



Highlights of the upcoming November meeting
Details for Pittsburgh
and more inside

From our program chair and vice president, Bert Roebben



In a time of turmoil, in a world of permanent change - for the better and for the worse - the temptation is great and understandable to lose faith in humanity. At the same time however, future generations are asking us to confirm them in their hope, in their aspirations for a better world. According to the French philosopher Gabriel Marcel, in his metaphysics of hope, as adults we should "introduce the element of patience into non-acceptance" of hopeless situations (*Homo Viator*, Chicago, 1951, p. 39). That is quite an educational job!

How to create patience in the mindset of a young person desperately longing for change? Well, says Marcel, "a simple expression borrowed from everyday language is a help here: to take one's time. (...) "Take your time," an examiner would say, for example, to a flurried candidate. That means, do not force the personal rhythm, the proper cadence of your reflection, or even of your memory, for if you do you will spoil your chances, you will be likely to say at random the first words which come into your head. (...) From this point of view, hope means first accepting the trial as an integral part of the self, but while so doing it considers it as

destined to be absorbed and transmuted by the inner workings of a certain creative process" (p. 39).

It is my honor and my pleasure to be the program chair of the Religious Education Association for our upcoming meeting in Pittsburgh on the 4-6 November, and to lead participants in ways of reflection and action as "hope generators" in religious education worldwide. We will hear from a number of outstanding scholars and speakers, as well as collaborate together in sessions that are structured to support collegial engagement. Among our speakers will be:

- Elizabeth Conde-Frazier and Reginald Nel on "teaching and globalization"
- Aaron Ghiloni and David Hansen on "the teacher and the world"
- Bernard Grümme, Daniel Moulin, Mualla Selçuk and Sarah Tauber on "biographical perspectives"

To deepen the ongoing conversation, I invite you to read my paper "Teachers as Hope Generators: Discovering Profession-as-Vocation in a Teacher Education Department", recently published in *Religious Education* 111 (2016) 3, p. 234-238.

From our president, Harold "Bud" Horell



In November we will journey to Pittsburgh, PA for the 2016 Annual Meeting of REA:APPRRE. The beautiful city of Pittsburgh has hosted REA meetings in the past – in 1920, 1936, 1953, and 1975. At each of these meetings REA members explored opportunities for learning about, from, and within religion traditions and communities. For instance, at the 1953 annual meeting in Pittsburgh, which was the 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of the REA, there were conversations about religion in general education, religion in higher education, and research on nurturing religious development. More importantly, before, during, and after the 50th anniversary celebration there was great hope within the REA that the organization would continue to expand and grow as an interfaith and international

fellowship (see for example Elliott 1950, especially 195-196). That is, there was a hope that the REA would continue to develop as an organization within which religious educators from various religious groups from around the world could share their distinctive outlooks, learn from one another, and then use what they learned to enrich their own religious communities. There was also hope that REA members could further develop their ability to work together to address common concerns about religion in public life and foster greater hope within the world.

When we are together in Pittsburgh this year we will continue our ongoing explorations of the need for and value of religious education within and beyond communities of faith. Our specific focus for the 2016 annual meeting will be on teaching and the teaching profession. As we gather together from across North America and around the world, our annual meeting will affirm how in the years since our organization last met in Pittsburgh, REA:APRRE has continued to develop as an interfaith and international organization. More significantly, we will be guided by our Program Chair Bert Roebben in exploring how, within the challenges of living in a globalized world today, we can discover fragments of hope and opportunities for nurturing personal, communal, and religious development.

I hope to see you in Pittsburgh in November!

Fun facts about Pittsburgh, our host city

If you've never had the opportunity to travel to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, you might not know the important role it has played in the history of the United States as a major steel producer. Pittsburgh's nickname is "Steel City," and it is home to more bridges than any other city in the world — even Venice. Pittsburgh steel not only contributed to building those 446 bridges, but has also built structures around the world. Pittsburgh is the second largest city in the state of Pennsylvania, located at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, which form the Ohio River.

Other interesting tidbits include:

- Fred Rogers, of *Mr. Rogers Neighborhood*, called Pittsburgh home
- Emoticons were invented here back in 1982 on a Carnegie Mellon computer
- The Clark bar, the Klondike ice cream bar, and Heinz ketchup are all from Pittsburgh
- Many artists, composers and writers hail from Pittsburgh, including Annie Dillard, August Wilson, Stephen Foster, Henry Mancini, Billy Strayhorn, Billy Eckstine, George Benson and Martha Graham
- The first community sponsored educational TV station in America is WQED
- The very first Bingo game, invented by Hugh J. Ward, was called in Pittsburgh in the beginning of the 1920s and by 1924 it was a nationwide phenomenon

(factoids cited from the web)



Registration is now open for our Pittsburgh meeting

Visit the [REA Annual Meeting 2016 website](#) for all the details about the meeting.

Register for REA2016 Today!

If you are the chair of a standing committee, work group or community of practice, we would love to include details of what your group will be doing through [the conference schedule](#). This is a resource that can be much more fully utilized than it has been in the past — for networking, for communication, for inviting people into your efforts. Get in touch with [our networking coordinator](#) for details on how to do this.

This year we have added to the registration process an opportunity to connect colleagues who are interested in sharing rooms at the hotel as a way to reduce expenses. When you register you can check a box that says you are interested in room sharing, and then you will receive an email with a link to a page that lists everyone who has indicated that desire. It will then be up to you to connect with someone on that list and make plans. Once you have found a roommate, please email our networking coordinator, [Mary Hess](#), so that we can remove you from the list. Or you can remove yourself by clicking on the link at that bottom of the room sharing page.

Keep in mind that we have had a very strong response to the Call for Papers, and **early registration for the conference (with lower fees) ends September 15th.**

Please help us spread the word on the meeting! You can get free pdfs of flyers at [the program website](#).

Getting more involved with REA

One of the exciting elements of this organization — but also one of its more confusing — has to do with how to get involved. As a grassroots organization committed to collaboration and collegiality, we welcome participation from anyone and everyone in our association. There are many different kinds of participation. Perhaps the simplest involves what you are doing right now — reading this newsletter. The next step might be joining us at an annual meeting. Or you could become involved with a [work group](#), a [standing committee](#), a [community of practice](#). Maybe you love social media, and want to become a regular commentator, or perhaps you have an idea that would lend itself to proposing a regional AAR grant with REA members who are also AAR members. Think about your gifts, and then how you might use them here. Our networking coordinator, [Mary Hess](#), is always ready to help you discern ways to get involved. Or you can visit [our website for information](#), email the chair of the [standing committee](#) or [work group](#) in which you are interested, or start a new work group yourself.

The groups which we used to refer to as “forums” have now been renamed as “standing committees,” and in a major change from years past, we are now electing only the chairs to these committees, and then seeking volunteers who are interested in helping with specific projects. To find out more about getting involved with the standing committee on religious education in academic disciplines, contact [Tony Vrame](#); for the standing committee on religious education in faith communities, [Kathy Winings](#); and for the standing committee on religious education in public life and the global community, [Barbara Morgan](#).

Deadline August 1st for titles for the conference bookstore

This November we are pleased to note that the University of Pittsburgh has agreed to stock an on-site bookstore during our annual meeting. They will bring along assorted titles from their regular stock, but are willing to order and stock additional titles which we suggest. Please send your suggestions to our executive secretary, [Lucinda Huffaker](#), by **August 1st**. Don't be humble! We are grateful when authors tell us about their own books.

We are also always willing to add member publications to our [REA Amazon bookstore](#). To add your books to that site, please email the details to our [networking coordinator](#).

Supporting innovation in religious education

By guest author Justus Baird, Chair of the Harper / Wornom Committee

For five years I ran a “start-up” religious education program. I wanted to test out a model of family-based learning in the Jewish community for families who were opting out of synagogue life. The methodology and pedagogy was inspired by Scouting: a system of ranks and requirements provided the framework for kids (K-12) to learn at their own pace, guided by parents and other adults in the community. The project never “took off.” Participating families expressed high degrees of satisfaction with the community we had created, but we struggled with recruiting new families each year, and we never converted the interest from leaders in other regions to become franchised groups. I wasn't prepared to leave my full-time job to give the program “my all” and we weren't able to raise enough money from tuition and fees and outside funders to hire a part-time project director.

I could speculate on whether the initiative died a natural death because it wasn't exactly the right educational product at the right time (which is my hunch) or because of other factors, such as insufficient commitment from the leadership or limited funding.

For me, one takeaway from that experience is noting that the field of religious education could do more to support and encourage innovation. And the Religious Education Association is in a position to become part of an ecosystem for innovation in the field.

There are many reasons why the educational approaches we are currently invested in may not be the ones that help our faith communities thrive into the future: religious life is changing, social demographics are changing, technology continues to evolve rapidly, and our understanding of how humans learn is changing through the field of mind, brain and education science. For these reasons and many more, our field of practice needs to have a healthy culture of innovation to thrive.

Over the past two years, a small four-member committee of the REA has been working to re-think how the REA approaches awards. Without boring you with the bureaucratic details, I can say that we inherited a set of three awards, none of which were sufficiently resourced to make much of an impact on the field. So we asked ourselves how we might do it better. The answer we are now working towards is to shift from three awards to one award and a new innovation grant. We're reaching out now to get REA members' feedback on the plans.

First, we would keep the William Rainey Harper Award, a lifetime achievement award in the field. That award would be given out every three to five years for financial reasons and to keep the award special.

Second, we would combine the two lesser-known awards under our purview, the Wornom Award (originally intended to recognize institutions leading in the field) and the Harper project (originally intended to promote collegiality across the field), into a new, annual small grant for innovation.

Our committee and the REA Board of Directors is eager to hear your feedback on this proposal, which will be formally voted upon at the November meeting. More details will be available at the REA website as they become available, and in the meantime, please direct your comments to me, [Justus Baird](#), or to our executive secretary, [Lucinda Huffaker](#).

Resource highlights

This section of our newsletter highlights resources that come to us through our members, and the various associations with which we are in relationship. There is a long [list of such associations](#) at our website, as well as [a list of members who blog and/or tweet](#). If you have ideas for this section of our newsletter, or for any part of our website, please email our networking coordinator, [Mary Hess](#).

Sapelo Square takes the name "Sapelo" from one of the first communities of African Muslims in the United States, founded in the early 1800s. On Sapelo Island, off the coast of Georgia, enslaved African Muslims struggled to hold onto their Islamic roots amidst the dehumanizing institution of slavery. In the spirit of "do for self," Sapelo Square intervenes in the marginalization and erasure of Black Muslims in the public square through being an online forum that places Black Muslims at the center. Its mission is to celebrate and analyze the experiences of Black Muslims in the United States: to create

new understandings of who they are, what they have done, and why that matters. [Sapelo Square](#) is committed to a nonsectarian approach to Islam and an inclusive vision of what it means to be Black in the United States, and seeks to provide informed and thought provoking content that leads to innovative and transformative action. The website maintains several resources, as well as an active Facebook site and Twitter feed.

The **[Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference](#)** nurtures, sustains, and mobilizes the African American faith community in collaboration with civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders to address critical needs of human and social justice within local, national, and global communities. Through partnerships and collaborations with others from the academic, business, policy and not-for-profit communities, the skills, talents and resources of SDPC supporters are maximized by sharing information and models of successful outreach strategies. SDPC focuses its work on education, advocacy and activism, promoting justice by resourcing and organizing partner churches, clergy and lay leaders to address the diverse concerns of communities. The [SDPC website](#) is chock full of resources, from a real time stream of curated news (available through Twitter, Facebook, and other social media), to speeches, videos, and photographs, as well as free downloadable resources (eg. a litany for *Do No Harm Sunday*).

[Teaching Tolerance](#) is a project of the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), and is a place where educators who care about diversity, equity and justice can find news, suggestions, conversation and support. They publish an extensive collection of resources that can be used in a variety of classroom settings — in both K12 and higher education environments — and this year have curated a very rich and diverse [set of teaching materials](#) that make it possible to disrupt the growing negative biases emerging from this year's presidential campaigns in the US context. These include resources which counteract [myths about immigration](#), a series of [religious diversity webinars](#) available on demand, stories focused on building empathy across religious traditions, and much, much more.

[Wing Young Huie](#) is a celebrated photographer who has captured the complex cultural realities of American society. His work has been shown in international museums —over half a million people have viewed his traveling exhibit in China— and in Minnesota storefront windows. His most well known works, Lake Street USA and the University Avenue Project, transformed Minneapolis and Saint Paul, MN thoroughfares into six-mile photo galleries, reflecting the everyday lives of thousands of their citizens. His projects explore a myriad of social issues, including immigration, race, adoption, urban and rural life, dementia, faith, Lutheranism, gender, homelessness, and youth culture. His website includes a rich assortment of his photography, more than 100 photos, along with thoughtful educational exercises by which to engage it in a variety of settings.

The **[Yale Center for Faith and Culture](#)** is focused on critically examining and promoting practices of faith which advance authentic human flourishing and the global common good. Their program on adolescent faith and flourishing has brought a number of REA's member scholars to Yale's campus for presentations. [Yolanda Smith](#), [Roger Nishioka](#), [Frederick Edie](#), [David White](#), and [Anne Wimberly](#) are just a few of the gifted presenters whose lectures are available for free streaming at the site.

Excellent response to REA surveys

Due to the tremendous response to the evaluation surveys we used at our last annual meeting, the Board has made significant changes to this upcoming meeting, including shifting plenaries into a more dialogical mode, adding a breakout session early in the meeting devoted to poster presentations, and holding a “community feast/fest” on Friday evening. We will again be looking for your feedback throughout our November meeting, and deeply appreciate your ideas.

We are also pleased to report that we reached a 30% response rate with the recent Association-wide survey. We have heard numerous positive comments from people about the design of the survey, and we offer our thanks to Deborah Gin, who designed it, and Arch Wong, who led the process with input from the REA Board of Directors. Next steps include preliminary analysis to be offered to the Board at its November meeting, and a much wider public announcement of survey analysis at the beginning of next year.

CFP deadline for special journal issue on race is July 15th!

The January-February 2017 issue of *Religious Education* seeks papers for a special issue critically exploring religious education in relation to race, racism, and anti-racism. What is the role of religious education in addressing racism today? Around the globe racism’s presence and effects manifest themselves in situations as varied as acts of racially motivated violence in the US; the global migration- and refugee- crisis; resurgence of anti-Semitic groups; policies of mass incarceration; and colonialism’s racially organized conflicts in places such as Indonesia, South Africa, and the Philippines. When has religious education encouraged or supported racism? How can it participate in creating change? Where is religious education significant in anti-racism movements and curricula? How might diverse religious traditions address and educate differently around matters of race through the lens of their particular religious identity and history? For this issue we seek papers that attend not only to race/racism as an interpersonal phenomenon, but also to religious education in relation to structural, systemic elements of racism, and to intersectionality. We also welcome papers addressing religious education and constructions of race/racism in contexts outside of the U.S., recognizing the varied conceptualizations of race and racism in different parts of the world.

Papers will be peer reviewed and should follow the standard guidelines for preparation and submission, available on [the journal’s web page](#).

The due date for submission of manuscripts is **15 July 2016**.

Member News

REA thrives through the practices and scholarship of its members. We need you! And we welcome news that you'd like to share. This column is entirely dependent on members sending us information — please try not to be silenced by your humility, but instead share your news, and help us to stay in touch with each other.

Wayne Cavalier, O. P. has received the 2016 San Juan Diego Award presented by National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM). NALM is the professional organization that supports, educates and advocates for lay ministers and promotes the development of lay ministry in the Catholic Church. During their annual conference this coming June 2016, the award was presented to Fr. Wayne for his outstanding witness to the spirit and values embodied in the life of the lay minister, San Juan Diego.

Eileen Daily participated in the *Silent Transformations* conference sponsored by the Institute Para Limes at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. She also took a week-long intensive course called Introduction to Complexity Science sponsored by the Complexity Institute at NTU.

HyeRan Kim-Cragg and **Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook** have contributions in a new book edited by Kwok Pui-Lan and Stephen Burns just out from Rowman & Littlefield, Postcolonial Practice of Ministry: Leadership, Liturgy, and Interfaith Engagement.

Jonathan LeMaster Smith writes: “It is with great excitement that I announce that I will be working at St. Matthews United Methodist Church in Morganton, NC as the Children's Minister beginning May 1st. I will miss my Oak Hill family, but will continue to be involved as I can.”

Barbara Senacal-Davis successfully defended her thesis “The Unresolved Conflict Over Revelation in American Protestantism: Reshaping Congregational Practices through Revelatory Teaching-Learning,” earning her the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education at Fordham University.

Tim Van Meter, a plenary speaker at last year's annual meeting, has received an NEH summer fellowship to continue his work on sustainability and a land ethic.

Daniella Zsupan-Jerome has accepted and begun working in a brand new position as Professor of Pastoral Theology at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

Mourning the passing of friends and colleagues



It is with deep sadness that we share news of the death on 15 May 2016 of **Dr. David J. Frenchak**, president emeritus of the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE). David suffered a sudden heart attack and died while at his retirement home in Florida. Dave served as president and founding director of SCUPE from 1976 – 2010. He was 73. Before coming to SCUPE Dave served as an urban pastor and adjunct seminary professor in the Boston area. He held degrees from Bethel Theological Seminary and Andover Newton Theological Seminary. Called at a young age to lead this start up organization, Dr. Frenchak helped build SCUPE over the years to become a robust consortium of seminaries that specialized in urban contextual theology. His wide-ranging relationships with various

constituencies in the Chicago, including churches and funding institutions, allowed many new opportunities to emerge. Among them was the development of theological education programs rooted in African-centered theologies – Center for African American Theological Studies (CAATS) – and in Latin American-centered theologies (Advanced Latino/a Theological Education (ALTE). These programs prepared urban ministers for effective ministry in their respective communities.

It is with deep sadness that we also share news of the death on 27 June 2016 of beloved scholar and friend, Nelle Slater. **Dr. Nelle G. Slater** was a United Methodist lay woman called to engage in religious education leadership from that social location. Her work in local congregations, in college and university and in theological education as both administrator and professor, and as a leader in the Religious Education Association and the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education gifted many educators whom she mentored. Her collaborative approach to research also empowered both students and colleagues. Dr. Slater retired to Redding, CA, where she actively engaged in designing and teaching in the adult education program at First United Methodist Church (Redding). She was a member of the design team of the Inter-faith Witness for Justice and Peace in Redding and facilitated conversations and mutual understanding among Islamic, Jewish and Christian believers. (Our appreciation to the [Talbot 20th Century Christian Educators site](#) for this brief biography.)



Donate to support our Association

Every year we hear from doctoral students, as well as our international members, about how difficult it is to come up with funding to travel to our annual meetings. We have a small travel fund available with which to offer partial support, and we are grateful for the generosity of a few members who contribute faithfully to that fund. However, the need is increasing, and we are always seeking additional contributions! Please consider making a donation when you register for the meeting, or when you renew your membership.

You can also donate at any time you like from our website: simply click on the “donate” button, which will take you to our donation form, or click on [this donation link](#). From there you can use any regular credit or debit card, as well as other kinds of funds, to donate. We really appreciate your support and urge you to consider donating.

One other way to support us is to designate the Religious Education Association as your “smile” partner at Amazon.com so that your purchases direct a small percentage to REA. More details at smile.amazon.com.



eREACH is a newsletter of the Religious Education Association, an Association of Professors, Practitioners, and Researchers in Religious Education.

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Dave Frenchak, SCUPE obituary.
Nelle Slater, photo offered by Debora Junker.
Members at the meeting, Mary Hess.