

CCT E-newsletter

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**ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 14-17 IN MEMPHIS**

The 2012 Annual Meeting will be held February 14-17, 2012 in Memphis, Tennessee. We will further explore the relationship of poverty and racism and Memphis offers rich opportunities because of such iconic sites as the National Civil Rights Museum, The Lorraine Hotel, and The Mason Temple (birthplace of the Church of God in Christ) as well as being home to a number of legendary civil rights leaders.

Mark your calendar now! More information will follow soon.

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***Reflections from Executive Director, Richard L. Hamm***

**The Circle of Protection**

This spring, a number of Christian leaders including many associated with CCT (David Beckmann of Bread for the World, Jim Wallis of Sojourners, John Carr of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Betty Israel of the Salvation Army, and others) and Galen Carey of the National Association of Evangelicals and Michael Livingston of the National Council of Churches of Christ launched the “Circle of Protection”. I was personally present and supportive at the National Press Club when the public launching occurred.



At this time when Congress is (rightly) seeking ways to reduce deficits and constrain the national debt, many proposals would drastically reduce our nation’s commitment to assist “the least of these.” The united voice of such a broad spectrum of Christian leaders, grounded in our experience of the love of God in Jesus Christ, is helping focus attention on the dangers of these cuts. I believe the “Circle of Protection” is an appropriate way for individual Christian leaders, churches and organizations to express the concerns we raise in CCT’s Statement on Poverty” see it at: [www.christianchurchestogether.org/poverty/](http://www.christianchurchestogether.org/poverty/).

The eight points in the Circle of Protection statement ([www.circleofprotection.us](http://www.circleofprotection.us)) provide a clear outline of the message. I strongly encourage you to use them and the “Circle of Protection” imagery as you speak to your members and the press about the current budget and debt challenges.

This “Circle of Protection” effort is a non-partisan way to express concern for those many who dwell in poverty and often without hope. It is not about Democratic or Republican politics, it is about the stewardship of our personal political power as American citizens who are also Christians. We must also exercise stewardship of our personal financial resources as well, of course, to help those who cannot help themselves. But political power is also a gift. In my *personal* understanding of Christian responsibility, not to choose to use my political power is as much an abdication of Christian stewardship as is using it poorly. You might choose to exercise your political power somewhat differently than would I, but I believe we *all* have a responsibility to *use* it....and to use it for the sake of the “least of these...”

Grace and peace,

**Dick Hamm**

P.S. The Evangelical Covenant Church has provided a marvelous resource for all of us who want racial reconciliation: The Sankofa Journey. I will be participating in the August 4-7 event and will report on my experience. CCT will be offering a special edition of the Sankofa journey this winter in conjunction with the Annual Meeting (dates to be announced soon). Check out this amazing opportunity by going to:

<http://www.covchurch.org/justice/racial-righteousness/sankofa/>

## Transitions



**Rev. Joel Boot**

The **Rev. Joel Boot** was elected Interim Executive Director of the Christian Reform Church in North America during the 2011 Synod meeting (mid-June) in Grand Rapids at Calvin College.

The **Rev. Jerry Dykstra** resigned this spring after serving as Executive Director for nearly six years. Rev. Dykstra and his wife, Linda, have moved to California to be near their children.



**Rev. Jerry Dykstra**



**Wes and Karin G-M**

The **Rev. Dr. Wes Granberg-Michaelson** was celebrated at the Reformed Church in America’s General Synod in June (a portion of which was held jointly with the Christian Reform Church’s Synod). Wes has served since 1994 as General Secretary of the RCA. Many church leaders from many communions and groups were present to celebrate.

At the same General Synod meeting, the **Rev. Tom Devries** (right), lead pastor of Fair Haven Ministries was elected the new General Secretary of the Reformed Church in America.



**Rev. Tom Devries**

The Rev. **Dr. Sharon Watkins** (right) was elected to a second six-year term as General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada during the Disciples' General Assembly this July.



The **Very Rev. Thomas Ferguson** (left), who has been serving as Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Officer for the Episcopal Church has left that post to become Dean of Bexley Hall Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. During his ten years of service in the ecumenical office, Tom was the theological consultant for the bilateral theological dialogues with the United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Orthodox Churches, and Roman Catholic Church.



The **Rev. Dr. Michael Trice** is completing his service as Associate Executive of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Relations for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to become Assistant Dean of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Dialogue for the School of Theology and Ministry of Seattle University on September 1<sup>st</sup>.



**Lt. Colonel Mark Israel**, who has been serving as National Secretary for Program of the Salvation Army and who has served on the CCT Steering Committee for four years, and his wife Carolee, have been reassigned to the Kentucky-Tennessee Division - Mark as Divisional Commander and Carolee as Divisional Director of Women's Ministries. Mark will be greatly missed by all CCT participants (maybe he'll be able to join us in Memphis for the 2012 Annual Meeting, since that's his new territory!)



**Father James Massa**, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington D.C. for nearly six years, has returned to the Diocese of Brooklyn in New York. A strong supporter of CCT, Father Massa will be missed greatly.



### **New President of the Evangelical-Pentecostal Family**

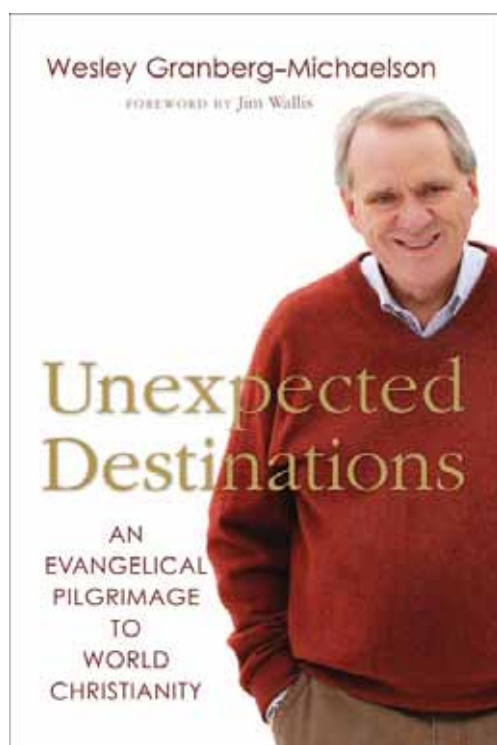
**The Rev. Dr. Jo Anne Lyon**, General Superintendent of the Wesleyan Church, a newly participating CCT church, has agreed to serve as the president of the EP Family. She believes CCT's two foci, evangelism and domestic poverty, align nicely with the Wesleyan Church's priorities. We welcome her to this leadership role and give thanks to God for her commitment.

Dr. Lyon follows Bishop James Leggett, former presiding bishop of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church, who gave such outstanding leadership to CCT from its beginning and to the EP Family for the past four years. Dr. Leggett now serves as President of Holmes Bible College in Greenville, South Carolina.



**Bishop James Leggett**

**Executive Director's note:** Wes Granberg-Michaelson has published a new book that details his journey and sheds light along the way on many of the most important developments of recent decades in the Christian unity movement, including CCT. Wes didn't ask me to do so, but I decided to include the following in this newsletter, knowing that many of us will be interested in reading it. *Dick Hamm*



From Billy Graham to a Trappist monastery, from Capitol Hill to the helm of the Reformed Church in America, Wesley Granberg-Michaelson's personal pilgrimage has covered the length and breadth of Christianity in America. Now, drawing upon forty years of his own spiritual journals, this elder statesman of the church crystallizes his wide-ranging experiences into a sharp, lively memoir.

*Unexpected Destinations* reveals Granberg-Michaelson's unique encounter with evangelical piety, Catholic contemplative spirituality, Reformed theology, and Pentecostal practice — all while daring to envision ecumenical harmony. It provides fresh historical insights into the evangelical subculture of the 1970s, sheds new light on how denominations today grapple on the inside with such issues as homosexuality and missional renewal — and poignantly relates the joy and pain of one man's spiritual life journey.

Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., it is available at [www.eerdmans.com](http://www.eerdmans.com) or [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

## Three Task Forces To Be Formed

Three task forces are currently being formed: 1) an "Outreach Task Force" to encourage more communions/denominations to join in CCT participation; 2) a "Funding Task Force" to develop more sources of income for CCT beyond church and organization dues; 3) a "Communications Task Force" to develop more effective communication between and beyond CCT participants, including the media.

If you have an interest in serving on one of these task forces, please contact Dick Hamm at [dhamm@ddi.org](mailto:dhamm@ddi.org).

For more information or to make a donation to CCT-USA, please contact:

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**Know someone who would like to be on the list to receive CCT’s e-newsletter? Please send their name and e-mail address to Val Ruess, administrative assistant at [ValCCT@att.net](mailto:ValCCT@att.net).**