



# TIA News & Notes

April, 2004

The Newsletter of the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance

Volume 9, Issue 2

**AN ETHIC FOR THE WHOLE PLANET**  
**An Address by Dr. Tom Boyd**  
**to the Annual Meeting of the Tulsa Interfaith Alliance**  
**Fellowship Congregational Church, 2900 S. Harvard**  
**Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.**

In a world where foreigners are neighbors, how do we live together? What are the ethics for a world community? These questions will be addressed by Dr. Tom Boyd at this year's annual meeting, April 26<sup>th</sup> at Fellowship Congregational Church. Dr. Boyd will follow up on a suggestion made by Hans Kung at the Second Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993 that they provide an ethic for what has come to be called globalization. How far along are we in developing this ethic and what is the commitment of the world's religions to pursuing it?

A popular lecturer and teacher, Dr. Boyd is currently David Ross Boyd Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Oklahoma. In 1997 he retired after twenty-eight years of teaching philosophy of religion and ethics. He holds four earned degrees, including a Ph.D. in religion from Vanderbilt. As an Emeritus Professor he now teaches in OU's Religious Studies Program, lectures and leads seminars around the country and writes. Most recently he completed his first novel in collaboration with his wife, Barbara, who is the Director of Educational Outreach for Religious Studies at OU.

The Boyds were both ordained in the Presbyterian Church USA, have four grown children, and thrive on backpacking, canoeing, mountain biking, reading novels and late-night conversation. Tom exercises his imagination and plays, especially when working. It is a joy to welcome him to our annual meeting.

## Four People Nominated to Serve on the Board of Directors

**Eva S. Cameron** is the new Assistant Minister of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, OK. She recently moved from a nine-year tenure as Assistant Minister of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Ann Arbor Michigan. Rev. Cameron studied at Meadville Lombard Theology School affiliated with the University of Chicago, and brings a lifelong knowledge of this

faith to her ministry. Poetry, song, meditation and a love of the outdoors shape Rev. Cameron's life. Influenced by her work in organizing the Centennial Celebration of the Parliament of World Religions, interfaith work has been a guiding passion in her ministry.

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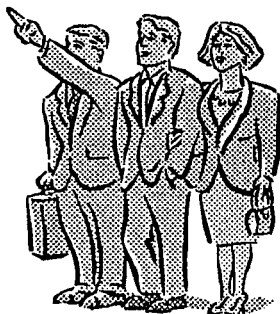
REPORT ON INTERFAITH ALLIANCE  
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GATHERING  
CHICAGO, FEBRUARY 27-29, 2004

By John A. Osborne, Treasurer

**Howard Plowman** A retired United Methodist minister, Howard graduated from Will Rogers High School in Tulsa. He earned his BA from Tulsa University, his Masters of Theology from Perkins School of theology SMU, and has an honorary doctorate from Oklahoma City University. Howard served as District superintendent of the Tulsa District of the United Methodist Church. He also served throughout the state serving churches in Oklahoma City, Ardmore, Bartlesville, Ponca City, Elk City and others, He is currently on the TMM Board, Oklahoma Methodist Manor Board of Directors, and Restore Hope executive committee. He and his wife attend and are active in the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church

**Ron McDaniel** Since 2000, Ron has served as the Vice President of the Publishing Division of Educational Development Corporation. EDC is the nationwide distributor of Usborne children's books. Past community activities include serving as President for the Board of Directors and Executive Director of Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry. Ron and his wife Betty are members of Harvard Avenue Christian Church.

**Luis-Carlos Sanchez** is an ordained religious science minister and graduate of Holmes Institute in St. Louis, Missouri. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business and a Master's Degree in Divinity. He has served as senior minister of Harmony Church in Tulsa, and as Resident Chaplain at Hillcrest Medical Center where he completed his CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) program. His present ministry is as Hospice Chaplain. He serves on the TMM Interfaith Committee Against Racism, the Committee on Diversity, The Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism, and is a member of the Coalition of Hispanic Organizations. Luis-Carlos' passion is peace, non-violence and social justice. He serves as co-chair of "Pastors for Peace" and as spokesperson for Tulsa Peace Fellowship.



My wife and I attended this meeting representing Tulsa. Oklahoma City was represented by Marvin Chiles (a national vice chair), his wife, Mary Ellen, and Jeff Hamilton (president of the Oklahoma City chapter) and his wife, Wanda. Tulsa and Oklahoma City were two of seven nominees for the Bishop P. Francis Murphy Local Activism Award. The Interfaith Alliance of Hawaii was presented the award, but Oklahoma City was the first runner-up. If you heard the accomplishments of Hawaii, you can quickly see why they won. I talked with their president and found out that he is active in United Religions Initiative, an international interfaith and peace organization in San Francisco whose executive director is a friend of ours from Tulsa, The Rev. Charles Gibbs, an Episcopal priest.

We met with representatives of chapters in Wichita and Pittsburg, Kansas. Several years ago we discussed the possibility of annual or semi-annual regional meetings with them, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa. This was brought up again, but no one took a leadership role.

The theme and programs for this year are "One Nation, Many Faiths. VOTE 2004. As a result, most of the conference program and talks included political activism, with an emphasis on voter registration. Local chapters were challenged to conduct voter registration drives in their communities. We need to do this in Tulsa. Members from some states mentioned that organizations doing voter registration drives have to include representatives from both political parties. I don't think this is true in Oklahoma.

Speakers and presenters included Dr. Martin E. Marty at the awards banquet, The Rev. Dr. Welton Gaddy, our national president, The Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord, our national chair, and Dr. Eboo Patel, executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core. The workshop presenters were consultants and national staff involved in press relations, fund raising, communications, the Internet, Congress

and the Federal Government, and IRS issues on political activities.

We were particularly impressed with some ideas presented by Dr. Patel, a 27 year-old Indian Muslim and Rhodes Scholar, on getting young people involved in interfaith activities. He is very articulate and enthusiastic and I would like to see him brought to Tulsa for a program involving NCCJ, TIA, and TMM. The Interfaith Youth Corps (IFYC), headquartered in Chicago, brings diverse young people of faith together to:

- Connect more deeply with the parts of their own religious tradition, which inspire social action.
- Learn to understand, appreciate, and respect other religious traditions.
- Make a difference in the broader society through interfaith social action.

Nationally, the IFYC focuses on catalyzing, resourcing and networking the emerging field of interfaith youth work. IFYC partners with faith-based youth program professionals and faith-based school personnel to deliver innovative interfaith education programs: shared values discussions, establishing school partnerships, and college and university partnerships.

Roger Limoges of the national staff who participated in our faith-based assistance forum last summer, gave a good analysis of the political issues involving the mixing of religion and politics. Despite opposition from many religious leaders, the Houses of Worship Free Speech Restoration Act is adding endorsers in Congress. This proposed law would allow houses of worship to use their tax-exempt contributions for political purposes and to endorse candidates. He discussed many other church/state problems from the current administration.

The following are some quotes from the national board chair, The Rev. Dr. Gwynne Guibord: "While there are many things that I truly don't understand...I accept much on faith...here are things that I truly don't understand. We call ourselves, often with deep patriotism and pride, the wealthiest nation on the earth. I don't understand how it can be that the wealthiest nation on the

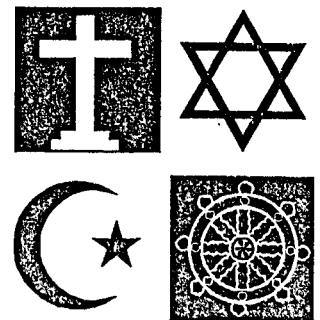
earth will send hungry children to bed tonight (those who have a bed)? I don't understand how it can be that there are men and women who are one paycheck away from ending up on the street? I do not understand how it can be that whole families live in their cars? I do not understand how hard-working men and women and their children do not have adequate health care?

I do not understand how it can be that so many of our young are addicted to drugs and live in prisons and die without a glimmer of hope?

I do not understand how it can be that our deepest faith traditions have been hijacked by a narrow margin of the Right which espouses a theology and Biblical interpretation that is restrictive and divisive? I do not understand how it can be that the Attorney General of the United States begins every day with Bible study inviting his entire office to do the same with him."

Other things she mentioned are: The Patriot Act which allows unlimited spying on citizens, billions of dollars spent on a short-sighted war, blurring of boundaries between church and state (faith based initiatives), the radical right having the ear of the President and being in the Oval Office itself, distortion by the CDC website claiming a link between breast cancer and abortion and information on HIV/AIDS (all of which has been disavowed by renowned scientists), and, of course, a Constitutional Amendment defining marriage along religious lines.

"We cannot allow the Radical Right to define who we are as a people and as a nation. And we certainly cannot let them control the definition of who is faithful and who is not. We must continue with great vigilance and vigor to confront each and every distortion and politicization of the role of religion in society and government"



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The Interfaith Alliance is a non-partisan, grassroots organization dedicated to promoting the positive, healing role of faith in civic life and challenging intolerance and extremism.

Contributing Editors: Russell L. Bennett  
and John Osborne  
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Tulsa Interfaith Alliance is proud to announce that our board member, **Sheryl Siddiqui**, will be honored with the Religious Liberty Award at a banquet May 1st at 6:30 p.m. at Hope Unitarian Church (8432 S. Sheridan Road). Keynote Speaker will be the Rev. Stephen Cranford, Executive Director of the Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry. Since her arrival in Tulsa in 1986, Sheryl has been one of Tulsa's community treasures. Wife, mother of three boys, and volunteer in the religious, education, and community sectors, she has—above all—been a leader for religious freedom and tolerance. A former member of the Board of the Islamic Society of Tulsa, she is now their Director of Community Relations. For reservations call 481-0999.

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