

THE NEW ECUMENISM *

Introduced by The Concord Covenant

(being completed for review)

A Warm Welcome To Lend a Hand in Its Fulfillment

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*“You ‘boat people’ know everything.
The only thing you don’t know is that you live from that which you do not know.”*

Slow Turtle, The Supreme Medicine of the Wampanoag Nation,
who welcomed the first pilgrims to Plymouth’s shores.

The Problem, Challenge, Opportunity

There are said to be more than 45,000 Christian denominations globally (Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Apostolic, Methodist, New Age you name it), *not churches, never mind members* — but **denominations**.

Beyond the “Christian” world, there are an estimated 4,200 religions, churches, bodies of worship, faith groups, tribes, cultures, religious movements, or “ultimate concerns”. For starters.

What one and all share in common are — can one say? — a number of things, outspoken and otherwise.

The commonalities begin with the fact that a good many of the denominations, their members, feel strongly that *they* have the “God’s Truth.” Which leaves the other 44,999 denominations and 4,200 religions and all, billions of members in total in the dark? Do we rightly conclude?

The commonalities conclude with the fact that what sustains one and all (of the denominations and religions) is central to each and every one, indeed central to all of Creation.

I speak of The Sun itself, with its light and warmth — along with the Air, Water and the Earth upon which we all dwell — all too often in anything but in peace. Divided, *We, the People* are conquered, inevitably, inexorably. So it has been since the beginning of time; so it is today; so it ever will be. Would we agree?

If so, what, if anything, might we, People of Good Will, do about this growing divide?

Trusting the foregoing is clear, a question offers itself: Have we considered, taken to heart the fact that the earth, water, air and fire are not discriminating, judgmental, dogmatic *in any way*? The sun does not dispute, pontificate, parse, argue, analyze. Rather it sends its illuminating and enwarming rays upon one and all alike . . . the air, thereto, its winds, the water its rain upon ALL of humankind that the earth sustains.

For those who can appreciate this fact of life, our lives, a further question arises.

That is: How might *the People, We* do justice to this universal beneficence, acknowledge such blessings that have been bestowed upon us, devote ourselves to their realization, fulfillment — on behalf of our children, grandchildren, and the generations to come?

While, that is, we can.

The astounding splitting, splintering spoken of is not only earth-shattering (literally), but such rending of our “Body Social” can NOT go on — if we are to have a future worth envisioning.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The Sage of Concord,” spoke to this decisive fact of life:

“The reason why the world lacks unity and lies broken and in heaps is because man is dis-united with himself. (And, thereby, dis-united with one another?) He can not become a naturalist, until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand as perception.”

Might the vision of the Sun, friends, be related to the vision of Love, itself? Deeply so? Might such visions bespeak the ever “New Commandment” — one, as such, that transcends and, thereby, would unite ALL the worlds’ religions, our humanity itself?

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Matthew 22:37-39 KJV

* Ecumenism: “The principle or aim of promoting unity among the world's Christian Churches.” The *New Ecumenism* expands such “promotion,” such a labor of love to good-willed representatives not only of ALL the world’s religions, but to humanity itself.

THE OFFERING

Con-vocation / Calling-Together

In the City/Community of _____

(Your thoughts?)

The center piece for gatherings to serve the “New Ecumenism” will be hewed out of an opening consideration *together* of LOVE, beginning with its 4 initial revelations:

Eros
Philia
Storge
Agape

We invite you, friends, to lend a hand in the fashioning of such a centerpiece, to offer your best thoughts on behalf of our children, grandchildren, and the generations to come: All Our Relations.

And as the spirit moves you, we invite you to work together with kindred spirits in your communities to host such an offering, con-vocation, such a calling together.

The guiding principle of the Con-vocation is most simple and, we suggest, to the point. Henry David Thoreau spoke to this principle in the opening paragraph of his perennial best-seller, *Walden*:

“In most books, the I, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking

Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men’s lives.” [Emphasis added]

Otherwise expressed, when I speak for myself, my self, my True Self (I) — and not defer to the *one*, “one knows . . . , the *we*, the *they* not only does *every* thought I have *have* to pass through the I/eye of my needle. But, as a result, I not only say less, *but* the words I’m given to offer are, accordingly, able to carry all the more weight.

“I, EYE, AYE!”

Trusting that the foregoing is clear, we envision the con-vocation in the spirit of the Quaker/Friends Meetings, in the kindred Spirit of indigenous gatherings.

That is: Seated in a circle — or, depending upon the numbers, circles of circles — people are invited to stand up, as moved, inspired, and share how love, the **Spirit of Love** has quickened their own/our own lives: testaments, confessions, expressions of deep and abiding gratitude to that “Power” that is greater than — and yet no less a part of — our self, our self, our Very Self.

Nothing More; Nothing Less.

~ **May the Peace Be with Us ~ We with the Peace** ~

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