

all things new

ZINE OF THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT OF CANADA

FALL 2009

WWW.SCMCANADA.ORG



ECONOMICS

INSIDE

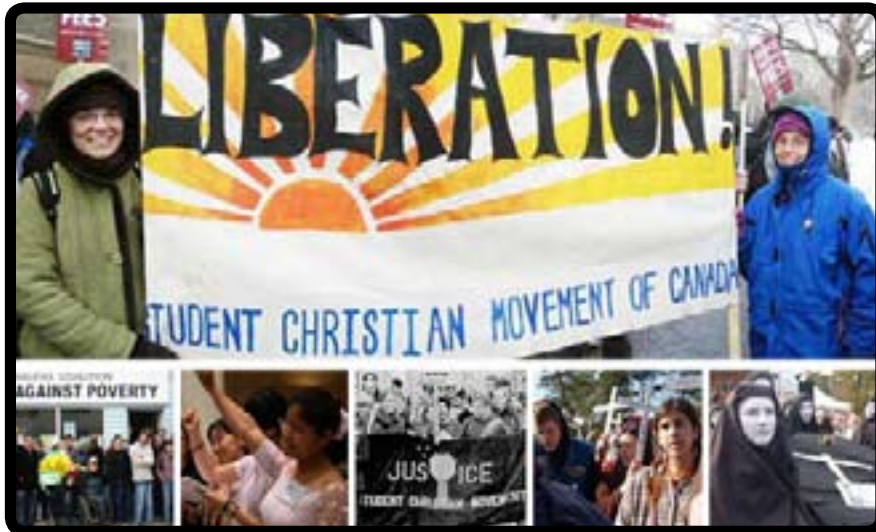
just transition
& god's reign

climate tactics &
alliance activism

earth-centred
theology

indigenous
solidarity

The Student Christian Movement of Canada is a youth-led grassroots social justice movement. Our mission is to build inclusive ecumenical communities which engage the prophetic teachings of the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth and act for change in our world.



Local Units

Local communities are our movement's grassroots. Activities include: Potlucks, liturgies/sacred times, radical Bible & book studies, protests & vigils, anti-oppression solidarity, theatre activism, retreats, arts & more. Get involved in the unit nearest you or we'll help you start one: scmcanada.org/units

General Conference

Our movement comes together every spring to share skills & ideas, engage current issues, and plan by consensus for the coming year: scmcanada.org/conference

Pilgrimage of Resistance

Our annual November road-trip for justice takes us to the gates of the School of the Americas (SOA) army base and communities of faith and resistance along the way: scmcanada.org/pilgrimage

Queer & Christian Without Contradiction

Our anti-homophobia campaign supports LGBTQIA youth in and out of the churches: QueerandChristian.org

All Things New

This zine is a forum for discussion amongst our network. We're always looking for submissions (writing, art, poetry, liturgies, news, letters), volunteers & subscribers: scmcanada.org/atn

Resources

We distribute progressive buttons, posters, t-shirts, study guides, worship materials, stickers & more. Our website has podcasts, a blog, forum community, downloads & photos: scmcanada.org/resources

SCM's vision

We are the **Student Christian Movement** because we feel called to engage the prophetic teachings of the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth. We include people of **many beliefs & faiths seeking to explore and challenge** the Christian tradition.

Locally, nationally and internationally, we strive to be a **healing community**. Through spiritual practice we strengthen and challenge each other on this journey.

Embracing radical ecumenism and interreligious praxis, we celebrate the paradox of **unity in diversity**.

We seek through **reflection, study & action** to discern God's will for the world and to understand our role in it.

Proclaiming God's preferential option for the poor and marginalized, we act in **solidarity with the oppressed** to resist structures of domination and realize justice in this world.

This we offer as a living prayer.

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Eco-Justice

Fall 2009 Issue



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About the cover by gwen McAllister

I was deeply affected by **Laura Killam's** original cover image of the church's silencing & destruction, especially of women (ATN Fall 1993). In a screen-printing session during the 2002 Solidarity Summer I came up with this version of the image as I tried to imagine how a living, life-giving church might be expressed. Although for me it represents new life and transformation of the church, some of the other participants found the image of the church splitting open to be harsh and offensive. I'm interested to hear readers' responses to this cover and I hope they will write in.

All Things New is the magazine of the Student Christian Movement of Canada. It exists to give voice to the thoughts & concerns of students and youth across Canada and globally. It is published twice a year and distributed to members, friends and alumni of SCM Canada. Circulation: 1,600.

Editorial Collective

Bre Woligroski, David Ball, Lana Wilson, Maggie McBride, Susannah Schmidt

Cover

gwen McAllister & Laura Killam

Submissions

Your creativity makes ATN happen. Send us your writing, photos, art, poetry, prayers/liturgies, or offer to join the Editorial Collective. We encourage letters to the editors.

SCM is a justice-seeking movement, therefore we will not accept any racist, sexist, classist, homophobic or otherwise oppressive submissions.

Please send submissions to **editor@scmcanada.org** or mail:

All Things New, c/o SCM Canada, 310 Danforth Ave, Toronto ON M4K 1N6

The views expressed in ATN are not necessarily those of SCM, its board, membership or staff.

scmcanada.org/atn

From the editors

Welcome to SCM's issue on **Eco-Justice!** And it comes not a moment too soon—with international climate talks approaching, a global movement mobilizing to address links between oppression of people and of the Earth, and the environmental crisis at, well, crisis proportions.

Admittedly, as you'll see in our Letters to the Editors section, SCM Canada has been slow to take up issues of eco-justice. A gross oversight on our part? After all, environmental issues are at the top of media, political and educational agendas—and where they're not, they should be.

We arrive on the eco-scene at a time when, in the media and popular discourse, "eco-friendly" and "green" have certainly become buzz words, but to what effect and for what reason? "Greenwashing," a marketing tactic which either fabricates or inappropriately over-emphasizes a product or company's environmental friendliness, is becoming *de rigeur*. But are we consumers really educating ourselves about ecological issues, or simply "consuming" a company's spin on them without challenging our often environmentally damaging North American consumer habits? Is "eco-justice" (with implications of fairness, informed decisions, and righting wrongs) a more useful discourse?

This issue is a response to these questions. As you'll see inside, the Earth is fundamentally a matter of justice. It is blatantly unjust for us to exploit and harm Creation, since it is God's gift to us. But also, the effects of our economic system's devastation hit hardest on the poorest and most marginalized among us. Mitchell Anderson writes about how he sees a "just transition" from an Earth-destroying to a liberating economy with justice for all. Pro-environmental changes in the world economy must happen, and quickly, but we must also ensure that the necessary widespread changes do not leave people jobless or unable to afford the necessities of life.

Eco-justice is not about only talking about how others should change their ways, although systemic change is essential. It's about actually trying out experiments with other ways of living, for instance pedal power as in Maggie McBride's opening article, 'I want to ride my bike,' and Johan Boyden's appeal for a strategy and tactics to combat climate change rooted in coalitions. Eco-justice can be challenging but incredibly rewarding. It can be very difficult—thinking critically about our individual and societal attitudes and habits, and negotiating new ways of living out our justice values. Sometimes these new ways of being will require sacrifices, at least perhaps at first: of finances, time, and long-held habits. Sometimes, we may be pleasantly surprised at how easy and advantageous these changes can be. What people are becoming increasingly aware of, as individuals and groups, is that change is necessary, and is happening already; but the change is often in negative ways now, whether we choose to act or not.

This issue is about exploring alternatives to exploitative, damaging ways of living. In the end, we're all on this beautiful Earth together so communal sharing and cooperation is a must. May the articles help you question what eco-justice means to you; may you be inspired to find ways to live out eco-justice in your own life!

SCM movement updates



SCM @ UBC, the newest local unit, organized a Stand for Housing! protest this fall. With Olympics approaching, housing is a crisis in Vancouver.

General Board Update

Greetings from the SCM board! The SCM board is the body that makes decisions on behalf of the SCM between the annual general conferences. This year we have a new board structure which has given various people designated roles on the board, which is a change from our previous model that had a greater focus on representation. This year's elected board members:

Ken Mills (Treasurer)

Pat Hayward (Personnel Committee)

Kristine Diesman (Western Region)

Chris Miller (Eastern Region)

Tanner Watt (Finance & Fundraising)

Katherine Tuck (Outreach)

Lana Wilson (Communications & Resources)

TJ Naven & Ryan Tristin Chapman (Anti-Oppression)

Geoffrey Dice (Co-Chair)

Sheryl Johnson (Co-Chair)

We are so pleased to have such a full board! It is great to have a full table at board meetings and many participants in our active online discussions. We met in October in Toronto for our fall board meeting and had a full agenda! One notable aspect was an excellent strategic planning and visioning session led by Luciano Kovacs, WSCF North America staffperson. It was very helpful to start to discern just what is "core" to

SCM and what is up to being changed.

Additionally, this fall we have been active in creating a number of solidarity statements, communiques, and letters. Please check these out on the website! This work is very important to networking with other activists and organizations, as well as to articulate what we as SCM believe. The process of creating these statements involves intense editing and deep discussions about the implications of language and various positions. Please note that anyone can propose a potential statement to the board and we are always looking to have more people involved in the process of creating these statements.

Our annual national programme of pilgrimage is coming soon, plans are underway for actions around the Olympics, and "Seize the Pulpit" is a great resurrected SCM tradition. Additionally, we continue to support the Queer and Christian Without Contradiction Advisory Board and work to support local units through the creation of a new local unit start up kit. So much is going on! Thank you so very much for your support!

Sheryl Johnson & Geoffrey Dice, Co-Chairs
scmcanada.org/about/board

General Secretary Update

Since the last ATN, the biggest event has been our General Conference, "Shine! Radiating a Dream of Inclusion & Liberation," held in Toronto last May. Almost 30 young adults came together from seven provinces to celebrate gender and sexual diversity, to build a safer community, and to explore theologies of liberation. Some of the most exciting outcomes of conference include an SCM Resolution on Sexuality & Gender Identity, the release of a Draft Resolution on Indigenous Rights to guide our local activism over the coming year, great talks by Bishop John Selders and writer Jan Guenther Braun, and our first SCM baptism.

The other big news is that SCM redesigned our website, with a smoother, more dynamic design and easier-to-use features like blogs, forums, calendars, podcasting, photos and news. Check out scmcanada.org and let us know what you think! We hope you'll sign up for a Forum account and get posting, and be inspired to check back often for news and updates from across our Movement.

You will notice that, as well as a restructured Board (above), we have renamed a lot of the programs and positions - General Board (formerly National Board), and similarly General Secretary and General Conference. The Movement felt that referring to everything in SCM as "national" was not reflective of the diversity of nationalities within Canada (notably the multitude of Indigenous nations, and Quebec). Though SCM continues to be predominantly privileged, we need to take the steps to make our movement welcoming of all. We feel this witness is part of our commitment to Indigenous solidarity and social justice for all.

In November, 12 youth joined our Pilgrimage of Resistance, SCM's social justice road-trip to the massive vigil at the School of the Americas military base. Along the way, we met with spiritual activists from communities in Toronto, Philadelphia, Comer GA, Berea KY and Pittsburgh. And now we're getting ready for General Conference 2010, to be held in Vancouver in early May. The tentative theme is on home, homelessness and economic justice. We hope to see you there!

I will be traveling out West in late January/early February, and then East in mid March - watch the events calendar! - David Ball

SCM Victoria

The Victoria SCM unit members have been busy taking part in Trans Day of Remembrance and related events. Besides the vigil itself, which memorializes lives lost this year due to transphobic violence, there will be an open mic, all-bodies swim, 'zine making workshops, and a dance with a local Queer collective. Check out

these events and the local Trans activist group, TransAction, at www.transactionvic.com. Local unit organizer Ryan Chapman presented at the University of Victoria's Sessions on Spirituality. We may launch a book study on *Somewhere Else*, using SCM's new discussion guide.

Local unit members are also excited to be involved in the planning of the 2010 General Conference in conjunction with the SCM @ UBC.

- Ryan Tristin Chapman

scmcanada.org/victoria

SCM @ UBC

UBC's SCM has been greatly blessed over the past few months. After months of hard work, the Sermon on the Knoll was held on 30 September, 2009. It was a great day of music, readings from the scriptures and exciting speakers that captivated much of the UBC community with a call for "Justice, Community and Housing, in Jesus' Name." Just two weeks later, the group engaged in a STAND for Housing in one of the first year residences, passing out information and encouraging students to write their MLA [provincial government representatives] to ask that the poor be given priority in government policy.

Our future plans include: a candlelight vigil for housing the night before Reign of Christ Sunday (21 November), and a march for housing following morning worship on Ash Wednesday as part of our response to the Olympics, as well as supporting the 2010 Welcoming Committee.

SCM @ UBC works to hold events that deal with poverty and justice in Vancouver and also to create a movement on campus that brings together the entire Christian community. The Kingdom of God includes us all: both liberal mainliners and conservative evangelicals. The Sermon on the Knoll was successful largely because of that vision - because members of the United Church of Canada Campus Ministry, the Catholic Campus Ministry, and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship and others came together to listen to the Word of God and respond with songs of praise and a commitment to be instruments of His Kingdom on Earth.



SCM York Alternative Remembrance Service for all war victims (photo: David Ball)

Difficult though this vision is, we read in Ephesians 2:14 that “he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.” We know that our God is mighty enough to conquer both homelessness and division within the Church, for He has already conquered death itself!

Emily Hopkins scmcanada.org/vancouver

SCM Saskatoon

Meeting Time: Our focus is on specific events rather than weekly meetings but we can be reached via the Ecumenical Chaplaincy in the tunnel under Qu’Appelle Hall.

Our Dream: Our unit’s goal is to become ratified as an official university club and to become self-sustaining at the local level while maintaining General Board involvement.

Events: We are excited to report that our major fall event, “Hunger for Justice: A Participatory Banquet” was a great success! Held in conjunction with McClure United Church and the U of S Ecumenical Chaplaincy on World Food Day, Oct. 16, about 70 guests attended this event to learn about local and global hunger and poverty issues. Drawing a ticket on their way in, guests were placed into high, middle, or low income groups and served a full meal, a spoonful of beans on rice, or just 1/2 cup of rice according to their group. Guest speaker and SCM Friend Janice Sanford Beck from CHEP Saskatoon, a

food security organization, discussed the inability of some Saskatoon residents to access or afford healthy food. All proceeds went to Station 20 West, a local core neighbourhood community resource centre initiative. We raised over \$1300!

Lana Wilson scmcanada.org/saskatoon

SCM Manitoba

SCM Manitoba was involved in organizing Take Back the Night this year. There were over 400 attendees at the march! In November, we will hold an event that will discuss what Feminist Theology is and why it’s so great. We have also initiated a poster campaign to promote SCM on both the University of Winnipeg and University of Manitoba campus. The posters will encourage people to learn more about SCM as they have messages like, “Jesus loves liberation,” “Jesus loves resistance” and “Jesus loves gay marriage.”

Our vision for this year is to promote SCM and have more students involved. Our passion is feminist theology and thought, so we will integrate this into all SCM Manitoba does this year.

Kristen Sheffield scmcanada.org/manitoba

SCM York

Meeting Time: Our regular activities include three different weekly meetings and activities: a Radical Bible Study, starting with a political reading of the Gospel according to Mark using Ched Myers’ book *Say to This Mountain: Mark’s Story of Discipleship*; a QACWC discussion series beginning with a study of Jan Guenther Braun’s novel *Somewhere Else*; and a liberation-focused morning prayer liturgy to provide centering and a time of worship and reflection midweek.

Our Dream: Our hope and vision for this coming year is to grow the local unit, to be an agent of change at York University and in the wider society, and to provide a space at York University for engaging discussions, deep spirituality, and sustainable community.

Events: On October 24th, a delegation of SCMers from York and U of T gathered together and travelled to Ottawa to participate in C-Day:

Fill the Hill – Canada’s primary event to mark the International Day of Climate Action. The goal was to gather 100,000 people on Parliament Hill in order to demand that the Canadian government take real measures for environmental protection and to stop climate change. SCM at York is also planning on taking part in a number of local actions throughout [delete the GTA] Toronto during the coming year. In conjunction with SCM UofT and York’s Leadership, Culture, and Christianity group, we are looking to organize a monthly series of ‘Theology on Tap’ discussion sessions in local pubs, restaurants, or cafés.

Chris Miller scmcanada.org/york

SCM U of T

Meeting Time: Thursday mornings 9 -11; first Sunday of the month 5 - 7pm, and Tuesdays 6 - 8 pm (Que(e)rying Religion)

Our Dream: To find ways to network with and engage and serve the campus; to let people know we exist! We also try to push the edges on what it means to be an SCM local unit.

Events: We held a Theatre of the Oppressed workshop, and have planned a Make-and-Take Soup Making Extravaganza featuring a speaker on food security!

Sheryl Johnson scmcanada.org/toronto

SCM Carleton

SCM Carleton does still exist! We are still working with the GLBTQ Centre on campus as well as partnering with the Ecumenical Chaplaincy to do Que(e)rying Religion, the series on discussing religion and sexuality. Our first guest speaker of the semester was last month. We had our new Chaplain, Rev. Wayne Menard (Presbyterian minister) come and discuss his thoughts on sexuality as well as his research in university on the ordination of gays and lesbians in the Presbyterian church. It was quite interesting and I cannot wait for the next session (speaker to be determined)! Hoping to do a winter retreat in January with the Ecumenical Chaplaincy, focused on wellness, religion and



Students at conference gather for General Council (photo: David P Ball)

spirituality and taking care of oneself as a student and child of God. That’s all from SCM Carleton!

Christina Anderson scmcanada.org/carleton

Halifax

In the spring, the multifaith chaplaincy hosted a well-attended event at the ecumenical chaplaincy, ‘Empire, Ecumenism & Liberation: Reimagining Church’ with SCM General Secretary David Ball, followed by Theology on Tap discussion over beer. Though there is no local unit in Halifax yet, there is student interest at King’s College and from the Dalhousie Chaplains. Get in touch, or find us on Facebook to get something started!

Katie Toth scmcanada.org/halifax

Memorial University Newfoundland SCM

Last March, MUN SCM hosted a workshop on ‘Dreams of Inclusion & Liberation: Reimagining Church’ with SCM General Secretary David Ball, plus a screening of the awe-inspiring world film, Baraka, followed by an interfaith discussion.

In fall 2009, we put in the online recognition forms to the MUN Students’ Union, so that we can work on rebuilding the MUN SCM from the ground up again. If we can get recognized for two consecutive semesters, then we can get ratified again, and get another room! We have a Facebook group to rebuild the unit - look it up, or visit our SCM webpage!

Jordan Lester scmcanada.org/mun

Letters to the editors

We love to hear from our alumni, members and friends.
Send letters to editor@scmcanada.org

A good article in the [United Church] Observer!

But while the actions around the Columbus GA facility [School of the Americas] are commendable and necessary – could not the Canadian SCM do something in Canada? Say protest the oil sands development? Kairos (Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives) was going to start protesting oil development in Nigeria and then decided it better to start with our own country – which they are now doing!!

That way too, Canadians might even hear about the SCM. All the best,

Rt. Rev. Lois Wilson (Toronto, ON)

p.s. The United Church Observer article can be found at www.scmcanada.org/media

Dear Friends,

Enclosed is our contribution to the SCM. It comes, however, with growing disappointment, arising out of the narrowness of the SCM's concept of justice. It seems entirely focussed on humanity. Of course we accept the need for decent housing and basic wages to meet the unjustly impoverished among us. Similarly we

Could not the Canadian Student Christian Movement do something in Canada? Say protest the oil sands development?

accept and have joined in urging our reluctant church towards fully supporting gay and lesbian marriage. But there is more to life on our planet than humans and their troubles. Our concern is the SCM's apparent imbalance if not blindness regarding this.

Prolonged and exponentially increasing use and abuse of earth, air and water have resulted in a serious decline in the actual existence of many of our fellow creatures. Last year the

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN – an outfit nearly as old as the SCM) assessed the status of 41,500 different species and decided that over 16,000, or nearly 30 per cent, should be put on the red list of creatures threatened with extinction. One-third of all amphibians, one-eighth of all birds, one-quarter of all mammals, to say nothing of disappearing flora all over the world.

During the last 400 years in North America alone over 50 mammal species have ceased to exist. Just? And more are on the waiting list. Think polar bears. Consider also the humble bumble bee. You may have noticed the current stories about honey bee beehive desertion. If you're fond of honey, to say nothing of the many crops dependent upon bees for pollination, enjoy (it) while you can. Time grows short.

There is a major justice issue here. The thoughtless hunting, disappearance, or fouling of earth, air and water leaves our fellow creatures with literally fewer places where it's safe or even possible to eat, live and propagate.

Some say we are well into the sixth major extinction. A very new kind; unique, in fact. No creature was involved in bringing on the previous five extinctions. They were externally caused. Like the last one some 65 million years ago when a huge comet smashed into the Yucatan Peninsula (in Mexico).

But life, new life, went on; our ancestors crawled out of the remaining cracks and we began our current march towards creating the next extinction ourselves. This is a radically new development in Earth's history. For the first time a creature, we humans, unlike any previous species before us, is able to unleash severe damage, if not destruction upon its own and every other creature's habitat. If we get away with it completely, new life will undoubtedly follow. Equally certain, it will not be the suicidal Homo

Sapiens.

The word 'creature' has been often used. Exaggeration to make a point. It seems that today's SCMerS are, in a sense, buying into the current extinction on earth by assuming that only human beings count. Of course we do, but, especially in the Christian view, other living beings count as well. While we have special gifts, these are meant to protect and enhance the dignity of all life, not just our own.

We claim to believe in 'God, Lord and Giver of Life.' Not just human life. All life. All God's creatures have their own place in the niches of life. Each one's loss makes that particular ecosystem, and therefor the whole web of life, that much weaker.

What is going on now is just about as unjust as we humans can get. We hope the SCM will reconsider its justice priorities and act accordingly. Creaturely yours,

John and Ruth McRae (Ottawa, ON)

Greetings from an old SCMer.

As a student at the University of Toronto (1954-58) I was active in the SCM, both at the UofT (attending several agnostic weekends at the Hart House Farm) and at Vic[toria College] (where I was on the Vic SCM exec[utive]). I also attended the SCM National Conference in 1957 and served on the SCM National Executive 1957-58 (...).

While at the University of Toronto I took a Psych course from Dave Ketchum (a colleague of my father's) who years ago wrote the song about the SCM 'They're Poisoning the Student Mind' which you recently published in your newsletter without giving him credit [ATN Fall 2005].

Best wishes in your work (not all your stands meet my approval but that is the standard in the SCM). Yours,

David K Bernhardt (Toronto, ON)

Dear SCM,

It is appropriate and fitting that the SCM should honour [late Archbishop] Ted Scott and

the work he did wherever he was called. In my early days Ted was involved in the SCM at the [University of Manitoba] pushing young Christians to be involved in Social Justice issues. Later he became a good friend and during his time as Primate [of the Anglican Church of Canada] he encouraged [my wife] Mary and me to undertake work in Uganda.

I was the Bishop of Rupert's Land - I'm surprised you, or anyone, remembers that. God moves in mysterious ways! I would be delighted to receive the SCM magazine in order to "plug in". Blessings and many rich rewards,

Rt. Rev. Patrick Lee (Perth, ON)

Dear SCM,

My husband and I tried in the early days of University of Calgary's existence [to start an SCM unit], but the '60s killed that 'fledgling' SCM, and there has never been another (at least, not one that survived for long). Maybe it's Alberta - not a welcoming place for radical thought.

I appreciate my one student exposure - Montreal Work Camp 1953 [... but] from my perspective there's a problem with the SCM's tending to spend whatever it gets on maintenance and great new projects, so that there's always a financial crisis [...].

I realize that this can't work with students, but think that what was possible when Canada had only a few universities isn't possible now that universities and colleges have proliferated. Little groups spring up here and there, then die because national SCM can't provide ongoing staff.

Good for those willing to keep at it despite the overwhelming 'contra-indications'! Best wishes to them,

Margaret Fitch (Calgary, AB)

It seems that today's SCMerS are, in a sense, buying into the current extinction on earth by assuming that only human beings count.

I want to ride my bicycle

Maggie McBride spent twenty-eight days this summer on a bike tour with the Otesha Project. She discovered some radical eco-justice roots.



Otesha participants pretty much all enjoyed riding their bikes, too (photo: Holly Norris / Maeda Welch).

The star-strewn sky was never more beautiful to me than on the night of August 15th, 2009.

I was sitting around a fire with 14 of my closest friends, hungrily munching on a corn cob. I felt fantastic. As the night sky had begun to close in on us, the last of our frightful 15 had trickled in. I was relieved. That morning we had woken up at 5:15 am to hastily pack up, eat and begin our longest bike ride yet; from Kennetcook to the Lorax Woodlands (a farming cooperative about 10km outside of Wolfville). What we thought was going to be an 80 km bike ride turned into 100 km, with the last 3 km up what we affectionately called “murder mountain.” My crew hit the road at about 7 am and arrived at around 8 pm, biking through peak heat which must have been about 30 degrees Celcius. We only took a few stops including one to pick up food for supper.

As I sat there in the cool evening breeze, I was filled with gratitude. I was so thankful that we had all made it safely. I also was very proud. I was proud because in my heart I knew that if 15 strangers from all over Canada could bike that far together on one day for social justice and the environment then anything was possible.

This summer from August 1st to 28th I was part of the Otesha Project’s Rising Tide Tour. We biked from Moncton, New Brunswick to Halifax, Nova Scotia. We rode along the coast of the Bay of Fundy and then down the south shore to stop, perform and learn in many small eastern communities. Otesha is a youth-run non-governmental organization that empowers young people through performance to make more sustainable every day choices. During the length of our tour we acted as a mobile commu-



Living integrally is not about a hairy, smelly, tree-hugging hippie lifestyle (photo: Holly Norris / Maeda Welch).

nity that tried to be the change we were so avidly promoting. We operated on consensus and had a food mandate that pushed us to try and eat as vegan, local, organic and gluten-free as possible. The tour made me really begin to re-conceptualize what eco-justice means to me.

I realized that living integrally with humanity and the environment in an ecologically just way is a lot more than adopting a hairy, smelly, tree-hugging, Bob Dylan-loving, hippie lifestyle. As the tour unfolded I met the bright shining faces of many community gardeners, played with the children of a revolutionary cooperative, watched a biodynamic farmer affectionately feed her deer, listened to a man passionately talk about alternative releases of serotonin rather than the conventional candy and TV and unpacked the stories of some of the other cool cats that were biking with me. I began to understand eco-justice as something quite larger than I ever could have imagined. It was no longer a title behind which radical outcasts took refuge. Eco-justice was this beautiful canopy full of tradition and

hardship which gracefully entwined those who chose to be a part of its community.

To be cocooned in this canopy was a privilege and an honor. Practicing care for the environment actually meant pushing myself, pushing myself to live to my full human capacity. Whether that be biking up a seemingly endless stream of hills between me and my destination just so that I could know that at least for that trip I wasn't completely dependant on fossil fuels, or maybe it simply meant compromising personal desires for the good of the community because I knew that in the end that was what was important. I could not fully explain to you what happened to me on my trip but it was radical - radical in that it brought me back to the root of eco-justice and of myself. Who I am now is a lot more a reflection of what I believe than ever before. Maybe that is what eco-justice and the spirit of community really are: letting yourself be, loving, feeling and looking at the stars.

Maggie attended her first SCM General Conference & Pilgrimage in 2009. She lives in Camrose, Alberta.

HOME

HOMELESSNESS, POVERTY & ECONOMIC JUSTICE



SCM GENERAL CONFERENCE VANCOUVER, BC : EARLY MAY 2010

This major gathering will bring students/youth from across Canada to explore the crisis in housing/homelessness, poverty & economic justice. How is homelessness part of the larger problem of urban poverty? How can we build economic justice in our own communities? Featuring theologians & antipoverty activists, fun community-building, liberating worship & leadership training. Come be part of a movement! Dates & theme to be announced.

'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' (Luke 9:58)

scmcanada.org/conference

Let's start thinking about climate justice

Chris Hrynkow gets ready for WSCF's regional eco-justice conference, June 2010



The link between ecology, poverty, and violence is all around us. Dry earth in north Lebanon (photo: David P Ball).

The 2007 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that even societies with high capacity for adaptability, are vulnerable to events such as the 2003 heat wave in Europe and Hurricane Katrina in USA.¹ However, these examples also point to how capacity is not evenly distributed around a society, as it is people on the economic margins in those societies that bear the greatest cost of climate change. There is a great deal of injustice accompanying this fact. While embracing principles of social justice, the lens of eco-justice also exposes another dimension to this malaise.

Examining the global distribution of wealth

1 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report," (Valencia, Spain, 12-17 November 2007), p. 56. Available from http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar4/syr/ar4_syr.pdf. Accessed October 9, 2009.

and suffering, Dennis Patrick O'Hara argued in his Student Christian Movement lecture in Winnipeg this spring that it is not just an act of suicide that we are committing as we use up the Earth's resources, but also an act of homicide.² This statement is true because it is those human beings on the periphery of both global and local societies that pay the ultimate price for our military industrial model of consumption and its manifestations in the climate and ecological crises. In this sense, the late Brazilian bishop Dom Hélder Câmara was correct to speak of poverty as a horrible form of violence akin to a bomb.³

Continued on page 29 ...

2 Dennis Patrick O'Hara, "Earth Matters: A Theological Basis for Ecological Justice," Student Christian Movement Lecture, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, March 11, 2009.

3 Helder Câmara, *The Spiral of Violence* (Denville: Dimension Books, 1971), p. 29.

SCM SOLIDARITY STATEMENT ON Climate justice

With the world talks approaching, SCM Board joins the eco-justice movement.

The Student Christian Movement of Canada (SCM) pledges our solidarity with the climate justice movement, and joins the global mobilization in support of radical climate change action this November 30 and beyond.

At the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark starting December 7, more than 200 governments are gathering to hammer out a global agreement. Canada has indicated that it has no plans to push for a stronger treaty, but it is not too late to reverse this.

SCM, a youth-led social justice movement founded in 1921, names climate change to be one of the most profound and urgent crises facing our planet and its people, and an issue of justice, anti-oppression, and ecological integrity, rooted in our faith and spiritual traditions.

We join a broad network of organizations working for social, ecological, racial and economic justice in demanding and pledging ourselves to immediate action.

We call upon the Canadian government to be part of the solution, not the problem. We call on Canada to support the strongest emission reductions and recognize the disproportionate impact of climate change on the world's poor and marginalized. Climate change has an incredibly devastating impact on communities already facing racial, gender and class oppression, with particularly harmful effects for Indigenous peoples.

We call for global action that leads to real emission reductions in a fair and equitable manner, including stronger commitments and actions by the Global North.

We express our concern that solely market-based approaches cannot fundamentally end the climate crisis without addressing the root causes of emissions. We call for a transition away from fossil fuels, and we call for strict regulation, oversight, and penalties for polluters on community, local, national, and international levels as well as

support for communities adversely impacted by climate change. We call for a critical rethinking of the neoliberal capitalist economy, which is a root cause of the climate crisis, and we call for grassroots action to ensure that governments are held accountable in actually reducing emissions.

We call for the closure of the Canadian tar sands, which Environment Canada predicts will grow to make up eight per cent of this country's greenhouse gas emissions by 2015. Continuing development of this project is not only an ecological nightmare, but short-sighted in light of the climate crisis. We also call for a just transition strategy for workers impacted by the shift towards a sustainable and liberating economy.

Time is running out to make drastic changes to our culture, economic system and lifestyles here in the Global North. This crisis is at once social, political and theological. SCM's theology of justice and liberation forces us to cry out against abuse and exploitation of the Earth and of marginalized people, as well as to challenge powerful multinational corporations and governments responsible for much of the Earth's destruction.

Our Creator has blessed us with a life in harmony with the Earth. We confess that our culture has destroyed and exploited this precious gift. We commit ourselves to challenging corporate power, short-sighted government economic policies, and the destructive aspects of our lifestyles. We proclaim that another world is possible.

We invite our movement and allies into this commitment to reducing our ecological footprint, building coalitions across the diversity of the movement of social and ecological justice, and acting in solidarity to protect the Earth and help build God's kingdom, as envisioned in SCM's *Living Prayer* vision statement: "We seek through reflection, study and action to discern God's will for the world and to understand our role in it."

This we commit, on this global day of Mobilization for Climate Justice.

Climate change movement

Broad coalitions are among the strategy and tactics we need, writes **Johan Boyden**.



SCMs from Ottawa, Toronto and York join in Climate Action Day on Parliament Hill, October 24 (photo: Sheryl Johnson).

We are honoured by the invitation to express a perspective on the environmental question, strategy and tactics. Communists and Christians and the youth movement in general, we think, have everything to gain from discussion and united action.

We see ecological problems as deeply connected with social problems, and likewise the solutions. Perhaps nowhere is this clearer than the climate crisis. Already, youth and students around the world are mobilizing for December. That's when the world's countries, rich and poor, meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, for the next climate conference. Copenhagen will update the 1997 Kyoto protocol, establishing a binding global agreement from 2012.

Of course, the colossal scale of global warming should not detract from the necessity for emboldened campaigning on other environmental fronts. Peace is an environmental issue. Water pollution, the release of toxic wastes, species extinction, unsustainable resource use, soil erosion, and desertification all pose immediate dangers. Such poisons are, often, historically

and deliberately woven into the fabric of working class, Aboriginal and racialized communities across Canada and internationally. These communities will also be hit hardest by global warming.

Welcome to hurricane Katrina. Welcome to the future.

The urgency of the situation is captured in the shift of the goals leading into Copenhagen. The events the Kyoto process was supposed to have prevented are already beginning. Kyoto's targets placed the overall goals at 2 degree Celsius increase. Now it is 3 degrees.

Overwhelmingly, youth and students reject the status quo. A sense of urgency sets the tone for youth discussions. To August's United Nations international youth day slogan, "Sustainability: our challenge, our future," you could add: "our bitter inheritance." Students and youth, including trade union youth, have recently formed the Youth Climate Coalition. Planning a conference in Ottawa this October, they call to surpass Kyoto's targets.

Our generation has seen the climate debate

shift: it can no longer be denied or obscured as a long-term issue. The question now is: what will be the content and direction of the response?

Many scientists insist that unless there is radical change in the near term, we will reach an irreversible point. But scientific conclusions are refracted through ideological prisms and class-based realities. In Canada, business produces the vast majority of green house gas emissions.¹ Modest measures of environmental protection are resisted by transnational corporations and their right-wing extremists in Parliament and in the media. Prominent western analyses such as Britain's Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change (2006), characterized global warming as the "widest-ranging market failure ever seen," but rejected all solutions that are not "economically viable."

This brings the issue into sharp relief. Which comes first: nature, or profits? What social system has the capacity to arrest this crisis and reverse it? If capitalism were compatible with solving the climate crisis, and companies could make more profits by charitably protecting the environment, we would have seen green capitalism long ago. Corporations don't need any help figuring out how to make more money. In contrast, according to the 2006 Living Planet Report, published by the World Wildlife Fund, socialist Cuba is the only country in the world that enjoys "sustainable development."

But we don't have to wait until a socialist revolution. The strategy and tactics needed to win a better Canada and world start with today's problems. That's why we need to break with dealing with the environment like a charity issue. The claim that "the conscious consumer is the best weapon against climate change" makes the main enemy you. Drive a better car. Turn down your thermostat. Recycle.

How many reserve communities can even afford municipal recycling? How many people living in Toronto's Jane and Finch neighborhood already turn their thermostats way down? How

many parents can't afford childcare let alone eco-holidays? How many students are unable to afford tuition, rent and dinner, let alone buy organic?

No wonder that historically oppressed and working class communities have seen the struggle to protect the environment as "middle-class"! But there is a common link between exploitation of the environment and exploitation of working people – the capitalist class and their drive for profits. People's solutions to climate crisis must target big business as the main enemy to a sustainable environment, not the individual.

In fact, youth, workers and all people in Canada have much to gain. Can we unite the fight for Employment Insurance reform and with a green housing and industrial jobs strategy? Stopping plant closures also means keeping factories under Canadian environmental regulations. Could we connect the fight against the tar sands with the call for democratic control of all energy and resources? Unlike market solutions ("cap and trade" or the carbon tax) public ownership allows democratic planning for people's needs – and is a source of funding for renewable energy and conservation programs, mass transit, free education and childcare.

From our vantage point, meaningful parliamentary advance – like emergency legislation drastically cutting greenhouse gas emissions – isn't possible without the people's mass action. Finding the tactics moving the most people forward is complex; media stunts aren't enough. What's needed is a united mass movement of all progressive forces, championing social and ecological alternatives.

As we head towards Copenhagen and possibly another election, we have got to turn up the political heat on Harper's Conservatives and their best friends: the big polluting corporations. More and more Canadians realize that the only thing green coming out of these guys is sludge. Let's clean up that sludge, pushing for a real democratic and ecological alternative.

Johan Boyden is the General Secretary of the Young Communist League - Ligue de la jeunesse communiste.

¹ Stats Can, "Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators: Socio-economic Information" (2007) says 82 % comes from the 'business sector' of the economy.

All of creation groans

Mitchell Anderson calls for a just transition to a sustainable economy.

“Creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God. We know that from the beginning until now all of Creation has been groaning in one great act of giving birth. We too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.” - Romans 8:19, 22, 23b



An industrial machine 'graveyard' in far-north Ontario (photo: David P Ball).

We find ourselves, as we always do, in a transformational time, one full of promise and hope and possibility, of challenge and despair and limitation. An economic and fiscal crisis has challenged many of the assumptions of decades of neo-liberal thought, a continuing environmental crisis is still largely unaddressed, but people continue to both seek and live out hope. How, then, do Christians respond to this challenge? Increasing secularisation has created a decentred Church, one where Christians can no longer assume to have social privilege. Despite the reduced ability to influence opinion and discourse, it remains the duty of the churches to use their remnant power to continue to work, in whatever ways that they can, for the Reign of God.

The transition from where we are to a sustainable economy is one that has the potential to be a tremendous change. Given the potentially adverse effects of this transition on many people, groups have called for a “just transition,” one where the effects of a transition to a sustainable economy are mitigated. I am offering one vision of this, seeking to articulate those values that I believe in, which are progressive and are Christian. This is not to say that there are not progressive people or Christians who would disagree but here is where I stand: I am a pro-

gressive and a Christian, and so I believe in a just transition to a sustainable economy.

What precisely this means is, of course, debated. However, I believe that we who are progressive and Christian have a few principles to add to this debate. The first that I would suggest is the preferential option for the poor, marginalized and oppressed. This principle is contained in countless acts throughout Scripture, from God’s liberation of slaves in the Exodus from Egypt, through the powerful condemnation of oppression contained in the prophets speaking on behalf of God, God’s solidarity with the poor as embodied in Jesus, and the continuing work of the Church as empowered by the Spirit to make real God’s Reign. Another principle is the innate dignity of all persons (Gen. 1:27), which Christians are called to affirm and support. Finally, beyond simply managing or alleviating the worst of injustices, we are called to create “abundant life” for all, which requires an active and aggressive effort.

Therefore, as a progressive and as a Christian, as one who seeks to create the possibilities for everyone to live in dignity and abundance, I believe that a progressive agenda for a just transition must be one whose central value and goal is empowerment: creating the ability for people and communities to exercise meaningful control

over their own lives. In order to live out God's preferential option for the poor, marginalised and oppressed, a just transition must include support for those most adversely affected by a transition, and those who the former society had forgotten or discarded. In keeping with the inherent dignity of all humanity as created in the image of God, a just transition must include that which is necessary in order to live a life of dignity. In keeping with the goal of abundant life spoken of by Jesus as His aim and God's aim, a just transition must include the creation of meaningful opportunities for everyone to not just exist or live, but to truly thrive in the new economy. An abundant life is more than subsistence; it is one of joy, of self-actualisation, where people are able to fully participate in their society in every way.

When I speak of businesses I am not talking about the massive transnational corporations which have caused many of the social, economic and environmental problems with which we currently struggle. Rather, I am referring to human-scale enterprises: cooperatives, small businesses, and other small and medium-sized enterprises. Small and medium enterprises provide employment, are locally-owned and controlled, with profits staying in their communities. They are essential to healthy communities and neighbourhoods, and to a strong, thriving middle-class. As well, I talk about people as they are affected by economic power systems. A person is not, of course, simply a worker, a consumer or an entrepreneur. However, the structure of the economy is such that people become entangled in powers beyond their immediate control. It is progressive to refer to people as workers, consumers and entrepreneurs insofar as they are affected by economic power. This is not to limit a person's identity to their economic role, but it recognises the importance that economic power plays in lives.

A progressive agenda of empowerment for a just transition should, in my view, include increased education and innovation. Workers who are displaced from their jobs by the shifts

in employment patterns created by eliminating unsustainable industries should be protected. This means generous unemployment insurance, skills training and retraining and access to post-secondary education. As we move to a knowledge economy where well-paid work is increasingly about ideas and innovation workers must become lifelong learners. The state must actively work to ensure that post-secondary education is accessible for all people, including those who have been historically under-represented in our universities and colleges. Sadly, the current shift from union jobs with benefits and a family-sustaining wage in the manufacturing sector are being replaced by service jobs which are often quite low paying and non-unionised. We see the effects of this in Canada's auto crisis, where many workers have been laid off. They deserve generous employment insurance, adequate to sustain their families until they can locate new jobs. This is especially important in those families where there is only a single earner. Access to post-secondary education is essential in moving workers into the knowledge economy. Working and middle-class families deserve the same abundant life as anyone, and it is the duty of the state to ensure this through the transition to a sustainable economy.

As we transition from an economy whose energy is supplied by the exploitation of non-renewable resources to the new energy economy, massive research into solar power, wind power, hydroelectric, geothermal, tidal and other renewable sources of energy is necessary. Training our workers for the new energy economy will be able to provide life-sustaining jobs for Canadian workers, as well as creating the innovation to make Canada a leader. While their immediate efficacy is unknown, continuing research into carbon capture and storage, clean coal and other technologies to diminish our impact are important, even if in the end they fail to produce meaningful results. The severity of the climate crisis is such that we must put all efforts into combatting it.

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Meaning of Thanksgiving

David Ball joined a delegation of Christian Peacemaker Teams in Kenora, Ontario, and Grassy Narrows First Nation. He shares his journal with ATN.



CPT organized a Prayer Walk to Honour the Treaties in Kenora as part of their Aboriginal justice delegation (photo: Marcus Armstrong)

“What does Thanksgiving mean in Canada?” asks Anna, a North Carolinian fellow delegate with Christian Peacemaker Teams, to the server at a Chinese restaurant in Kenora, Ontario. A moment of puzzled thought, then a shrug. “I don’t actually know. I think it just means be thankful.”

Anna has asked this question to many people we’ve met here in Canada – other delegates of our Aboriginal Justice peacemakers delegation, passers-by, even a police officer. Nobody here seems to know the origins. In the U.S., Thanksgiving is frequently told as the commemoration of a welcoming feast between Indigenous peoples and European settlers. But as a Canadian, I have never been taught this. The U.S. version has always seemed like a racist myth to justify the Europeans’ conquest of the land.

Last night, Anna and I prepared supper for our group and several friends connected to Grassy Narrows First Nation, the Indigenous community just north of Kenora we have been invited to be in solidarity with. During the feast preparations the meaning of Thanksgiving again loomed in importance, especially because we would have our Anishinaabe friends sharing

the meal with us (Anishinaabe, or Ojibwe, is the First Nation stretching across much of Ontario). Have we forgotten the meaning of Thanksgiving? Or have we in Canada never drawn Indigenous peoples into our colonial / genocidal history? Have we merely forgotten over the last few centuries? Most pressingly, would our preparations offend our friends because of our ignorance of their history and culture?

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During the week, I vividly recall our final drive down from Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation) at the end of the 10-day delegation with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), on which I represented the SCM as we seek to build relationships in Indigenous communities and with CPT.

As our road bent and curved, we passed beaches serenely facing the lakes; passed beaver dams, their swamps a mix of dead, dying and new; passed white hunters in their orange coats and hats on quads (and remembered Kaaren describing her fear of being ‘accidentally’ shot, so she wears orange – not to prevent being shot, but to reveal the truth if she is); passed the Trans-Canada Highway – four lanes of transport

trailers, national shipped goods, vital economic movement and travellers.

My heart is full. Our international CPT delegation – with members from Philippines, UK, USA and Canada – has spent such a short time up here, and yet it seems as though we've been here for months. The curves of the road are familiar now, but I see my world with new eyes.

What has touched my heart?

My heart was touched by the chance to play soccer after dark last night on the reserve following a trappers' feast, where local teenagers terrified us with animal noises from the forest; we smoked and lay on the grass staring at the stars between the clouds. One of them, Cody, asked why we would want to come to their community (as if it were a preposterous proposition). We spoke of our anger at the logging, of our friendships, and for me the memory and inspiration of my roommate, Dave Brophy, who died two years ago July and had been a tireless non-Anishinaabe supporter of Asubpeeschoseewagong.

"You know, you guys are pretty cool in my books," Cody spoke as he said goodnight. I'm not sure if being willing to visit Grassy makes us particularly good people, but what it meant to me was that our relationships do matter to people; it's not merely a one-way relationship, either. We are all touched in some way.

My heart was touched also by hearing the sorrow of trappers and hunters who have lost their traplines (more properly called 'traditional hunting areas') to clearcutting, and also by those who have re-learned the skills of their culture and are practising as much as possible, to keep the traditions alive.

My heart was profoundly touched by Stephanie, a staff person at the local sexual assault centre in Kenora, who looked me in the eye and spoke of rape as a tool of warfare against Indigenous people and the land, and the need for allies; she said that she does not know any Anishinaabe women who have not been sexually assaulted, and for this I wept.

Yesterday, CPT organized a Prayer Walk to Honour the Treaties (View our media release

and photos). Our message was that we all – Native and non-Native – have rights and responsibilities under the treaties. Our scripture verse this morning hit hard in this light:

Listen! The valiant cry in the streets; the envoys of peace weep bitterly (...) the treaty is broken, its oaths are despised, its obligation is disregarded. The land mourns and languishes (Isaiah 33:7-9)

Our walk began at the shopping mall, addressing discrimination Indigenous people experience coming into town to shop. We stopped outside the museum where a display educates about the Residential School abuses. We prayed outside the courthouse where our delegation has been making an active witness this week as the right to appear physically in court is being stripped away from the mostly-Anishinaabe prisoners, at the whim of a justice of the peace who we heard explicitly lie about the issue. Over the last week, we have witnessed trials, spoken to lawyers who are fighting for Indigenous rights, met with court support workers and police officers.

As one Anishinaabe friend, Roberta, highlighted this week, "This is nothing like a justice system. It is a system of legalism, nothing more." Charged for building a trapping cabin on her people's traditional territories, she told us she was prepared to enter the courtroom "like a beaver would if it were charged for chopping down a tree." On Friday, all her charges were dropped.

Each CPTer wrote a prayer for one of the stops on our Honour the Treaties walk. I was moved profoundly by talking to Stephanie and her coworker, Paula, at the sexual assault centre, and as a man and a pro-feminist, felt a strong need to speak out. Here is my prayer, in hopes that others might use or adapt it (see sidebar).

When we had finished praying, and shared a moment of silence and song, Stephanie approached me and offered me a hug. She had brought a Sisters in Spirit silver button for me to honour the missing and murdered women, and I feel utterly grateful for having made a connection with her.

Continued on page 39 ...

Christian animism

Can Christianity embrace a truly green spirituality? **Shawn Sanford Beck** explores



Examples of “green faith” seem to be exceptions to the denigration of the non-human world (photo: David P Ball)

These deep eyes were now surveying them, slow and solemn, but very penetrating. They were brown, shot with a green light. Often afterwards Pippin tried to describe his first impression of them.

“One felt as if there was an enormous will behind them, filled up with the ages of memory and long, slow, steady thinking; but their surface was sparkling with the present; like sun shimmering on the outer leaves of a vast tree, or on the ripples of a very deep lake. I don’t know, but it felt as if something that grew in the ground - asleep, you might say, or just feeling itself as something between root-tip and leaf-tip, between deep earth and sky had suddenly waked up, and was considering you with the same slow care that it had given to its own inside affairs for endless years.” (*Lord of the Rings, The Two Towers*, 452)

Unlike Pippin and Merry, two jolly young hobbits from Tolkien’s Middle Earth, not many of us will be blessed in our lifetime with such a vivid and gripping encounter with an Ent, or “tree-shepherd”. However, if we carefully search out the recesses of memory, it is entirely possible that, at some point in our childhood, each of us was given a taste of the “aliveness”, of the natural world around us. Perhaps it was a favourite tree in the backyard, or a special boulder in the

field; maybe it was even a momentary glimpse of a faery, a water kelpie, or some other inhabitant of that mystic land just beneath the surface of things. For some, the early experience of animate nature was mysterious or even a little scary; for others it was simply a calm and quiet sense of being held by a presence, a personality cloaked in green leaves, clear flowing water, soft brown earth, moss and fern. As children, we experience the Earth as alive.

But how quickly we forget. Or rather, how quickly we are initiated and indoctrinated into the cult of “just” ... as in, “the tree is just a tree”, “the rock is just a rock”, “the Earth is just earth”. In the reductionist worldview of scientific materialism, it is imperative that the cosmos is stripped of every vestige of personality, agency, soul. And before a child is finished elementary school, she has been effectively robbed of a way of experiencing the natural world which is immediate, imaginal, and utterly relational. By high school at latest, living nature has been transformed into mindless matter, a resource waiting to be exploited for human gain.

So is there a way back (or forward) into Eden? Is there a path we can take which will lead us deep into the primordial forest, where we can rediscover our original connection to all the wonderful creatures with whom we share this

planet? So many of us are haunted by a collective memory of the Dream Time, the days of the First Parents, when Eve and Adam could talk to the animals, and understand the languages of all the plants and trees, when the wind told us secrets, and the water sang melodies which were already ancient by the time humans arrived on the scene. Are these days utterly lost to us? Or is there a way to reconnect to “all our relations”, to our cousins in the animal, plant, and mineral realms?

Ironically, on a personal level, it might be easier for me to find such a pathway were I not a Christian. If I was a Wiccan or a Taoist or a traditional Cree, I would be immersed in a worldview and a set of spiritual practices designed to facilitate and enhance my relationship with the living Earth, and the spirits of nature which surround us. As a practicing pagan, I would have access to teachings and psycho-spiritual technologies which would help me find my place, once again, in the web of energy and consciousness which permeates the entire universe.

As a Christian, however, I find that these life-ways have been cut off from me. Now don't misunderstand - there are many good things about the Christian faith, and many reasons why I remain a convinced and convicted believer in the Way of Christ Jesus. But let's face it, in the contemporary mainstream churches of modern western society, we no longer have a functional spiritual cosmology. We have all kinds of engaging theologies - that is, words about God - but nothing that serves us well as a map of the spirit world. North American and Western European culture is dominated by the presuppositions of scientific materialism, and the church has imbibed this reductionist worldview as if it were gospel truth. We've found ways to smuggle in God and the human soul, but anything “spiritual” beyond that is pretty much treated with scorn and intellectual contempt.

Surveying the long history of Christian thought and practice, we find of course, that it wasn't always so. There were exceptions and marginal traditions which opened doors for Christians

to step out onto the green paths. Early Celtic forms of Christianity were one such example; the Spirit-drenched viriditas of Hildegard was another. Francis of Assisi, in his own unique way, invited the church to pay closer attention to the rest of creation, and there are others who have followed in his footsteps. But these brilliant examples of “green faith” seem to be exceptions to the normative path of ignoring, or even denigrating, the non-human world.

I expect that this present work will be met in many quarters by incredulity and open hostility. “Christian animism”, for many, can suggest nothing more than crude syncretism, a blasphemous oxymoron. I hope to challenge that view, though my intention is more apologetic than polemic. I write from my own experience, and I draw on the experience and reflections of many who find themselves on the fringes of church and society. I pay attention to Witches, Buddhists, Faery-watchers, deep ecologists, and elders. I also search out the fertile places of my own tradition, seeking to hear a Word of healing for our Earth, a Word of grace for the trees and the animals, a Word of invitation back to the garden of Creation, our once and future home.

For those who are interested to know such things, I want to acknowledge the work of two primary guides in my intellectual formation of Christian animism: Walter Wink and Starhawk. Wink, in his masterful trilogy on the Powers, introduced me to the biblical category of the “angels of nature”, and provided a conceptual framework which made sense of the relationship between spirit and matter, heavenly and earthly. Starhawk challenged me to keep moving from the head to the heart, from “talking self” to “younger self”, from theory to practice. Thinking about the spirits of land and woods is one thing; encountering them, communicating with them, ministering to them, is quite another. Starhawk and Wink both held up a warning as well: the work we do with the multiplicity of beings in creation is never simply personal; it is simultaneously political.

Continued on page 27 ...

Shine! Radiating the dream

In May, youth from across Canada gathered in Toronto to celebrate gender & sexual diversity, build community and direct the Movement at **SCM General Conference**.



Photo captions (clockwise from top)

1. Conference participants outside in Toronto
2. Speaker Bishop John Selders (TW)
3. Keynote speaker Bishop Gene Robinson (DB)
4. Youth making at General Council (DB)
5. Keynote speaker Bishop Gene Robinson (DB)
6. Youth making at General Council (DB)
7. Youth making at General Council (DB)
8. Our rainbow



left)

Photos by: David Ball (DB), Lana Wilson (LW), Tanner Watt (TW), Tyson Skriver (TS)

1. Keynote speaker Jan Guenther Braun (DB). 2. Alberta SCMer Maggie celebrates Shine's street festival (TS). 3. Queer & Christian coordinator Arron (TS). 4. Elected SCM General Board members (DB). 5. Baptism on Toronto Island, SCM style (LW). 6. Students learn tools for consensus decision making (TW). 7. Students learn tools for consensus decision making (TW). 8. Students learn tools for consensus decision making (TW). 9. Students learn tools for consensus decision making (TW). 10. SCM Victoria coordinators Ryan Tristin and TJ (DB).

Teamwork, advocacy, service

SCM's North America representative, **Bre Woligroski**, attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. She recounts her experience.

I can't tell you how many times I've sat down to write this article. My recent experience in advocating for women's rights at the United Nations with a team of SCM members from every region of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) was very large, very all-encompassing, and very difficult to put into words . . .

The United Nations' 53rd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place in March 2009 in New York, USA. I was part of a team of six WSCFers from all around the world - Sara from Norway, Facia from Liberia, Veronica from Argentina, Chai (originally from India, but studying and living in New York), Charite (the WSCF Global Intern), and myself. We were also working as part of a larger team of World Council of Churches staff-people, as well as other organizations under the larger delegation of Ecumenical Women (www.ecumenical-women.org). Ecumenical Women is an international coalition of church denominations and ecumenical organizations which holds ECOSOC status (a recognition within the UN's Economic and Social Council) and works together to further the cause of women's issues at the United Nations. My WSCF team, as well as the rest of the Ecumenical Women delegation, were at the CSW to ensure that the voice and perspective of the Christian Ecumenical Worldwide community had a strong role within the Commission's process and negotiations. At the end of the CSW, each of the participating countries signed onto a final document called the "agreed conclusions" - a set of intentions and commitments by the governments involved to recognize and further the rights of women within their respective countries. This is a powerful document that can be used by countries and non-governmental



Bre outside the UN headquarters in New York City (Photo: Bre Woligroski)

organizations on the global stage to keep these governments to their promises. The final document can be downloaded at www.un.org.

The two weeks that we spent at the CSW were extraordinarily busy - our time was spent in formal UN sessions, meeting with our government officials, participating in and planning panel discussions and other events, worshipping with the other Ecumenical Women, faxing, phoning, photocopying, participating in caucuses, leading caucuses, crafting formal statements, riding the subway, trying to find sleep, etc. Every day we had new tasks and new adventures, and every day included moments of teamwork, intimidation, and joy.

As in so many incidences of my life, I have been changed by this experience. This is where I find it difficult to adequately describe how my time in this program has affected me—in very personal and spiritual ways. I will do my best.

I am changed by the positive influence of the fantastic people which I was given the honor of working with. My team of SCMerS is an incredible group of people. It has been six months since the CSW, and I still feel so connected to them in very significant ways. I have grown

and have learned so much by being a part of this team. Charite taught me about grace. Facia taught me about strength of spirit. Veronica taught me about passion, unapologetic advocacy, and claiming cafeteria space. Sara taught me steadfastness. Chai taught me about compassion. Not only did I learn and grow because of my interactions with my WSCF team, I grew because of my relationship with countless Ecumenical Women who have such a strong passion and love for God and justice. I remember fondly the worship times that we were able to share. I remember being claimed as an honorary Anglican by the welcoming Anglican priests. I remember the support and passion of the Ecumenical Women, how I felt so loved and valued by them. I remember how strange and empowering it felt to sit around a table as an equal with people who were infinitely more knowledgeable and prepared for the CSW than I was – people who have been working at this high level of advocacy for years and people who opened a place for a wide-eyed and unsure student like myself because they valued my unique perspective. For me, the major highlight of the CSW was in interacting with and learning from these extraordinary women. They have given me significant gifts from their strong characters which I will remember, always.

Women worldwide will be touched, empowered, and changed in some way by what we did as a delegation.

I have changed because I have learned so much about the UN and about the vital role non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play within its walls. Though at times we felt frustrated and as if our hands were tied too tightly to truly do good at this Commission, those feelings of inadequacy did not last very long. It took us a few days to learn our footing, and to learn the special place we held within our delegation and within the walls of the UN. But once we found our place, once we discovered our voice, we used it loudly with both joy and passion. Our

presence made a difference at the CSW; I can say that without hesitation. In many cases, our presence made a difference in very tangible ways – a number of our group priorities, as well as our suggested language, found its way into the final conclusions. These priorities involved education for women, property rights for women, gender equality in matters of caregiving, and more. The stand that we took as SCMerS and as Ecumenical Women was powerful and was heard at the UN. Women worldwide will be touched, empowered, and changed in some way by what we did as a delegation.

Ecumenical Women and the other NGOs have an impact at the UN – a strong one. The agreed conclusions would not have been so strong or as justice-oriented had we not been present; I saw that time and time again in very personal and real ways. Our team of advocacy workers kept the governments accountable to their words and to the world. Though there were a number of closed door meetings and negotiations into which we were not allowed a physical presence, we continued to brainstorm and strategize as to how to have a strong impact using creative ways. NGOs keep the governments to their words, intentions, and to their promises. Without the NGOs, the cause of women would not go far at the international level.

Finally, I am personally changed because of the opportunities that I was provided with to serve the Ecumenical Women and the UN. We were given a number of tasks to complete which I found very scary and intimidating – meet with government officials, participate and speak in caucuses and UN events, stand and tell my personal story to others who I knew would react negatively. These were all areas of discomfort for me. But I faced them – with as much bravery as I could muster, and with the affirmation and strength of the SCMerS and Ecumenical Women behind me. And now I have learned to be a little more bold, a little less scared, and a little more aware of the special place and calling that God has on my life.

... Continued on page 29

Remarkable, not perfect

On the 37th anniversary of martial law in the Philippines, activist **Charlene Sayo** reflects on her father's participation in a popular uprising as part of the SCM.

On September 21, 1972, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos issued Proclamation No. 1081 placing the entire Philippine archipelago under martial law. With this, the Philippines fell under the powers of the Philippine military jurisdiction and Marcos became the sole authoritarian leader and military dictator of the whole nation. Members of SCM Philippines (SCMP) were among millions of activists who resisted the dictatorship and its human rights abuses, and were at the frontlines of the 1986 revolution that overthrew Marcos. Today, SCMP continues to resist imperialism and human rights abuses in the Philippines. This letter is from the daughter of an SCM Philippines activist.

Dear Dad,

I read somewhere that earth is the only planet that has mornings. I'm not sure of the scientific accuracy of that statement, so don't take it to heart. But if we were to take it squarely for its metaphorical essence then it's fitting for what this day means: a new beginning.

Ironically, in trying to capture the perfect balance of eloquence and militancy, I've written and re-written the beginning of this letter several times over, failing at each new attempt. I know there's a lesson to be learned here, but if my learning is anything like my writing, it will be a slow and arduous undertaking. It would be easier to just call and tell you everything I want to say, but then that would be too easy. Or not. Or maybe the tricky choice between a letter and a phone call reflects the heaviness of this day. It's difficult to summarize the full extent of something that is so monumental and transformative—Revolution—is at the same time as concrete and tangible as the people that embody it.

But here I go.

In less than 6 months I'll be 30. This upcoming milestone has everything to do and nothing to do with my reflective mood the last few weeks



Charlene Sayo

leading up to today, the anniversary of Martial Law. As my youth rapidly closes, I can't help but think of yours and how it was undeniably shaped under the monstrosity of a dictatorship—and the fearless determination of ordinary-turned extraordinary people who resisted it. I can only imagine the ideological conflicts you wrestled with as you and countless other youth struggled with the uncertainty and certainty of failure in the pursuit of unknown freedom. I'd like to think that I lived my young life and what remains of it in the best of struggles, like you did, but I don't have it in me. Or maybe I do, and I've yet to challenge my humanity as you challenged yours all those years ago.

I don't feel it necessary to narrate your life story to you. It's not the point of this letter anyway. I'm also not going to recount the dark days of Martial Law—the outpour of statements and the kindle of vigils tonight will cover all that. Nevertheless, I want you to understand how pro-

found this day is for me, and how proud I am of you. I'm proud to have a father who participated selflessly under unimaginable historical forces; who was able to act beyond his own fears despite the bloodshed and real possibility of death; who was able to surrender his unshakeable faith to his comrades under trying times; who was able to keep his humility and youthful idealism up to middle age, and I suspect well into old age.

This is of course, not what people see. Because to look at you, is to not see very much: a body made thin by the scourge of diabetes, the too-dark skin and the accent that doesn't belong. In a country intolerant of colour and low bank accounts, people see the lazy immigrant, not the father; the foreign parasite, not the person. They judge your failures, not your effort; they scrutinize your poverty, not the wealth derived from your praxis of simple living, hard struggle.

Fighting for social change demands a change in ourselves... but transforms humanity in the long run.

You taught me that such behaviour and actions are constructs of a system in contradiction, fragments of the new world emerging and at times colliding with the old world; that human "nature" changes as social conventions change. That fighting for social change demands a change in ourselves—and that social change whether it's a demand for proper health care or overthrowing a dictator may from time to time produce heroes, but transforms humanity in the long run.

It would be nice of course, for the world to see this and everything that you are and everything you are not; to appreciate your intellectual capabilities in swallowing books whole and your

wordsmith mastery over the English language. I want people to listen to the storyteller always giving his children a full cup of stories to drink from, to learn from the grassroots professor joking while theorizing the necessary process towards a classless society. I want people to know the remarkable human being behind the not so perfect individual: your ability to shrink every load of laundry is striking if not down-right annoying, and your inability to understand my grumpy tone when you call at 5 in the morning just to say hello would be completely irritating if it wasn't just slightly endearing.

Most of all, it would be wonderful for the world to appreciate the youthful idealism you possess, the one that was first rooted in the stormy period of the First quarter storm and then strengthened during carnage of Martial Law. It carried you through your prison days, and was at your side during your migration voyage. It may not be the most important lesson of Martial Law, or even the bravest sentiment to uphold during this time of remembrance and re-affirmation. But it's a crucial facet nonetheless, especially if we are determined to continue the long march towards genuine freedom and democracy (and there's still so much to do to get there!).

You may not like what I've written here. Or maybe you will, what do I know? In any case, I hope your morning stirred when the sun broke. On any given day, it would make a good beginning—but on this day especially.

Charlene Sayo was a keynote speaker at SCM's 'Empire' National Conference in 2005 and is involved in the BC Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines and the Philippine Women's Centre of BC. Her parents were both active in SCM Philippines.

.. Christian animism, continued from page 21

Mere sentimentalism is blind to the real powers at work in the destruction of the Earth and all her children, and gives us no tools to resist the war-makers, strip-miners, clear-cutters, and polluters around us and within us. A truly green spirituality will engage us in the work of

Earth-protection and Earth-healing, in many forms and venues. It is my hope that Christian Animism will make at least a small contribution to that larger work of which we are all a part.

Rev. Shawn Sanford Beck is an SCM Senior Friend in Saskatoon. This is from an unpublished manuscript.

Local and global news

What's new from the SCM, our global federation and allies.



SCM 'moral voice on campus' - *Observer*

In September, SCM was featured in an article in the United Church *Observer* magazine, with interviews from General Secretary David Ball, local unit organizer Beidy Casas-Aragon, historian and participant in SCM York Bruce Douville, and Senior Friend Stephen Endicott (whose father helped found SCM in 1921).

"For almost 90 years, the Student Christian Movement has been a force for social justice," wrote Chantal Braganza. "(SCM) remains a moral force on Canadian campuses."

Read more at scmcanada.org/media

SCM USA in midst of 'resurrection'

Following a historic conference in January bringing together progressive Christians with a global vision of change, students in the USA are reclaiming their prophetic voice. Now, 9 months after the historic "Raising New Prophets" conference, a steering committee is deep in strategic planning sessions towards grassroots networking of ecumenical communities on campuses nation-wide.

"Students have struggled, and sometimes even

died, to build a movement that follows the radical life of Jesus Christ," said Alice Hageman, an alumni and chair for the trustees of the U.S. Student Christian Movement (SCM), which voted itself out of existence in 1969. "It is they who paved the way."

Visit sites.google.com/site/scmusanow

Regional conference tackles eco-justice

The second WSCF North American Regional event following the San Francisco conference will take place in Winnipeg, Canada June 10-13, 2010. The theme of the conference will be eco-justice, in accordance with the global theme of the Federation for the year 2010.

SCM speaks out in solidarity statements

General Board, SCM elected youth leadership, has been busy addressing issues of public attention, and bringing others to light. Since General Council, the Board has taken public stands on the Iranian uprising, climate justice, homophobia in Iraq and Canadian campuses, Indigenous protests in Peru, Canadian immigrant restrictions, disasters in Asia-Pacific, and more.

Read more at scmcanada.org/statements

... **Teamwork**, continued from page 25

When I think back to the Commission on the Status of Women, I am still overcome by the waves of different feelings which I experienced there – a mixture of nervousness, excitement, teamwork, joy, accomplishment, anger, a sense of purpose, weariness, and overwhelming support. It was a very special place for me, and I am so thankful for this experience. I am also thankful for its influence in molding me into

a stronger, more confident, and more compassionate woman of God. I am changed. The World Student Christian Federation is changed. And, through God's grace, the world is changed as well.

Bre Woligroski is SCM Canada's representative to the North American Regional Committee of WSCF. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts – this time in Women's & Gender Studies – at University of Manitoba.

.. **Let's Start**, continued from page 12

As such, despite the resistance of Câmara's successor,⁴ it is understandable that in continuing Câmara's legacy of praxis-based work with people affected by economic injustice in North Eastern Brazil, ecofeminist liberation theologian, Ivone Gebara, connects the suffering of people living in poverty with the suffering of the Earth community.⁵

This link between ecology, poverty, and violence is all around us. Hence, the importance of a vision of the future that Arthur Walker-Jones has discerned as operative in the Psalms in which "social justice is interrelated with the well-being of Earth."⁶

When moving beyond the social, the IPCC report also lends statistical support to moral vision of connectivity put forth by these theologians. The report demonstrates that not only will less wealthy human communities and particularly those in high risk areas be especially vulnerable as a result of the impacts of future

anthropogenic climate change,⁷ but simultaneously the report notes:

that approximately 20 to 30% of plant and animal species assessed so far are likely to be at increased risk of extinction if increases in global average temperature exceed 1.5 to 2.5°C over 1980-1999 levels. Confidence has increased that a 1 to 2°C increase in global mean temperature above 1990 levels (about 1.5 to 2.5°C above pre-industrial) poses significant risks to many unique and threatened systems including many biodiversity hotspots. Corals are vulnerable to thermal stress and have low adaptive capacity. Increases in sea surface temperature of about 1 to 3°C are projected to result in more frequent coral bleaching events and widespread mortality, unless there is thermal adaptation or acclimatisation by corals. Increasing vulnerability of Arctic indigenous communities and small island communities to warming is projected.⁸

These effects on the larger life community are yet other reasons that we can speak of the ecological crisis as a moral crisis. We can do this in the spirit of liberation theologians who called to our attention the need for a preferential option for people living in poverty, in order to overcome social injustice. Given the current effects of the climate crisis we might also now speak of the need for a preferential option for the earth made poorer by human abuse.⁹

Chris Hrynow was SCM Manitoba co-coordinator last year. He teaches in Ottawa, Ontario.

4 Câmara's successor, José Cardoso, thought that the pastoral work in the diocese had been too focussed on social questions, to the point that "spiritual matters" had been severely neglected. Richard Marin, *Dom Helder Camara: Les Puissants et Les Pauvres* (Paris: Les Éditions De L'Atelier, 1995), p. 325. Hence, many of the reforms Câmara instituted in the diocese of Recife were reversed. See Rosemary Radford Ruether, "On the Front Lines of Faith," *Sojourners*, 28, no. 6 (1999), p. 24.

5 Cardoso even tried to silence Gebara by bringing the full weight of Vatican discipline down upon her. From Ivone Gebara, "What do we Mean by Change: Conflict Arising from a Feminist Ethical Perspective," *Catholic Network for Women's Equality Conference Lecture*, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, June 13, 2009.

6 Arthur Walker-Jones, *The Green Psalter: Resources for an Ecological Spirituality* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), p. 65.

7 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, p. 48.

8 *Ibid*, p 56.

9 On the latter point see, Gerald O'Collins, S.J., "Prodigal Sons and Daughters: My Dreams for the Future of the Church," 2009 Tablet Lecture. Heythrop College, London.

Indigenous Rights

Approved by **General Council** 2009 as a basis for discussion and solidarity actions, SCM's first such resolution will be finalized at Conference 2010.

"Where one would be overcome, two will put up resistance. And a three-braid cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:12, New Jerusalem Version)

Whereas the Student Christian Movement of Canada (SCM) is a youth movement operating within traditional Indigenous territories, as well as within the global movement of SCMs, we believe:

that the Indigenous Peoples of this land, who are the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have, through colonialism, been subjected to numerous crimes, including but not limited to, occupation, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and apartheid;

that all are harmed by the broken relationships, broken communities, and broken trust resulting from colonization;

that we need to struggle to transform all systems that continue Canada's tragic legacy of racism and perpetuate the oppression of Indigenous peoples and that the systems of oppression in which we exist have deep intersections, including but not limited to discrimination, poverty, sexism, environmental destruction, police brutality, and cultural appropriation;

that the Canadian government's 2008 apology for residential schools did not address colonialism in a substantive or meaningful way, and stands in glaring contrast to Canada's refusal to sign the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

that the global political, social and economic systems of domination in our world today – which we call Empire – also remind us of the call to repentance, for all those who live on this land, but also as people associated with the Christian churches, which also have much for which to repent;

that the various peoples of Canada have a duty and role to play in helping to protect and heal

the Earth, to challenge the exploitation of the land, and to build a culture of mutual respect, reconciliation and peace;

that Indigenous groups are whole societies in which a change at a cultural level can disrupt all other institutional patterns that society has, and in which all actions have a spiritual component;

that, as people of radical faith and spirituality we must challenge the traditional paradigm of domination over marginalized peoples and the earth, which has been and is often justified through Biblical texts and implemented in the name of Christian mission;

that colonial Christian proselytizing of Indigenous peoples, groups and communities, especially in light of the use of the Bible and Christian beliefs, has created a divide within many communities, impeding Indigenous unity;

that the churches have not done enough to redress the residential schools and assimilation projects;

that interfaith dialogue and spiritual diversity are vital to our mission as a radically ecumenical and multi-faith youth movement with a long history of seeking to

act "in solidarity with the oppressed to resist structures of domination and realize justice in this world" (from the SCM Living Prayer Mission Statement), based on how we understand the prophetic life and teachings of the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth. We respect and celebrate the right of all peoples to live out their culture, beliefs and spirituality;

May our first steps of solidarity move us from the isolation of one to the resilient strength of a "three-braid cord" standing together.

THUS AS THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT WE COMMIT:

to strive to act in solidarity with the Indigenous peoples of this world in an ongoing way. This may take many forms, and it is not easy to all agree on what solidarity looks like. We will strive to participate in days of action and demonstrations for Indigenous rights; to build respectful relationships with Indigenous communities; to acknowledge that we are building our ecumenical movement on Indigenous land, recalling that we are guests here; and to welcome the unique gifts, alliances and cultures of Indigenous youth in our movement, to name but a few;

to challenge ourselves, our churches, faith-communities and society to strive to build right relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, as a journey of beauty, celebration and holiness deeply rooted in sacred teachings;

to push the churches to end the active colonial proselytizing of Indigenous peoples, but rather to work in solidarity and accompaniment, while recognizing the right of all peoples to practice their chosen form of spirituality in relations of mutual responsibility and interdependence;

to advocate for and support revitalization of Indigenous languages as a redress for the role of the Churches in destroying Indigenous cultures in residential schools;

to support and uphold all international conventions on issues impacting Indigenous peoples, especially the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, regardless of whether the Canadian state is a signatory or not;

to pray for a peaceful unfolding of justice for those so deeply hurt and wronged by colonization – not only historically but also through the Canadian state, economic system, environmental destruction and pervasive racism against the Indigenous peoples of this land;

to call our members, local units, and all people of conscience to carry out the work of solidarity and justice, if not yet begun, and to work for increased interrelationship of all peoples;

to pray for repentance (“a turning around,”

in Biblical terms) and the courage to resist and oppose pervasive systems of racism, and to challenge understandings of racialization and marginalization, as allies with peoples and communities, remembering that we, too, can fall short of the mark;

to also pray for healing and hope for those scarred through the generations. We believe that Jesus, who opposed the Empire of his day to the point of martyrdom, will strengthen all those who struggle to survive, to resist, and to learn better the practices of solidarity, and right relationship;

to commit as a movement to continuing our living prayer mission as we walk in solidarity. And, as we pray together at every national gathering of the Student Christian Movement, acknowledging the Indigenous nations’ territories upon which we work:

“As guests on this land, we give deep thanks.

We are blessed with the opportunity

to work towards right relations,

to resist all that threatens Creation,

to confront injustice, privilege and empire,

to pray and live our way into the kingdom of God,

and to learn graceful ways of living on this Earth.”

May our first steps of solidarity move us from the isolation of one to the resilient strength of a “three-braid cord” standing together, with all our relations.

Glossary of Terms

Assimilation: The overt or invisible process of coercing a marginalized people into the dominant culture’s worldview, economic system and religious/social belief system.

Canada: As an affiliate movement of the World Student Christian Federation, SCM uses the European-designated name, ‘Canada,’ throughout our activism and work. In the context of Indigenous culture, however, the Canadian state can be contentious. We use ‘Canada’ as the name by which this land is commonly known, regardless of the fact that many other names have been given before. *Continued on page 32 ...*

Glossary of Terms

However, SCM Canada General Council 2009 decided to replace 'National' with 'General' at all levels of programmes and publications, in recognition that there are many nations within this territory.

Colonization: The extension of a nation's sovereignty over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler or exploitation colonies in which Indigenous populations are directly ruled, displaced, or exterminated. Colonizing nations generally dominate the resources, labor, and markets of the colonial territory, and may also impose socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic structures on the Indigenous population. It is essentially a system of direct political, economic, and cultural intervention and hegemony by a powerful country in a weaker one. The term colonialism may also be used to refer to an ideology or a set of beliefs used to legitimize or promote this system.

Cultural appropriation: The theft or unconsenting use of a marginalized culture's objects, beliefs, art and spirituality by the dominant culture – whether it be unconscious, commercial, or coercive. The dominant culture's preservation of Indigenous cultural artifacts without recognition of Indigenous rights.

Empire: The global political, social and economic system of domination in our world today, which is not based upon a particular territory or state but rather a global logic of rule or operating system. It includes processes of globalization, corporate rule, and intersecting forms of oppression.

Guests: This is a contentious word, and has been hotly debated. In SCM, we have acknowledged that we are 'guests' on this land, which is traditional territory of Indigenous peoples. We are in discussion currently to explore whether this term implies that we have consent and permission to use this land, or if consent to our presence must first be earned. Share your thoughts for our final draft!

Indigenous peoples: The original nations of this land, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.

Oppression: The domination and subjugation of a social group or community, which intersects with multiple forms of domination and privilege.

Paradigm of domination: The worldview in which privileged social groups are enabled to rule over and benefit from the subjugation of other groups.

Racialization: The cultural processes and discourses that create assumptions of racial identities, recognizing that 'race' does not exist prior to defining and categorizing people into hierarchies. It signifies the extension of dehumanizing and racial meanings to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group.

Racism: Racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination based on historical constructions of skin colour and group difference(s). Racism is supported intentionally or unintentionally by institutional power and authority, which is used to the advantage of one race and the disadvantage of other races to support prejudices and enforce discriminatory behaviours in systemic ways.

Residential schools: Institutions created by the Federal Government and operated by Churches which placed Indigenous children into European-style school. Cultural assimilation, sexual abuse and enforced loss of Indigenous identity have had a devastating legacy in Indigenous communities.

Traditional territories: The lands used and lived upon by Indigenous peoples' prior to colonization, to which Indigenous peoples have an inherent right under treaties, agreements, law and constitution.

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Signed in 2007, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand & USA)

...**All Creation Groans**, continued from page 17

Creating well-paying jobs for workers is an important policy goal to operate alongside the transition to a sustainable economy, ensuring that all workers have the opportunities to live full lives, lives of dignity and meaning, lives of the abundance they deserve, lives lived in respect with Creation.

Businesses as well require support in order to succeed and flourish in the new economy. Education and innovation benefit everyone; they are foundational to a thriving economy and a strong society. That means that

research and development should be supported with targeted tax credits designed to encourage innovative and challenging research and a patent and legal regime that removes barriers to innovation. As well, a coordinated plan for research should be implemented, ensuring that all stakeholders, the public, industry and the university community are working together to produce the innovative research needed to transition to a sustainable economy. In making the transition to a sustainable economy, certain industries may require government support in restructuring in the form of low-interest loans, state guarantees of debts, or, in extreme cases, temporary public ownership. The crisis facing Canada's auto sector is one of these, where there is tremendous need to transition to a sustainable model of development, and where the market alone has been insufficient to produce a just transition. A just transition is necessary; in some industries the market alone has proven insufficient to shift to sustainability or to even meet shifting consumer demand. When the market fails, it is the duty of the state to intervene. Finally, a thriving private sector is only possible with a strong, vibrant and targeted public sector; the illogic of neo-liberalism cannot produce a just transition to a sustainable society. Strong and sustainable businesses providing good paying jobs for today's families are a precondition for lives of dignity and abundance for all people.



(Photo: David P Ball)

Consumers require tremendous support through a transition to a sustainable economy. The effects of pricing carbon will fall most heavily on those already neglected by society. Those living on fixed incomes will see their purchasing power eroded. For those who already struggle to heat their houses, increased heating costs will be damaging. Seniors who live on pensions deserve to see those pensions increased in line with inflation or higher. Low-income families deserve increased financial support. A program of affordable, sustainable social housing should

be offered for working and middle-class families. In short, the progressive project of creating a welfare-state capable of sustaining meaningful social justice must be completed. Low-interest loans should be offered to retrofit our houses and workplaces to become more efficient and to save money. Targeted tax and subsidy policies should make living a sustainable life easier for the hard-working majority; a progressive policy of using both state and market forces to achieve a just transition is necessary.

Consumers, workers and businesses, and among these especially the most vulnerable, are in need of support and empowerment during the transition to a sustainable economy. This necessitates the redistribution of wealth and power, an active and aggressive policy to encourage education and innovation, and the expansion of social and economic rights. Progressive values, made real by commitment and action, are what is necessary to create a transition to a society of sustainability and justice, where social exclusion, poverty and inequality are being actively tackled. The transition to a sustainable economy can and should be a just one. Equally so, we can say that the transition to a just economy can and should be a sustainable one. The two goals operate side by side, and committed, progressive, Christian activists and organisations can take part in this project.

Mitchell Anderson is an SCM member in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and attending university.

SCM RESOLUTION ON

Sexuality & Gender Identity

General Council passed this statement by consensus at Shine! Conference, May 5, 2009. It replaces our former Resolution on Sexuality & Homophobia.

WHEREAS we in the Student Christian Movement of Canada believe:

that all people are created in the image of God, and that our understanding of the nature of God is ever-changing, but the love of God is constant;

that, because we are created in the image of God, we find our genders, sexualities, and sexual and gender expressions, to be fluid, constructed, a journey, and unique to individual experience;

that gender is fluid and not binary, that people should be free to explore and express their gender identity, and that gender can be understood as a social construct;

that for some, gender identity is not fixed, and also that gender expression may vary from situation to situation;

that for some sexuality is also not fixed, and that people should be free to explore and express their sexual identities;

that it is integral to understand, explore, and express one's own sexuality and gender for well-being, safety, and wholeness;

that no gender identity, sexuality, or form of gender or sexual expression is inherently superior to any other form of gender identity, sexuality, or gender or sexual expression;

that safe, consensual, and anti-oppressive expressions of gender and sexuality safeguard the dignity and worth of all people;

that exploitative, non-consensual, or oppressive relations or expressions are not holy, and do not affirm the dignity or worth of people; rather, they are expressions of exploitative power;

that sexism, homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia, heterosexism, cisgenderism, binary genderism, genderist assumptions, and other forms of sexual and gender oppression are assaults on the physical and emotional well-being of people,

particularly marginalized peoples, and when one is alienated and broken, all are alienated and broken;

that these forms of oppression pervade our personal, interpersonal, economic, social, cultural, political, and religious systems;

that our understandings of sexuality, gender, and multiple forms of oppression come through a lens of many social factors, including but not limited to race, ability, and class privilege;

and that our self-identification, expression, and spiritual lives merge into holiness when we seek right relations;

THUS AS A MOVEMENT WE COMMIT

to struggle to overcome and resist homophobia, sexism, cisgenderism, transphobia, binary genderism, genderist assumptions, queerphobia, heterosexism, and other forms of sexual and gender oppression in all aspects of society;

to challenge each other within SCM Canada to be in right relations and solidarity with all marginalized people, with each other, with ourselves, and with the Divine –

seeking always to live in an anti-oppressive, mutually supportive, celebratory, healing and open-minded fashion;

to express with creativity and passion our conviction that people of all genders, sexualities, identities and expressions are fully equal;

to affirm the holiness found in the diversity of ways we express our sexualities and genders, and to proclaim that through incarnation, the Divine creates, recreates, and sanctifies all flesh as holy, and that within each of our selves, our bodies, our souls – our whole person – resides this holiness.

We offer this as a living prayer.

**Within each of our selves,
our bodies, our souls...
resides this holiness**

SCM RESOLUTION ON SEXUALITY & GENDER IDENTITY

Glossary of Terms

Queer is a term used by some individuals, groups and communities to describe their sexual orientation, sexual expression, gender identity and/or gender expression, as they may not associate with all or some other terms used in relation to sexual and gender diversity. The term queer is also often used as an umbrella or blanket term to refer to LGBTTT2IQAPPBDSMK * and ally communities. The term queer has a history of being used as an oppressive term and is being reclaimed by some individuals, communities and activists. It is important to recognize that queer is still experienced as an uncomfortable and/or oppressive term for many individuals, groups and/or communities who identify as queer or to whom the term may be applied.

* *LGBTTT2IQAPPBDSMK: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Transgender, Transsexual, 2-Spirit, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Asexual, Pansexual, Polyamorous, Bondage, Domination, Discipline, Sadism, Masochism, Kink*

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

binary genderism: the beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices which presuppose and limit gender expression to only male or female, and which oppress those who do not conform to the gender assigned at birth.

cisgenderism: the beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices which preference those individuals (termed a person who is cisgender) whose biological sex and assigned gender identity are perceived by society or by themselves as not being in conflict, based on a socially constructed gender binary.

heterosexism: the beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices which preference and presuppose enforced heterosexual norms, assumptions of ubiquitous heterosexuality and heterosexual relationships, and which oppress non-heterosexual individuals.

homophobia: a fear of, aversion to, dislike of, or discrimination against homosexuality, homosexuals, or individuals perceived as homosexual.

incarnation: literally, "made flesh." Refers to the physical embodiment of a non-material reality; usually, as in this statement, this term refers to God entering into the physical world in some fashion. In traditional Christian thought, Jesus is understood to be the incarnation of the Divine, that is, "the Word made flesh." Other unorthodox/heterodox or liberal Christian theologies may include the earth as the "body of God" (for example, in the work of ecofeminist theologian Sally McFague), or see God as incarnate in some fashion in every human being (for example, in some Quaker thought).

transphobia: a fear of, aversion to, dislike of, or discrimination against trans* folk, or those perceived as not conforming to the gender binary.

sexism: the beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices held which oppress those who are not male, masculine, or man, and those gendered expressions which have been societally assigned as being feminine.

queerphobia: a fear of, aversion to, dislike of, or discrimination against those individuals having or perceived as having queer identities. Queer identities can be understood as those identities, sometimes sexual and sometimes gendered, which do not conform to gender and sexual constructs of the dominant, patriarchal culture. Queer is sometimes used as an umbrella term for LGBTTIAQ* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-, two-spirit, intersex, asexual, questioning, other*) individuals, but this is not unproblematic, as queer was originally and still is seen as a derogatory term by some, and it attempts to categorize and generalize people together who may come from very different places in their lives.

www.queerandchristian.org

Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning

George Monbiot argues that the need for action on climate change is urgent, and offers solutions. **Bruce Douville** is inclined to believe him.

Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2006

Review research assistance from Matthew Prescott

If you only read one book about the environment this year, this should be it. In fact, I would recommend this book for SCM group study. Monbiot is an engaging writer, and he makes a convincing case that we can and must make substantial changes, in order to effect a 60% reduction in global carbon emissions by 2030. In fact, he contends that we need to make a 90% cut in rich nations. (His target far exceeds Kyoto. The book argues that the Kyoto measures will probably be inadequate to prevent catastrophe). And he demonstrates that these changes are achievable.

The bulk of his book is NOT about global warming -- whether or not it is happening, whether or not it is anthropogenic. He deals with that in the first and second chapters. The remainder of this work explores the solutions. Using Britain as his "test case," he looks at the various ways we can cut carbon emissions but still keep building, heat our homes, keep the lights on, shop, and travel from Point A to Point B.

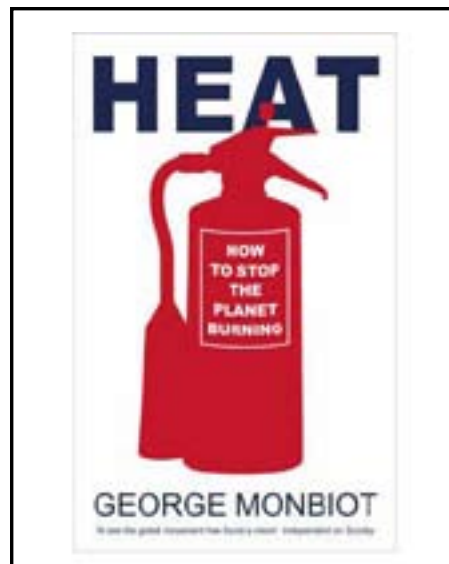
Since the first two chapters seemed pretty polemic and alarmist (though sometimes we need to be polemical and alarming), I was worried that the remainder of the book wouldn't be honest about the complexity of the solutions. Fortunately, my worries were unfounded. Monbiot displays a refreshing skepticism about the pet projects of many environmentalists. He shows that wind-power alone cannot provide sufficient energy even in a windy nation such as the UK, and that solar power, as it presently stands, is greatly over-rated. But he still concludes that wind and solar energy must be a

part of the solution; alternate energy sources could still provide about half of the power in the UK. The other half would be provided by natural gas, stripped of its CO₂. (I suspect that many other environmentalists would not be so quick to endorse a non-renewable resource, or carbon-stripping and

storage. I don't have the expertise to render judgment on that one). Monbiot even gives serious consideration to nuclear energy, but concludes that it is neither safe nor cost-effective. On the whole, he finds nuclear power preferable to coal, but he demonstrates that there are better options.

When it comes to land travel, he shows that bus coaches are about 20% more environmentally friendly than trains (mostly because trains don't seat the same number of people), and contends that converting from car travel to bus travel would make sense, since the infrastructure already exists (i.e., we wouldn't have to build new rail lines). Monbiot isn't a fan of biodiesel; he argues that producing it on a large scale could have detrimental effects on the food supply in poor nations, and if the source is palm oil (which in many cases it will be), it could result in deforestation and the net effect would be more carbon emissions.

I was particularly interested in what he had to



say about air travel. In the past decade, I have made a personal decision to avoid flying because of the environmental consequences, but I always wondered: how devastating is it? As I expected, he showed that plane travel is, by far, more environmentally destructive than travel by land. Mile per mile, flying produces far more CO₂ - many times over - than travelling by bus or train. On top of that, we generally travel much greater distances by plane. (There is no Greyhound service from Toronto to Paris, unless we're talking about Paris, Ontario). Furthermore, CO₂ emissions have a more harmful impact on the ozone layer at a higher altitude. (Don't ask me to explain; I'm not a scientist). There is simply no "techno-fix" for air travel, though propeller planes are more carbon-efficient, but slower. Buying "carbon offsets" is laudable, but we are deceiving ourselves if we think that they actually "offset" the carbon emissions from plane travel. And high-speed trains are neither an economical nor environmentally friendly alternative. (Carbon emissions for trains rise dramatically over 250 km/hr). As for boat travel, let's not even go there. His advice: travelling around the world should be reserved for visiting the people you love, and

If you were hoping for somebody to tell you that it's possible to save the planet with simple lifestyle changes, this most certainly is the wrong book

and the saving up of carbon rations. expect slower travel and the saving up of carbon rations. Now, if only Monbiot would follow his own advice. For example, he flew to North America to promote the book on a tour throughout Canada and the United States. Admittedly, he is pretty candid in the book about his failure to meet up to the standards that he sets. Sadly, I find that this is often the case for many of our leading environmental poster boys. On a radio interview I heard some time ago, David Suzuki admitted that he was trying to cut down on flying, but frankly, I expect better than that from Canada's leading one-man green campaign. (And no, I'm not going to discuss Al Gore,

other than to note that Monbiot never mentions the man or his movie once in the book).

I think what I appreciate most about this book is that he avoids over-simplifying a complex problem. I appreciate that he doesn't buy into the simplistic magic bullet approach; there are no magic bullets. But there are bullets (if I may extend the metaphor). In other words, he shows that none of the solutions are perfect, but many of them - combined together - should be a part of an overall strategy to achieve a 90% emissions cut. And this strategy depends on far more than individual lifestyle choices. (If you were hoping for a book outlining the 101 things you can do to save the planet, this is the wrong book. If you were hoping for somebody to tell you that it's possible to save the planet with simple lifestyle changes, this most certainly is the wrong book). The strategies that he outlines would require the same sort of political mobilization that goes into fighting a major war. This will include measures such as rationing, large-scale housing projects, or reconfiguring the energy grid. These strategies clearly are not compatible with the neo-liberal philosophy of unrestrained global capitalism with minimal government intervention (other than to oil the wheels of the business machine). On the contrary, they will require governments that are not afraid to be called "social democrat" or dare I say, "socialist."

And Monbiot argues that the need for action is urgent. I'm inclined to believe him. Like him, I'm doubtful that governments will mobilize to the extent necessary, if they mobilize at all, and we may indeed be up Poop Creek without a paddle within the next 25 years. But even though I'm not optimistic, I'm hopeful, and I make my own environmental lifestyle choices -- and voting choices -- accordingly. Because without hope, we become cynical, and cynicism leads us to act carelessly, irresponsibly and very, very unethically. Living in hope is the only ethical option, for the alternative is despair.

Bruce Douville is a history student at York University and a participant in SCM York.



Sunday, February 14

Seize
the
Pulpit
2010

A youth lead initiative
by the Student Christian Movement of Canada
www.scmcanada.org/pulpit

Justice. Jesus. Peace. Prophets. Reclaiming faith. Revolution. Got something to say? In the week leading up to Universal Day of Prayer for Students (Feb 21), SCMLers across Canada are raising our voices in the churches and having our message heard. Will you seize the pulpit? Find out more at www.scmcanada.org/pulpit

(Image adapted from "Pieterskerk: The pulpit" by smiling_da_vinci under an Attribution Non-Commercial Generic 2.0 Creative Commons Licence at http://www.flickr.com/photos/smiling_da_vinci/11801627/sizes/o/#cc_license)

...**Meaning of Thansgiving**, continued from page 19

I feel truly blessed by all we have met, all who have shared their tears and their time with us, all who have offered us food, energy, housing, and company this week. I dream that SCMerS can share in such rich relationships with Indigenous people. Our resolutions and statements on the issues around colonialism are a starting point,

but we need to do so much more.

The complicity of the Church needs to be more aggressively addressed, in my opinion. Residential schools were not a mistake; they were a weapon. Can we really come to terms with this truth? Regardless of good intentions among some, the effect is that of genocide. No apology will take that away.

Healed relationships are not built by policy, nor by rushing headlong into campaigns and activism (as needed and vital as those are). Relationships are built over time, person-to-person, nation-to-nation. Not only through protests – but also through smoking in fields under the stars, or sharing soup in a basement, and sitting quietly in a living room, without the need to speak. Relationships with our neighbours are, theologically speaking, as important as our relationship to God, eternal mystery, great healer, love, and comforter of the weeping envoys of peace. May it be so!

+ + +

And so we come to Thanksgiving Monday, and the feast is served. Hands are held. An awkward tension. Which Thanksgiving do we “celebrate” today? And like the prophet Jeremiah standing at the gates, watching resentfully as the oppressors party it up, it is hard to celebrate knowing the truth; it makes me sick.

The soup comes out first. Hands are held. We pray to the Creator, for repentance and for justice. Our thanksgiving is for the land, for friendships across cultures, for the strength and courage to resist when that takes all our energy.

Sweet potato pies with turkey-shaped raisin art. Curry butternut squash soup. Mash potatoes with vegan mushroom gravy. Tabbouleh salad. Crepes for dessert. If we are to have Thanksgiving at all, let us at very least be thankful for the chance to be changed.

David Ball is General Secretary with SCM Canada and spent October 9-18 with Christian Peacemaker Teams (cpt.org). This article is adapted from his blog entries at scmcanada.org/blog.

Prayer for Healing

We gather here... to acknowledge all survivors of sexualized violence, and to cry out in memory of those who have not survived, especially Indigenous women.

Creator, we cry to you in sorrow for the more than 500 missing or murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

Creator, we cry to you in rage that Indigenous women are targeted at higher rates for sexualized violence, including rape, and are too often not protected by the State or society.

Creator, we cry out in lamentation that violence against women continues today, and decry rape and sexism as weapons of war against Indigenous people, their land, and culture.

O Great Healer, grant us the resolve to end violence against all women. Help us, we pray.

O Great Healer, grant us who are non-Native settlers on this land the humility to face our indifference and prejudice. Help us, we pray.

O Great Healer, grant us who are men the compassion and vulnerability to support our sisters, daughters, mothers, grandmothers and neighbours, and the strength to confront abuse of power. Help us, we pray.

Source of Life, it is said that a nation is not broken until the hearts of its women are on the ground. Be with us as we resist oppression; give courage to defenders of the land and their allies; and lift our hearts today in unity. May it be so; amen.

- David Ball

FRIENDS OF THE SCM NETWORK

Ways you can support SCM

Our alumni ("Senior Friends") and Allied Friends form a network of supporters who share their gifts, time, money and prayers to keep SCM strong and growing.



EVERY GIFT - BIG OR SMALL - SUPPORTS OUR FUTURE

"The SCM, though small, is certainly a visionary and growing voice across Canada, and one that is urgently needed. SCM definitely makes a huge impact in people's lives as it has mine – especially since there are so few progressive faith voices on campus. We humbly ask that you consider financially supporting the movement. There is still much work to be done, and many

students to mobilize. We are in need of funds in order to keep moving forward with building units up in new cities and increasing our national presence. We ask that you prayerfully consider making a donation to the SCM. Your sacrifice will ensure that the important work of the SCM continues long into the future!"

-Bre Woligroski, student, former National Rep

MONTHLY GIVING

More SCM friends are now giving a monthly gift to sustain our movement. It's convenient for you & dependable for us. We process Credit Card and Direct Deposit donations (please include a void cheque with the latter).

"Generation after generation, SCM manages to recreate a radical space for transformation... (Monthly giving) is a really easy way for me to give the money I intend to be giving."

- Joelle Morgan

(Senior Friend & WSCF representative 2004-8)

DONATE ONLINE

Did you know you can donate online, through CanadaHelps? It's convenient, and they accept Credit Card and gifts of securities. Call us, or see our website below for more information.

LEGACY BEQUESTS

One of the greatest ways you can strengthen SCM's future is to leave a legacy gift to SCM in your will. Please contact us for more info.

"Bequests are important because the continuity of the SCM is important."

- Audrey Tobias

(Senior Friend & founder of SCM Project Phoenix)

scmcanada.org/support

Muriel Duckworth

A new generation of SCMer honours a radical voice that defined not only SCM but the Canadian peace movement, writes **David Ball**.

(b. October 31, 1908; d. August 22, 2009)

“We will remember her words: ‘WAR IS STUPID! Only love can save the world.’”

What more fitting headline could we imagine for Muriel Duckworth, a pioneering and radical member of the Student Christian Movement, peace activist, feminist, war tax resister, Quaker, anti-racist and fearless advocate for oppressed people? Even in her obituary headline, Muriel was fomenting dissent, and challenging the status quo.

On August 22, renowned activist Muriel Duckworth died at 100. Muriel saw peace and justice as intrinsically linked, and she summed up her views in a pithy statement: “War is stupid.”

Muriel Duckworth, born Muriel Helena Ball, attended McGill University in the early 1920s,

and got involved in Bible studies run by the Student Christian Movement, which took the radical approach of letting students decide for themselves how to interpret the Gospels.

“Looking back over the years,” she told Marion Douglas Kerans in her 1996 biography, *A Very Active Pacifist*, “I’ve felt always that the experience of the SCM was the most important thing that happened to me, probably the most important aspect of my college life, more important than any of the courses that I took.”

“This question of free and open discussion, that everything needed to be challenged, to be questioned, to be talked about, that was completely opposite to the authoritarian approach in the church... This was the beginning of my adult search for truth, and my sense that all things must be open to me.”

As she became more and more involved in the radical social justice organizing and theological reflection that characterized the SCM - formed only a few years earlier in 1921 - she met Jack Duckworth, an SCMer and gifted preacher. The two got engaged, and headed to Union Theological Seminary (UTS) in New York City, a bastion of the Social Gospel movement which turned North American theology on its head and proclaimed a new social order based on justice and peace.

At UTS, Muriel was inspired by the example of Eugene Debs, one of the U.S.’s most prominent socialists and co-founder of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or Wobblies), a revolutionary, even anarchistic, union devoted to “building a new society in the shell of the old.” Debs was jailed for war resistance, and ran for President from inside prison. For decades afterwards, Muriel kept one of Debs’ quotes on her wall:



Muriel Duckworth (Photo: Terre Nash)

*"While there is a lower class, I am in it
While there is a criminal element, I am of it
And while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."*

Some other prominent achievements of Muriel's: In 1960, she founded Voice of Women, Canada's first women's peace organization, which became one of the key pillars of the Canadian anti-Vietnam war movement, and later anti-nuclear & peace movement. She was a dedicated supporter of Oxfam, where a major fund was named in her honour at her 1000-person 100th birthday party in Halifax earlier this year.

She gained notoriety for refusing to pay a portion of her income tax which supported the Army. She was also the first woman in Halifax to run for political office. And Muriel continued attending protests against today's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan until the end of her life; she took opposition in stride.

"Halifax is very much a military town, and I've always had crank letters and phone calls," she said in 2004. "People wouldn't speak to me on the street."

In the words of fellow Voice of Women activist Hattie Prentice:

*"She can confront, comfort, enlighten all of us
war-torn refugees, hate-torn kids,
timid well-wishers, the hopeful people
and sometimes, even, the spite-filled ones
with no hope at all.
All of us,
From her own inner well
Of tranquility and strength
Her self-found peace."*

Though raised in the United Church of Canada, Muriel was infuriated by that denomination's slowness to condemn the Vietnam War, and left to join the pacifist Quakers in the 1960s. She remained a very active and faithful Friend to the end. In 1996, she co-founded the Halifax chapter of the Raging Grannies, a singing, dancing, song-writing group of older women activists. She continued to inspire social change activism in her actions, and in her words:

"Voices like ours are needed now more than ever for peace, for civil rights, for children, for

a life on this planet, for our grandchildren. War is stupid. To bring about the changes we need in society, all of us must speak out and act."

In the 2000s, a new generation of SCMer got the privilege of learning about Muriel Duckworth from former Board member Gillian Strong, an SCMer in Halifax, who regularly visited Muriel for tea and shared stories of the early SCM and one of the radical voices that defined it.

When asked by writer Scott Neigh what wisdom she would offer today's young activists, here's what Muriel had to say:

"Stick to it. [laugh] That's what I would say to them. Keep it up. Because I think there's so much, so much opposition to the violence, to the poverty, to the misuse of power, amongst young people. Everywhere, everywhere young people are not happy about what's going on. Probably we all need to know more. There are some wonderful young people giving leadership. And to keep up their belief that somehow they can make a difference. Somehow or other we all have the responsibility of changing the social organization so that they can have access to power, which they feel very cut off from. Anything that the older generation's going to do to help them to get access to power is worth doing. Keep singing and dancing and loving.

"Most of us can't do much alone. We need the strength of others who share our concerns. We help each other to understand the issues and figure out how to deal with them."



Senior Friends Update

On December 29, **Jean Lee** (Toronto) heads to Gaza for a 'march to open the borders' by feminist organization Code Pink (**codepinkalert.org**). The international action confronts the siege which has created a disaster for Palestinians.

DIVERSION FROM THE STRUGGLE: RADICAL WORD SEARCH

"Challenges of unity for Christians and activists"

D T C S E C T A R I A N I S M O
 O H S R E D A E L J C I A A S A
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 U C S E X U A L I T Y D S E C P
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* Words have at least one letter to themselves & can go in any direction. The remainder spell a secret message:

“-----”

BUREAUCRACY
 CIA
 CLASS
 COLONIALISM
 COMMUNION
 CRISIS
 DIALOGUES
 DIFFERENCE
 DIVISION
 DOGMA

ECUMENISM
 ENVY
 GLOBALIZATION
 GOD
 HISTORY
 HOPE
 IDEA
 INTERFAITH
 JUSTICE
 LEADERS

LIES
 MARTYRS
 OPPRESSION
 POWER
 PRIVILEGE
 QUEERS
 RADICALS
 RESPECT
 SACRAMENTS
 SECTARIANISM

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 THEOLOGY
 TIME
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Students at SCM's 2009 General Conference in Toronto - "Shine! Radiating a Dream of Inclusion & Liberation" (Photo: David Ball)

Movement Radio podcasts

Music, interviews & great ideas.



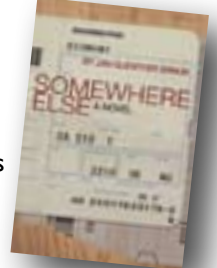
Epistle Journal

Published in Spring 2009, SCM's occasional publication of arts, theology and theory features original art, a sermon, essay, play and photography.



Somewhere Else study

This book discussion resource from the Queer & Christian Without Contradiction campaign accompanies Jan Guenther Braun's 2009 novel *Somewhere Else*, about the journey home of a queer Mennonite. (Book included)



T-shirts

- 'Where Would Jesus Poop?' trans activist
- 'Who Would Jesus Bomb'



Fish on Fridays (Design may vary)

Buttons!

Eight 'I' designs:



"Liberation!"

in a cross with words 'radical,' 'anti-imperialist,' 'feminist,' 'activist'

Revolutionary Jesus

(Che Guevara style)

Gay Pride Jesus

on a rainbow flag background.

Queer & Christian

logo (rainbow fish circle)

'Who would Jesus bomb?'

With picket sign.

In Christ

there is no male or female

Rainbow heart Christ

Jesus Resisted Occupation

Revolutionary Devotionals

2 radical daily prayer-books, featuring diverse voices on liberation theologies with scripture & meditation tips (Issue 1: Radical Prayer. Issue 2: Nonviolence)



ZINES

System Error: De-boot

Eco- and social collapse - is there hope?

Unbinding the Yoke of Oppression

A primer on anti-oppression & privilege.



ABC's of Jesus poster

This poster has Jesus glowing, kicking-ass & going to the bathroom (\$15)



Rainbow Christ sticker

Jesus, anti-oppression organizer!



support the movement!

Yes, I want to support the mission and work of the Student Christian Movement!

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\$ _____ per month \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other: \$ _____

Credit Card #: _____ Expiry: ____ / ____

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For **monthly direct deposit**, enclose a voided cheque. For a **credit card donation** (monthly/single), please write the number & expiry above, or phone our Toll-Free number below. Want to leave a legacy for SCM's future? We gratefully accepts **bequests**; please ask us about this. **All donations are tax deductible.** Charitable # 10804 3936 RR 0001.

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