



IDEAS & NEWS

GENERAL COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN UNITY AND INTERRELIGIOUS CONCERNS

MUSLIM CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE

Christians and Muslims are increasingly aware of the need for a clearer understanding of one another in order to develop closer relationships.

Misconceptions, anxiety, and lack of understanding have often hampered Christian and Muslim leaders in developing friendly and productive relations. Many desire more accurate information about Islam or Christianity and Christian-Muslim relations and the time to study and reflect on the teachings of Islam and Christianity. This institute will give Christian pastors/pastoral workers, as well as Imams/Muslim community leaders, the opportunity and time to learn and reflect together about the two religions and the history of relations between the two faiths.



**INSTITUTE ON
MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS**
June 22—June 28, 2008

Through an intensive, six-day institute with experts, participants will study foundational elements for understanding Islam & Christianity by becoming familiar with the *Qur'an* and the *Bible*, by reviewing historical developments in the history of Islam, Christianity, and Christian-Muslim relations, and by discussing successful approaches to interreligious dialogue and collaboration.

Some introductory sessions are for Christians; others are for Muslims; and other joint sessions will bring the two groups together for study and dialogue.

The deadline for registration is May 1, 2008. For further inquiry, please contact Michael Peterson at: Georgetown University, Office of the President—204 Healy Hall, 37th and O Streets, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20057 - Phone: 202-687-4005, Fax: 202-687-5803 - E-mail: MLP34@georgetown.edu
A PDF of the brochure can be found at: www.gccuic-umc.org/mcinstitute.

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MARCH 2008

Special points of interest:

- * [Accepting applications](#) for General Secretary of GCCUIC through March 15, 2008.
- * Tickets are available for **Bridges of Unity** banquet scheduled for April 29, 2008 at General Conference 2008 in Fort Worth, TX.
- * Metropolitan Ieronymos was elected head of the Greek Orthodox Church. The former head of the church, Archbishop Christodoulos, died earlier this year.

COKESBURY HAS GCCUIC RESOURCES

Have you been wondering where you can find GCCUIC brochures, study guides, books and the like? Cokesbury has them!!

GCCUIC has partnered with Global Ministries to place resources at Cokesbury. So

don't let it throw you off if Cokesbury calls them Global Ministries resources.

You can click [here](#) to get to all the GCCUIC resources. Or click on Global Ministries banner on the right side of the Cokesbury home page. The next

page will have a list on the left. Click on the link to General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns. You will find all GCCUIC resources here. We will be adding new resources in the next several months so bookmark this page and check it regularly.

**GENERAL COMMISSION
ON CHRISTIAN UNITY
AND INTERRELIGIOUS
CONCERNS**

475 Riverside Drive
Room 1300
New York, New York 10115
Tel: 212-749-3553
Fax: 212-662-7045
E-mail:
wwhiteside@gccuic-umc.org
Website: www.gccuic-umc.org



*Working toward unity
and peace.*



PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT:

Religions for Peace

[Religions for Peace - USA](#) is:

- a coalition comprised of leaders from over sixty U.S. religious communities.
- RFP-USA is the USA chapter of [Religions for Peace - International](#).
- the largest and most broadly-based representative multi-religious forum in the United States.
- a non-profit organization working to bring religions together to promote peace and justice.

Rev. Dr. Doug Mills is the United Methodist representative on RFP-USA and currently serves as Treasurer.

RFP-USA operates on the conviction that **multi-religious cooperation** and **common action** can be powerful instruments in the quest for constructive social development, justice, reconciliation, and peace.

Religions for Peace – USA began as an office within its parent organization, Religions for Peace International in the early 1970's. In 2000, the U.S. office became an independent



chapter, Religions for Peace – USA.

RFP-USA affords The United Methodist Church the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue with a wide variety of faith traditions with whom we are not otherwise in communication. Together we provide some programming to encourage peace.

One such program is the Interfaith Academies. **The Interfaith Academies for Religious Leaders** are intensive study programs for people engaged in or training for leadership in various religious traditions. The first academy was held at St. Paul's School of Theology in June 2007. The second in the series is being planned for 2009.

BROADEN YOUR LENTEN PREPARATION

Lent is a time of repentance and restoration, reflection and atonement. "It leads up to the greatest of all celebrations, Easter, the day we sing God's victory over death and darkness. Lent, however, is not just a time of sacrifice and deprivation, but a time that calls us to come closer to God so that the Lord may heal us. And maybe, heal the Church of its devastating divisions that we might sing the Lord's song together."¹

Preparation for Easter is an excellent time to gather the larger Christian family together. It is a particularly good time to gather with our Episcopalian and Lutheran (ELCA) brothers and sisters.

The United Methodist Church has agreements in place with both of these denominations to pray and study together. In these special relationships, we seek to find a way to

stronger, more visible unity in Christ.

The Lenten season allows us to draw closer to one another as we draw closer to God. In a spirit of openness and understanding, study with your Episcopalian and Lutheran neighbors can lead us to the healing to Christ offers.

- Invite the Episcopalian and Lutheran congregations to pray & study with your congregation. Ask if you can attend their studies.
- Add the Episcopal and Lutheran churches to your prayer list. Encourage your pastor to exchange prayer lists with the other congregations.

May God bless you. May the triumph of Easter invigorate you and bring your peace.

¹ Arizona Ecumenical Council website