

Faith Digest

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NCC nominates new leader. The National Council of Churches has nominated a veteran educator and ecumenist to be its next general secretary. If affirmed next month by the council's governing board and general assembly, Michael Kinnamon will assume the helm of the New York-based ecumenical agency in January. Kinnamon, a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister and professor of ecumenical studies at Eden Theological School in St. Louis, serves on the NCC's governing board and chairs its justice and advocacy commission.

Conservative Episcopalians explore alternative church. Some Episcopal bishops and more than 200 Episcopal congregations have taken a first step toward forming a new alternative to the Episcopal Church that will unite conservatives irked by the church's liberal drift. Meeting in Pittsburgh, the Common Cause Council of Bishops brought together nine North American splinter groups to lay the groundwork for a conservative counterpart to the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada. Conservative Episcopalians, a minority in the American church, have decried the church's stance on gay rights, especially the 2003 election of an openly gay bishop in New Hampshire.

Mormons launch PR campaign. Prompted by interest generated by Mitt Romney's presidential campaign, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is mounting its own campaign to help journalists better understand what it means to be Mormon. This month, two spokespeople for the Salt Lake City-based church hosted an online news conference with religion reporters. Church leaders are planning meetings with editorial boards and may schedule additional online news conferences.

Brits OK teaching creationism; just don't call it 'science.' The British government has given teachers the go-ahead to discuss creationism with their pupils—but only if they stress the controversial theory has “no underpinning scientific principles.” The Department of Children, Schools and Families issued the guidelines after several teaching unions and civic groups said science teachers were unsure how to tackle the issue of creationism in their classrooms. Under the government's guidelines, teachers are expected to contrast the belief that God created the world in six days with Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which teaches life on earth evolved over millions of millennia.

Ecumenical body rejects military force in Iran. The World Council of Churches has cautioned the United States and its allies that the dispute over Iran's nuclear programs must be settled through negotiations and not military force. In a statement on Iran and the Middle East regional crisis, the council's executive committee said, “Threats to begin another war in the Middle East defy the lessons of both history and ethics,” referring to the “belligerent stance” of the United States toward Iran and of Iranian threats against the United States and Israel. The group also called for withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Iraq and urged the implementation of “alternative Iraqi and multilateral political, economic and security

programs.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.