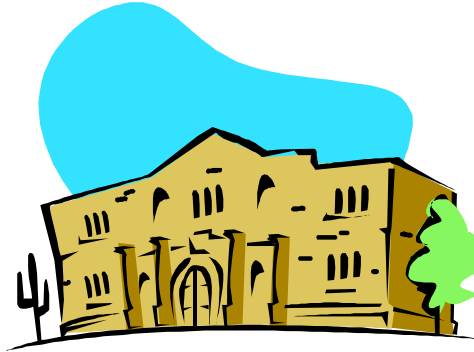


# NAECED Newsletter

Fall 2002

NAECED



**San Antonio, Texas  
January 2003  
Conference Site**

## **San Antonio**

San Antonio captures the spirit of Texas. Now the ninth largest city in the US, the city has retained its sense of history and tradition, while carefully blending in cosmopolitan progress. The city has always been a crossroads and a meeting place. Sounds and flavors of Native Americans, Old Mexico, Germans, the Wild West, African-Americans and the Deep South mingle and merge. Close to seven million visitors a year delight in the discovery of San Antonio's charms. (Welcome to San Antonio website)

And the "birthplace" of NAECED! In 1997 thirteen Episcopal Education Directors meet in San Antonio to discuss what it was like to be a Christian Education Director, what it meant to them, how they dealt with some of the struggles, and compared benefits. This meeting, facilitated by The Rev. Jack Hilyard, was not only a time to come together and network but to spend valuable time refreshing ourselves for the return to the work place. At our last gathering in San Antonio on Sunday morning NAECED became a reality. We developed a name (much longer than we had planned), elected co-chairs, and a board of directors. Much has happened in the last 5 years and many more have joined us as friends and co-workers. So, we come together again in 2003 to celebrate who we are and what we do by God's grace and in His name.

# Conference2003

## *Seeing the Whole*

Things will come in threes at our gathering in San Antonio. We will be together for three days; we hope to achieve three objectives during the conference: community, learning, and recreation; and we will focus on three areas of discernment in the workplace: identity, purpose, and stewardship.

*Seeing the Whole, the theme of our San Antonio NAECED Conference*, will lead us through a model for discernment in organizations. The conference theme will help us understand church not only as the place for the faithful together in worship but an organization comprised of diverse members. Like the Trinity, the whole of any system can be understood as the dynamic tensions of three unique parts: the office of Identity (Who are we?), the office of Purpose (Why do we exist?), the office of Stewardship (How do we govern? How do we manage our resources?). We will explore together the legitimate needs of each office of our gathered lives, the tensions that often exist in each of these dimensions, and the shadow aspects that creep into our lives as we navigate through the organization of church. Can one exist without the other? How do we come together as one? Our collective question will be “Where are we in this story?”

Debbie Asberry, senior consultant with CommunityWorks, Inc. will lead us in a brief orientation and then as facilitator during discussions. Debbie is an organizational development consultant who works around the country with churches, not for profits, and government agencies in leadership development, team development, and strategic planning. Her expertise is in the use of dialogue, which she explains as the discipline of learning to engage in conversations that allow for the diversity, creativity and holiness of the group to emerge.

We will begin on Wednesday evening with a purely social gathering, a time to come together to get to know one another. Thursday we will quickly take care of business before beginning our learning, exploring our ministry, and San Antonio. Friday we will take care of NAECED items of importance and breakout into optional focus groups, reporting back to the whole and handing out assignments as needed. “Congregations in Bloom”, a workshop sponsored by the Diocese of West Texas, will begin that evening and continue through Saturday (see article on page 6.) Those not attending this workshop may continue to explore friendships, San Antonio or return home.

Brochures, membership information, and nomination forms will be in the mail to you soon.

(as published in Episcopal Teacher, Summer 2002)

# Certification

## NAECED to Develop Certification System

The National Association of Episcopal Christian Education Directors (NAECED) is developing a system of certification for people who work in Christian education/formation in the Episcopal Church.

Malinda Harris, a founder of NAECED and director of Christian education at Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra, Florida, is directing the association's work in this area. The goal is to provide different levels of certification for Christian education directors, classroom teachers, and diocesan coordinators.

The association has looked at certification processes from other denominations and is currently working with the Rev. Linda Grenz of LeaderResources who is developing a self assessment form for Christian educators.

Heidi Clark, Christian Education Coordinator of the Diocese of Missouri, emphasized that the purpose is not to provide academic certification, such as a master's degree in Christian education, since those programs already exist. The NAECED certification emphasized self assessment and continuing professional growth.

Clark said that continuing education can help educators to "stay fresh." She noted that much of the training now available is program or curriculum driven. Educators need broader training to "find out what has worked" in areas such as classroom management and selecting curriculum.

NAECED eventually hopes to certify continuing education programs and document participation by its members. "Hopefully," said Harris, "it will reinforce to individuals and their congregations the importance of education ministries in the church." She added that the certification might also be used in performance evaluations and negotiation compensation. Certification would be renewable every two years.

"Even those with existing degrees can be certified because this is really about professional growth," she said. "I'm excited about the fact that it is not a static reaching of a goal, but it honors the way Episcopal Christian educators actually train in the church—through an informal yet quality network of training sessions, workshops, and conferences.

The next annual NAECED conference will be in 2003 in San Antonio, Texas. The association met this year in January in New Orleans, focusing on different aspects of professional development.

For more information about NAECED, contact former president Heidi Clark at the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri at 314-231-1220 or [heidic@missouri.anglican.org](mailto:heidic@missouri.anglican.org).

# Continuing Education

## ~ A Reflection

“Taking a walk can restore us to sanity. Taking a long walk can restore us to creativity.”

When I was a green rookie Christian Education Coordinator for the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri I was a fanatic at conferences. I went to every workshop, every breakout discussion group. I gravitated towards conference participants at breakfast. I stayed up late in the evening with colleagues talking about diocesan structures and the pros and cons of recommending one program over another to congregations. I collapsed on my bed in the evenings and was up first thing to start all over again the next day. I returned home exhausted and in need of a weekend off. I was spending an average of \$600 per conference when all was said and done (registration, travel, hotel) and fell needed to return to my people with at least that much valuable information and experience. I was told at that time by a treasured colleague “You don’t leave much room for the Holy Spirit, do you?” Somewhere between then and now a gradual transformation has taken place. It began at the national conference at Camp Allen a few years ago. I went to a couple of workshops that simply blew me away. I was scheduled to rush into another workshop immediately. I had to! I had registered for it, and the people back home were counting on me! But I was conflicted. The information I just received was life changing. Perspective-altering. I needed to soak it in. Fold it into my own faith experience. Call to mind the structures of my congregations, and the membership therein. I had to make a choice. My options were to slow down and discern how I could be a good steward of the information I just received, or barrel ahead to the next workshop, and risk that the experience or conversation I just had might spend the rest of it’s life in a forgotten folder on the shelves in my office. I had to take a walk. Sort this out. Now when I participate in continuing education opportunities I try to be a better steward of the whole experience. Take a break. Get some perspective. Have confidence that the people who sent me need me to come back not only with more ideas, but also with some perspective. Perhaps a new look at them, and at us, and at what we are trying to do together. We need to give ourselves permission not only to be informed but also to be inspired and restored. I know that making room for the Holy Spirit is countercultural in this world of over-achievers known as professional Christian educators. But not to do so is to waste more than \$600. I encourage you to go into these opportunities seeking not just more program ideas and tricks, but with the expectation that you will encounter a fresh breeze, a holy spirit, swirling around and uplifting your work, and your spirit.

Heidi Clark, NAECD

# Teacher Training

Resolution passed by Diocese of Connecticut in October  
2001

## **Resolution for 2001 Diocesan Convention**

*Submitted by:* Children's Ministries Committee

*Resolution:* Diocesan Christian Education Teacher Training

The 217<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Connecticut, understands that Christian Education and formation involves lifelong learning and therefore commits to the development of a program for continuing education for those involved in parish ministries with children, youth and adult formation. Whereas there is currently no standard for Christian education teachers in the Diocese, we desire to give our educators the skills they need to fulfill their ministries:

- (1) Establish a program for the training of Christian educators
- (2) A structure will be in place by 2010 for Christian Formation training for those involved in ministries with children, youth and adult formation
- (3) Components will include 5 core areas: spirituality and faith development, mission and ministry, bible and tradition, theological reflection and program design

*Explanation:*

The Children's Ministries Committee developed this resolution out of an ongoing concern of Christian educators in the diocese. There is a need to develop a framework for those involved in teaching Church School and other education programs in our parishes. The Episcopal Church USA does not have a standard for employees and volunteers who work with children and youth, except they be trained in sexual misconduct/abuse awareness. (In Connecticut, that is not required of Church School teachers, only recommended.) We have standards for many in our church settings why not one for those who work with our youngest, most vulnerable members?

During the spring of 2001, a pilot program for teacher training was held in three locations throughout the diocese. It was overwhelmingly received and a great interest was shown by the participants that a formalized training continue so that educators could become more competent in the ministry with which they feel called, but do not have the financial resources or time to complete a more extensive education.

This resolution will formally endorse the development of such a program. While the initial impetus will be the training of those who work with children, components will be added to include those who work with youth and those who are involved with planning and leading adult formation programs. By 2010, it is hoped lifelong learning will be embraced and supported in our diocese through training for those called to this ministry.

Those who participate in this training will also add to a developing network of trained educators (lay and ordained, paid and volunteer) who can support and develop new leadership in our diocese in the area of education and formation. Funding has been preliminarily approved, having passed through the Budget and Finance Committee this spring. It is included in the increase of the Children's Ministries budget line, of which you can find in the proposed Diocesan budget for 2002.

There has been a renewed interest in Christian Formation in our diocese. We desire to support those called to this ministry by providing the means to assist them. During Holy Baptism, all of us promise to be responsible for seeing the newly baptized be brought up in the Christian life and faith. Our children are not the future, they are the present and deserve a sound foundation.

Sharon Ely Pearson, Consultant for Christian Education, Diocese of Connecticut

[SelyP@aol.com](mailto:SelyP@aol.com)

203/846-2934

# MACE

## **Master of Arts in Christian Education**

For the past several years, each summer for 4 weeks the campus of Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA comes alive with the voices of Christian educators and youth leaders who desire to continue their education with a Master's degree (60 credit hours) in the area of Christian Education (with an option to focus on Youth Ministry). It is an intense 4 weeks of study with courses led by the seminary or adjunct faculty classes in traditional subjects such as Christian Ethics, Church History, Old Testament, New Testament, or Liturgics for two weeks. Christian education classes are also offered on children's ministry, adult education, curriculum, group process and human growth & development. During the "school year," participants do independent study type courses that involve readings, field study and a thesis project. Each course is designed for practical use for Christian educators, and it is an environment of mutual learning and sharing.

Although designed to be accomplished in three summers, candidates have up to seven years to complete the program, allowing flexibility for those who are not able to attend for four weeks at a time. Besides reading, writing and seminars, the MACE program offers a community of Christian educators who support one another in study and resources that continues long after the summer weeks are over.

For more information, visit [www.vts.edu/cmt](http://www.vts.edu/cmt) or contact Dr. Amy Gearey at the Center for the Ministry

Sharon Ely Pearson  
Consultant for Christian Education  
Diocese of Connecticut  
SelyP@aol.com

## Congregations in Bloom

**CONGREGATIONS IN BLOOM** with the **Rev. Caroline Fairless**, founder and director of "Congregations in Bloom, Children at Worship," an organization devoted to including everyone in the life and worship of the church.

What kind of faith formation is possible when a community worship is inclusive of all its members and has its arms wide open to embrace what and who is new? Children at Worship addresses this fundamental question of a community's faith formation and more, as it provides resources for the full inclusion of children and youth in worship.

?? Friday, January 17, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.; Saturday, January 18, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

?? Cost: \$65 which includes snacks and lunch on Saturday (does not include hotel.)

?? For more information contact Lou Taylor 1-888-824-5387

# How to ...

## nurture yourself while nurturing others

### 10 Tips on self care for church professionals

It's funny, isn't it? We spend hours and hours in the church building, up to our ears in Bible stories, scripture, songs, creative crafts, children's prayers and lots of other tools that help us foster spiritual growth in our charges... but we don't often talk about how difficult it can be to nurture our own spiritual development. Let's face it... working at a church can sometimes be hazardous to your spiritual health! Part of it is because it's hard to worship when you are in "work mode" and part of it is probably because we often know way more about the inner workings of a church than any parishioner should have to know. Whatever the reasons we might not do it, here are some suggestions for taking care of yourself:

- 1. Be clear about boundaries!** Most church workers work way above and beyond their appointed office hours. Remember that as EDUCATORS we have a responsibility to model appropriate behavior and if you use your free time to finish up every single project that arises, you are not modeling appropriate behavior. Establish firm office times and make yourself stick to it. Don't habitually work through your lunch hour. Buy an answering machine. Don't answer the phone. Know when to say "No". You cannot be everything to everybody, no matter how much you work. God is still in charge.
- 2. Clarify Job Expectations!** Be clear about what you are and are not willing to do. Create a detailed job description and try to keep it updated to reflect what you actually DO, not just what you thought you would be doing when you took the job. If you need help in creating a job description, gather several samples from colleagues and start with that. Once you see everything you do written down on paper, find ways to delegate some of your work if it seems unmanageable.
- 3. Build a Professional Network!** Knowing other people in church work helps... not just for seasonal ideas or getting a scoop on the latest adult curriculum, but it helps to talk with people whose lives look like yours. Find a group that restores, energizes and encourages you. Call your diocese to find out if groups of local educators meet. If not, call several people in similar positions and arrange to meet for lunch. Also, look into regional or national organizations such as NAECED.
- 4. Pursue Continuing Education!** There are lots of conferences, retreats, and classes available for Christian educators. They have different structures- short conferences that focus on one area or curriculum or ongoing collaborations. Things like EFM, DOCC, and other intensive study courses are an appropriate use of continuing education monies, but so are retreats at your diocesan camp or any number of workshops offered across the country. Remember when you are gone that you do not have to be working 24 hours a day to justify your expenses. Taking time to rest and renew are a big part of why continuing education exists!

5. **Take time off!** Make yourself observe your day off. There will always be things that still need to be done... some will have to be left undone until the next week. Take your vacation time in a way that allows you to let go of your responsibilities for more than 48 hours. Let it go, it will all be there when you get back. Find out what restores you and schedule it into your life. Burnout is a big hazard in church work— protect yourself!
6. **Pay attention to your body!** Keep an eye on what you're eating. Get adequate rest. Take time out for doctor and dentist visits. Exercise regularly (even a little is better than none). Get a massage. Give yourself time for quiet.
7. **Reserve Family or Personal Time!** Remember that your family is more important than any job. What we DO is not nearly as important as who we ARE. Our jobs are not our life... it just feels that way sometimes! ~~☹~~ SCHEDULE time with your family on your calendar. When a church or job activity threatens plans for family time, you might say something like, "Gosh, I'm sorry I can't make that meeting, but I already have another commitment." You are under no obligation to specify what that commitment is!
8. **Do something you enjoy!** We can get so caught up in being productive and meeting deadlines, that it is easy to overlook ourselves. Do something just for YOU. Read a book just for pleasure - not the one about 101 ways to make paper plate crafts. Take a class totally unrelated to your job – yoga, pottery, calligraphy, whatever. Find time for activities you enjoy - tennis, golf, racquetball, movies, travel, etc. Indulge in the arts. Go to lunch with a friend or find other ways to nurture friendships with people who see you as a person beyond just what you do as an educator.
9. **Seek help when you need it!** Those in "helping professions" are often the last to seek help. This is often true for people who work in a church. If life seems overwhelming for too long, find a reputable counselor you can talk to. Watch out for warning signs of distress, burnout, and impairment. Don't overlook them. Stress is a part of all our lives. Accept it, respond to it, and avoid the costly consequences of ignoring it.
10. **Make time for your own spiritual growth!** Allow time for spiritual study. After all, as educators, we should all be lifelong learners. Take time to be the student. Seek out spiritual teachers that inspire and challenge you. Refresh your enthusiasm, gain a new perspective or enhance your wealth of knowledge. Try new things like meditation or a new method of praying. Keep a journal. Read something that challenges your beliefs. Find a spiritual director or mentor.

We need to remind ourselves (and each other) that selfcare is not selfishness. The work we have been given to do is important and the better job we do in taking care of ourselves, the better equipped we are to take care of others. God's peace to all!

Tracey E. Herzer

Director of Children's Formation

All Saints' Episcopal Church

Atlanta, Georgia

# Food for thought:

## Explore alternatives to Sunday routine

by Tom Ehrich (as printed in the Indianapolis Star)

On Sunday, my family and I faced the weekly decision: Do we go to church?

We like our church and feel at home there. Since joining three years ago, we have given a lot, received a lot, and made many acquaintances, plus a few friends. We value this lively congregation's commitment to outreach ministries.

I am not questioning God or my need for God. The love and mercy of God are more alive to me than ever. My need for God has driven me deeper and deeper in my writing.

I am not questioning Christian community or my need for significant relationships grounded in faith. I believe in the Body of Christ. I believe we need to listen to others and to serve in God's name.

I am not questioning the need for trained and caring clergy, who inspire laity.

What I am questioning is the Sunday morning enterprise. Not the offerings of our congregation vs. offerings elsewhere, but the paradigm itself.

Hour of Sunday School, hour of worship. The one time members gather en masse. Too little time to do much faith work, too much structure to allow spontaneity. A participatory experience that is mostly passive. Readings, but no time to listen. Prayer lists, but no time to pray. Proclamation, but no time to cringe, weep or exult. Singing, but no time to savor. Together, but alone.

I am wondering if "church," as we know church, is at all what Jesus intended. He had no apparent interest in hierarchies, structures, or rules. He dreamed of something organic, constant, dynamic—like a vineyard, living and fruitful. Believers were a body, not an audience; a household, not a membership roster.

Emotionally, I need to be known deeply, not greeted briefly. I need to love, not to acquaint. I need to serve, not to watch.

Spiritually, I sit with God for two hours every morning at my computer. That isn't a communion that everyone might value. But it means life to me.

I sense that the Sunday-church paradigm has been fading for some time. Fewer than half of church members attend worship on a given Sunday. Fewer still attend the education hour.

Church leaders ask: Should worship start later or earlier? Different music? Better preaching? What is wrong with people that they prefer Sunday Brunch to Sunday communion?

Shifting paradigms is my response, not lagging zeal for God. Instead of spending 20 more hours on a sermon that only a third of their flock will hear, I'd suggest they make 20 visits, or take 20 people to lunch, or nurture 20 weekday groups, or maybe just leave people to work out their own salvation and spend those 20 hours with their families.

On Sunday, we decided to take a walk and ended up standing in sunlight talking with neighbors. It is another form of communion. Not better than Sunday church, and not worse. Just different, another paradigm for experiencing the love of God.