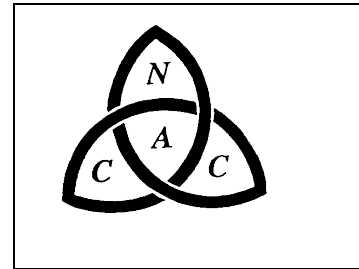


# NEWS BRIEFS

Volume 10, Issue 2 January, 2008

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## Time to Quit?

Late in 2007, some NACC members and supporters were approached by Rev. James Love, a minister who has left the United Church. His purpose was to encourage others to follow his example, arguing “the battle for the UCC is lost”. He has established a website ([www.leavingunited.com](http://www.leavingunited.com)) for those who may be considering leaving the church, but, while there is some force to what he advocates there, your Steering Committee is unanimously resolved to stand by the NACC’s original decision to stay in the United Church and work for the denomination’s return to the unapologetic orthodoxy upon which it was founded. While Mr. Love believes all hope of that is gone, we disagree.

Individual clergy like Mr. Love feel very vulnerable when they swim against the tides at play in the UCC, but as a congregationally based organization, where folk feel less isolated, the NACC is determined to continue in its witness to an unadulterated faith. To be sure, the going has often been tough, but, while a great many have left the UCC, we have chosen to trust that God’s strength will carry us past what seems, in human terms, to be overwhelming odds - after all, not only are we theologically out of step with the leadership of the UCC, we are also in conflict with the culture’s militant secularism, a secularism which has deeply infiltrated our denomination.

An example of this infiltration: As you are aware, the NACC has filed a formal protest against the 2006 General Council’s approval of the UCC’s *A Song of Faith*, the new declaration of what it is the denomination believes. This is just the UCC’s most recent (and important) departure from the clear doctrinal statement agreed to in 1925, the *Articles of Faith* in the *Basis of Union*. As most of you know, the *Basis of Union* – the UCC’s “constitution” – requires that official deviation from the *Articles* must be approved by the whole church, through what is called a “remit”, a vote. The 2006 General Council ignored this requirement.

But does *A Song* in fact deviate from the *Articles*? Well the NACC believes it has demonstrated that it does, choosing four illustrations by way of demonstration: (1) The two statements take quite different positions on the authority of Scripture; (2) Their use of the term “Truth” are in conflict (*A Song*’s “Our” truth vs. the *Article*’s God’s Truth); (3) They name God quite differently (e.g. *A Song* includes “Mother”); (4) The *Articles* stress the Lordship of Christ, but *A Song* mentions that not at all.

The NACC asked the General Secretary to rule that the GC acted improperly by ignoring the requirement for a remit, but she disagreed with our position. We then appealed to the Judicial Committee, effectively the UCC's last court of resort. In her turn, the General Secretary recommended the Judicial Committee's Executive refuse to hear our appeal. And that is precisely what happened. Without elaboration, their ruling on our request for a hearing said that "the ground for appeal is not met", and no more.

We were somewhat thunderstruck, since both our 8 page brief and 10 page commentary on the General Secretary's recommendation against a hearing were both carefully thought through and included input from recognized theological authorities in the UCC. We therefore asked the Executive for some indication of the reasons for refusing to hear our formal Appeal. Over a month later, there has been no response, or even acknowledgement of receipt.

Our procedural options within the UCC would therefore seem to be exhausted. The game is over – Church Bureaucracy 2, NACC 0. However, we remain undaunted and will now pursue the matter in less orthodox ways. Once those details are worked out, we'll let you know how we are proceeding. Be assured we intend to keep slogging away until God tells us to stop.

In conclusion, we hope this next year will be a happier one for our denomination, and, indeed for people all around this fractured world. We sincerely trust it be that way for you too. (For the NACC, 2008 at least promises to be interesting!)

God bless --

Geoff, for the Steering Committee

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Briefly:

- Renewal News: Those with Internet access may already receive this newsletter of the Association for Church Renewal (to which the NACC belongs). *RN* provides updates on developments in Canadian and US mainline denominations. To receive it, contact [renewal.acr@gmail.com](mailto:renewal.acr@gmail.com). (Renewal is not a typo!)
- Age of Protection Bill: Canada's age of sexual consent, 14, is one of the lowest in the world. Legislation to raise it to 16 died with the last parliament, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (to which the NACC also belongs) is asking that it be re-introduced. Letters of support to MPs, the Prime Minister, and Opposition party leaders are requested.
- Twentieth Birthday: This year the COC, our sister UCC renewal group, will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> on April 19, at Ryerson UC in Hamilton, Ontario. For more information call 1-800-465-7186 or 905-318-9244.
- Useful insights for Those of a Certain Age: –
  - \* Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
  - \* It's not healthy food you need, but food with preservatives.
  - \* Time may be the great healer, but it's a lousy beautician.
  - \* You may have all the answers, but nobody asks the questions!