

UTH TURN

connect create change

YOUTH CONCERNS - NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN INDIA

PRIORITIES OF THE NCCI—YOUTH CONCERNS

- Encouraging young people to be part of the National Ecumenical Movement.
- Networking with the Local and International Ecumenical partners for sponsorship and partnership.
- Connecting member churches and local youth movements with NCCI Youth Concerns ministry through organizing programmes both at regional and national levels.
- Strengthening direct partnerships with youth fellowships of the member churches and NCCI Youth Concerns ministry and encouraging them to create ecumenical platforms for young people to promote grassroots ecumenism.
- Identifying young people to engage them in a process of articulating their faith and understanding about God.

Spiritual Maturity - Hebrews 5: 12-14



Maturity in life- physically, mentally, spiritually is very important. Maturity is a sign of change and the change is determined by reason (ability to decide), change in our needs, wants, liking, behaviour, and thinking. Change is constant in our lives that leads to growth and vice versa. A case in point is the growth of human beings from infant to an adult. Our choice of survival (food habits) start to vary as we grow. For instance, for a fully grown adult to survive by milk alone is next to impossible. As an infant our system is designed to sustain by milk but as an adult our body has other requirements for full development. The person who still feeds on milk

can be taken as someone immature spiritually (feeding on basic Christian tenets) and the person who feeds on solid food as spiritually matured (lives in Christ likeness). This gives us two types or categories of Christians, spiritually immature Christians and spiritually matured Christians.

In Hebrews 5:12-14, we find a good explanation on spiritual immaturity. In this particular passage the author is addressing to the Christians who had converted to Christianity from Judaism. The conversion had taken place for a long time now and so they were expected to be full grown Christians rich in faith, skilled in the word of righteousness, able to discern the good from the evil, however that was not the case. They did not live Christ-like and were only Christians by name. The sad reality of our times is that many of us are like that, still living in spiritual immaturity. We are satisfied being called Christians but never really living out life in His likeness. On the other hand, someone who has spiritually matured is never content by namely being a Christian but constantly and prayerfully seeks God and feeds himself His Word to grow wholly in faith.

What defines spiritual immaturity and spiritual maturity? Change in our spiritual life will define whether we are matured or still living in spiritual immaturity. What is that change? Change from being just happy with the tag of being a Christian and willing to know more about God, having the desire to read and understand the word of God, living a prayerful life, able to teach others the truth and most of all living Christ-like life of love, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, generosity, humility and unceasing faith. That only can bring a fullness in our life like no other.

The choice is ours, whether to live contented with just knowing Christ, like someone who still lives on milk, in spiritual immaturity, being vulnerable to the target of the evil force or truly live in His wholeness, like a real born again Christian who feeds on solid food, declaring everyday "I want to know more about God, I want to grow in his likeness and live it out daily". In an age as this, it's a daunting challenge for us to live in spiritual maturity when we are faced with every kind of temptations, lured by the ways of the world. But if we take up this challenge, the fruit we bear will only bring everlasting light, goodness and peace.

Let's remind ourselves right now that we are called to be more than just a Christian by name. We are called to be an active, productive, practicing and spiritually matured Christian everyday of our lives. **God Bless You!**

Zochon Ovung, Pastor: North-East Christian Fellowship, Nagpur



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Youth Transparency, Accountability and Responsibility



The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI), Youth Concerns organized a one-day seminar with the theme '*Youth Transparency, Accountability and Responsibility*' on 17th of November 2017 at NCCI Campus, Nagpur. The seminar was attended by 18 delegates from the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad, General Secretary, NCCI, Mr. Jianthaolung Gonmei, Executive Secretary, NCCI-Youth Concerns, Rev. Caesar David, Executive Secretary, Communication, and Mr. Rajesh Jadhav, Coordinator, Vidarbha Centre for Labour Concerns were the resource persons.



Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad gave the keynote address based on *Christian Imperative and A Moral Challenge (Transparency, Accountability and Responsibility)*. Here, he pointed out that Corruption has become a problem, not only in the society but also in the church, because of which the weaker sections of the society are suffering. It is not just an individual corruption, but a system we are part of and in order to address the issue of corruption, particularly in the church, we are called to draw upon the spiritual resources from our faith that will help us to be transparent, accountable, and responsible. He said that Jesus was a reformer. Very often there is a temptation for us to say that Jesus has saved our lives and we are looking forward of going into heaven, but before going to heaven, Jesus

is talking about responsibility on earth. At the same time, we are living in a society in a secular constitution and therefore this constitution also guides us as to how we should be living.

Mr. Jianthaolung Gonmei spoke on the *Challenges and Problems of Youth in the Church*. In this area, he pointed out that, the young people today are drifting away from the church as there is no space given to them. In order to avoid this, the church need to give an open space, not only some kind of portfolio roles in the name of leadership but to give a space where young people can contribute under the name of partnership. The young people as well as the church is accountable to make young people involve as well to make selves (young people) involve in the church. The church need to encourage young people in order to avoid the anxieties. Rev. Caesar David spoke on *Ethics, Values and Good Governance for the Church: Role of the Youth*. One important thing he pointed out is that, it's not simple to say that there should be no corruption. The first thing is to be aware of the negative things in the church, to be aware of the negative effects that corruption causes. Negative effect of development in the church is the wrong allegation and misdirection of development, and also violation of Human Rights deliberately or unconsciously. And even though we talk about the churches' commitment, it has to come from the heart. In his concluding comment, he encouraged the youths to look beyond oneself, build up a corporate consciousness, exercise wisdom and discernment.



Post lunch, there was a documentary show, on "*Kabir,*" initiated by Mr. Rajesh Jadhav and group discussion on *Challenges of Being Transparent, Accountable and Responsible* in the local context, moderated by Mr. Jianthaolung. The documentary show was based on political domain of the country, how decisions were being taken based on a person's name and looks, and impartial decision to kill someone in order to earn good names. Later, the youths were divided into three groups. Some of the challenges pointed out by them were; the youths are being de-moralized and the power mongers try to use them in the church's politics through the manipulation of words. The youths are not give space and freedom by the churches, however, they are recognized during the festive season and he youths are being restricted to responsibility. Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad responded and encouraged the youths that youths need to raise educational standards and as a youth one should get angry if corruption happens in the church for corruption has to be blocked. Youths must also be educated even in accounts, be vigilant and should be protected from being misused. He also said that as youths, the faith and the practice should be matched. The seminar ended with prayer.

Unity Octave: Ecumenical Youth Music Concert



As part of the Unity Octave, the National Council of Churches in India organized an Ecumenical Youth Music Concert on 18th January (Thursday) at Sristhi Lawn, NCCI Campus, Nagpur, on the theme “*Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power (Ex. 15:6).*” The main focus of the concert was to enlarge ecumenical rapport and togetherness among the Christians, especially Youth, spreading the message of peace and unity through music in the midst of the rising atmosphere of turmoil and intolerance in our society.

Opening Prayer was said by Mr. Peter Sebastian, NCCI Intern and Mr. Jianthaolung Gonmei, Executive Secretary, NCCI-Youth Concerns welcomed the invitees and the participants as well as gave a brief introduction of the Unity Octave.

Different forms of music such as bhajan, choir, male voice, qawwali and western were presented in various languages – English, Hindi, Latin, Malayalam, Marathi and Mizo. Choreography, group dance and a skit on unity were also performed by various organizations. Churches, seminaries and organizations from different Christian faith communities in and around Nagpur participated in the event. The participants were from St. Ursula Girls High School, St. Charles Seminary, St. Thomas Orthodox Theological Seminary (STOTS), Talking Hands Restaurant, Nagpur Christian Art Ministry, NDC Boys Hostel, CNI St. Thomas Church, Mizo Fellowship, and North East Christian Fellowship.

Two readings of the scripture were delivered: Ms. Abigail Lalawmpuii Gaikwad from Exodus 15: 2, 6(a), 21(b) and Ms. Shyreeti Christopher from John 17: 17-23, and the prayer for unity was offered by Mr. Jatin Barse from Kentwood Community Church. Ms. Wapangyingla Ao, NCCI Intern proposed the vote of thanks and the program concluded with prayer by Mr. Saurabh Khobradade, NCCI Intern. The entire programme was anchored by Ms. Romena Gorai, SCMI-NCCI Intern.

The Ecumenical Youth Music Concert was filled with delightful experiences where both the performers and the audience were inspired through the presentations that paved the way for an opportunity to widen the space of learning and reasoning and welcoming all humanity leading towards love and unity of all.



Newsflash

I. The Student Christian Movement of India invites young people to serve the Ecumenical Movement

Applications are invited for the following posts:

1. Coordinator for Dalit Women Resource Centre
2. Executive Secretary for Mission and Scholarship Desk
3. Executive Secretary for Communication Desk
4. Programme Secretary for Karnataka
5. Programme Secretary for Mid India region
6. Programme Secretary for North East India Zone I – based in Meghalaya
7. Programme Secretary for Uttar Pradesh region
8. Programme Secretary for Western India region

For more information, please check the given link: <https://communicationscmi.wordpress.com/2018/01/17/opportunities-for-young-people-to-serve-the-ecumenical-movement-student-christian-movement-of-india-3/>

II. WCC internship programme: A unique opportunity to learn and engage

The World Council of Churches (WCC) invites applications of church-engaged youth to undertake an internship with the council at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva in 2018.

For more information, please contact Youth@wcc-coe.org

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-internship-programme-a-unique-opportunity-to-learn-and-engage>

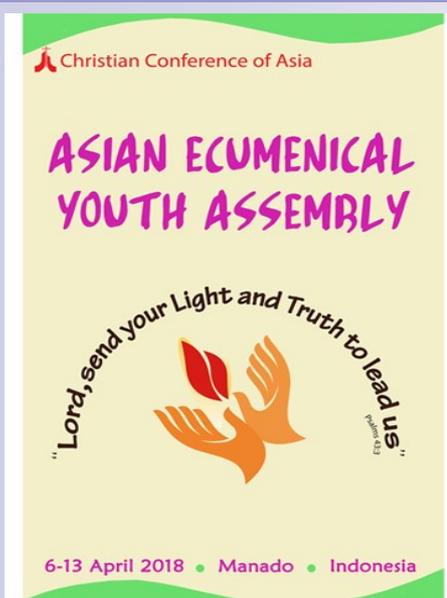
III. Christian Conference of Asia

In 2018, a major youth event, Asia Youth Assembly on Peace in Asia (AYAPA) will be organized with focus on 'Youths for Building Peace in Asia'.

For more Information, please check the given link: <http://cca.org.hk/home/news-and-events/cca-initiates-asian-ecumenical-youth-assembly-ayapa/>

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News in Picture



<http://cca.org.hk/home/news-and-events/cca-initiates-asian-ecumenical-youth-assembly-ayapa/>
<https://communicationscmi.wordpress.com/2018/01/24/be-a-volunteer-in-scm-bonn-germany/>