

Greetings and welcome to Volume 10:1 (June 2010) of *Didache: Faithful Teaching*. Regular participants will note that our website has gone through a renovation. The new design comes courtesy our creative web designer Shawn Stevenson, the artistic eye of Tammy Condon, and the steady leadership of Commissioner E. LeBron Fairbanks. Hopefully the new design will also make the journal more user friendly in the future, assisting readers as they explore the large array of writings from regional theology conferences around the globe.

Speaking of conferences and global settings, this edition serves as a vehicle to announce a new global theology conference within the Church of the Nazarene in 2012. A recent press release includes the following:

The International Board of Education and the eight regional education coordinators for the Church of the Nazarene globally serve as planning committee members for the two conferences. Dr. Ron Benefiel, Nazarene Theological Seminary president, serves as chair for the Global Theology Conference Planning Committee, and Dr. Loren Gresham, Southern Nazarene University president, leads the Global Faith, Learning and Living Conference.

The two conferences will be held on the campus of Africa Nazarene University in Nairobi, Kenya. The Global Theology Conference (GTC) is scheduled for March 26-28, 2012, and will focus on critical issues in Ecclesiology. The GTC is designed to be a global conversation among Nazarene theologians, biblical scholars, denomination leaders and pastors (by invitation). A key desired outcome relates to a shared vision emerging from the conference of the biblical/theological nature and mission of the Church in light of the demographic center of the church moving to the Southern and Eastern Hemispheres. The Global Theology Conference is sponsored by the Board of General Superintendents. Participants for the conference will be selected by the IBOE schools and by the conference planning committee.

The Global Faith, Learning and Living Conference is scheduled for March 29-April 1, 2012. The conference will include participation from the majority of the 54 Church of the Nazarene institutions in 35 countries. The goal of the conference is to inspire and mobilize Nazarene faculty and students to engage the Millennium Development Goals in fulfillment of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. The overarching question for the conferences is “How do we live the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ in our global, complex and changing world?”

The “One Heart, Many Hands” organization will organize an all-conference service day on March 29, and other, more lengthy, service opportunities before and after the conference.

For those interested in exploring the Global Theology Conference, this volume of *Didache* includes the call for papers in multiple languages at the end of the edition. There are some qualifications that may help as you read the call for papers:

- 1) This is a Call for Papers, not a general invitation to participate in the conference. The nomination and invitation process will come later since global participation is limited due to accommodations.
- 2) We realize the due dates for proposal and paper submissions are well in advance of the conference. This is necessary in order to arrange for translation of the 25 selected papers. All deadlines are final deadlines.
- 3) We are anticipating/hoping to approve the writing of 50-70 papers to be submitted globally (12-15 papers from each global region). The 6000-8000 word total includes footnotes and other citations so papers should run 15-20 pages. Of these submissions, approximately 25 will be selected for the conference. The authors of the 25 finally selected papers will, by virtue of their selection, be invited to attend the conference but funding may rest with the participant. (Conference planners are working on funding but nothing can be promised.) All conference participants will be requested to read all 25 selected papers in advance of the conference. The authors of the 25 papers will participate in panel discussions related to their papers at the conference.
- 4) All other papers, upon review, will be published after the conference in *Didache: Faithful Teaching* as continuing resource for the ecclesiological conversation.

Now, back to the journal edition: To help with the Global Theology Conference (where I serve as program co-chair) we have two new treatments for your reading to help frame the call for papers. You will note that the primary backdrop for the next Global Theology Conference is the Article XI of the Articles of Faith for the Church of the Nazarene that addresses the doctrine of the church. The original version of the Article XI was adopted in 1989 and made part of the denomination's polity known as the *Manual*. Since that time the Article read as follows (2005)

XI. The Church

15. We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ and mutual accountability.

The mission of the Church in the world is to continue the redemptive work of Christ in the power of the Spirit through holy living, evangelism, discipleship, and service.

The Church is a historical reality, which organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms; exists both as local congregations and as a universal body; sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (35-36)

What some of you might not know is that Article XI was revised a year ago during the denomination's General Assembly. The new *Manual* language (2010) now reads as follows (note italics represent new language while brackets reflect deleted language):

XI. The Church

15. We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ, *holy living*, and mutual accountability.

The mission of the Church in the world is to [continue] *share in the redemptive and reconciling ministry* [work] of Christ in the power of the Spirit [through holy living, evangelism, discipleship, and service]. *The Church fulfills its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, showing compassion, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.*

The Church is a historical reality, which organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms; exists both as local congregations and as a universal body; sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (34-35)

While changes in wording may help clarify the official doctrine, understanding the overall frameworks that inform Nazarene ecclesiology remains an ongoing task. One early attempt to elaborate on the original version of Article XI surfaced in a book titled *A Community of Faith* (1997). Interestingly this book was published eight years after the original adoption of Article XI with seemingly limited exposure. Since then several conferences and writings have attempted to provide a robust ecclesiological vision for the Church of the Nazarene, including papers published during the last global theology conference by Deirdre Brower Latz (June 2007) and K. Steve McCormick (June 2007). Both articles are available under volume 7:1 of this journal. http://didache.nts.edu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=21:vol-7-no-1-june-2007&catid=18:vol-7&Itemid=38.

In preparation for this edition, and anticipating the call for papers, I commissioned two friends and able scholars to provide basic documents that will help frame our thoughts. The first document, by Dr. Henry W. Spaulding II, reflects on the influences that shaped the original Article XI, going back to the original 1985 Commission on the Church that Dr. Spaulding chaired. Reflecting on the events that shaped the original Article XI may prove instructive for our deliberations today. In addition Dr. Sam Powell has been gracious enough to provide a short overview of the concept of ecclesiology. I asked Sam to write this draft recognizing that many of us have already engaged this topic but also recognizing that a review might raise several key

issues that might guide future investigation. I extend my thanks to both gentlemen for providing these documents as such short notice and think they provide excellent companion pieces to guide our deliberations in the future (alongside the articles in volume 7:1).

In addition to this emphasis on Article XI and ecclesiology, the journal includes several interesting offerings for your reading pleasure. To begin, we are fortunate to publish a previously written “white paper” created at Nazarene Theological Seminary as a resource for the Board of General Superintendents (BGS) of the Church of the Nazarene. The original document, which addressed holiness and entire sanctification, remained an exclusive resource for the leadership of the denomination until recently, when the BGS authorized its release for a larger reading public. Hopefully this document will provide additional reflection at this point in time.

Following these three theological reflections the journal turns to a couple of key writings addressing the task of education. The first, by Mark Maddix, provides an interesting approach to ascertaining and cultivating spiritual growth in other people based on resources found within the field of Christian education. An essay by Joseph Coleson follows Maddix and reflects on the use of literature, particularly C.S. Lewis and Tolkien, in a seminary curriculum. This theme of literature and theological education follows Dr. Vicki Copp’s treatise in our last edition.

Finally the journal finishes with two excellent student papers. The first, by Jim Good, takes a renewed look at our Christian anthropology and asserts why we need a robust view in light of a culture that often depersonalizes people with disabilities. My thanks to Jim and to his faculty sponsor, Dr. David McEwan from Nazarene Theological College, Brisbane Australia, for sending us this article. The final article is this year’s recipient of the Tom Nees Award for Social Justice at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Shawna Songer Gaines provides a fitting close to the edition by providing a well researched and well argued reflection on the intersection of justice and hospitality in the Christian tradition. Often our student papers provide some of the strongest research from fresh young scholars who are quickly making a mark for themselves around the globe. Jim and Shawna provide excellent examples of this type of quality work. As always we invite faculty to consider submitting quality student work for publication in the journal. We anticipate such quality next edition when we hope to have a fine treatise of polygamy within the African context.

One final comment, you might have noticed the “absence” of my friend and co-editor Matt Price in this edition. Matt was busy behind the scenes helping to pilot a new blind review form we will be using in future editions. As mentioned before, research paper submissions always undergo outside blind reviews as well as editorial revision, commissioned essays are reviewed and revised by senior staff, and student papers are received upon the recommendation of sponsoring faculty who serve as the independent reviewer for that document. In the future we will have an even more formal process to guide our outside review to enhance the academic quality; and Matt has been helping with this venture. However, Matt also started a new teaching position at Mount Vernon Nazarene University this year. As a result he had eleven new course preparations the first twelve months under contract, the academic equivalent of freshman “hazing” for most faculty members. Needless to say the poor fellow needed a rest... :0-) So, being close to the Global Theology Planning Team, I chose to oversee the final design of this edition. This volume initiates my tenth year with *Didache* as editor. I was fortunate enough to be involved in the “birth” the first edition and it seems amazing to me that the journal now rapidly enters a phase of

early adolescence. As always, the journal exists due to the quality of submissions by Wesleyan educators around the globe, so I thank everyone who has contributed in the past years. Keep sending your articles and essays for consideration.

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