**PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC KOINONIA 2021: A Report on Pentecostal/Charismatic Engagement with the Greater Christian Community, with a Focus on North America** Presented by David Cole, PCCNA Liaison to the Greater Christian Community  **PCCNA Christian Unity Commission** In May of 2015, the PCCNA executive committee approved the formation and establishment of a commission that would assist in the facilitation and expansion of the work of promoting Christian unity among member denominations and organizations, and also between Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians and other members of the Body of Christ. A number of PCCNA organizations have appointed C**h**ristian Unity Liaisons, who serve as ambassadors on behalf of their church families while cooperating in Christian unity efforts within and beyond the PCCNA. These Liaisons gather each year in conjunction with the PCCNA annual meeting, along with guests, to engage in work together on behalf of Christian Unity.

**Christian Unity (taken from Christian Unity Commission page on PCCNA website, pccna.org):**

**Mission:** The PCCNA Christian Unity Commission exists to serve the PCCNA by facilitating greater communication and cooperation between PCCNA constituents and other Christians for the sake of Christian unity and the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

**Vision:** Building on the ongoing cooperative work that takes place within and among the PCCNA churches themselves, the Christian Unity Commission encourages awareness among members of opportunities that lie outside the PCCNA to share the message of Pentecost with other Christians and churches. This sharing of the Pentecostal/Charismatic message and experience involves testimony, stewardship, leadership, and commitment to relationship.

Such an outward focus can be seen in the founding PCCNA document, the Racial Reconciliation Manifesto, article VII, "We commit ourselves not only to pray but also to work for genuine and visible manifestations of Christian unity," and also article XI, "At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Azusa Street Mission was a model of preaching and living the Gospel message in the world. We desire to drink deeply from the well of Pentecost as it was embodied in that mission. We, therefore, pledge our commitment to embrace the essential commitments of that mission in evangelism and mission, in justice and holiness, in spiritual renewal and empowerment, and in the reconciliation of all Christians regardless of race or gender as we move into the new millennium."

**Goals:** 1.Address issues raised by PCCNA that encompass the whole of the Body of Christ. 2. Provide leadership in the education and training of emerging Liaisons officially designated by their churches. 3. Equip those responsible for advocacy on behalf of PCCNA member churches when engaging other Christian churches. 4. Develop media suitable for the use of PCCNA member churches as they respond to the call for unity embedded in Scripture.

**Christian Unity Commission: 2021 Christian Unity Liaisons, appointed from various PCCNA organizations:**

\*Rev. David Cole—Open Bible Churches, Open Bible Faith Fellowship

\*Rev. Harold D. Hunter—International Pentecostal Holiness Church

Rev. S. David Moore--Foursquare

Rev. Frank Patrick—Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

\*Rev. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr.—Assemblies of God

Rev. David Han—Church of God (Cleveland, TN)

(asterisk\* designates members of the Steering Committee of the Christian Unity Commission)

**PCCNA/USCCB Conversation** After several years of discussion surrounding the possibility of dialogue between Pentecostals and Catholics in North America, the PCCNA executive committee has approved a three year informal conversation between a designated team of five PCCNA representatives and a team appointed by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. On behalf of the PCCNA Christian Unity Commission, Rev. Harold Hunter has facilitated conversations with USCCB leaders that resulted in approvals by both organizations for this conversation. Each year for three years, an agreed upon topic will be discussed, including papers being presented by representatives of both teams. The topics for the conversation will be: Vocation, Christian Initiation, and Healing. After the three-year conversation, further evaluation will take place, holding open the possibility that an ongoing, more formal dialogue will result. The first session in this series will take place at the Roman Catholic Retreat Center in Washington, DC this fall. The PCCNA executive committee has delegated to the CUC the task of putting together a team of representatives. Those team members are:

Harold Hunter (facilitator, steering committee)—International Pentecostal Holiness Church

Tammy Dunahoo (steering committee)—Foursquare Church

David Han (paper presenter)—Church of God (Cleveland, TN)

Fred Ware (paper presenter)—Church of God in Christ

Marty Mittelstadt (paper presenter)—Assemblies of God

**Church of God (Cleveland, TN)** The International Executive Committee of the Church of God met in July 2020 and gave approval for the formation of a Committee on Christian Unity. Dr. David Han has been appointed to serve as chair, and the invited initial members are David Han, Clifton Clark, Dale Coulter, Fijoy Johnson, Cruz Paniagua, and Lisa Stephenson. One purpose of the Christian Unity Committee will be reviewing how the Church of God

can join with other groups/organizations as the body of Christ, together provoking a good work for the greater Kingdom.

Here is the proposal document for the formation of the Committee:

*Committee on Christian Unity*

*In his high-priestly prayer to the Father, Jesus commands that all who follow him should be “one” (John 17.21-22). Being united in Jesus seeks not uniformity in doctrines or polities but the “unity” of fellowship among all Christ-followers. The fellowship-sharing in this regard has in view fostering a missional connection among all God’s people, collectively attending to the work of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. Being involved in variegated gatherings of Christian churches helps broaden our capacity to discern crucial challenges facing the Christian churches in the 21st century. In listening to, and discerning with, co-laborers in various Christian*

*denominations around the globe, we become intentional, strategic, and collaborative in pursuing the mission of God in the world.*

*Therefore, the proposal herewith recommends the creation of a “5-member” Committee on Christian Unity (i.e., the Chair and 4 other members), appointed by the Executive Committee. The Committee will engage in the following activities:*

*\*Meet quarterly throughout the year.*

*\*Assess, plan, and strategize the church’s involvement in inter-church gatherings.*

*\*Advise the Executive Committee in all matters pertaining to Christian unity*

*\*Provide an annual report on significant trends in global Christianity.*

*\*Review and make recommendations on the COG participation in various Christian organizations and associations.*

*\*Review and make recommendations on individual petitions and/or requests regarding inter-church meetings and/or conferences.*

*The proposal encourages the Church of God to join with other churches as the body of Christ, together provoking a good work for the Kingdom of God.*

**Pentecostal World Fellowship** The PWF has established a Christian Unity Commission, chaired by David Wells. Here is the introductory information from the PWF website (<http://pentecostalworldfellowship.org/>): The Christian Unity Commission (CUC) of the Pentecostal World Fellowship (PWF) is a collegial body of Pentecostal ecclesiastical leaders and scholars who facilitate the authorized representation of the PWF in inter-communion dialogues, forums, and conversations.

OBJECTIVES

1. To represent PWF in theological dialogues
2. To consider accepting various ecumenical invitations
3. To engage in bilateral Christian unity
4. To appoint moderators or facilitators for a team dialogue in consultation with the PWF Chair
5. Members of the Commission should be funded by their appointed denominations and not from PWF

MEMBERS WILL:

* Facilitate the engagement of other qualified Pentecostal ecclesiastical leaders and scholars to represent the PWF in inter-communion dialogues, forums, and conversations.
* Serve as a resource for PWF member organizations and leaders in matters related to inter-communion and multi-faith representation and dialogue through consultation, training, and communications.
* Cooperate with the PWF’s World Missions Commission and the Educational Commission (WAPTE) on initiatives of mutual interest.
* Provide presentations and resources at PWF related conferences and events as requested by the organizers.

**Pentecostal Ecumenism in Canada** Frank Patrick (PAOC) participated in the Canadian Roman Catholic-Evangelical Dialogue in May and November for three days each time with other delegates to this ongoing conversation. He also spent three days each in May and December as the PAOC representative to the Canadian Council of Churches. In December he spent an afternoon with other national religious leaders in discussion with Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau. The assignment was to indicate what the respective traditions represented were doing at the local level to serve those in need, during the COVID season.

**Global Christian Forum** Jean-Daniel Pluss, a Global Christian Forum Facilitation Group participant and the president of the Fondation du Forum Chrétien Mondial, has published an article on the intersection of Covid-19 and ecumenism, entitled “COVID-19, the Church, and the Challenge to Ecumenism:” <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0265378820961545>. For other updates on GCF initiatives, go to globalchristianforurm.org. Several PCCNA Christian Unity Liaisons have been actively engaged in GCF work, including David Han, Harold Hunter and Mel Robeck.

**World Council of Churches** The WCC Central Committee meeting will be a virtual meeting this June. Included on the agenda is that Apostolic Faith Mission (South Africa) will be formally received into the WCC, the first member church of the Pentecostal World Fellowship to join the WCC (but not the first Pentecostal church).

**Stone’s Folly Event** On January 1, 2021, David Cole participated in an event in Topeka, Kansas, commemorating the 120th anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which took place at Bethel Bible College. It was there that Rev. Charles Parham led a group of Bible college students to study the Scriptures and seek the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. On January 1, 1901, student Agnes Ozman experienced Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues, and other students among those gathered also demonstrated manifestations of the Spirit. This event was a precursor to the Azusa Street Revival which took place beginning in 1906, under the leadership of William Seymour (who had been a student of Parham’s in Houston, TX). The Topeka property (Stone’s Folly) where Bethel Bible College met is now owned by the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City, and the commemorative prayer, worship and teaching event took place in the original Stone’s Folly basement. The event was sponsored by the Glory to God Catholic Charismatic Community of Topeka. The focus of the event was to celebrate the renewing work of the Holy Spirit to empower the Church for witness, and to be an ecumenical grace which brings the Body of Christ into greater unity in fulfillment of the John 17 prayer of Jesus.

**Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** with special emphasis on unity between Christians takes place all over the world each year from January 18-25. It has been instrumental in gathering diverse groups of Christians together for prayer, Scripture reading, preaching, worship and fellowship. The theme for 2021 is*Abide in My Love...You Shall Bear Much Fruit* ([John 15:1-17](https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/15)) and was prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp, in Switzerland.

**Christian Churches Together in the USA** CCT provides a forum for honest dialogue on issues related to life, poverty and racism, as leaders gather from Evangelical/Pentecostal, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and Racial/Ethnic churches from across the US. [www.christianchurchestogether.org](http://www.christianchurchestogether.org)

**International Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue**, **Eastern Orthodox-Pentecostal Academic Dialogue** The global pandemic has contributed to delays in the restarting of both of these international conversations. As of this point, virtual alternatives have not been established. There is hope that both conversations can progress towards an active engagement once again later in 2021.