

ARTICLE

University Chaplaincy in Global Context: The First 25 Years of the International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education (IACHE)

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Abstract

Since the year 2000, university and college chaplains from several nations have been gathering for global conferences of chaplains in higher education nearly every four years. After an initial global conference in Vancouver, Canada in 2000 and a second in Brisbane, Australia in 2004, several continental and national associations of university chaplains constituted an International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education (IACHE) to build bridges among universities, chaplains, and campus ministers worldwide. IACHE has since gathered for seven global conferences in total. This article traces the history of IACHE and describes its leadership efforts and its global conferences to date. It also describes some of the changes currently taking place in continental and national university chaplains' associations and discusses current efforts to broaden the scope of IACHE to include more university chaplains from Africa, Asia, and South America.

Keywords

International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education (IACHE), university chaplaincy, campus ministry, higher education, global networks, interfaith engagement, organizational history, international collaboration

One of the defining features of the past 25 years in global history has been the increasing speed of connection in the transmission of information and knowledge around the world made possible by the new technology of the internet.* At the same time, an ancient calling, the religious and spiritual life that was the founding impetus of many institutions of higher learning around the world, has been engaged in a process of global networking of those who lead and support the living spiritual lives of university students, faculty, and administrations—chaplains and campus ministers.¹ While increasing secularization has been predicted by some and witnessed in some quarters, at the same time, globalization, multiculturalism, and postmodernism have rekindled the spark of religious and spiritual practice in many universities, both for traditions that have long been present as well as for those more newly arriving.²

In the year 2000, a group of chaplains in higher education at universities on several continents decided to begin to form a new network that became the International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education (IACHE). According to the constitution of this group, it had the goal of connecting chaplains as higher education professionals to share ideas and resources, to network their universities and programs to better serve their campuses, and to organize the hosting of quadrennial conferences that would gather as many chaplains as possible from settings around the world to hear keynotes, share papers, and learn about the various contexts in which spiritual life takes place in higher education.³

IACHE was formed as an association of higher education chaplain professional associations, with the founding bodies being the continental or

**I offer my grateful appreciation to the colleagues who allowed me to contact them for this article and to those who sent me materials to facilitate my research. All of us in the field of college and university chaplaincy around the world owe a debt of gratitude to those who helped envision and establish IACHE, and especially to those who took on the challenge of gathering our global conferences of chaplains from around the world in their own contexts. They have blessed us all.*

- 1 "IACHE History," IACHE website, <http://www.iache.org/>. This article will use the term "chaplain" and "campus minister" almost interchangeably for ease, although strictly speaking, at least in the US, "chaplains" are those employed directly by universities and colleges to serve all students, whereas "campus ministers" are employed by particular denominations or sending organizations to serve students of their own denomination or tradition and may also engage in multifaith or interfaith work. The presence, structure, and responsibilities of each vary greatly around the world, although there are commonalities.
- 2 Douglas Jacobsen and Rhonda Jacobsen, *No Longer Invisible: Religion in University Education* (Oxford University Press, 2012).
- 3 "IACHE Constitution 2016," IACHE website, <http://www.iache.org/>.

national university chaplains' associations of Aotearoa/New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Europe, and the United States. Over the past 25 years, some of these associations have consolidated and others have eclipsed, and yet the work continues, even as IACHE is eager to build relationships with colleagues from other contexts, for whom spiritual life may take different forms and offer new insights for higher education. So far, there have been seven quadrennial conferences of IACHE that have taken place in North America, Oceania, and Europe. As IACHE looks toward the next 25 years, its leadership is eager to find ways to structurally build more access for chaplains from regions that may not have established university chaplains' associations, but that nevertheless have spiritual life connected to higher education and have insights for this broader work, especially from the continents of Africa, Asia, and South America.

In this article, at this particular moment in the history of IACHE, I have endeavored to interview organizers of or participants in each of the past seven global conferences of chaplains to understand the important themes and topics that their conferences were intended to address, important keynotes and papers that were delivered, as well as learning excursions and other opportunities that were part of their conferences. I have done this to provide something of a foundational history of the ways that IACHE has developed over the past 25 years and also to plant seeds for the creative new ways it may grow in the next 25 years as IACHE looks toward the future. By way of disclaimer, I will say gathering historical information over 25 years from a network of colleagues around the world, many of whom worked for universities as only one part of their larger ministries, has been a challenge. I express my regrets in advance if there are people or contributions that should have been recognized that are inadvertently omitted here, and I look forward to how future colleagues will continue building on the stories related here.

My methodology in developing this history was documentary analysis of materials available online and the current records of IACHE (my own and those that were sent to me at my request for depositing into the archives), oral history with leaders and participants in IACHE whom I interviewed or corresponded with, and insider narrative, as I have been a participant in IACHE since 2012 and a board member since 2022.

Many things have changed in recent times, including through the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise of autocratic governments in many parts of the world, and the continued movement of immigrants and refugees bringing ethnicities, cultures, and religions to different contexts and reshaping the religious landscapes of many countries. Looking toward the future, IACHE has great potential for connecting the tremendous resource

of higher education institutions with the spiritual and moral dimensions that can enrich human and community life. Countless challenges and new questions are on the horizon with the rise of AI, divisive wars, climate change, and more, and yet the perennial questions of what gives life meaning and purpose and how best to live and flourish together abide. The global collegium and connections IACHE represents are but one part, but potentially a significant part, of how we can connect educators and learners to facilitate the greater thriving of the human spirit.

2000: “Phoenix Rising,” University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

According to Bill Wiegert, the former Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) campus minister at the University of British Columbia (UBC), the impetus for the first global conference of chaplains in higher education began when he and three other Canadian chaplains attended a conference of the European Student Chaplains Conference (ESCC) in Durham, UK in 1996.⁴ (After 2002, ESCC became known as the Council of European University Chaplains, or CEUC.) The visiting Canadian chaplains were impressed by the quality of the conference and spoke with some of the chaplains there, including the international coordinator Johan Kijne of Denmark, and the local coordinator Reynaud de la Bat Smit, about the idea of gathering a global conference of chaplains in the near future in Canada.⁵ A few possible locations were proposed and considered, and Wiegert offered UBC in Vancouver, which was chosen, and he became chair of the local host committee. Kijne came on board as an advisor to them, and he was also involved in an international committee that formed to support the conference. (Kijne served as coordinator for the ESSC/CEUC from 1991 to 2002 and coordinator for the global conferences from 1996 to 2008).⁶

According to Kijne and Erich von Dietze, an Australian chaplain who was chair of Australia’s Tertiary Campus Ministry Association (TCMA) and later became chair of the international committee, the local/national host committee also included Rick Garland and Norma McDonald, and the international committee included: Ulla Albert (Europe); Karen Bach (Canada); Jan Fuller Carruthers (USA); Leona Garchow (New Zealand); Nobu Imaizumi (Asia); Devorah Jacobson (USA); Chin Huat Kang (Asia);

4 Bill Wiegert, phone interview with the author, October 17, 2025.

5 Johan Kijne, email message to the author, October 29, 2025.

6 Johan Kijne, email message to the author, October 29, 2025.

Zac Kaye (Canada); Morag Logan (Australia); Wendy McCaninch-Ruenzi (USA); Reggie Nel (Africa); Fabian Radcliffe (Europe); and John Valk (Canada).⁷

As Wiegert recalled, the conference took place in June of 2000 at UBC, and it lasted approximately 4–5 days with roughly 200 chaplains and campus ministers attending. Together, the local host committee and the international committee chose the theme “Phoenix Rising,” which was intended to reflect the fact that, in some regions, chaplaincies and campus ministries in higher education were falling back and needed to revitalize.

The conference included three keynote speakers who were Jewish, Christian, and Muslim, as well as papers and workshops presented by the conference participants, worship services in the major faith traditions represented among the participants (including Bahá’í and Hindu worship services), and a range of excursions, including into the city of Vancouver and to Vancouver Island. Notably, the chaplain participants were encouraged to attend not only their own worship services but also those of others at the conference in order to learn. The conference participants included not only North American and European chaplains but also several chaplains from Japan and Southeast Asia, South America, and Africa. They stayed in university residence halls to contain costs, and they used the Lutheran campus center for worship and talks, as well as the Hillel Jewish center and the Roman Catholic college. They also held plenaries in UBC’s Chan Centre for the Performing Arts and held a celebration with food from many cultures in the UBC student union.⁸

The conference was so successful that one of the main outcomes was the desire to do it again in four years, and Wiegert and others worked with colleagues in Brisbane, Australia to help plan the next global conference, including by way of a trip Wiegert took to Brisbane.⁹ By the time of the next global conference, he had left campus ministry for congregational ministry in Calgary and was not able to attend the second global conference, but he had helped to start an initiative that would continue for over 25 years. The international committee that gathered to help plan the second Global Conference in Brisbane also widened its charge and began planning toward the establishment of IACHE.¹⁰

The Global Conference in Vancouver lived on as an inspiration in the guild of Canadian university chaplains and campus ministers, which,

7 “Senior Consultant Dr. Erich von Dietze,” AHRECS website, <https://ahrecs.com/>; Erich von Dietze, email message to the author, October 15, 2025.

8 Bill Wiegert, phone interview with the author, October 17, 2025.

9 Bill Wiegert, phone interview with the author, October 17, 2025.

10 “IACHE Constitution 2016.”

although lacking a national interfaith professional organization, created a “Campus Chaplaincy Centre” website in 2008 to serve as a resource for themselves. That site expresses pride in having hosted the first global conference of campus chaplains and having energetically participated in those since then.¹¹ A webpage of Canadian Lutheran History also presents a note from Bishop Raymond Shultz mentioning support for campus ministries was “in decline,” but remembering that “Pastor Bill Wiegert and the ministry at UBC hosted a remarkable worldwide interfaith campus ministry gathering that would likely be impossible at present levels of support.”¹² Bishop Shultz mourned this fact by saying:

Campus ministry has always had a push/pull relationship with the rest of the church. There is more freedom of inquiry possible and more flirtation with doubt than some church members consider safe. However, facing the questions, exploring the edges, and having faith grow out of that experience is elating and powerful. As a consequence, campus ministry has been the place of formation for a good deal of our church’s leadership.¹³

2004: “Dreaming Landscapes,” Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia

According to the IACHE constitution, Erich von Dietze (TCMA) was the chair of the international committee 2002–2006 and prepared an initial draft of the constitution of IACHE.¹⁴ The original six founding/foundational bodies were: the Aotearoa/New Zealand Tertiary Chaplains Association (ANZTCA, Aotearoa/New Zealand); the Association for College and University Religious Affairs (ACURA, USA); the Conference of European University Chaplains (CEUC, Europe); the National Association of College and University Chaplains (NACUC, USA); the National Campus Ministry Association (NCMA, USA); and the Tertiary Campus Ministry Association (TCMA, Australia).¹⁵

11 “About the Centre,” Canadian Campus Chaplaincy Centre, <https://campuschaplaincy.ca>.

12 “LSM, LSAA, Campus Ministry Gallery,” Canadian Lutheran History, <https://canadianlutheranhistory.ca/>.

13 “LSM, LSAA, Campus Ministry Gallery.”

14 “IACHE Constitution 2016.”

15 “IACHE Constitution 2016.”

The international committee 2000–2004 membership included: K. Amal, SJ; Raimund Blanke; Patricia Blundell (Griffith University, Australia, chair of the local host committee); Phillimon Chikafu (Mutare, Zimbabwe); K. James Davis (University of Puget Sound, USA); Erich von Dietze (Curtain University, Australia, chair of the international committee); Leona Garchow (New Zealand); Bill van Groningen; Zac Kaye (Canada); Johan Kijne (Denmark); Morag Logan (Australia); Hannu Majamäki (Finland); Rakesh Peter-Dass; Ricky Waters; Bill Wiegert (UBC, Canada); and Brian Young (UK). The national Australian host committee membership included: Patricia Blundell (local host committee chair); Erich von Dietze; Roy Hazlewood; Johan Kijne (consultant); Morag Logan (chair); Peter Maher; Michael Pietsch; and Judy Redman.¹⁶

The conference took place July 1–7, 2004, and the chair of the local host committee was Patricia Ann Blundell, a Roman Catholic Sister of Mercy and a former campus minister at Griffith University in Brisbane. Blundell was also a member of the board of Religions for Peace (Australia) and the author of several writings on university chaplaincy. She was also instrumental in founding the Multi-Faith Centre at Griffith, which continues to operate today.¹⁷ (The center later developed a Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue that operated for nine years, but it closed as a result of COVID-19 funding cuts on December 11, 2020).¹⁸

According to correspondence with Judy Redman (University of New England, Australia, Uniting Church chaplain), the theme of “Dreaming Landscapes” was chosen to acknowledge how “Australian First Nations people talk about the creation of the world as happening during the Dreaming,” and it also gestured toward the dreaming of “new landscapes” of spirituality and peace through chaplaincy work.¹⁹ The local organizing committee included: Patricia Blundell (ecumenical chaplain at Griffith University, where the conference was held); Erich von Dietze (Curtain

16 *Dreaming Landscapes*, conference brochure (Griffith University, 2004).

17 Patricia Blundell, “Establishing a Multi-Faith Centre: A Cautionary Tale for Chaplains,” *Journal of the Tertiary Campus Ministry Association* 20, no. 1(2004): 301–306; “Multi-Faith Centre,” Griffith University website, <https://www.griffith.edu.au/>.

18 Bryan J. Adams, “Building Relationships, Transforming Institutions: The University Multi-Faith Centre as a Vehicle for Community Engagement,” *TRANSFORM: The New Normal for Higher Learning* 5 (2020): 35–43. Centre for Interfaith & Cultural Dialogue, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/icdgriffith>. “The Closing of Griffith University’s Centre for Interfaith Dialogue and Culture,” Religions for Peace Australia, December 27, 2020, <https://religionsforpeaceaustralia.org.au/>.

19 Judy Redman, email message to the author, October 23, 2025.

University); Roy Hazelwood (University of Newcastle, Ourimbah campus, now deceased); Greg Hughson (a former Methodist university chaplain at Otago University, New Zealand); Morag Logan (University of Melbourne); Peter Maher (University of Sydney Catholic chaplain, now deceased); Mike Pietsch (University of South Australia Lutheran chaplain); and Judy Redman (University of New England Uniting Church chaplain). Johan Kijne was the liaison person between the Australian committee and the European, Canadian, and US associations.²⁰

The conference was organized into three subthemes which were: Landscapes of Faith and Religion, Landscapes of Justice and Respect, and Landscapes of Learning Communities. There were three keynote lectures which addressed each of those themes respectively, given by Ursula King (University of Bristol, UK), Chandra Muzaffar (International Movement for a Just World), and David Tacey (La Trobe University). In addition, there were many participant paper presentations and participant workshops. Both the keynotes and the paper presentations (and some workshop materials) were later published in the *Journal of the Tertiary Campus Ministry Association* in 2004, running some 400 pages in length.²¹ Judy Bowman (a Lutheran chaplain at Monash and Melbourne Universities) also had in her files a CD that contained hundreds of photos from the “Dreaming Landscapes” conference.²² One of the major contributions of this conference to IACHE was its focus on Indigenous spirituality, Indigenous heritage, and ongoing Indigenous living presence, which has continued to inspire future IACHE conferences.

2008: “Reflecting Light,” University of Tampere,²³ Tampere, Finland

The IACHE constitution was subsequently developed by the 2006–2008 international committee, whose membership included: Patricia Blundell (Griffith University, TCMA, secretary, and chair of the host committee 2004); Karen Bush (NCMA); Wayne Clark (Hendrix College, NACUC and treasurer); Esther Dierderen (CEUC); Serena Fujita (Bucknell University, ACURA, at large); Peter Gustavson (CEUC, chair of the Finland host committee 2008); Cassandra Howes (CEUC and chair); Johan Kijne (CEUC, consultant to Finland host committee 2008); Risto Korhonen

20 Judy Redman, email message to the author, October 23, 2025.

21 Judy Redman, email message to the author, October 23, 2025.

22 Judy Bowman, email message to the author, October 23, 2025.

23 University of Tampere became Tampere University in 2019.

(University of Tampere, CEUC, chair of the local host committee 2008); and Ricky Waters (ANZTCA).²⁴

The conference took place June 30–July 4, 2008, hosted by Risto Korhonen, the former Lutheran campus pastor from the Federation of Tampere Evangelical Lutheran Parishes, placed at the University of Tampere, Tampere, Finland.²⁵ Interestingly, a Vatican website contains a summary of the conference written by Jeremy Fairhead, an official of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People.²⁶ Fairhead writes that the theme “Reflecting Light” was a nod to the importance of Midsummer in the Nordic countries, and was meant to invoke the common calling of human beings to reflect light to one another globally. It also invoked the notion of unity and diversity—like the sun, there is a common source of light in the calling to university chaplaincy and campus ministry, but there is also an acknowledgement that the light reflected is not the same everywhere; there are many traditions and forms in which it takes shape. The many goals of the conference included sharing stories, refining professional skills, developing tools and resources, sharing ideas and experiences, forming an international association, encouraging chaplaincy worldwide, exploring the role of religion in higher education, and committing to a spirituality that promotes peace, justice, and understanding.²⁷

According to Fairhead, the conference gathered nearly 350 chaplains from 40 different faith groups, with a majority from Protestant traditions but including Catholics as well. It was hosted at the University of Tampere, a public university with about 2,000 international students. The two keynotes were given by Amy-Jill Levine of Vanderbilt Divinity School (USA), on the idea of reflecting light without casting other traditions in a negative light, and by Taneli Kukkonen of the University of Jyväskylä (Finland), about the qualities of light itself, and why people see it similarly, differently, and in some cases not at all.

The conference also included a number of workshops given by participants, which, according to Fairhead, “ranged widely in subject matter” and religious understanding. Topics included loss and grief, daily

24 “IACHE Constitution 2016.”

25 Maria Muilu, “I Won’t Hammer You on the Head with the Bible: Visiiri Took the Retiring Campus Pastor Out for a Beer,” *Visiiri*, September 6, 2024, <https://www.visiirilehti.fi/>.

26 Jeremy Fairhead, “Third Global Conference of University and College Chaplains, Campus Ministers and Religious Professionals,” *People on the Move*, no.108, December 2008, <https://www.vatican.va/>.

27 Fairhead, “Third Global Conference of University and College Chaplains.”

transformation, multireligious chaplaincy, ecumenism, Bonhoeffer's Christology, and workshops on international students' experiences, including culture shock and Catholic pastoral care. Each day offered opportunities for devotions and social activities, and the conference was divided into reflection groups that met twice after the keynotes to share and discuss the issues raised in them. In sum, Fairhead noted the conference "wisely" made no attempt to draw a clear conclusion, but rather celebrated the different experiences and understandings of all those seeking to provide better pastoral care in higher education.²⁸

2012: "Mosaics in Motion," Yale University, New Haven, United States

The international and local committees 2008–2012 membership included: Omer Bajwa (Yale University, USA); Patricia Blundell (Australia, local host committee chair 2004); Esther Diederer (Netherlands); Lucy Forster-Smith (Harvard University, USA); Serena Fujita (Bucknell, USA); Cassandra Howes (UK); Callista Isabelle (Yale, USA); Katrina Jenkins (Rollins College, USA); Risto Korhonen (University of Tampere, Finland, local host committee chair 2008); Sharon Kugler (Yale, USA, local host committee chair 2012); Daniel Puski (Hungary); and Joanne Sanders (Stanford University, USA).

The conference took place from June 25–29, 2012, hosted by Yale University Chaplain Sharon Kugler, who was the first woman, the first Catholic, and the first layperson to be chaplain of Yale.²⁹ Sharon had come to Yale after a distinguished tenure at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where she had opened the Bunting-Meyerhoff Interfaith and Community Service Center in 1999. She had attended the Global Conference in Tampere, Finland, and proposed to host the next conference with a strong desire to increase its multireligious scope.

Kugler chose the theme "Mosaics in Motion: Spiritual Leadership in a Multifaith World," with a special desire to highlight the arts as a part of, and pathway into, interfaith engagement. The conference was planned to coincide with the annual International Festival of Arts and Ideas in New Haven, and that festival co-sponsored conference events such as an interfaith

28 Fairhead, "Third Global Conference of University and College Chaplains."

29 "Sharon Kugler Is Reappointed as University Chaplain," *Yale News*, July 17, 2012, <http://news.yale.edu/>.

sacred music concert with the Yuval Ron ensemble.³⁰ The conference had four subthemes of: religious literacy, radical hospitality, service with thoughtful reflection, and creating and sharing sacred space.³¹

In addition, Kugler was deeply committed to helping the conference be more accessible to chaplains from parts of the world where travel and the conference registration fee could be prohibitive, and she was able to secure significant funding from Yale to use for scholarships for these colleagues, in the area of \$120,000. Homestays and other low-cost options were also arranged to help reduce the cost of travel and lodging for chaplains and seminarians from around the world. The local host committee also decided that the formal events of the conference would be alcohol-free to make it more inclusive for colleagues who did not drink for religious reasons, as somewhat of a departure from past conferences. For the first time, two of the four keynote speakers were Muslim.³²

The keynote speakers at the conference included: Gail Bowman, university chaplain at Dillard University, which had experienced the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005; David Ellenson, president of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Grancell Professor of Jewish Religious Thought; Ingrid Mattson, director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, and director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program at the Hartford Seminary; and Eboo Patel, founder and executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core.³³ Other features included paper presentations and workshops, roundtables, a sacred music concert, opening and closing banquets, and an excursion to historic Mystic Seaport.³⁴

For this first IACHE conference in the US, the three US-based chaplaincy and campus ministry professional associations (ACURA, NACUC, and NCMA) cancelled their conferences that year in order to contribute resources toward the IACHE conference, which also encouraged their membership constituencies to attend. Highlights included an opening reception at Yale's beautiful Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and meals with the 400 chaplains who attended in the beautiful Yale

30 Sharon Kugler, phone interview with the author, October 30, 2025.

31 "Yale to Host Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education," *Yale News*, June 4, 2012, <https://news.yale.edu/>.

32 Sharon Kugler, phone interview with the author, October 30, 2025.

33 "Yale to Host Global Conference."

34 *Mosaics in Motion: Spiritual Leadership in a Multifaith World*, conference brochure (Yale University Chaplain's Office, 2012).

Schwarzman Center “Commons” Dining Hall.³⁵ The keynotes were also very impressive, including Ingrid Mattson, who was a pioneer in American Muslim university chaplaincy and chaplaincy studies, and Eboo Patel, who would become one of the most influential voices on interfaith engagement in American higher education, now leading Interfaith America. In some workshops, some attendees expressed the sense that the US was perhaps overrepresented—perhaps because there were three US national chaplaincy and campus ministry associations present. This may be a valuable consideration for future US conferences.

2016: “Digging, Dialogue, and Diversity,” La Trobe University, Bendigo, Australia

The international committee 2012–2016 membership included: Omer Bajwa (Yale, ACURA); Lucy Forster-Smith (Harvard, ACURA, and secretary); Serena Fujita (ACURA, resigned 2015); Cassandra Howes (Bedford, UK, CEUC and chair); Greg Hughson (University of Otago, ANTCA); Katrina Jenkins (Rollins, NACUC); Sharon Kugler (chair of the host committee 2012; resigned 2015); Robert Lingard (Southern Cross University, TCMA); Cody Nielson (Wesley Foundation University of Minnesota, NCMA); Daniel Püski (University of Debrecen, CEUC); Jay Robinson (TCMA); and Günther Sturms (Delft University of Technology, CEUC).³⁶

The local organizing committee included: Patricia Blanks (La Trobe, and chair); Judy Bowman (Monash University); Russell Briese (Griffith); Ray Hazelwood (Newcastle University); Greg Hughson (Otago); Julie Jerbic; Robert Lingard (Southern Cross); Richard Murray (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology); Russ Nelson (Griffith); Judy Redman (Charles Sturt University and La Trobe); and Jay Robinson (Monash).³⁷

The conference took place from July 11–15, 2016, hosted by Patricia Blanks, a multifaith spiritual advisor in the Multifaith and Wellbeing Service at La Trobe University in Bendigo, Australia, ninety minutes north of Melbourne.³⁸ An interview with Lucy Forster-Smith, then serving as the

35 “Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library,” Yale University Library, <https://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>; “Commons,” Yale Schwarzman Center, <https://schwarzman.yale.edu/commons>.

36 “IACHE Constitution 2016.”

37 *Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education 2016*, delegate handbook (La Trobe University, 2016).

38 “Multifaith Spiritual Wellbeing Service,” La Trobe University, <https://www>.

Sedgwick Chaplain at Harvard University (USA), related some of the focus of the discussions.³⁹ The title of the conference, “Digging, Dialogue and Diversity,” hearkened back to the fact that Bendigo was established in the 1850s as a gold mining town, but it also suggested that today’s higher education requires a different kind of digging for treasure—the mining of our faith traditions and academic studies in order to build a just world at peace.⁴⁰

Conference coordinator Patricia Blanks shared the initial proposal for the Bendigo conference, the delegate handbook, and the introduction to the concluding global panel of chaplains, which chose as its starting metaphor the image of a platypus. The proposal for the conference in Bendigo relates that considerable thought was put into the idea of hosting in Bendigo because it is a rural regional city, a significant 165 kilometers from Melbourne.⁴¹ While Perth was considered as a possible site, the practicalities of it proved challenging. Positives for Bendigo included the fact that all the chaplains in Victoria were members of the state chaplaincy body, and most were members of TCMA. Together, they had also hosted two successful national conferences, and many had attended past IACHE global conferences. Ninety percent of the chaplains offered their assistance in hosting. La Trobe University was a multifaith chaplaincy with 15 years of experience working with the university and the wider community, and the chaplains there were endorsed by all of the local faith communities.⁴²

Bendigo was also written about as a city “with a great spiritual heart” in which the biggest employers were the education and health sectors.⁴³ The city also offered the conference full support, including the Lady Mayor’s offer to open the conference proceedings, and also cited were the cheaper and high-quality local food, the ease of local transportation, La Trobe’s offer of the free use of university facilities (except for after-hours security and cleaning), and the chaplains’ expertise in securing sponsorships.⁴⁴ In addition, the neighborliness of “country towns”—both to visitors and to the growing immigrant populations from China, Indonesia, Philippines, and

latrobe.edu.au/.

39 Jeffrey Blackwell, “Memorial Church Sr. Minister Forster-Smith Talks International Conference of University Chaplains,” *The Harvard Gazette*, August 22, 2016, <https://news.harvard.edu/>.

40 Blackwell, “Memorial Church Sr. Minister Forster-Smith.”

41 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?” unpublished conference proposal, Tertiary Campus Ministry Association, n.d., deposited in the IACHE archives, Pitts Theological Library, Emory University.

42 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?”

43 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?”

44 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?”

Sudan—were noted, along with the surrounding bushland’s wild orchids, birds, and other animals.⁴⁵

Many Bendigoans are descendants of the Jaarah and Dja Dja Wrung peoples who are the region’s traditional and living Indigenous peoples, along with those of European pioneer ancestry who came to work the mines. Numerous sacred sites were mentioned, including the Chinese Joss House, the Anglican church, the Atisha Buddhist Monastery, the Islamic Society, the Jewish synagogue, a growing Coptic Orthodox church, other Protestant denominations, and individuals of other and no faiths.⁴⁶

The 2016 Delegate Handbook began with an acknowledgement of the Jaarah and Dja Dja Wrung peoples and an invitation to dig into the conference, not for gold, but “for the treasure of spirituality, knowledge, experience, and sharing” with one another.⁴⁷ It continued, “In a world still torn by conflict, it is important that we celebrate our faith values and recognize similarities shared across our different faiths as we strive for justice and peace.”

Keynote speakers included Rachael Kohn; Richard Leonard, SJ; Abdullah Saeed; Julian Hamilton; and a multifaith panel of chaplains from the UK, Australia, and New Zealand.⁴⁸ Workshops included topics such as: atheism, Christianity, and Humanism; what Jesus said and did; pastoral encounters; strategizing your chaplaincy; the science/religion debate; exploring Muslim chaplaincy; navigating privilege; honoring Indigenous spirituality; responding to suicide; Buddhism and pluralism; nonviolent communication; sacred spaces; serving refugee students; global citizenship; secularism in Australia; teaching the next generation of chaplains; institutionalizing spiritual values; dances of universal peace; deaf ministry; caring for student deaths; self-care for chaplains; serving first year students; and labyrinth walking.⁴⁹

Six reflection rooms were provided, including Catholic, Jewish, Multifaith, Muslim, and Protestant rooms, in addition to a labyrinth space. There were also five designated chaplains to the conference itself. Other features of the conference included association meetings, excursions, dinners, cafe conversations, and a visit to the Indigenous Student Services Unit. The usual Global Marketplace was replaced by a Festival of Sharing because

45 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?”

46 “IACHE Conference 2016 in Bendigo?”

47 *Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education 2016.*

48 *Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education 2016.*

49 *Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education 2016.*

Australia's strict quarantine rules did not allow for importing food. Instead, arts and ideas were shared, followed by Australian desserts.⁵⁰

Greg Hughson, a former Methodist university chaplain at Otago University (New Zealand), noted that in addition to helping plan the conference and offering two workshops, he followed the conference by leading a one-week tour of the South Island of New Zealand for six chaplains.⁵¹

2022: “Liberty, Legacy, and Leadership,” University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom⁵²

The international committee 2016–2022 membership included: Jeremy Clines (University of Sheffield, CEUC, and chair of the host committee); Cassandra Howes (CEUC); Mohamed Ismail (until 2022); Robert Lingard (Southern Cross, TCMA, until 2021); Shahla Meghrani (at large, until 2021); Jay Robinson (Monash, TCMA); Christine Schardt (Mainz, CEUC); Jill Shaw (Massey University, ANZTCA); Günther Sturms (Delft, CEUC); and Denise Yarbrough (at large, USA). The planning was also made possible by a local planning group in Sheffield; a pan-European strategy group; and a conference administration team at the University of Sheffield, under the leadership of Jeremy Clines, the former Anglican chaplain and now coordinating chaplain of the Belief, No Belief, and Religious Life Centre (BNBR Centre) at the University of Sheffield. The conference was postponed from 2020 to 2022 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵³

The conference took place from June 13–17, 2022, with some pre-conference days as well.⁵⁴ The theme of “Liberty, Legacy, and Leadership” was chosen to signify the idea of the chaplaincy as an agent for liberty and liberation in higher education, and the idea that, during times of political and social turmoil, there is a need for the egalitarian principles of faiths to rise to the fore. “Legacy” was intended to gesture toward the fact that the conference was taking place in a nation that had operated a colonial empire. The conference sought to reckon with that legacy through honoring and respecting Indigenous communities and exploring the meanings of Brexit

50 *Global Conference of Chaplains in Higher Education 2016.*

51 Dunedin Methodist Parish Bulletin September 11, 2016, Dunedin Methodist website, <https://www.dunedinmethodist.org.nz/attachments/14734832633.pdf>.

52 “IACHE Global Conference 2022,” IACHE, <http://www.iache.org/>.

53 Jeremy Clines, ed., *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership: IACHE 2022 Handbook* (Sheffield Phoenix Press Ltd., 2022).

54 Clines, *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership*.

(which took effect on January 31, 2020) for relationships with Ireland and the rest of Europe. And “leadership” was meant to invoke the goal of nurturing healthy styles of leadership in the global communities of the next generation, and highlighting grassroots, radical, and alternative forms of leadership that promote understanding and holistic wellbeing.⁵⁵

The conference formally began on Monday, with refreshments and a keynote by Grace Davie entitled “Changing Religion, Changing Universities, and Changing Chaplains.” That was followed by an opening ceremony and civic reception and dinner, and then a second keynote with Pádraig Ó Tuama and Anthony Reddy on “The Borders of Our Lives.” Tuesday began with morning reflections, followed by a keynote with Jana Bennett on “Religion, Disability, and Embodiment in a Virtual World.” After morning refreshments, a fourth keynote was given by Harold Koenig on “How Spirituality Is Relevant to Good Mental Health.” After lunch, there were two sections of workshops and another keynote by Lindsay van Dijk on “Non-religious Provision and Faith-based Chaplaincy.” Then, that evening, there were excursions to several local spiritual communities, including Anglican, Bahá’í, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh sites.

On Wednesday, after morning reflections, there was a sixth keynote by Anthony Reddy on “Colonial Legacies, Brexit, and Anti-racism,” followed by the conference business meeting. In the afternoon, there were regional tours, and then a roundtable on “Peaceful Campus Dialogue in the Context of Anti-hate, Anti-racism, and Anti-violence” with five speakers of different backgrounds. Following dinner, there was IACHE’s beloved International Marketplace, in which each chaplaincy was invited to share food, drink, or other items from their context. As usual, Wednesday night closed with evening reflections.

Thursday morning reflections were followed by a seventh keynote with Kristin Aune on “University Chaplaincy as Relational Presence.” After morning refreshments, there were workshop sessions and two additional keynotes by Linda Woodhead on “A Place for Religion When No Religion Is a Big Bit of the Mix,” and by Mohammed Abu-Nimer on “Peacebuilding and Interfaith Dialogue in University Contexts and Beyond.” There were more afternoon workshops and afternoon tea, and a roundtable on “Leadership, Conflict, and the Post-secular University,” followed by a celebratory closing dinner and evening reflections. On Friday, the final day of the conference, there was a tenth keynote with reflections by Harvey Belovski and Jana Bennett, followed by a closing ceremony and then departures.

55 Clines, *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership*.

What stood out to many at this conference was the number and the diversity of the keynote presentations, which were very high-quality and strongly multifaith, including Humanist perspectives. Jeremy Cline's hospitality was incredibly welcoming and supportive of everyone. The conference included a beautiful, printed handbook with copious contents, including poetry; welcomes; statements on sustainability, accessibility, and religious accommodations; lists of the planning teams; maps and logistical information; the schedules and descriptions of all events; biographies of all of the speakers and workshop presenters (the latter of which were approximately 20 in number); as well as information on the pre-conference sessions.

The pre-conference sessions included sessions entitled: Empowering Minorities in Chaplaincy; Out of Doors Chaplaincy; LGBTQ Chaplaincy; Ecological Consciousness; Insights from a Hindu Chaplain; Disability, Theology, and Empowerment; Do We Need a Journal for Higher Education Chaplaincy; Campus Chaplains and Research; Spiritually Accompanying a Whole University; Understanding the Human Impact of Immigration Policy Change for the United States; the Impact of Conversion Therapy for Black LGBT People; Listening Projects; the UK's PREVENT Strategy; Extremism and Hate Incidents; Islamophobia and Antisemitism; Valuing Spiritual Sadness; Benedictine Spirituality; Chaplain Recruitment; Supporting Student Development; Transforming the Self; and How Buddhism Can Contribute to Higher Education.⁵⁶

Other workshop sessions included a vast array of topics, including: Black Majority Christian Groups; Developing Chaplaincy; Faith and Belief Provision in UK Universities; Friendship for Christian Women; What Students and Staff Think about Chaplaincy Work; a Hindu Framework of Care; Working with International Students; Using Mindfulness in Group Rituals Following a Student Death; What Does God Say about Suicide; Mindful Explorations of the Five Senses; the Training of Muslim Chaplains; How Chaplaincy Can Support Students in African Universities; Beauty and Refinements; Crafting Theology beyond God; the Future of Muslim Chaplaincy; Queer Salons; the Benefits of Thinking Eternally; Leading from Difference; GAY: Meaning God Adores You; Responding to Self-harm; Hip-hop Songs in Christian Context; Hospitality; Getting the University's Attention; Spiritual Direction for Emerging Adults; Social Media; Reconstructing Chaplaincy; Student Mental Health; the Problem of Religious Diversity; Evangelism; University Chaplaincy and the Gospel; How to Make Religion or Belief Inclusive; Freedom on Campus; Leadership

⁵⁶ Clines, *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership*, 2022.

Development; Students Serving Students; Religious Student Societies; Servant Leadership; Ecology; Organizing and Leadership; the Emergence of Student Wellbeing Offices; Religion Is Optional, Meaning Is Mandatory; Strategic Leadership in Chaplaincy; Experiential Learning on the USA-Mexican Border; the United Nations; Mindful Stitching; Spiritual Direction; and Religious Diversity and University Chaplaincy.⁵⁷

Excursions included the National Holocaust Memorial Museum; the stately ducal home of Chatworth House; the Sheffield Industrial History and Coal Mining Museum; the Yorkshire Sculpture Park; walks in the city of Sheffield, including museums and galleries; and the history of the Sheffield Football Club. There was also an exhibit on forgiveness on display.⁵⁸

The conference had many sponsors, and it offered an extensive bookshop in the common dining room. Another feature of this conference was the great flexibility it allowed for people to attend for individual days of the conference as their schedules permitted. A highlight was also being greeted by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield and her chaplain, as well as various university leaders and significant local religious leaders. In terms of participants, in addition to European and North American chaplains, there was a significant contingent of chaplains from Malawi. Moreover, there was significant religious diversity among the chaplains, with Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim chaplains represented.

2026: “Diversity, Dialogue, and Democracy,” Frankfurt and Mainz, Germany⁵⁹

The international committee 2022–2026 membership included: Barry Baron (Colgate University, treasurer, at large, ACSLHE); Jeremy Clines (Sheffield, CEUC, and chair of the host committee 2022); Betti Gombkoto (Prague, CEUC); Ellie Hummel (Mount Allison University, at large, Canada); Gregory McGonigle (Emory University, secretary, at large, ACSHLE); Anthony Cruz Pantojas (Tufts University, at large, ACSLHE); Monica Sanford (Harvard Divinity School, at large, ACSLHE); Christine Schardt (Mainz, CEUC, and host committee chair 2026); Jill Shaw (Massey, ANZTCA, and vice chair); Günther Sturms (Delft, CEUC, and chair).

57 Gregory W. McGonigle, *Religious Diversity and University Chaplaincy: Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Humanist Chaplaincy in Higher Education*, Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2024. Clines, *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership*, 2022.

58 Clines, *Liberty, Legacy, Leadership*.

59 Christine Schardt, “IACHE Conference 2026,” <https://iache2026.org>.

In considering a possible conference location for 2026, several colleges and universities in the United States proposed hosting since it would have been the USA's "turn;" however, given current events and the political climate, Christine Schardt, a Catholic campus minister in Mainz, offered to host with help from CEUC, and the board accepted her proposal. She and her local host committee chose the theme of "Diversity, Dialogue, and Democracy"—seeking to highlight Frankfurt and Mainz's location in the heart of Europe, which has been a point of convergence for many developments in religious life and history—the UNESCO medieval Jewish heritage sites of SchUM (Speyer, Worms, and Mainz); the medieval Benedictine abbey of the mystic St. Hildegard von Bingen; the Gutenberg Bible Museum; the Osthofen Concentration Camp Memorial; St. Stephan's Collegiate Church and its Marc Chagall windows; the Bahá'í House of Worship for the European continent; and more recently established sacred sites like the Islamic Center of Frankfurt.⁶⁰ Given the times, the theme was chosen to highlight all of this diversity, the need for ongoing dialogue around the world, and the moral calling to affirm the democratic values of "freedom, equal rights, justice, solidarity, and peace."⁶¹

The conference took place June 8–12, 2026 and was co-led by Christine Schardt of the Catholic campus ministry at the University of Mainz, Kerstin Söderblom of the Protestant campus ministry at the University of Mainz, their Business Organizer Viva Roumieh, and their Public Relations Coordinator Vanessa Karwat. Some 24 countries were represented among the registrants. There was also a Local Planning Group and Local Supporting Organizations.

The conference began with a convivial welcome reception at the Protestant campus ministry followed by music by student musicians, various welcomes, a keynote on "Diversity and Educational Equity" by Marita Liebermann, dinner, and a panel. The second day began at the beautiful St. Stephan's Collegiate Church in Mainz with a keynote by Thomas Hieke and a response by Rabbi Barry Baron on the church's Marc Chagall windows. After lunch there were two sessions of workshops followed by the International Market and dinner with student musicians. Wednesday was the

60 "ShUM Sites of Speyer, Worms and Mainz," UNESCO World Heritage Convention, <https://whc.unesco.org>; "You Have Come to Visit Our Abbey," Benediktinerinnenabtei St. Hildegard, <http://abtei-st-hildegard.de/english>; "Gutenberg-Museum Mainz," Landeshauptstadt Mainz, <https://www.mainz.de/>; "Osthofen Concentration Camp Memorial," Landeszentrale Politische Bildung Rheinland-Pfalz, <https://www.gedenkstaette-osthofen-rlp.de>; "Welcome," Pfarrei St. Stephan Mainz, <https://bistummainz.de/pfarrei/mainz-st-stephan/english/welcome>; "Bahá'í Faith in Germany," Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org>.

61 Schardt, "IACHE Conference 2026."

day of excursions to the various sites mentioned above followed by reflection groups and dinner on the town. Thursday's program began at the University of Frankfurt with a joint keynote by Saba-Nur Cheema and Meron Mendel followed by workshops and tours in Frankfurt and then a closing dinner. Friday's schedule included the IACHE General Meeting and CEUC Annual Meeting, followed by a keynote with Meike Jolie and Stephan Jolie and a closing ceremony with student musicians, after which the conference adjourned.⁶²

As always, the conference invited chaplains, scholars, practitioners, and graduate students to propose papers and workshops in the fields of interfaith studies, lived religions and ethics, and chaplaincy studies, in order to open up new areas for research, dialogue, and practice.⁶³ Papers and workshops presented included topics such as: Religions on Campus; Interfaith Travel Learning for Peace; a Peace Encounter Bracelet Workshop; Introduction to Mindfulness in Action; Evidence for Early Multireligious Pedagogy in Preparing Campus Chaplains; Council Circles for Interreligious Spiritual Practice; Biographical Work as a Process of Recognition; Islamic Chaplaincy and Interfaith Engagement; Dialogue and Democracy with the Diversity in Nature; the Question Wheel and Inclusive Conversations; Exploring the Future of IACHE; Multifaith Spaces on Secular Campuses; Queer in Church; University Chaplaincy in Asia; LGBTQI+-queer-genderfluid?!; and Preparing Buddhist Chaplains for Three Publics.

As has become standard for IACHE, commitments to gender equality and LGBTQIA inclusion (which is a requirement of all countries proposing to host the global conference), ecological sustainability, and disability awareness were expressed on the conference website and in the program book, with the support of an awareness policy and awareness team.⁶⁴ In addition, photographers and videographers were present to document the conference and some provisions were made for participants to attend online if they could not attend in person.

IACHE Looks Toward the Future: The Next 25 Years

Since 2020, a number of changes have occurred with national university chaplaincy professional associations. In the United States, ACURA and NACUC had become increasingly overlapping in purpose and membership,

62 Schardt, "IACHE Conference 2026."

63 Schardt, "IACHE Conference 2026."

64 Schardt, "IACHE Conference 2026."

and they decided to merge to become the Association for Chaplaincy and Spiritual Life in Higher Education (ACSLHE) in 2020.⁶⁵ At its annual meeting on February 4, 2025, ACSLHE officially voted to (re-)join IACHE. Meanwhile, the NCMA dissolved on March 15, 2024, depositing its archives at the Yale Divinity School.⁶⁶ And in Australia, the TCMA dissolved on September 21, 2025, transferring its assets to Australia's Council for Chaplaincies in Tertiary Institutions (CCTI).⁶⁷

Given these changes, the IACHE board is developing proposals to amend the IACHE constitution to affirm the remaining constituent bodies as: ACSLHE, ANZTCA, and CEUC. In addition, a new structure is being considered to establish an executive board with an ongoing presence from the formerly represented regions of Canada and Australia, as well as newly represented regions that do not yet have formal continental or national bodies but whose presence and insights have been greatly desired on the international board for years—chaplains from Africa, Asia, and South America.

Recently, board members have been endeavoring through their own professional travels to build relationships with institutions such as Yonsei University (South Korea), the University of Pretoria (South Africa), and the Seminario Rabínico (Argentina), with the hope of involving chaplains from these or similar institutions in IACHE. The hope is also that the involvement of such institutions might allow for them or neighboring universities to become future global conference sites. IACHE has developed “Conference Hosting Guidelines” to assist universities in proposing to host a global conference, which provide detailed recommendations about a shared international and regional/local hosting process.⁶⁸

One challenge that has emerged with appointments to the IACHE international executive board is the fact that some of the member associations' continental or national board terms are on a different schedule from IACHE's and may be shorter than four years. It has been an IACHE best practice and custom that continental or national representatives be elected to the IACHE international executive board based on proposals from their full associational memberships at a continental or national business meeting in the year of the global conference, and that the representatives

65 “Who We Are,” ACSLHE, <https://acslhe.org/>

66 National Campus Ministry Association, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/NationalCampusMinistryAssociation>.

67 Tertiary Campus Ministry Association, Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/TertiaryCampusMinistryAssociation>.

68 “Guidelines for Submitting a Proposal to Host an IACHE Conference,” IACHE, <http://www.iache.org/>.

remain in their position for a full four-year term to help plan the next global conference. Ideally, continental or national associations also put aside some funding to support their representative's travel for attending an in-person IACHE executive board meeting at the midpoint between global conferences (to explore and plan at the next global conference location), and to attend the global conference that they help to plan. IACHE also recommends that, in the year that a continental or national association is hosting a global conference, they not hold a continental or national conference so that they can give full support to the global conference being hosted in their region, including providing scholarship funds as a form of global hospitality. In the past, continental and national associations have decided to add a one-day pre-conference to the global conference for their own networking and traditions and to handle their annual associational business. These are some of the best practices that have developed over time for IACHE board representation, board service, hosting, and business.

IACHE is also in the process of officially establishing its archives. It is the hope that these archives will continue to serve as a resource for the association and help to inspire the vision of connecting interreligious university spiritual life around the globe in the service of a just world at peace.

Looking further ahead, members of IACHE have expressed that they hope to continue to be, and to become more fully, a significant setting for the convening of higher education chaplains and spiritual life leaders for professional development around the globe. A significant trend in higher education chaplaincy in the past decades has been the tendency to become more multireligious and interreligious, with the religious diversity among students, faculty, and staff at universities around the world increasing, and with current events continually demonstrating the need for deeper and more intentional interreligious dialogue and collective action for peace.

In the early years of IACHE, many more chaplains represented Christian and Jewish traditions, but the trajectory over the past two decades has been greater participation of Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Humanist chaplains in the field, and also becoming a significant and valued presence in the gatherings of IACHE. At the same time, there is a growing number of students, faculty, and staff at universities who hold multiple religious belonging or who are Spiritual but Not Religious (SBNR), which presents new challenges to the field of supporting spiritual life, learning, and engagement in the higher education context.

Of course, these changes are not merely additive but also to some extent reshape the fundamental assumptions of who constitutes an association like IACHE, what it is intended to accomplish, what it can do and what it cannot

do, etc. Even some of the questions that have arisen in conference planning—such as whether alcohol should be served at conferences, or whether a conference can be hosted in a country that does not guarantee LGBTQIA human rights—invite reflection about how IACHE sees itself as an association of colleagues. And the questions about how to create a more truly global international association will require further structural reflection on membership and leadership, perhaps new pathways to membership and more attention to practicalities like scholarships and sponsorships. But they also hold great potential for enriching the vision and contributions of the association with greater insights and potential to advance positive international spiritual and ethical relations and growth around the world today.

In a time when some on the global stage are questioning the relevance and importance of associations intended to advance international peace, friendly international relations, and the harmonization of the efforts of different peoples, IACHE has the potential to reaffirm these values in one particular realm that nevertheless can have significant impacts on people’s lives. Its founders and members have created a platform for international dialogue, learning, cooperation, and relationships that has room to grow, but also has a valuable contribution to make today.

Table 1. IACHE Conferences, 2000–2026

Year	Location	Host	Theme
2000	University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada	Bill Wiegert	Phoenix Rising
2004	Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia	Patricia Blundell	Dreaming Landscapes
2008	University of Tampere, Finland	Risto Korhonen	Reflecting Light
2012	Yale University, New Haven, USA	Sharon Kugler	Mosaics in Motion
2016	La Trobe University, Bendigo, Australia	Patricia Blanks	Digging, Dialogue, and Diversity
2022	University of Sheffield, UK	Jeremy Clines	Liberty, Legacy, and Leadership
2026	Frankfurt and Mainz, Germany	Christine Schardt	Diversity, Dialogue, and Democracy

Gregory W. McGonigle has served as dean of religious life, university chaplain, and a member of the faculty at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, where he developed a multifaith chaplaincy team and designed and opened the Emory Interfaith Center. He previously built multifaith chaplaincy programs at Tufts, Oberlin, and UC Davis. He is a Unitarian Universalist minister and author and holds degrees in religious studies and divinity from Brown, Harvard, and Boston University. He has been a researcher for the Harvard Pluralism Project and is past president of the National Association of College and University Chaplains (USA) and currently serves as secretary of the International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education.

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