

The Society for Ecumenical Studies

Annual Report 2008

The Society's Statues & Objects

The Society was founded in 1995 and became a Registered Charity, Number 1096515, on 14 March 2003. Its objects as a registered charity are the advancement of religion and the education of the public by fostering as widely as possible the Christian Ecumenical Movement, in a way that combines practical experience in social, international and interfaith fields with theological reflection and exploration in regard to divisions between Christian denominations, in particular by providing occasions and a regular forum within which persons and groups of different backgrounds, races and theological convictions can meet for exchange of information, for discussion and to work together on study projects, where appropriate in collaboration with other groups or agencies.

Executive Committee (elected on 30 May 2007)

Dr Martin Conway	President (Chairman)
The Revd Mark Woodruff	Secretary
Mrs Hilary Martin	Treasurer
The Revd John Bradley, Mr David Carter, The Revd Maximos Lavriotes, Mr Alan Rainer	

Dr Paul Murray is an honorary member of the committee, corresponding on the Receptive Ecumenism initiatives, and the Society is delighted to support him in this important work.

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Membership

The Society's membership at the end of 2008, including subscribers, honorary members and certain associate bodies, now stands at 127.

Committee and Activities

During the year the Executive Committee met twice to conduct the Society's business And it was a very busy year for arranging or being involved in events and collaborations:

- Celebrations to mark the 100th Anniversary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Westminster Abbey, which the Society helped to arrange
- Our Annual Study Seminar – What is a “Church in the proper sense”? – a heartening debate between Professor Nicholas Lash, emeritus Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, and Canon Nicholas Sagovsky, Canon Theologian at Westminster Abbey
- Atonement, Sacrifice & Eucharist – Reconciliation or Disunity? – a day conference with Canon Nicholas Sagovsky, Dr Douglas Knight, Hilary Martin and The Revd Mark Woodruff (both these events were at the kind invitation of Canon Sagovsky at Westminster Abbey)
- Ecumenism and the Limits of Diversity – Can different faiths accommodate each other? – another day conference at the University of Cambridge, with addresses from Dr Reza Shah Kazemi from the Ismaili Centre and Dr Michael Ipgrave, Archdeacon of Southwark
- The preparations by a number of members for the second Receptive Ecumenism and Ecclesial Learning at Durham in January 2009
- Sisters in Hope of the Resurrection – Westminster Abbey's events to mark the death of Mary I and the accession of Elizabeth I – exploring the still live history and its significance for Church and Society today.

- The Society is also more active in the work of Churches Together in England as a Body in Association. The Secretary serves as Chair of the Bodies in Association and as a member of the Enabling Group.

Website – www.ecumenicalstudies.org.uk

Papers and reports from most of these events are either on our website or accessible at a linked site.

The website continues to be a means to disseminate our discussions and papers and reports by our members to a much wider readership. It now constitutes as full as possible an archive of the Society's activities and studies since preliminary meetings in 1994.

In collaboration with our friends in other ecumenical societies we operate a dedicated web site for the commemoration of the different martyr traditions in English history, responding in the run up to the Centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity to the call by Pope John Paul II for a 'new memory'. Thus the former causes of pain and enmity are embraced as part of one another's story, so that they become a focus of unity. Honouring the Protestant, Anglican and Catholic martyrs thus ceases to be partisan but is an expression of hope for visible reconciliation. The site can be found at www.seedofthechurch.org.uk

Again in partnership, we set up a second dedicated web site for the Centenary of the Week of Prayer, setting out its history and the development of prayer for unity in the progress of the ecumenical movement through the last 200 years. We were closely involved through 2007 in discussions with Westminster Abbey, the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Churches Together in England, which resulted in a fine national celebration on 18 January 2008 at the Abbey. It was a most encouraging Service of Thanksgiving and Recommitment, recalling that, despite our persisting separations, so many of our prayers for unity have indeed been granted and renewing our confidence that unity will surely come. <http://weekofprayer.faithweb.com>

Wider Public Benefit

The recent Charities Act requires all charities to demonstrate wider public benefit. The Society for Ecumenical Studies benefits wider society in the following ways:

- Education and research
- Providing a forum to explore the positive contribution and bearing of the Christian faith on life and society
- Providing a forum to explore and enhance the role of the Christian ecumenical movement in the advancement of society through promoting Christian unity, religious harmony, inclusion of minorities and community cohesion

Martin Conway, President

27 April 2009

Society for Ecumenical Studies

Income and expenditure for the year 31.12.07 – 31.12.08.

EXPENDITURE:

Speakers' Book tokens:	£150
Travel:	£70.80
Catering:	£751.07
Westminster College, Cambridge	£390
Advertising (The Tablet):	£506.60
CTBI Subscription:	£190
Societas Oecumenica	£57.73

Total expenditure **£2116.20**

INCOME

Residual fee for November 2007 meeting:	£30
Subscriptions by cheque:	£586
Subscriptions by Bank orders	£256
Donations	£27.80
June conference:	£250
November Conference:	£330
Jerusalem Trust for November 2007	£600
Inland Revenue refund from gift aid:	£126.05
Charities Aid Foundation	£20

Total income **£2225.85**

Excess of income over expenditure **£109.65**

Opening balance as of 31.12.07: **£887.76**

Balance carried forward at 31.12.08: **£997.41**