2011
Legislative Seminar*

*Tuesday, April 5
Raleigh*

*Watch Future
Publications and the
Website for Details*

www.nccouncilofchurches.org

Working for Peace, Justice, and Unity Since 1935



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North Carolina Council of Churches

Critical Issues Seminar Focuses on Care of Creation

About 150 activists and experts gathered in Greensboro recently for the North Carolina Council of Churches' Critical Issues Seminar focused on integrating Creation Care with the mission and ministry of faith communities.

The Seminar took place on Oct. 14 at Congregational United Church of Christ and featured the Rev. Canon Sally Bingham, president and founder of the national Interfaith Power & Light campaign, as the keynote speaker. North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light, a program of the Council, is a state affiliate of national IPL.

Workshops throughout the day looked at a variety of topics including "Preaching on Creation: Understanding the Ecological Message of the Bible," "The Relationship Between Climate Change and Immigration," and "Bringing Nature to Christian Education: Ideas, Resources and Attempts." Incoming NC IPL Director Katherine Shea led a session on "Making the Connection Between the Health of People and the Health of Creation."

At his session on "Brewing Justice: Fellowship and Fair Trade Coffee," John Odom of Starmount Presbyterian Church in Greensboro described how switching to Fair Trade coffee had led to other positive changes at his church, including building an interest within the congregation about other ecological and production issues.

"Rarely do we ask the question what is the cost of the cheapest," he said. Secondary costs can include destruction of natural resources and degradation of workers that may come with saving money only in the short-term.

Closing the day, Bingham prayed, "Forgive us, our brothers and sisters, the damage we have done to creation and to each other. We pledge to do better...each of us matters to You, and the choices we make matter."

Audio of Bingham's keynote address and of Norman Wirzba's remarks on the ecological message of the Bible can be found on the Council's website at www.nccouncilofchurches.org.

Dr. Katherine Shea Chosen to Head NC IPL

Dr. Katherine Shea, a physician with expertise in the link between climate change and human health, is the new director of North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light, a project of the North Carolina Council of Churches and a state affiliate of the national Interfaith Power & Light campaign.

Shea is a board-certified pediatrician with specialty training in environmental health who has taught on the staffs of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Public Health and at the Duke University Medical Center. Her undergraduate degree is from Brown University, her medical degree is from the University of Oregon Health Sciences Center, and she holds a Master's of Public Health from UNC-CH. Shea served three terms on the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Environmental Health and currently works

part-time at a staff physician at North Carolina State University's Student Health Service.

"The Council is indeed fortunate to have someone of Kathy's experience and abilities wanting to take us to the next stage in our work on global warming," said Council Executive Director George Reed. "With the recognition of her expertise at the national and international level, I feel certain that she will extend the work of NC IPL in new ways."

Shea said she was excited to join NC IPL.

"I am truly honored to be selected as the newest director of NC IPL. I look forward to working with a terrific staff and steering committee to advance the creative and courageous work of developing positive responses to climate change through faith communities," Shea said. "It is at the com-

munity level that individuals can come together, support each other and make a real difference, and faith communities have the power of faith and hope to bring to this work. We all want to bequeath a vibrant, beautiful and living creation to our children; for me, working with NC IPL is the most direct avenue to this work."

In May 2000, the North Carolina Council of Churches joined with the Eco-Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches and partnering organizations representing other faiths to establish Climate Connection: Interfaith Eco-Justice Network. In 2005, Climate Connection became the 16th state affiliate of the national Interfaith Power & Light campaign. The name was changed in January 2007 to North Carolina Interfaith Power & Light.

Council, Filmmaker Take Immigration Documentary Statewide

The North Carolina Council of Churches and documentary filmmaker Charles Thompson have partnered for a statewide series of showings of Thompson's immigration saga "Brother Towns/Pueblos Hermanos." Throughout October and November, from Asheville to Wilmington, audiences have had and will have the opportunity to watch Thompson's film and then take part in discussions about immigration.

"Brother Towns/Pueblos Hermanos" tells the story of two towns, Jacaltenango in Guatemala and Jupiter, Florida, that are linked by immigration, family and work. It traces the path of people who travel thousands of miles from home in the hopes of making a living and being able to send money back to their families. While conducting graduate field research in Jacaltenango, Thompson realized that violence and economics had driven thousands of men and women from the Guatemalan town to Florida. His film captures that as well as the voices of people opposed to undocumented immigrants and those who are advocates for helping migrants, regardless of their documentation status.

"Our country wouldn't be where it is today without immigrants. In fact, we're all immigrants, from those who first came to this continent thousands of years ago to those who came yesterday. The question that we hope to address with this film and related discussions is how we can all live together in this complex and globalizing world," said Thompson, who is director of undergraduate programs at Duke's Center for Documentary Studies.

The North Carolina Council of Churches has long been an advocate for immigrants, including efforts on behalf of farmworkers in the state's fields and, more recently, in the heated debate over undocumented immigrants. The organization established the North Carolina Religious Coalition

for Justice for Immigrants in 2008.

"Our longstanding faith traditions compel us to recognize the full dignity and humanity in all people," said Council Program Associate Chris Liu-Beers. "The farmworker who provides our daily bread, the construction worker who puts a roof over our head, the library worker who greets us with a smile -- each is a child of God."

Thompson said he was elated to be working with the Council on the project, citing the organization's history of work on immigration.

"There are no better sources to turn to regarding how to treat our neighbors -- not only those we choose, but those we have -- than our religious traditions. The Bible, for example, is filled with quotes regarding how to live with immigrants and other people we might not know. This film is called 'Brother Towns' in part because it also is about a community that addresses how neighbors of different origins can live together," he said. "It is not a religious film, per se, but it will have resonance with many persons of faith."

Showings of "Brother Towns/Pueblos Hermanos" have taken or will take place at:

- Oct. 7; Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte
- Oct. 15; UNC-Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill
- Oct. 19; Appalachian State University, Boone
- Nov. 1; Carolina Theatre, Durham
- Nov. 4; East Carolina University, Greenville
- Nov. 11; First Congregational UCC, Asheville
- Nov. 13; Cucalorus Film Festival, Wilmington (1:15 p.m.; \$10)
- Nov. 16; NC A&T University, Greensboro

All showings are free and at 7 p.m. except for Cucalorus. For more information, visit www.nccouncilofchurches.org or www.brothertowns.com.

Mennonites Join the Council

The Eastern Carolina District of the Virginia Mennonite Conference of the Mennonite Church USA is the newest member of the North Carolina Council of Churches. The addition of the group brings to 17 the number of denominations who have chosen to work with the Council on issues of social justice and Christian unity.

"Mennonites are one of the three historic peace churches, along with the Friends and the Brethren. We are very pleased to welcome them into Council membership," said Council Executive Director George Reed. "I am also

grateful to Spencer Bradford, pastor of the Durham Mennonite Church and the Council's former peace associate, for encouraging the Eastern Carolina District to join."

The district includes five congregations: the Chapel Hill and Greensboro Mennonite fellowships and the Durham, Graham and Raleigh Mennonite churches.

"While Mennonites have participated in many collaborative efforts, for a variety of reasons we have been hesitant to formally join ecumenical bodies. Several years ago, Mennonite

Church USA, our national conference, became a full participant in Christian Churches Together, but very few area conferences have joined statewide ecumenical bodies," said Andre Gingerich Stoner, Director of Interchurch Relations, Mennonite Church USA. "This is an important opportunity for us to give and receive gifts in the body of Christ, to engage with each other at the points of common conviction and also on differences, and to more fully live into our place in the broader body of Christ."

Exciting Progress for Partners in Health and Wholeness

Congregations across the state are now taking part in the North Carolina Council of Churches' Partners in Health and Wholeness (PHW) Certification Program, demonstrating that their bodies are God's temple by eating healthier, being more physically active and reducing the impact of smoking on themselves and their neighbors. So far, 49 congregations have achieved Bronze Level Certification by each naming a health contact person, maintaining tobacco-free buildings and serving healthier church meals.

Five churches are the latest to receive this honor, setting a wonderful example for others in the faith community to follow: Holly Springs Baptist Church, Franklin; New Birth in Christ Holy Church, Hillsborough; Palmer Grove Baptist Church, Kingstown; St. Paul Baptist Church, Enfield; and Watauga Baptist Church, Franklin.

To learn more about the PHW Certification Program and how your congregation can get involved, please visit www.healthandwholeness.org.

In August, PHW held its first Clergy Breakfast on Health at St. James African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Goldsboro where Dr. Dwight Cannon serves as pastor. Twenty-five local pastors and public health professionals were in attendance to learn about health as a practice of faith, the state of health in Wayne County, and opportunities to improve the lives of clergy and congregants by participating in PHW and other faith-based health initiatives. The Rev. Joseph C. Brown, Sr.,

Presiding Elder of the A.M.E. Zion Dunn-Lillington District, was the keynote speaker. The Council will hold similar events across the state in the coming year.

In addition, PHW recently unveiled its new logo. The original PHW logo was modified in order to increase the visibility of the Jerusalem cross at the center. However, the concept behind the logo remains the same. It illustrates the mission of PHW – 1) to promote health as a faith issue (*represented by the Jerusalem cross at the center of the logo*); 2) to build key partnerships between existing health programs across the state and the Council's 6,200 affiliated churches (*represented by the four burgundy-colored hands surrounding the cross*); and 3) to facilitate congregations to serve as health promotion centers in the community, helping people of faith to lead healthier, more fulfilling lives (*represented by the sun – a symbol of happiness, life and spirituality – that is formed by connecting all of the hands together*).



Council Welcomes Interns from Duke Divinity School

The Council is delighted to welcome two Duke Divinity School interns who will be working on a variety of projects over the course of the school year.

"It is always exciting for us to have Duke Div interns helping with the work of the Council," said Executive Director George Reed. "Their energy and enthusiasm enhance all that we do."

Brett McCarty is a 2008 graduate of Furman University, where he double majored in Mathematics-Economics and Religion. While at Furman, he was the Programming Committee Chair for Mere Christianity Forum, a campus ministry dedicated to developing thoughtful, ecumenical Christian faith.

McCarty spent a formational summer in 2007 interning at Union Mission, Inc., a homeless shelter that includes educational training, health services, and housing. Upon graduating summa cum laude

from Furman, he began studies at Duke Divinity School, where he is now a third-year Master's of Divinity student.

Since arriving at Duke, he spent his first summer at Palmer's Grove United Methodist Church, a rural church in Hillsborough and his second summer as a chaplaincy intern with Duke Hospital's CPE program. McCarty has developed a strong interest in medical and economic ethics and hopes to pursue doctoral work in theological ethics upon graduation.

Rennie Salata graduated from Maryville College in 2005 with an undergraduate degree in music. Since coming to Duke Divinity School in 2008, Salata has served two field education placements in local church settings. Through these experiences, he has developed a growing interest in ministry that has an impact on the local congregation, both for its mission and its nurture.

Projects that promote peace initiatives and conversations between otherwise opposed groups rank among his other interests. This has led to an increasing desire to see more ecumenical activities and events in the life of the church. Issues surrounding poverty, specifically in the area of food, are also of interest to him. Any projects that make pastors, parishioners, and the general public better educated and promote cooperation through worship, missions, or special events represent Salata's greatest commitment as it relates directly to the life of the church.

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