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## Foreword

Tom Best

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It is a great pleasure to write, on behalf of the Faith and Order movement worldwide, in recognition and celebration of this inaugural issue of *New Horizons in Faith and Order*.

In a visual, multi-media culture—is it only my impression that our entire age suffers from attention deficit disorder?—launching a new and serious journal is an act of courage. At a time when some fear that no “new generation” of ecumenists is on the horizon, *New Horizons* demonstrates that quite the opposite is true. In a moment when some still speak of an “ecumenical winter”, the essays in this issue show a remarkably creative engagement across the major fault lines of the ecclesial landscape.

It is fascinating to see the themes which emerge from these essays, as identified in the Editorial for this issue: a focus on the worship life of the church; the exploration of how previously divided ecclesial traditions are now interacting, and growing in their own life and self-understanding, through their ecumenical engagement; and a wrestling with the relation between “the individual Christian life” and the life of the church as a whole. This is a profoundly hopeful sign. It signals that for the coming generation, Faith and Order’s work will continue to be grounded in the life of the Church as a witness to God’s intention for humanity as a whole. And it means that Faith and Order’s work for the unity of the churches will address the full range of forces—ecclesial, cultural, social, historical—which divide the churches today.

It is also fascinating to see how these “new horizons in Faith and Order” link with the Faith and Order movement, in both its long history and its most recent phase. The first world conference on Faith and Order, held in Lausanne in 1927, had a breath of prophecy about it, a bold claiming of unity as the church’s birthright and eschatological goal. The Report from the most recent Faith and Order Plenary Commission meeting, held in Kuala Lumpur in 2004, was titled Faith and Order at the Crossroads, pointing to the Commission’s commitment to work for the unity of the church in a way that would engage the churches in all aspects of their lives. For unity is not only about formal agreement on issues of doctrine and practice, as important as that is. Unity is about the churches living out together their common faith, about their sustaining one another, and about their being mutually accountable in common confession, worship, mission, prophetic witness, and service to the world.

Congratulations to all who have made this new journal a reality. May it live a long and creative life in the service of the ecumenical movement in general, and in particular of Faith and Order's work for the unity of the church. If this is the future, then there is much to hope for.

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