

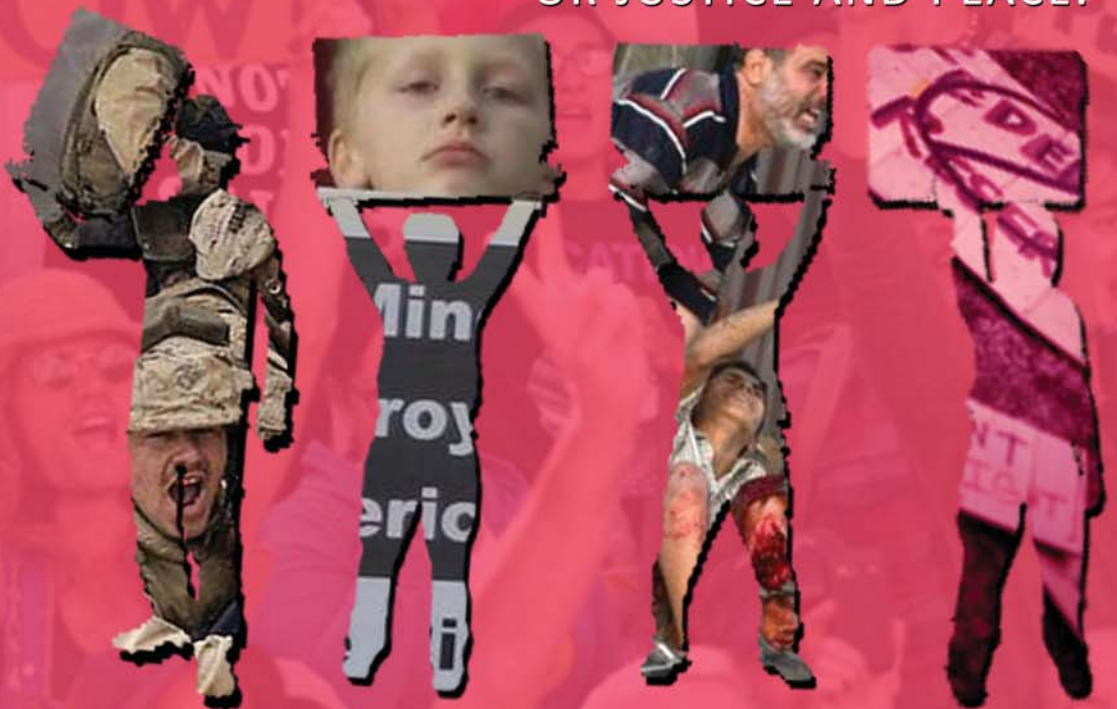
PRAXIS

Newsletter of the World Student Christian Federation Asia Pacific

No. 2, May - August 2011

JUST PEACE?

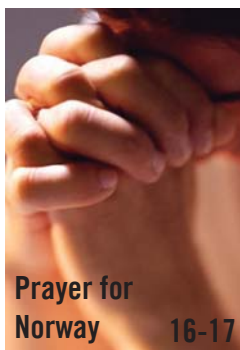
OR JUSTICE AND PEACE.





INSIDE PRAXIS

Perspective on Just Peace 4



Prayer for Norway 16-17



18 Global Staff & Officers Meet

EDITORIAL ON PAGE 3

PERSPECTIVE ON PAGE 4

Just Peace from the Perspective of Korean Theologians

BIBLICO-THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON PAGE 9

Who will roll the stone away?

SCMERS DIARY ON PAGE 12

The Post 80's Movement in Hong Kong

SOLIDARITY SPACE ON PAGE 16

Prayer and Message to SCM Norway

REGIONAL NEWS ON PAGES 18-22

WSCF Global Staff and Officers Meeting on page 18. Bipul Alite as EASYNET Coordinator on page 19. Ecumenical Creative Workshop on page 20. HRJP Committee Meeting and Communique on page 22.

MOVEMENT NEWS ON PAGES 24-31

Australia at 24. Indonesia at 26. Nepal and India at 27. India at 28. Korea at 30. Japan at 31.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS ON PAGE 32

PRAXIS

is the newsletter of World Student Christian Federation Asia Pacific Region

Regional Office:

Unit 1-2, 18/Floor
280 Portland Street
Commercial Building
Mongkok, Kowloon,
Hong Kong SAR

Tel: (852) 23852550

Fax: (852) 27823980

Email:

wscfap@netvigator.com

Website:

www.wscfap.org

Inter-Regional Office:

The Ecumenical Centre
5 Route des Morillons
P.O. Box 2100, CH 1211
Geneva 2, Switzerland

Tel: (41-22) 7988952

Fax: (41-22) 7982370

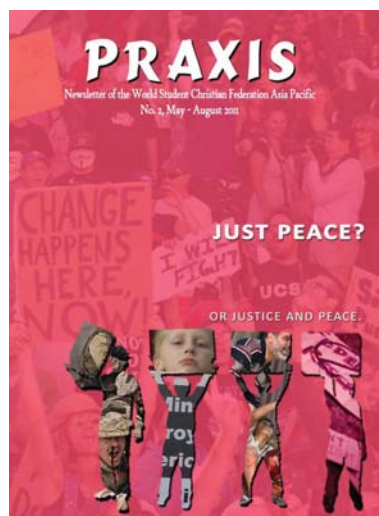
Email: wscf@wscf.ch

Website:

www.wscfglobal.org

Editorial Team:

Necta Montes Rocas,
Sunita Suna



This issue of Praxis is our effort to engage young people to discuss the concept of 'Just Peace' in the context of Asia

Pacific region cognizant of the ongoing debate on the content of the 'Ecumenical Call for Just Peace' of the World Council of Churches (WCC), its framework document. As an organization deeply involved in Justice and Peace work at the grassroots level, WSCF AP views this important development in furthering the ecumenical vision of our Justice and Peace work in the context of Empire, War and Militarization, Fundamentalism and neo-liberal Globalization.

In the Ecumenical Call for 'Just Peace' from the World Council of Churches (WCC), 'Just Peace' is defined as "a collective and dynamic yet grounded process of freeing human beings from fear and want, of overcoming enmity, discrimination and oppression, and of establishing conditions for just relationships that privilege the experience of the most vulnerable and respect the dignity of creation." The journey towards 'Just Peace' must take into consideration the realities of Militarization and war in today's context as a major deterrent in achieving this vision. Today, this reality is shared by many countries in the Asia-Pacific region at varying degrees, where internal and border conflicts exist, where direct military intervention and occupation by powerful nations infringe on the sovereign rights of people and smaller nations, where the presence of nuclear weapons pose a threat to life and Earth, and where US military presence, through its bases and personnel, contradicts the people's yearning for 'Just Peace.' In the face of widespread poverty in the region,

many governments continue to prioritize military spending over and above basic social services for education, health, shelter and food. Militarism as an ideology continues to be reinforced in the educational system in the form of military service.

In the Perspective Section, we feature the response of a group of theologians from Korea to the WCC's call for 'Just Peace,' in preparation for the International Peace Convocation (IEPC) in Jamaica. In their response, they wrote, "we live in the a world torn apart and divided by the historical residue of colonial exploitation, the continued imposition of artificial borders of Empire and its militarism fuelled by greed resulting in violence and war." In the same response, they also reminded the church of its complicity and to repent from its historical sins in the Crusade, its participation in the slave trade, witch-hunting, colonization and the division and in-fighting within the churches. They called on churches to develop a Spirituality of Resistance to empower the marginalized and the weak.

The section on Biblical Reflections features a Bible Study by Dr. Hope Antone on Mark 16: 1- 4 entitled, "Who will roll the stone away?" The Bible Study invites us to re-think the meaning of removing the heavy 'stone of oppression,' especially to women and marginalized people in Asia. She also invites us to challenge Theology of Atonement where it romanticize suffering, "underpins the common advice to victims of abuse and violence: just bear your pain, it is nothing compared to the pain suffered by Christ on our behalf." Instead, she asks us not to focus on this, but to link the death

EDITORIAL

and resurrection of Christ to the very reason of his coming to the world, and that is, to have life in abundance.

SCMers Diary is entitled, "Post 80's Generation, A Value War," is written by Jeremy Chu from SCM Hong Kong, is a review of a recently published book, "Post 80's Self-Delving Youth" by SCM Hong Kong. Its subject is on the growing social-movement of young people in Hong Kong who were born in the 80's and who are trying to discover their identity and role in the social movement space separate from the pre-80's activists. The article summarizes the various articles of reflection on the current context in Hong Kong written by young people.

Solidarity Space shares a prayer and statement from the WSCF Asia Pacific region to SCM Norway on the July 22nd twin attack in Norway, killing more than 100 people, mostly students in the small island in Utoya. WSCF AP expressed its sympathy to SCM Norway and deep concern to growing right-wing fundamentalism, extremist ideology, xenophobia targeting minority groups and migrants in Europe.

Our Regional News and Movement News bring you what's up-and-about in the Federation and the activities of the SCMs in Australia, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and our newest movement in Nepal.

For Justice and Peace

Necta Montes
Regional Secretary

The Korean Theological Response to Justice



1 . The God in which we believe is the God of Life who desires all creation to enjoy life in all its fullness (Jn 10:10).

Therefore, the destruction of life is a destruction of peace and a blasphemy before God. Denying the right of life that is a gift for all creation is not only unfaithfulness to God but is also the cause of violence.

In the world today, however, we see the life of all creation being threatened with utter destruction by human greed. The livelihood of creation itself is at stake as the toll of human activities to manipulate creation for its own benefit and consumption. The human desire to manipulate God's creation and God-given characteristics of life is a denial of life and a blasphemy against God.

Therefore, we reject any kind of human attempt to manipulate or distort God's created-universe according to human greed and avarice. We also reject all theologies and doctrines that justify human domination of creation as "divinely inspired" and attempts to legitimate the corruption of creation. Such human corruption is a distortion, destruction and violation of life, the God-given right of life of all creation.

PERSPECTIVE a

Theologians' Just Peace*

We, as Christians, once again affirm that we are part of God's created world and are called to live in harmony and peace with all God's creatures in God's created world (Is 6:3).

2. The God in which we believe is the God of Reconciliation who dismantles the walls of division between individuals and communities (Eph 2:14).

In the world today, however, we see innumerable divisions which continue to threaten the life and peace of people and earth. We live in a world deeply torn apart and divided by the historical residues of colonial exploitation, the continued imposition of artificial boundaries by Empire and its militarism fuelled by greed, resulting in violence and war. The cries of the people who bear the brunt of such violence and who are constantly struck by the sharp end of the spear ring out in the regions thus divided, Palestine and the Korean peninsula providing very specific examples. The imposition of this artificial division is a sin which severs those who suffer its traumatic effects from the fullness of life, a gift from the God of Life.

Therefore we reject all ideologies, political policies, practices, theologies, religious beliefs and any

other human forces which do not recognize the inherent value of the other, demonizing that which is not familiar, and seeks to justify one's peace at the cost of the suffering of the other. Peace for oneself based on the suffering of the other is a denial of the worthiness of the other and disregards the fact that we are cohabiters on earth.

As theologians who live and bear witness to the God of life in the midst of division we adamantly reject the global and geo-political system which perpetuates the current state of division on the Korean peninsula. The division of one part affects the entire global community. As such, Christians are called to break down the walls of division and heal its pain, to overcome the legacy of colonialism and the remnants of the Cold War which still cling to our communities like the stench of death.

3. The God in which we believe is the Sovereign who reigns over all powers and principalities and yet emptied Godself to become one of us, to serve rather than be served (Mk 10:45; Phil 2:5-11).

In the world in which we live, however, we see the ideologies and practices of the Empire that aspires to dethrone God and

enthrones itself to extend and keep its influence over the geo-political market through military power. We hear the cries of the victims of violence, the refugees who have lost homes and livelihoods because of war.

Therefore we reject the US Empire and all other Empires which seek to usurp the sovereign authority of God. We reject the arrogance of Empire which perpetuates a life-killing civilization and even aspires to colonize Space; to subjugate entire communities of people with the threat of war based on a new concept of war which unilaterally utilizes the ideology of pre-emptive strikes.

We affirm that we are called to live in this world as God's people, to serve and glorify God only. We have been called to listen to the cries of the victims, to empathize with their pain and to walk in solidarity with them in their quest for just peace and fullness of life. We are called to be witnesses of Jesus Christ who suffered under the violence of Empire (Jn 19:19; 1 Cor 2:8).

4. The God in which we believe is the God of the Basics; who feeds all God's creation (Mk 6:30-44; Rom 8; Is 65:17-27).

In the world we live in today, however, we see the evils of the current global economic system which is exclusionary in nature. It thrives on the monopoly of capital and market by the rich few and worships the god of development at the expense of the erosion of earth's ecological health. It colonizes the consciousness of the people through media and the promotion of consumerism, forcing us to worship Mammon in the place of God. It perpetuates the growing disparity between the rich and the poor, exploitation of human labour, enforced poverty due to underemployment and holds people hostage with the constant threat of unemployment as more and more people are demoted to cogs in the wheel, disposable labour at the mercy of the global economic machine. Many are degraded to economic refugees in spite of the fact that many work, albeit partially. The tyranny of multinational corporations has created an environment in which people no longer receive their rightful fruits for their labour. The current economic injustice and inequality shatter peace among individuals and within communities. Peace is economic justice for all – equalizing the distribution and sharing of grain to each mouth. The exclusion of any from basic economic activities is a denial of the blessing and peace of life together.

Therefore we reject the current dominant capitalist economic system which denies the rights of the majority to work for the benefit of a few, erodes ecology, promotes greed and the false belief that unlimited economic growth is possible, and places Mammon on the throne of worship instead of God.

We are called, in a context where the multitude are excluded and the ninety nine sheep are lost, to “re-member” them into their rightful place of life; to work for and accompany the economically disenfranchised of society who constitute the majority of contemporary global society (Mk 8:1-10; Lk 14:21; 16:19-31).

5. The God we believe is the God of Creation. The Created world is not ours to own but that of the Creator God. The Psalmist declares “The earth is the Lord’s and in it, and all who live in it.” (Ps 24:1)

The world in which we live today is a world in which this creation is threatened by climate change and the ensuing ecological crises (Is 24:5). We have reached a critical point where not only the life of humankind but all of creation is at risk. The effects of the ecological crises which we face today can be felt all around us. It is no longer mere scientific prediction but a daily experience in our everyday lives. We are fast approaching the irreversible point where the extinction of species and the greatest violence is that perpetuated by humans against all creatures.

Therefore we reject the mistaken belief which regards creation as the possession of humankind refusing to acknowledge that it is God’s creation. We reject the dogma of developmentalism and its false ideals of unlimited growth. We reject the lies of science which promises wealth and health as it is based on the basis of tampering with the ecosystem. We reject the current monopolization of agriculture by multinational corporations who regard the earth and agriculture as the objects of economic exploitation. We call into question the governments and corporations who claim to

be “eco-friendly” by promoting “green growth” as this in itself is self-contradictory and merely a façade attempting to camouflage their unswerving adherence to the dogma of developmentalism and unlimited growth. As Christians we are called to promote not only peace on earth but also peace with earth.

Therefore we repent our ecological sin and confess that we are called to repay our ecological debt. Humankind must embrace a fundamental shift from the current fossil fuel based civilization; transform the current consumerist life-style; reduce its appetite for consumption of material resources and practice a frugal life-style which seeks to consider the needs of neighbours as well as the livelihood of future generations (Mk 1:15; Joel 2:12-13).

6. The God we believe is the God of all people created in God’s image. We re-affirm that the *raison d’être* of all religions is to give fullness of life, compassion and comfort; to practice mercy, love of neighbour and self-denial; and to promote peace and harmony. Religion in itself is not violent in nature (Lk 10:27; Acts 17:23-27).

The world in which we live today, however, is one in which religion has lost its basic character and is corrupt, often becoming an instrument of violence in the service of political ideologies and secular interests, justifying its sins through distorted fundamentalist theologies. Religion is sometimes abused for political ends and has become a source of violence. Conflicts between religions are threatening global peace and endangering the lives of individuals and entire communities.

Therefore, we reject exclusivist fundamentalism, patriarchy in all religions, religion subverting itself

to secular interests, any political manipulation of religion and distortion of its values. All religions must be free from being abused by politics and liberated from fundamentalism.

We as Christians are called to be advocates of God's peace, bearing witness to each religion's basic teachings and tenets, conducting ourselves in a spirit of mutual respect, and solidarity and cooperation.

7. The God we believe is God, the Spirit. God renews our spirits and provides us with new energy. God provides us with the spirituality of peace which seeks repentance of sins and forgiveness of faults. This spirituality is expressed in action which is non-violent. This spirituality is more than the deepening of individual faith but is a public spirituality, a social spirituality. It seeks to establish peace, refusing to utilize means and methods which are themselves violent and therefore "un-peaceful" (Jn 4:24; 2 Cor 3:17).

The world in which we live today, however, is one in which the acts of resistance by the victims is labelled "terrorism" and the violence of the perpetrators is called "the norm", "social order" and "governance". We live in a world where Mammon rules and the spirit of consumerism shackles the souls of people and enslaves them as commodities of the neoliberal global economic order. Within this spirit only the machinations of Darwinian competitiveness dominates the hearts of individuals who are pitted against each other, forced to market themselves as commodities.

We reject the culture of violence which pervades our society. We reject the violence of governments and politicians as a means of extending their power. We reject the structural violence so prevalent in our societies. We reject all

cultures, educational systems and structures which justify unlimited competition in the name of progress and development. We reject the violence of dehumanizing cultural mechanisms, such as patriarchy and racism, which degrade differences into discrimination.

We are called to develop a spirituality of resistance which empowers the marginalized and weak. This spirituality is different from the nonviolence advocated by the traditional peace churches. It is the spirituality of transformation that leads to action, such as that embodied by Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi. It is a spirituality which not only resists against what is wrong but also presents an alternative. It is a world transforming spirituality, not an other-worldly spirituality. The spirituality which we are called to embody is a spirituality of poverty. It is following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, emptying our self and giving of ourselves to voluntary poverty as an act of prophetic witness and solidarity (Mt 5:3-12; Gal 3:28).

8. The God we believe is the God of the Faithful, and at the same time is a faithful God. Our God is the God who presents all creation with Shalom, Salaam, peace based on justice. However, the Church must confess that throughout its history it has failed to establish the peace to which it has been called by God, excluding the other, justifying war and aligning ourselves to the exploitations of colonialism and imperialism. Far too often the Church has stood as the vanguard of violence as it sided with the

"The God in which we believe is the sovereign God who reigns over all powers and principalities and yet emptied Godself to become one of us, to serve rather than be served. (Mk 10:45; Phil 25-11)... Therefore we reject the US Empire and all other Empires which seek to usurp the sovereign authority of God."



“The God we believe is the God of the faithful and at the same time is a faithful God. Our God is the God who presents all creation with Shalom, Salaam, peace based on justice.”

 PERSPECTIVE

powerful. Rather than living out the peace of God it has justified the false “peace” of Empire.

The time has come for the Church to repent of its sins, especially the sin of murder and pillage committed during the Crusades, the sin of theologically justifying the burning of innocents during its witch hunts, legitimizing the slave trade and the annihilation of the native residents of America, Australia, Africa and other regions. The Spirit of repentance to which

the Church is called must include an in-depth and serious study of Christian Scripture. Far too often the violence within Scripture has been overlooked or interpreted as a means of legitimizing the domination of the other. The Church is also called to repent of its divisions which express itself in violence, verbal and physical, against the other.

The in-fighting of the Church is one of the primary reasons for violence which disrupts and destroys peace all around the world. Although the Church is called to proclaim and

bear witness to the Gospel of Peace it has lived and acted according to precepts which contradict it, such as triumphalism and the prosperity gospel. The world does not believe because of our divisions and because of our self-contradictory lives. The divisions which plague the church, and to which we must confess, are not only historical. They also exist within congregations between men and women, the strong and weak, the powerful and the marginalized.

Therefore, as we confess our sins of the past and renew ourselves for the future we reject all theologies, doctrines or narratives that justify violence, war and the unjust invasion of sovereign territory. We also reject any theology or discourse which justifies the logic of power and destroys peace.

We acknowledge that the Church is called once again to take up its prophetic role in society. The Church has been called to be the ambassador of reconciliation in a world of division and conflict. The Church is called to be the salt and light of this world, existing as an alternative society and distinctive community transforming the world as the Body of Christ, filling everything with the fullness of Christ (Eph 1:23). The Church exists not to extend itself but as a sign and symbol of the Kingdom of God in the world.

** A group of theologians teaching at different seminaries and universities of the Presbyterian Church of Korea met together from 19-20 January 2010 to reflect on the Initial Statement of Just Peace that the WCC has prepared for the International Ecumenical Convocation held in May 2011 in Kingston, Jamaica. This article appears on the Just Peace Companion, a resource document of the World Council of Churches.*

Who will roll the stone away?

Hope S. Antone

is the Joint Executive Secretary for CCA Faith Mission and Evangelism. This article appeared previously on CCA News.

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. [Mark 16:1-4, NIV]

"Who will roll the stone away?" This question seems to carry a note of helplessness and despair that seemed to have engulfed the women disciples. Yes, I call them disciples because they had faithfully followed Jesus, helping him in his ministry and providing their resources (Luke 8:3). They must have been there to keep vigil until he breathed his last on the cross. In order to carry out the custom of anointing the dead body of their dearly beloved teacher and friend with spices, these women went to the tomb early morning after Sabbath, not knowing how they could even get to the body – for the entrance to the tomb was tightly sealed.

The tomb of Jesus was sealed in three ways. One, through a large stone rolled against the tomb. Normally stone covers for tombs weighed somewhere between 1-1/2 to 2 tons or 1,361 to 1,814 kg., so levers had to be used to move them.

Two, through the Roman guard unit stationed at the tomb. Normally a guard unit consisted of four soldiers. These Roman guards were strictly disciplined fighting men who knew that failure on duty was punishable by death, torture and other humiliating methods.

WHO WILL ROLL THE STONE AWAY? 

“Jesus did not come simply to die on the cross for us. Rather, Jesus’ death was the result of the strong opposition from the powers that be to what he came here for: to initiate and demonstrate a movement towards fullness of life in the reign of God.”

WHO WILL ROLL THE STONE AWAY?

Three, through the Roman seal affixed to the stone. This seal symbolized the power and authority of the Roman Empire. Moving the stone from the tomb’s entrance would have broken the seal, thereby deserving automatic execution by crucifixion upside down.

The gospel accounts in Mark, Luke and John do not include a description of how the stone was rolled away and who was responsible for it. They simply mention that the stone had been rolled away. Only Matthew’s account mentions a severe earthquake and that an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, rolled away the stone and sat on it.

Who will roll the stone away? Where Jesus’ death was concerned, the stone had already been rolled away. He is not dead but alive! Let us not look for him among the dead for he is among the living.

What does this message mean for the many people who are suffering in Asia, especially for Asian women who continue to face the heavy stone of oppression which is often justified by our Asian cultures and religions?

The church’s traditional theology states ‘that the death of Jesus atoned for human sin, saved the world, and is the model of loving self-sacrifice.’ This atonement theology underpins the common

advice to victims of abuse and violence: “Just bear your pain; it is nothing compared to the pain suffered by Christ on our behalf;” or “Never mind if you suffer now (or that you are poor and deprived now) for you will be greatly rewarded in heaven.” If not other people’s advice, the suffering victims themselves have been taught to rationalize and make a self-judgment: “I must have done something wrong or bad to deserve this suffering.”

Theology that keeps women and other marginalized people under the yoke of oppression is not a liberating theology. Any theology that is not liberating falls short of Jesus’ purpose to bring fullness of life to all. Any theology that reinforces oppression falls short

of the biblical affirmation that women and men are created in the image of God. It is therefore important to critically revisit some of our theological affirmations. One of the most problematic theological affirmations we have is on atonement, which seems to glorify or romanticize suffering. As the verse in “How Great Thou Art” goes:

And when I think, that God,
His Son not sparing;
Sent Him to die,
I scarce can take it in;
That on the Cross,
my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died
to take away my sin.

If this is so, there seems to be something suicidal about Jesus’ death: that God sent him to die? That Jesus was gladly bearing my sin? Now really I scarce can take that in.

The concept of atonement is rooted in the Jewish celebration of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) during which the high priest offered a sacrifice of atonement for the forgiveness of Israel’s sins (see Leviticus 16). That idea has been adopted and “Christianized” by applying it to Jesus’ death on the cross. The difference is that in our Christianized version, Jesus, the holiest and highest priest, did not only offer an animal sacrifice but his very own life as atonement for sinful people.

Why would a supposedly loving and just God, who is the source and giver of life, demand the offering of life? Why would God want to be appeased by a sacrifice of life? What makes this loving and just God blood-thirsty? Is it really through Christ’s dying

on the cross that we are saved from sin? How can that make sense to the many women in Asia who continue to suffer from the yoke of oppression?

Theological affirmations that are related to the notion of atonement help to make us feel guilty or remorseful about our sinfulness; and therefore to be grateful for Jesus’ sacrifice for our sake. But what about our being sinned-against as women and other marginalized groups in Asia?

Instead of focusing on atonement alone, it is very important to link the death and resurrection of Christ with the very reason for his coming to the world. Jesus did not come simply to die on the cross for us (that is simply suicidal). Rather, Jesus’ death was the result of the strong opposition from the powers that be to what he came here for: to initiate and demonstrate a movement towards fullness of life in the reign of God.

In this context, it is not enough to understand salvation only from the traditional perspective of the sinner; it should also be seen from the perspective of the sinned-against: the marginalized and oppressed peoples in Asia whose oppression is not a fault of their own but of structures and systems, including cultures and religions that are so patriarchal and hierarchical. By oppressed I mean the suffering Asian women, poor, indigenous people, the disabled, people of different sexual orientation, lower castes, to name a few. For them, a more hopeful and helpful emphasis of Christ’s salvific act is on his having come “that they might have life in

its fullness” (John 10:10).

It is important to understand the cross, on the one hand, as a reminder of the human capacity to sin, to abuse and victimize others, and to defile the sacred. But it is not completely true that Jesus the Christ was, on the cross, gladly bearing our burden. We remember his pain and agony, his tears and blood.

We can also look at the cross as God’s statement that just as Jesus died once and for all, no one deserves to suffer anymore injustice, discrimination, or oppression. Moreover, we can look at the cross as a symbol of the human ability to take risks for a higher cause – that of claiming our God-given right to fullness of life and of making that available for others as well. The offering of life in solidarity with all who hunger for justice and a fuller life always involves risks. Like Jesus, we who follow his way knowingly take the risks, not with the hope of dying, but with the hope of bringing about the better and fuller life that all deserve to have.

Who will roll the stone away? The stone of oppression that keeps women and other vulnerable groups in a dehumanized position remains entrenched till today. It is well guarded by patriarchal cultural traditions and sealed by religious teachings or justifications. But through Asian feminist theologizing, many women and also some conscientized men are gently but firmly chipping this gigantic stone. In Asia we say that together, women and men can and must roll this stone away. When we ask, “Who will roll the stone away?” we are inviting others to join us.

In the past two years, there's an ambiguous term called "Post-80s" arisen in the Hong Kong society. I call it ambiguous because there are at least two distinctive meanings for the term. First, it seems to refer to all young people born in the 80s, this is exactly how the mainstream media is using it. However, the gang who uses the term to self-nominate seems to have a different view on its meaning. As a member of the society, we see that the mainstream churches appear to be confused about this growing "Post-80s Movement". Hence, SCM Hong Kong launched the "Post-80s Self-Research Program". With qualitative interviews, thorough media research and analysis, we summarized our findings and published them in our book – "Post-80s Self Delving Youth", as a little round up for the first phase of the Program.

Like Jesus says that new wine should be poured into new wineskins, to understand the current "Post-80s Movement", we may need a new theological framework. It's not simply about learning new concepts; most importantly, how it leads us into everyday practice. As the relationship between orthopraxis and orthodoxy emphasized in liberation theology, biblical hermeneutics is not only about the methodology, more crucially, it is the theological examination and reflection on self-world-view as a whole. It's not simply gaining more knowledge but as a guidance for our thoughts and livings.

We cannot have any practical theological reflection if we don't understand our surrounding, i.e. de-circumstanced makes orthopraxis impossible. After 1997, the sovereignty of Hong Kong was transferred from United Kingdom to the PRC, since that,

Hong Kong people are experiencing a downstream of social position. Through the collusion between the governing and the business sector, and the unbearable "toppling property hegemony", the social immobility in recent years is undeniable. With more and more people fall below the poverty line and increasing Gini-coefficient, people starts to recognize there's something structurally wrong in our society. From various government-proposed infrastructure projects, to the implementation of public policies, the people starts to realize whenever there is conflict between public interest and private profit in Hong Kong, the former one is always sacrificed. In such a time, a group of loosely organized youngsters – the Post-80s, stood up to pinpoint the deep-seated problems and advocated that changes are needed. However, when this self-declared term entered the mainstream media, it is twisted into something else. It is no longer about the conflict between different ideologies, but stunted as simply economical struggle among generations. Post-80s becomes just a biological identity.

Through in depth studies and close interaction with the "real" Post-80s these two years, I conclude the flag of Post-80s have at least the following characteristics: The real Post-80s are those actively mobilizing social movements; those who continuously contribute in local identity construction; those against the sole "value of Central" [1] and deliberate possible non-urban sustainable lifestyle. They are against the global exploitation of capitalism and class privilege; and believe the citizens have rights to participate in community planning. The Post-80s feel extremely unpleasant when being undemocratically represented in major issues in

The actions and discourses from the Post-80s are challenging the unexamined knowledge of the public... I witnessed people being awoken by the drumbeat of the Post-80s. As if hearing the wisdom shouts in the street, lifts her voice in the square. At the gates in the city she utters the instruction for righteousness, justice and equality. If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

the society. As long as there is a fair platform, they are willing to discuss all topics in rational ground. They are direct activists, who believe social movements can bring real chances to the society. The Post-80s Movement is a dynamic, continuously sublimating, spontaneous people crusade. It's never a war among generations, but a war among distinctive values.

Unfortunately, we found that even the major social-caring Christian organizations in Hong Kong failed to identify the true characteristics of the Post-80s Movement. Some of them even turned the problems the youths are facing into the problem of the youths. SCM Hong Kong

wishes the published book can act as an introduction of the Post-80s Movement for the mainstream churches, and hope the churches can learn from this positive and dynamic crusade. Hence, together, we can build a fairer society for everyone and let God's kingdom demonstrates on earth. Following are some stories we collected in our book.

In "Master of Job Maintenance in Living", Wilson, the author gave us a brief review on the education-landscape of our city. He said many friends only continue their studies after graduated because they want to keep their job. As everyone is being expected to obtain a post-graduate degree or diploma, you will be sifted out if you have none. When such demand for higher education arises, the education suppliers, i.e. the university and other educational institutes are more than willing to help fulfill such demand by "producing more certificates"; unfortunately, not in a proper way. In recent years, it's generally agreed that anyone capable of paying the tuition fee, can basically obtain a higher-diploma, associate degree, or even a taught master degree with minimal effort required. Universities or educational institutes become shopping malls of certificates.

What about those incapable to pay the tuition fee? Another interviewee, CL might give us some insight. As a young man aged 27, CL didn't attend college. Without a college degree, CL can only work as a low-skill-labor; he just got off work from a fast-food restaurant when Dan interviewed him. The interview took place at CL's "cube". Dan called it a cube because it's too tiny that it failed to accommodate the two of them (i.e. approximately 3ft. x 6ft.). CL alleged

THE POST-80S MOVEMENT 

THE POST-80s MOVEMENT

A Value War

Jeremy Chu

*is a member of SCM Hong Kong
and one of the authors of the book
Post-80s Self Delving Youth
published by SCM Hong Kong*

SCMER'S DIARY

THE POST-80S MOVEMENT

that eventhough the living situation is bad, it's still better than living at "home" because of his terrible relationship with his violent dad. Repeating meaningless job tasks and receiving disesteemed salary, CL said he doesn't dare to dream for a lover or to build a family in foreseeable future.

CL's story is not something extraordinary in Hong Kong. In "Creative Life Planning", our interviewee who is a young scholar, Kim-ching Chan pointed out that the Post-80s witness the sovereignty transfer of Hong Kong, the disappearing living space for the poor, and the decline of fairness in our legal system. "They can no longer play the game their parents played as the rules had changed," he said.

After the "wheel-turning" of the Democratic Party in 2010's Political Reform [2], we saw many citizens cried because the political party that they have supported for years betrayed them in such an important issue. In "The Radical

Post-80s", as a diehard supporter of DP, Ka-ling expressed her deepest disappointment on its betrayal. She said from now on, the collusion would go all the way through. The circle of social movement had broken up because of it too, since most of the Pan-Democrats believe they can no longer trust these past-comrades after the Reformation.

After all, the Post-80s are not the naive and greenhouse-youngsters as the mainstream media described. They born in hardship, faced the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty, Asian Financial Crisis, SARS, Article 23 crisis, and the recent Global Financial Tsunami, etc. They are not simply the witnesses, but direct sufferers as well. From education to career path, from living space to place for sex, from the economy to basic human rights protection, freedom is significantly lessen gradually in all these areas.

Some Post-80s in churches are echoing the social Post-80s Movement too. If Post-80s truly want to regain what are originally belongs to them, and refuse to

be undemocratically represented, this "deadly seriousness" is exactly the attitude we should devote in our faith. Our interviewee, Yu mentioned the church leader could no longer monopolize the right to interpret the Words in "Everything Begins in Happy Bible Study: You Have the Call on What the Bible Says". He shared his Bible study experience with SCMHK, said the discussion is very open-minded; everyone can have his own view. But of course, only those "make sense" ones will be left for consideration. Lai in "Guarding the Church Tradition on the Boundary" commented many churchgoers or even ministers are not respecting the tradition of their own denomination today. Many of them only depend on the pastors on Bible interpretation or theological explication; they are not willing to take up their own responsibility for any theological reflection.

As I stated in my research article, "The Ignorant Church and the Unfinished Post-80 Movement", except for a few scholars, the majority of the church leaders failed to understand the true



characteristics of the Post-80s. They only used the biological identity as the mainstream media does to analyze this dynamic war for alternative values. Some of them even problematized the youths from sufferers to troublemakers. In facing the real problems the Post-80s bought up, such as land justice, globalized capitalism, non-urban living style, etc., the mainstream churches are sluggish and failed to respond.

In “The Theological Meaning of the Post-80s Movement”, Frankie emphasized that experience is the primary source for understanding the truth. When facing uncertainty, Hong Kong people need to confront it with our subjectivity to prevent from being colonized or re-colonized. And for our subjectivity, it must be built according to our domestic experience. In the past, when the Hong Kong’s theological circle mentioned the concept of domestic, it’s always related to traditional Chinese culture, which has nothing to do with our political or economical structure. Our pop-culture, agriculture and fisheries, grassroots culture are

always ignored. It’s time for us to rethink about structural injustice encountered in our society. In the chapter on comprehensive analysis, Kim Ling said the Post-80s refused to only focus on the traditional distribution justice and step forward on intergeneration justice. In church content, the major opponent of the intergeneration injustice is the arrogance of the church leaders. Frankie believes in understanding the praxis of the Post-80s, we need to first unravel the myth of adulthood [4]. He wishes more brothers and sisters to join our crusade, and we can help develop this theological-paradigm-shift together.

The actions and discourses from the Post-80s are challenging the unexamined knowledge of the public. From the past two years, I witnessed many people being awoken by the drumbeat of the Post-80s, their kneeling and bowing caused strong spiritual impact for the passers-by [5]. As if hearing the wisdom shouts in the street, lifts her voice in the square. At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters the instruction for

righteousness, justice and equality. If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

Footnotes:

[1] *The value of Central refers to an urban myth of capitalism in Hong Kong. It praises consumerism and worship “successful” capitalists. It believes all privation in society is simply due to the laziness and incapability of individual and has nothing to do with local social or political structure.*

[2] *During their 2008 Legislative Council Election, the Democratic Party (Hong Kong) promised the voters they will fight for universal suffrage in 2012. However, after secret meeting with the Beijing side, they voted for the government’s 2012 constitutional reform package in the council which has no indicator for universal suffrage in the near future. The move divided opinion in the pan-democratic camp but ultimately allowed the bill to pass. 30 of DP’s members left the party, and accused their leaders for betraying the people and slowing the pace towards universal suffrage since the reform package has no promise for the content or timetable for universal suffrage. During July 1, 2010, the annual rally for democracy, many voters shouted, “Shame on DP, you guys sold out Hong Kong people!”*

[3] Law, Wing-sang. (2010 Jan 9). *Happy Fight: Everyone is Post-80*. Ming Pao, <http://news.sina.com.hk/news/1119/3/1/1388313/1.html>

[4] *According to John Bell, Adulthood is defined as “behaviors and attitudes based on the assumptions that adults are better than young people, and entitled to act upon young people without agreement”.*

[5] *You may refer to the following photo album of Mr. Benson Tsang, a Christian photographer who stays very close with SCMHK’s actions: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.258529264933.142082.572574933&type=1> <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.405588954933.182737.572574933&type=1>*





WSCF AP Statement on the July 22 Attacks in Norway

We share the grief of the Norwegian people for the lost lives, most of them young people, in the calibrated bombing and shoot-out in a youth camp in Utoya islands last Friday in Norway. We are one with the international call for justice for all the victims, along with their families, friends and the people of Norway.

The twin attacks in Norway, reportedly by a single individual whose prime motivation which is slowly coming to light, is alarmingly slanted towards

hatred on the Muslims and immigrants in Norway. We are alarmed that these are aimed at encouraging more extreme rightist Christian ideology, xenophobia, islamophobia, racism and animosity against people of color in Europe. Recently we have just witnessed the attacks on Roma camps and expulsion of the Roma people.

In our contexts, religious and racial bigotry is an issue that we also must address. Elsewhere, terrorism, attacks on religious and cultural

minorities has deep connections with neo-fascism. If this triumphs, the aim of those who want to systematically maim and attack innocent lives will also succeed.

As we pray and call for justice for the victims, let us also not forget to cast light on the deep roots of such atrocities, intertwined in the political, cultural, and economic milieu. Thru this, may we find solutions that will promote democracy, peace and justice in our midst.



Our Prayer for Norway and SCM Norway

*Our loving and gracious God,
We pray for your healing spirit to touch the lives of
the people of Norway,
We ask that your love and compassion bring
comfort to the families, friends and loved ones of
those who died in the July 22nd tragedy.
We pray that the perpetrator of this crime be put to
justice, so that faith in the ideals of justice, peace,
freedom and liberty be restored in our hearts.*

*God, it is you who is the source of life and wisdom,
We seek your grace and wisdom to discern your
will and the meaning of this painful incident,
We ask that you guide the leaders of Norway
and the international community to seek lasting
peaceful solutions to the problems fuelling religious
and racial tensions in Norway and elsewhere.*

*We pray for the safety and well-being of students,
youth and our dear friends in SCM Norway
We remember in our prayers communities of
religious, ethnic and cultural minority groups in
Norway and elsewhere in Europe,
Let not bigotry, exclusion and hatred further
escalate the tension in the aftermath.*

*May your grace, justice, peace and love be with the
people in Norway in this time of grieving and loss.*

AMEN

WSCF Global Staff and Officers meet amidst difficulties

The WSCF Global Staff and Officers met at the WSCF Inter-regional Office (IRO) in Geneva from June 16 to 24, 2011. The Meeting was attended by Mr. Horacio Mesones, WSCF Chairperson; Ms. Janejinda Pawadee, Co-vice Chairperson; Ms. Shantha Ready, Co-vice Chairperson; Mr. Youhanna Kamal, Treasurer; Ms. Christine Housel, General Secretary; Ms. Georgine Kengne, Africa Regional Secretary; Mr. Luciano Kovacs, North America Regional Secretary; Mr. Marcelo Leites, LAC Interim Regional Secretary; Mr. David Masters, Europe Regional Secretary; Ms. Nectar Montes, Asia Pacific Regional Secretary; and Ms. Elsy Wakil, Middle East Regional Secretary.

The Meeting aimed to develop common understanding and interpretation of the current situation of WSCF related to its identity, governance, programs, and finance; to work on the strategic plan and action plan proposed by the WSCF Executive Committee; come-out with a common fund-raising strategy and agree on the Fund-raising Protocol; organize the funding partners meeting; installation of Christine Housel as the Co-secretary General, and develop the monitoring and evaluation tools for the staff.

Highlights of the Meeting were the development of the "WSCF Emergency Plan" to address the financial difficulties of the Federation on the short term and long term basis. The Plan contains various strategies on Finance, Management, Governance and Institutional Relations. Another significant



WSCF GLOBAL OFFICERS MEET 

EASYNET welcomes Bipul Alite Gonsalves as new regional coordinator

The Ecumenical Asia Pacific Student and Youth Network (EASYNET) welcomes Mr. Bipul Alite Gonsalves, as the new Regional Coordinator of the Ecumenical Asia Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASY Net). Bipul hails from Bangladesh and belong to the Catholic faith tradition. Since his student life Bipul has been actively involved in Young Christian Students (YCS) movement and Bangladesh Catholic Students Movement (BCSM) (local branch of the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS)) and has contributed to the student community in many ways. His association with the EASY Net is not new. In fact, he started his ecumenical journey in the year 2002 by participating in an EASY Net event in Bangladesh followed by other local, national and international events including the Asia Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG 2004).



Bipul defines EASY Net in his own words as a “spiritual and human bonding among the like minded students and youth movements who envision for a just society”. With this experience through Easy Net Bipul continued to participate in the ecumenical initiatives and promoted the spirit of grassroots

ecumenism among the students and youths.

Bipul’s commitment and enthusiastic spirit for a just society led him to serve with different youth and student movements. After serving with the Catholic Weekly Pratibeshi, Episcopal Commission for Youth and Christian Communication Center at Dhaka, Bipul was appointed as the Regional Coordinator of the IMCS Asia Pacific, based in Manila, Philippines. During this time Bipul also had the opportunity to serve as the EASY Net moderator for 2007-2008. Presently Bipul is working as the Executive Secretary for Programmes of the National Council of YMCAs of Bangladesh, Dhaka. He also works with the Interfaith Youth Chapter of Bangladesh as a volunteer National Director. Apart from the above responsibilities Bipul also served in brief at Justice & Peace Programme, Caritas Bangladesh, Bangladesh Christian Boys Hostel, Dhaka YMCA, Bangladesh Christian Writers Forum and also with the Holy Cross Family Ministries, both based in Dhaka. Bipul’s vast ecumenical experiences and hands on experience with EASY Net and with a vision to build a just society, we have strong faith on Bipul’s leadership to carry forward the significant work of EASY Net among the Students and Youth movement in Asia and the Pacific region. Bipul is excited and humbled to join hands with you all to accomplish our vision of a Just society by way of our efforts in restoring the reign of God for all creation.

WSCF GLOBAL OFFICERS MEET

activity during the Meeting was the WSCF Funding Partners Meeting attended by representatives from the EED, Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), Methodist Church in UK, ACT Alliance, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), World Council of Churches (WCC) and EMW. The Partners Meeting was a venue to present the WSCF Quadrennial Strategic Plan, share the stories and progress of WSCF life in the regions, elicit feedback from the partners and

develop closer relations with the partners.

The Meeting ended with the installation ceremony of Christine Housel as General Secretary, attended by senior friends, ecumenical partners and friends of WSCF.

The Staff and Officers also bid farewell to Necta Montes and David Masters, both ending their term in 2011 and welcomed Marcelo Leites in the Staff Team.



Justice and Peace Now! Ecumenical Creative Workshop held for Youth

The Ecumenical Creative Workshop of Students and Youth in Asia and the Pacific was held during July 25-31, 2011 at the Tao Fong Shan, Hong Kong. The workshop was based on the theme "Justice and Peace Now!" Twenty five creative young people including organizers and resource persons from Asia participated in the said workshop. This workshop was a joint collaboration of Ecumenical Asia Pacific Students and Youth Network (Easy Net), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), and Hong Kong Christian Council (HKCC), hosted by the HKCC.

The young people full of energy and vibrancy, gifted with diverse talents and creative artists, musicians, dancers, choreographers, theater persons, photographers, painters, lyricists, poets, writers, theologians' church leaders, youth activist etc represented

EASYNET member organization of Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), International Young Christian Students (IYCS), Asia Pacific Alliance of Young Men Christian Association (YMCA). World Student Christian Federation –Asia Pacific (WSCF-AP), Global YWCA.

During the 7-day workshop the creative group initiated to reflect and articulate their understanding of Justice and Peace in the present context and the urgency of restoring justice and peace now! The Creative workshop established a community to interpret and envision justice and peace through creative skills of alternative art forms of theater, dance, paintings, singing, writing, studying Bible together, etc. Their critical analysis helped them to understand how and why Asia is ripped apart by various forms of violence, that made them convinced to be creative prophetic spiritualities by being catalyst of justpeace. Their affirmation was influenced and inspired by Jesus who as a youth had the courage to transform society, break status quo, challenge injustice, and heal and reconcile broken communities. Therefore anointed with prophetic spirituality, they pledged to use their talents to heal, reconcile broken communities and relationships and combat violence.

Their prophetic affirmation came as: “through rhythms of our body, power of our hands, feet, prophetic tongue and talents we commit ourselves to engage in advocacy to overcome violence, promote values of democracy, equality, and justice. We commit ourselves to empower Asian Churches and revive grassroots ecumenical movement in Asia and to build inclusive prophetic communities of peace. We demand Asian churches to recognize and acknowledge the



Through rhythms of our body, power of our hands, feet, prophetic tongue and talents we commit ourselves to engage in advocacy to overcome violence, promote values of democracy, equality, and justice. We demand Asian churches to recognize and acknowledge the prophetic contributions of youth and involve youth in decision making process and nurture our prophetic spiritualities. We are restless for peace and justice!

prophetic contributions of youth and involve youth in decision making process and nurture our prophetic spiritualities. We are restless for peace and justice right now!”

In order to facilitate and enhance their creative skills we had facilitators Dr Valli Batchelor (co-founder the Journey Towards Hope Dance Projects in Malaysia), Dr Rommel Linatoc (program secretary of the Unit on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Relations of NCC Philippines), Ms Mercy Kappen, Rev Ken Seng, Rev Barath Patta (General Secretary, SCM India), Ms Necta

Montes (General Secretary of WSCF AP), Ms Fanny Lam, Ms Kitty Tsang (SCM Hong Kong), Ms Moumita Biswas (Joint Executive secretary for Ecumenical Formation, Gender Justice and Youth Empowerment, CCA) and Sunita Suna (Regional Women’s Coordinator, WSCF AP). The sessions were on the topics: Discovering the passion for Justpeace within me, From Brokenness to Healing from Violence to Justice and Peace, Peace and Justice through the Rhythms of our body, Making Peace with Mother Earth, Building Inclusive communities of Peace (Gender Justice), Waging justpeace.

CommuniQue

of the WSCF Asia Pacific Human Rights, Justice and Peace Committee

August 12, 2011

Dear SCMer and National
Movements,

Coming from different parts of Asia Pacific, representatives from each sub-region of the WSCF AP came together for the first time in-person to form the Human Rights, Justice and Peace (HRJP) Committee of the WSCF AP from July 1-7, 2011 in the Philippines. The HRJP committee was an offshoot of the recommendations of the former working group on Human Rights since 2006 and was formally formed as HRJP Committee in the RCM 2008 in the AP by-laws.

Attended and composed by Neill Ballantyne (Aotearoa/NZ), Leni Valeriano (HRJP Com. Coordinator), A.V. Caleb (India), Nano Yeung (Hongkong), Sunita Suna (Regional Women's Coordinator), Dayan Asuelo (Philippines) and Necta Montes (Regional Secretary), the HRJP Committee reflected, discussed the mandate, its objectives, reading of the signs of times and the admonition to us as ecumenical Christians for the imperative to be involved in human rights, justice and peace-building. The HRJP Committee also took part in the International Festival of Peoples Rights and Struggles held in Manila and maximized the venues

for networking and developing deeper analyses on migration and migrants rights, struggles of the youth, US military bases, women's rights movement etc.

We shared the different efforts of the SCMs in the human rights program and also able to grasp the need to encourage to sustain and improve these efforts in the regional, national and local levels of our movement. In the regional level we have sustained the HR Program and thematic workshop since 2006 and initiated campaigns in the last years on human rights in Burma, the Freedom of Morong 43 health workers in Philippines and against extra-judicial killings, and on communal violence. In the national movements, efforts in advocacy and campaigning also vary in terms of capacity of the movement and the priority issues focused on.

Campaigning is also one facet of advocacy among SCMs which still needs improvement and sustainability. There are cases in local and regional levels that the campaign we joined had reached some concrete results for raising consciousness and for achieving justice like the freedom of the Morong 43, freedom of Dr. Binayak Sen in India, support for

the rehabilitation in Burma after cyclone Nargis and others.

We recognized that these are not a top-down effort but a collaboration of the different levels and resources of our federation. In the global level, we have the Global Advocacy and Solidarity Committee (GASC) which helps coordinate; we can share our efforts with GASC and the different SCMs, and maximize the federation's global reach for solidarity, advocacy and justice-building.

The regional context we live in propels us to live out our faith in accordance to the dream for an inclusive and just society. While already rampant in Asia Pacific, issues like mining and foreign plunder of TNCs, developmental aggression, and corruption are increasingly becoming a wide concern for our communities and SCMs. Some of the issues that persist in our region needing our continuing analyses, reflection and advocacy, and which SCMs are addressing in a way or another are: Human rights, economic rights, migration, ecological justice, education, peace building, communal violence and globalization among others.

Also among the major plans developed based from the last RCM mandate and directions, the HRJP Com. meeting came up with (final HRJP Com meeting minutes will also be available later for reference) :

- To harmonize our 2011-2013 campaign with the global thrust on Water Justice Campaign, while inclusively and consciously connecting the advocacy for water justice with the economic and ecological justice as encompassing framework of analysis (continue the Water Justice Campaign for 2011-2012 and Land and Mining Campaign to be launched in mid-2012)
- Continue Solidarity efforts by issuing statements and prayers on major issues and appeals requested by national movements and use the existing protocols in practice
- Promote awareness on these advocacy issues to the national, local units of SCMs and encourage mobilization in different levels on these issues for example on water justice and ecological justice
- Develop and explore strategic networks that already advocate on issues regionally and in national level for example the Ecumenical Water Network and Water for the People Network
- Sustain the regional HR Program yearly; help raise national movements capacity to develop SCMer to be trainers for trainers on advocacy and solidarity; and develop the HRJP SCM Manual which was started by previous HR working group (next HR Workshop on Militarization and US Bases to be held in Korea will be a Training for Trainers 2011)
- Each member of the HRJP committee representing a sub-region will help in coordinating and

highlighting issues and advocacy by SCMs in each sub-region; and over-all aim to encourage SCMs to nominate an SCMer (like the HR education desk officer of SCMI or SCMP's HR coordinator) that will promote consistent advocacy and solidarity initiatives in the national movements

Along the line of further improving the Water Justice Campaign and complementing efforts in the global task force, we affirmed the main objectives as to raise awareness on the Water as a Right and connect to related issues like water privatization, rising sea-levels, pollution and damaging effects to communities by big dams and other "development" infrastructure. We have also outlined these Plans of Actions:

a) Draft a Primer as discussion guide and Bible Study material on the Water Justice Campaign to help deepen our analyses and reflection on the Water Justice and

its connection with economic and ecological justice

b) To encourage national SCMs to have at least 1 main activity in a year to cap the Water Justice Campaign to be coordinated nationally and mobilize as many among the students, young people, churches

c) To contribute to the Water Stories collection initiated by the global water task force

d) To develop network both local and regional like the Ecumenical Water Network

e) Develop visual educational materials on the Water Justice Campaign like a short video

As a fresh team, we offer our commitment to assist also the region and national movements to develop ideas to strengthen our local and national capacity for advocacy and solidarity.

Members of the WSCF AP HRJP Committee



(from left to right): Dianne Asuelo, Tin Valerio, Neill Ballantyn (back), Necta Montes, A.V. Caleb (back), Leni Valeriano, Sunita Suna (back) and Nayo Yeung.

ASCM National Conference 2011

The Revolution of Small: Freed from Success

Report by Ann Ng



❖ *god comes to us in the weak, poor, broken, small ... god comes to us in our own brokenness*

❖ *for freedom you have been set free, stand firm then, and do not return to enslaved living Galatians 5:1*

It's only been 20 years or more since I attended an SCM conference but National Conference 2011 in Perth organized by the WA SCMerS was like 'coming home'. There was the same exploration of faith issues, intellectual rigour, lots of discussion and information sharing, fellowship, good food and a slowly growing, binding sense of something good happening.

Conference was a 3-day affair, starting Sunday afternoon and finishing Wednesday. In all, we were a small community, quite wide-ranging in age and interests of course, but asking similar questions – where to, what for in regards to the ASCM, what role does Christianity have to play in our lives, is God really to be found in 'weakness', 'boy, did you find it cold last night?' and occasionally 'what's for dinner?'

Clare and Tyson Menck, Barrie Baker and Kate Watts had done an incredible amount of ground work such that the conference ran very smoothly. Clare led a series of challenging and engaging bible studies each morning, and Ros Hewett, another WA SCMer led the worships (which included 'washing of one another's feet one morning, and walking meditatively in a labyrinth on an adjacent property another morning). During the day and in the evenings on this beautiful property called "Gidgegannup" kindly lent to us for our use by a WA church minister called Neville Watson (perhaps better known for his book, "Traffic light: an on-site account of the 2003 Iraq War as seen through the journal of Neville

Watson”) we sat and thought and worked and breathed through sessions led by different individuals helping us to ponder on questions to do with “The Revolution of Small – Freed from Success”.

Little Eva wandered amongst us, reminding us in no uncertain terms of ‘smallness’ but at the same time with a full personality of her own, but needing care and attention from those of us bigger and more able and independent than her.

Clare and Tyson’s fellow-parishioner, Michael Prince led the first session. He was a rope-in but it made little difference. In line with the topic of “Freed from Success” he shared with us different articles on concepts like success and earnestness, giving us lots of room to explore the usual definitions as presented in worldly terms, and allowing us to question if these were parallel yardsticks to those set by God.

Another day, Barrie Baker talked about God’s economy in nature and contrasted this with our modern human economy in our web of life, asking questions about our culture of excess. Was Jesus a minimalist? Is it impossible to distinguish any more between wants and needs? Involvement with others inevitably brings compromise. We rated where we were on the level of waste production, and tried to work out some practical steps that a responsible society could take towards tackling this Culture of Excess.

One night had all of us learning to crochet from WA SCMer, Megan Sheard, who talked about returning to a lifestyle of working as an artisan (crochet teacher and sales via the Net and through friends). Megan shared ideas from Ivan Illich’s writings on how tools have been used not to serve us but instead to oppress us. A few delightful photos



It was a quality conference, boundless thanks to the WA SCMerS who brought it altogether, and to God, who despite our smallness and weakness, gave us enough to recognise the fellowship amongst us and to try to do Her work.

of the young men learning to crochet and succeeding brought the evening to a close.

Jeni Goring, Anglican priest, talked about how in working with people who have undergone severe loss or trauma, it is important that we ourselves understand our own interpretations of why calamity has occurred – is God to blame, or the devil, or is it just a case of ‘shit happens’? So often in our lives, God equates to ‘power, omni-this and omni-that, eternity, strength, etc’ and weakness equates to ‘small, powerless, voiceless, weak, ill, infirm, old, useless’ and it would appear that never the twain shall meet, and yet we know deep inside that this is far from the truth. One other Clare-led session looked at all the difficult questions raised with parent support when children were

removed from their families, and Kate ran a very revealing simulation game on refugees fleeing and the things we would bring with us and what would be left by the end of our journeys.

On the last evening, Josh Peppall from World Vision spoke to us about his work in initially Bosnia, then Iraq, then Sri Lanka and currently Cambodia. From genocide issues to war refugees to the massacre in Sri Lanka of 40,000 people after truce had been declared, to human trafficking, Josh painted a graphic picture of a world with a lot of suffering and the work of the NGO sector but at the same time his optimism and faith shone through all that he had to say.

Queensland SCM sent Georgia, who had a wealth of knowledge in church history, Eloise was able to bring herself from Canberra partly because her fare to the US for studies wasn’t as expensive as anticipated, I came from Victoria along with Pierre (student representative from Victoria University SCM) and he was able to tell everyone about what the students at VU had been doing the two years before on their campus, and WA SCM had along with its stalwart ‘crew’ some young students from the Performing Arts Departments of WA Universities.

On Tuesday afternoon, we also had the pleasure of a visit from two senior friends, and being able to connect a little with the past. Alan Mathews and his wife joined us soon after lunch and stayed for Jeni Goring’s session as well.

It was a ‘quality’ conference, boundless thanks to the WA SCMerS who brought it altogether, and to God who despite our smallness and weakness, gave us enough to recognise the fellowship amongst us and to try to do Her work.



Indonesian SCM takes efforts for religious freedom, vs. corruption

Indonesian Student Christian Movement (ISCM) organized a nationally coordinated action on August 18, 2011 to uphold religious freedom and fight corruption. This action was held as a form of concern about the condition of the nation and the State, many of the problems and the various injustices that cause public unrest stems from weak law enforcement.

Some examples of these injustices are the noncompliance of Bogor Mayor against the Supreme Court ruling on giving the license to GKI Taman Yasmin to establish the a church in Bogor, church

destruction, intimidation of people who attend the worship, and the burning of three churches in Pekanbaru-Riau province. The last example of burning three churches in Pekanbaru proves that the state security apparatus cannot provide security to its citizens fairly. To this day the perpetrators of this incident have not been seriously investigated by the police. Arrogance and intolerance of all forms of action are threatening the very value of the Indonesian people- the value of nationalism and pluralism as an independent state.

Along these issues, ISCM is also

concerned that widespread corruption is not seriously addressed by the government. Investigation of corruption cases involving politicians of the ruling party is full of intrigue and questionable intentions to protect the interests of certain parties. Government who has the legitimate authority to implement policies to protect the entire Indonesian nation seems to be preoccupied with personal interests group.

These two issues, Freedom of religion and Corruption, came from the realization that independence cannot be enjoyed by many people of Indonesia. Security institutions as an instrument of the state in creating a safe and comfortable atmosphere for its citizens, have lost its legitimacy. GMKI responded to these issues by inviting Christian students in the various regions in Indonesia to demand from the government to exercise its authority on the issues of Freedom of Religion and Corruption, one day after the celebration of the Indonesian Independence Day.

SCM India participates in the Day of Protest and Hunger Strike on Scheduled Caste

By Inbaraj Jeyakumar



SCMI members along with program staffs stood for the cause of Dalit Christians and Muslims and participated in a Three Days Hunger strike in Delhi organized by the National Coordination Committee for Dalit Christians (NCCDC) & National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC). It was held in Janthar Manthar near Parliament from 25th up to 28th 2011. The Dharna was about the Dalit Christians and Muslims struggle and demand for Rights and justice, particularly a demand for the deletion of the paragraph three of the Presidential order. People from different walks of life pour in for all over India and participated in the Dharna. Every one came with the slogans and raised their voice to the government asking for justice. SCMI gave our service as volunteers in this Dharna.

Bishops, Pastors, Political leaders and social activists from all over India delivered speeches which were an inspiration to press more and to gain our justice back.

The Dharna ended with a public rally marched from Ram Lila ground to Jantar Mantar. More than 3000 people joined in the march.

SCMI is happy and proud to have been a part of the Dharna and is most hopeful that such initiative will bear fruit and create a just society.



SCM Nepal to hold capacity building for youth

SCM Nepal held a meeting to plan for a Capacity Building Program for Church Youth/ Students Leaders on the 1st week of December in Kathmandu. They have elected the following members of its Executive Committee: Mr. Rajesh Rai (Chairman), Mr. Raj Man Ghale (Secretary), Mr. Azit Lama (Treasurer), Ms. Sangeeta Rai (Member), and Mr. Isaac Rai (Member).

They have also finalized their SCM Logo with the following explanation:

1. Big round figure represents the Earth.
2. Inside the Earth is the map of Nepal
3. Inside the map of Nepal are the Christians living in Nepal, represented by Male & Female figures running with the goal/mission/vision of SCM Nepal. The vision is not only for Nepal but all over the world, Christian youth and student responding to global issues with spiritual tools.



Ecumenical Students' Peace Declaration of the Student Christian Movement of India

*Participants of the National Fellowship
Peace Convocation of SCM India
12th May 2011*

In resonance with the culmination of WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation to be held at Kingston, Jamaica during May 17-25, 2011, we seventy Dalit and Adivasi Students representing the Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI), join the global ecumenical communities in offering our solidarity and commitment as they contemplate on 'Glory to God and Peace on Earth', for the cause of peace and justice in our conflict ridden society, and thereby offer this Peace Declaration,

We SCMer are,

- Disturbed at the ongoing violence and conflicts in our communities in the name of caste, creed, gender, class, and region...
- Grieved at the spiraling suicides of Dalit & Adivasi students in places of higher learning due to rampant discrimination in the name of caste & ethnicity ...
- Pained at the oppressions done against Dalit & Adivasi women, for as thrice oppressed their pains know no bounds...
- Saddened at the impact of

globalization on Dalit & Adivasi students in educational institutions as they are further 'pushed into marginalization' due to the rampant commercialization and communalization of education...

- Angered at the increasing forceful child labour from among Dalit & Adivasi communities as they are abused and trafficked, denying their right to life...

Therefore, in such situations, we SCMer have been exploring the meaning and relevance of peace in our communities. Our search in that direction has been challenging one, for peace has remained a distant reality to our people.

However, in our quest for contemporizing our faith in our times today, we student community believe that peace on earth is peace with justice, peace with earth and peace through creation.

We therefore affirm that God as Creator is not apart from it but is constantly revealing God-self through the whole creation. The diversity of the created world does not imply that it should necessarily exist in conflict. However, we do find conflicts that threaten

harmony and peace in our creation. The Student Christian Movement of India reflects and responds to this crisis in this year of its Centenary. As we reflect on our centenary theme "Eco Justice" from the vantage point of Dalit and Tribal/Adivasi perspective we affirm our commitment to peace and justice for all people and all creation.

We therefore acclaim that Jesus' coming into the world was to reconcile the world with God, and to bring to judgment all those perpetrators of conflict and division. For us Jesus' words, "I come not to bring peace but to bring a sword" (Mat 10:34) guides us, for Jesus' sword of justice pierces all forces of injustice and only when all these powers & principalities of falsehood, indignity and violence are brought down to ashes, peace can be a possibility. The "parousia" of Jesus is an every day event, for Christ breaks into our communities and lives everyday challenging us to bring about peace.

We therefore assert that Dalits are an ancient indigenous people of India, for whom building



communities of peace have always been a norm that existed in our societies. Over the years, Dalits have been oppressed and deprived of social, economic, political and cultural life. Untouchability, though abolished by law, still continues to haunt them. And Dalit Christians are doubly discriminated for exercising their Constitutional right of freedom to choose their faith. Tribals/Adivasis are indigenous people, traditional guardians and friends of India's great hills and forests, nature and environment, who have always lived in peace with earth, peace with people and peace with God, through our Tribal spiritualities. The greed of the powerful has exploited the Adivasis and their natural resources. Their environment is degraded as the world extracts their resources and threatens their existence, dignity and future.

We therefore aspire that as students we hope for a purposeful future for we are concerned about all attitudes and forces that destroy a just and peaceful society, and we wish to affirm through this declaration our intention to continue to serve as agents of peace.

1. Peace is living without physical violence. Violence involves injury, hurt, bloodshed and killing. As

Dalits and Adivasis are constantly exposed to physical violence we declare that we will do all that is in our power through non-violent means to stop violence against Dalits and Adivasis and all vulnerable people here in India and across the world.

2. Peace is threatened by non-physical violence. It is not only physical violence that affects the life and peace of the oppressed. Many other forms of violence such as abuse, exclusion, discrimination, hatred, prejudice and insult also lead to alienation and denial of identity and social space also destroy peace. We affirm that we will empower ourselves to respond to this form of violence and stand in solidarity with all people of goodwill across the world to eliminate such violence.

3. Peace is threatened by violence of injustice. There is no peace without justice. Dalits and Adivasis continue to be denied economic, social, political and religious rights. They are denied educational and job opportunities that are essential to live a decent and fulfilling life in this age of science and information technology. We pledge that we will offer all support at our disposal to eradicate inequality and the unjust order that perpetuates violence and denies a peaceful life for millions.

As SCMerS we will ever listen to the word of God as revealed in the teaching and life of the Prince of Peace. We realize that God is constantly working through people of goodwill all over the world and organizations such as the World Council of Churches, helping them in their efforts to reorder and establish a just and equitable society, especially among the oppressed people such as Dalits and Adivasis. We express our solidarity with all such people wherever they may be. We seek the cooperation of all such people and ask them to join us, help us, guide us and empower us.

We therefore declare that we as SCMerS shall be the channels of such a just peace, which builds a community of equals, far from all discriminations and oppressions. We shall stand united against all forces of division and death, for we pledge to accompany all those victims and survivors of violence in their struggle for peace & justice. We commit ourselves to be in total solidarity with all movements for liberation and transformation, for we strongly believe only when justice is established peace becomes a reality. To that end, glory be unto God and peace be on earth and peace be with earth, and thus we sing...

**Come SCMerS
unite be one,
Pull out injustice
from this world,
Live with people,
build together
One day
we'll reach a
new just world.**

We are letter from Christ (2 Corinthians 3:3)

KSCF and EYCK held First Asia Ecumenical Trekking in Indo-China

Park Byung Chul, KSCF Staff for Univesrity Work

The Korea Student Christian Federation (KSCF) held its first Asia Ecumenical Trekking as international program last July 4 to 22, 2011. This program was organized with the EYCK (Ecumenical Youth of Council in Korea) to rebuild the Youth-Student organization for a year. It aims to draw the strength of both organizations as an international network belonging to the ecumenical movement.

The groups chose Indo-China as the venue for the Ecumenical Trekking because of its history of colonization, economic and social

system, and cultural richness and diversity. The theme was "We are letter from Christ (2 Corinthians 3:3)". The Program aimed to share the situation of Asia from the experiences of the participants to Korean churches and Christian societies. There were 12 participants coming from KSCF and EYCK. The places visited were Chiang-Mai in Thailand, Vientian, Vang vieng, Luang Prabang in Laos and Hanoi in Vietnam.

Each participant chose an issue as his or her concern as they made their journey in each city. The issues and concerns were ethnic

culture, visiting that country churches, looking for cultures and life, meeting with local people. The group stayed for five days in each country. In each city, the group had meetings for reflection about their activities. During these meetings, they shared their experience and feeling and every participant gave questions and feedbacks.

The outcome of the program was different from their expectation before they left Korea. The participants found the different situations in the field and broaden their horizons throughout the whole journey. When the participants reflected about this program when they came back to Korea, they agreed to organize each ecumenical branch to deepen their understanding of their situation.

The participants were from different ecumenical organization member, church youth or students. Their perspectives were varied, hence the group had some difficulty meeting the expectations, although it turned out to be positive. The participants are preparing to share and brief the programs to other ecumenical group. Through this experience, the organizers will modify the program, to make it more organized and educational.



Ecumenical Trekking participants from KSCF and EYCK at the airport.

Student YMCA/Japan SCM appreciates the sincere concern, support and prayers for Japan from all over the world. We feel the strong solidarity of the SCMs and your warm prayers.

We believe our solidarity will encourage the people of Tohoku area to rebuild their lives and our SCM members to continue helping the victims of the Earthquake. We are thankful that all our YMCA/SCM students and senior friends living in Tohoku region are safe after the earthquake.

The Tohoku region and Kanto region were affected by "The Great East Japan Earthquake," with a magnitude of 9.0 was about 130km away of Miyagi Prefecture at 2:46PM, Friday, March 11, 2011. More than 15,600 people lost their lives and 4,700 people are still missing. 250,000 buildings were completely destroyed or partially-destroyed. There are more than 91,000 evacuees who are still staying in evacuation area and temporary shelters.

YMCAs of Japan continue to support the victims located in the Sendai YMCA and the Morioka YMCA. We set up the volunteer support center and dispatched staff to Miyako. We have been sending relief supplies and volunteers to Tohoku region after the disaster. You can see the photo and detail of our relief work on the web. (<http://www.ymcajapan.org/>).

Student YMCA/SCM started to support the stricken area right after the earthquake. We sent relief supplies and medical supplies to Tohoku area in cooperation with students and senior friends, who are Pastors, Doctor and counselor of school. Students of Student YMCA/SCM collected donation to support the victims staying in the

A Message from Student YMCA/SCM of Japan

Sayuri Mori
 Student YMCA
 SCM Staff

cold street. We continue to send students to the stricken area as volunteers.

I myself went to Sendai as a volunteer with 4 students from Tokyo as a Student YMCA/SCM group. We worked with other volunteers in Wakabayashi area of Sendai, severely affected by Tsunami. We cleaned up houses and fields. There were many things and sludge that were carried away by the Tsunami.

It was very hard that we needed to separate necessary things and unnecessary things among sludge. Student's impressions are "I saw our human network and relationship in stricken area. And I saw the affected area would be cleaned up step by step. We have to keep relating with people of Tohoku area." Also some other students are planning to join volunteer work during this summer vacation.

In the aftermath of these disasters, we are now facing the threat brought about by the accident of the nuclear power plant. We have to think about the energy crisis and its policy. How can we get



electricity? Can we choose other energy resources?

To respond to these questions, we invited Hitomi Kamanaka as a lecturer to The 39th Student YMCA/SCM Japan summer seminar. She is a documentary filmmaker and anti-nuclear activist. She produced films such as the "Hibakusha at the End of the World", "Rokkashomura Rhapsody", "Ashes to Honey (Mitsubachi no Haoto to Chikyū no Kaiten)", and she has been advocating against the danger of nuclear power.

We plan to see her film and listen to her lecture, and we would like to discuss these issues with the participants. She asks us, "How can we create a sustainable society?" We would like to think and discuss and share our thoughts and feelings in summer seminar from September 16-19th at Tozanso.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPT 26 TO OCT 2

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES ASSEMBLY
PLANNING COMMITTEE (WCC APC) MEETING
BUSAN, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

OCTOBER 4 TO 8

GLOBAL CHRISTIAN FORUM (GCF)
MANADA, NORTH SULAWESI, INDONESIA

OCTOBER 25 TO 30

WSCF AP REGIONAL WOMEN DOING THEOLOGY
WORKSHOP
STUDENT CHRISTIAN CENTER, BANGKOK, THAILAND

NOVEMBER 1 TO 8

WSCFAP HUMAN RIGHTS JUSTICE AND PEACE
(HRJP) WORKSHOP
ACADEMY HOUSE, PROK, SEOUL, KOREA

DEC 19

WSCF AP REGIONAL STAFF HAND-OVER AND
CHRISTMAS FELLOWSHIP