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**TOP CHURCH LEADERS TO HOLD SUMMIT  
AT CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

CLAREMONT, Calif.—May 6, 2009— How does theology help churches with social action? How does social justice change theology? What role will progressive Protestantism play in the “Age of Obama”?

Executives from the nation’s oldest Protestant denominations, as well as progressive leaders in the emergent church movement, are gathering for the Claremont Denominational Summit on May 27-29 at Claremont School of Theology, to discuss these and other questions concerning the roles of progressive Protestant theology in twenty-first century American churches. The summit will be held on the School’s campus, located at 1325 N. College Ave., Claremont, Calif.

“In light of the new political landscape in America, church leaders must talk about how theology impacts social justice, and vice versa,” says Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, program co-director and professor emerita at the School. “This mutual dynamism—between theology and social action—is critical for the future of the Church and the repair of our world.”

The Claremont Denominational Summit will include a public forum on the topic, “Contemporary Theology for Social Action in the Churches.” The forum, which will feature presentations and conversations with top denominational executives, is set for Thursday, May 28, at 7 p.m. in Claremont’s Mudd Theater.

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Leading representatives of eleven denominations, as well as the National Council of Churches, are scheduled to participate. Confirmed participants include Peg Chamberlin, president-elect of the National Council of Churches, as well as Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches. Phyllis Tickle, noted commentator and author on religion in America, will also be on hand.

Denominations to be represented include American Baptist Churches, USA; African Methodist Episcopal Church; Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ); Christian Methodist Episcopal Church; Episcopal Church; Evangelical Lutheran Church of America; Presbyterian Church (USA); United Church of Christ; The United Methodist Church; and Unitarian Universalist Association. Representatives of the Emerging Church Movement will also participate.

The Claremont Denominational Summit is the second of a three-part program entitled “Rekindling Theological Reflection: Transformative Thought for Progressive Action,” funded by the Ford Foundation and sponsored by Claremont School of Theology. The first meeting in March brought leading theologians together to discuss theological foundations for social action. The third meeting, scheduled for September, will invite presidents and deans of theological schools to develop new educational strategies for theological education.

Claremont School of Theology is a fully accredited ecumenical and multi-religious graduate school affiliated with The United Methodist Church. Additional information and maps are available at [www.cst.edu](http://www.cst.edu).

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**Summary:**

WHAT: The Claremont Denominational Summit, an ecumenical meeting to discuss shared visions for the future of American Christianity

WHO: Top leaders in progressive American Protestantism

WHEN: May 27-29, 2009

WHERE: Claremont (Calif.) School of Theology, 1325 N. College Ave.

**Public Forum:**

WHEN: Thursday, May 28, 2009 at 7 p.m.

WHERE: Mudd Theater at Claremont School of Theology

**Confirmed Participants**

- **Peg Chamberlin**, President-Elect, National Council of Churches,
- **Michael Kinnamon**, General Secretary, National Council of Churches
- **Phyllis Tickle**, Senior Fellow of Cathedral College of the Washington National Cathedral and Founding editor of the Religion Department of Publishers Weekly
- **Dennis C. Dickerson**, the James M. Lawson, Jr., Professor of History at Vanderbilt University

## ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS

**Chris Copeland**, Minister for Leadership Formation

## AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Daryl B. Ingram**, Secretary-Treasurer of Christian Education

## AMERICAN BAPTIST

**Mary Hulst**, President

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE US (Disciples)

**Sharon Watkins**, General Minister and President

## CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Thomas L. Hoyt**, Bishop,

## EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**C. K. Robertson**, Canon to the Presiding Bishop and Primate  
**Thomas Ferguson**, Office of Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Relations,

## EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

**Marcus Kunz**, Executive for Discernment of Contextual & Theological Issues

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

**Lee Hinson-Hasty**, Coordinator for Theological Education and Seminary  
Relations

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION

**Rob Eller-Isaacs**, President

**Beth Miller**, Director of Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**John Thomas**, President and General Minister

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Gregory Vaughn Palmer**, President of the Council of Bishops

**Mary Ann Swenson**, Bishop of the California-Pacific Annual Conference,

**Grant Hagiya**, Bishop of the Pacific-Northwest Annual Conference

**Jerome King del Pino**, General Secretary of the General Board of Higher  
Education and Ministry

**Mary Ann Moman**, Associate General Secretary of the Division of Ordained  
Ministry

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