

UTH TURN

connect create change

YOUTH CONCERNS—NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN INDIA

PRIORITIES OF 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 grass-roots ecumenism.
- Identifying young people to engage them in a process of articulating their faith and understanding about God.

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New Covenant for New Humanity- Genesis 9:1-17

Introduction

Genesis is an interesting book that begins with two creation accounts (**Genesis 1-3**) and **continues with stories about humanity in general till the end of Genesis Chapter 11** before the specific journey of Abraham. In this particular text Genesis 9:1-17, God establishes a new world with the blessing of fruitfulness and the prohibition of taking another person's life, a covenant never to destroy ever living creatures again by such flood and the Rainbow becomes a sign of the new covenant. Keeping this context in mind, let us meditate upon the given text i.e., Genesis 9: 1-17 with the theme as, "**New Covenant for New Humanity.**"

1. The Blessings (Vs. 1-4)

V. 1 starts with the renewal of God's first blessings and commission to Adam. Like Adam, Noah and his sons were blessed and commanded to reproduce. In Vs. 2-3, we can see the additional blessings of authority over all the Creations and unlike previous blessing on human eating plants, humans are now given permission to have meat in their normal diet. The only restriction was that they are not to eat the meat with blood in it for blood remains sacred and is not to be consumed as an acknowledgement that all life is from God. God blesses Noah in V. 1 and made covenant with him and his sons, however this covenant is not only with him but with all of Noah's descendants and every living creature.

2. The Prohibition (Vs. 5-7)

Following his comments about the killings of the animals, God addresses the issue of violence by all flesh (V.5). This means any person or animal that takes a human life will be held accountable by God, working through human representatives. So valuable is human life that a compensation of life will even be extracted from animals. God prohibits one from murdering his fellow human for a human to murder another fellow human is to murder what is most like God which shows contempt for God as well as he/she assume the role of God. And later in V. 7, against the back drop of the warnings about taking life, God again reminds Noah and his sons to reproduce life.

3. The Covenant with a Sign (Vs. 9-17)

The word Covenant (*berit*) is repeated 7 times in Vs 9-17. From V. 9, God outlines the Covenant he is now establishing with living creatures. Different covenant have appropriate signs or symbols linked to them. Here on this occasion God's designated Rainbow as the sign. Its presence, when rain clouds are in the sky, will be visible reminder of God's **Everlasting Covenant (V. 16)**. God clearly states that this is the eternal covenant (Genesis 9: 11, 15). Since God is an eternal God who dwells outside the space and time, he can maintain his covenant as long as his sovereignty chooses.

Reflection

Humans are created in such a way that our very existence is intended to have relationship with God. God did not give us the entire creation in order that we could simply use and abuse them. He gave us these things to look after them on His behalf and in a way which brings glory to God as the creator. Hebrew bow or God's bow is a weapon of war and wrath and judgement, which now became a symbol of peace. It is important to note that in sending his son Jesus to die on the cross was indeed turning his wrath upon himself in the person of his own son Jesus Christ taking an arrow into his own heart as it were, to accomplish the salvation of his people; A covenant of faithfulness and a picture of reconciliation that He brought about in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In vs. 4-6 God instructs humanity to respect life and protects life by prohibiting murder. How do we follow the Commands in the future? How do we protect the people or the animals that are really in need of protection? If some unfair means are happening to a person, do we walk away or are we the bystanders or do we really go and help that person (practically)? Does understanding the blood sacrifice of an animal for a sin offering help prepare us for understanding Christ's atonement for our sins? What specific mercies have we seen in our life? As we meditate, let us remember God's forgiveness and kindness in our life and in return, let us promise God to renew our life each day in His likeness and will.

Wapangyingla Ao- Intern, NCCI-Youth Concerns

NCCI-Three-Month Computer Application Training (CAT)

The biggest challenge that young people living below poverty line (BPL) face in their day to day life is the difficulty of accessing employment opportunities.

Though some of them are educated, they fail to get jobs due to lack of many necessary skills. One such necessary skill is digital skills, which are needed in this era of computer assisted applications. To address this concern, Rev. Caesar David, Executive Secretary – National Council of Churches in India Communications (NCCI-Com) and Mr. Jianthaolung Gonmei, Executive Secretary- Youth Concerns (NCCI-YC) started a Digital Literacy Modular Course of three months for Capacity Enhancement of disadvantaged youth. The aim of this project was to provide the benefits of computer based education and skills training to students from socially and economically backward areas of Nagpur city, and to equip them for work with computers thereby being able to do better in their life.

The list of students is given below-



Priyanka Arun Nanhe Nandini Umesh Wasnik Priyanka Umesh Wasnik Somiksha Dilip Gawande Sumesh S. Rawte

The project which started with 5 students on January 28, 2018 and which concluded on April 30, 2018 was conducted in the NCCI premises at Nagpur. All the students were from economically weak backgrounds, living in slum localities.

This three-month project covered:

1. Computer Fundamentals for basic computer knowledge
2. MS Office for Office work
3. Corel Draw for designing
4. English Typing for improving their typing speed.

We conducted 5 classes per week. The NCCI Staff namely Mrs. Preety Waghchoure, Mr. Vijyan Pillay and Mrs. Neelam Gaikwad served as resource persons. (Thus the staff are also getting engaged in the programmes of NCCI.) During the total of 60 classes in 3 months, the staff taught the theory of computers, explained the different software and also facilitated maximum time of practice with computers. On the completion of their training, the students shared their experiences of three months and expressed their gratitude to NCCI for helping them with computer skills development. The NCCI General Secretary Rev Dr. Roger Gaikwad awarded them gifts and certificates of completion.

We hope that through this computer course we have provided the students an opportunity to enhance their capacities and skills. At the same time they have learnt the values of community togetherness and commitment to the quadrennial motto of the NCCI: Towards Just and Inclusive Communities.

Neelam Gaikwad
Program Co-ordinator, CAT Program NCCI



Adieu with Gratitude by the Outgoing Interns



My one year with National Council of Churches in India (NCCI)-Youth concerns was a time of unlearning and re-learning, a time of introspection and retrospection, and a time of feeling at home, away from home. Through the immense exposures, I have the confidence that I will be able to get involve and face any ministerial challenges for God's greater glory. And with the strong ecumenical influence NCCI has given me, I can't stop myself but to look forward to continue the journey of ecumenism. May the Triune God's continuous blessings and wisdom be upon NCCI.

Thank You NCCI

Wapangyingla Ao

Intern, NCCI-Youth Concerns

National Council of Churches in India has given me a lifetime memory to cherish. It was a privilege to get involved with NCCI as its intern for a length of nine months. I have received a lot from NCCI, the things I learned here, the mistakes I made here will all be counted one day as a profit in my life. The guidance of Sir Roger and all the other Executive Secretaries will be acknowledged everlastingly. I have discovered a new self of mine after joining NCCI for which I will be grateful evermore.

Thank You

Romena Gorai

Intern of SCMI working under the General Secretary of NCCI (She was send to NCCI as part of SCMI Change Maker Programme)



I had a great learning experience at NCCI. The process of unlearning and re-learning aspects of theological perceptions and ecumenical relations is quite a task, but NCCI's internship with Unity and Mission made it look easy. The one year spend at NCCI has been an enriching experience in terms of mutual learning. All these experiences gained from NCCI will see fruits in the years to come.

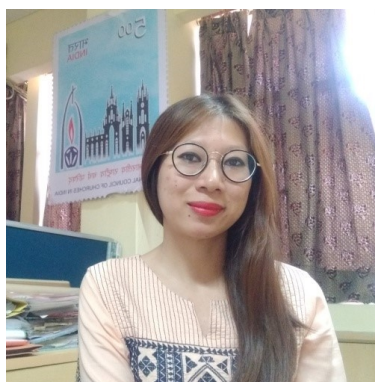
Vinod Shemron

Intern, NCCI-Unity and Mission

To have worked with NCCI, Nagpur-the apex body of all protestant and Orthodox churches in India, I deeply felt accomplished and complete and cannot ask more but praise God who always gives the best. The profound wisdom and excellent leadership of the General secretary Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad, which was imbibed and imparted upon the interns was just awesome indeed. To add fuel to the fire, was the concerns of Dalit and Tribal Adivasi (DATA) related issues, and the real purpose of ecumenism; which was the needs of the time to be addressed, made my stay worthwhile and nostalgic. Above all, Glory and honour be to God.

Mathingmi Hongchui

Intern, NCCI-DATA Concerns



Greeting's Peace of God to You.

Christian ministry is not only about serving the humanity while it's all about knowing one-self "who am I to the world". National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) proffers a very challenging and essential training for the young people's as in category internship, which is very beneficial for a person to vision their own future ministry in the ecumenical world. Internship in NCCI endorse in strengthening ones outlook among and between the societies, also facilitate to stimulate oneself to engage in the needs of the service in the finding of people's rights, values, freedom of religion and belief in India. It trains the young people to equip themselves in ministering humanity of all religions and cultures, it also endow with leadership ethics.

It's a great joy for me to works as an intern in the Commission of Policy, Governance and Public Witness, NCCI. It enriches knowledge from within and beyond experiences which makes me aware of the unsafe world especially about the struggles of the minority's societies in India. It not only helps me to understand while it also encourages me to imply these benefits into my further studies. As I joined in NCCI with great enthusiasm of gaining knowledge, I also contributed in whichever works assigned to me in the office as well as through attending several meetings/consultation with the collective reports.

Thank You

Joynam Longvah

Intern, NCCI-Policy Governance and Public Witness

Determined to Make a Difference

By Claus Grue

At 20, Ruth Mathen has already come a long way on the path that God has chosen for her. She heeded his call at a YMCA camp six years ago and is now running a non-government organization (NGO) together with three college friends.

It began in 2015, when she attended an inauguration service of the Social Service Cell in her school in Bombay, India. She became instantly aware of the stark differences and inequalities in the Indian school system, where 75 percent of the children attend public schools, while the remaining 25 percent go to private schools with much better education quality.

"There is a huge gap in quality between public and private education. The current system promotes social inequality and I decided there and then to do something about it", Ruth explains.



Since none of the organizations she approached were doing the kind of work she envisioned, she and her friends decided to set up their own NGO: The Youth United Foundation, so that they could work on their own terms.

Today, what started out as a small pilot project helping juvenile kids in remand homes, has grown into a network of volunteers influencing the education of 20,000 kids in the Bombay-Thane area. A key to success has been liaising with the local commissioner in Thane, who after a 15-minute presentation by Ruth and her colleagues, was so impressed that he immediately wanted to implement their plan for better and more equal education. The plan includes better classroom management systems and creating a for knowledge-sharing between teachers from public and private schools.

Since that breakthrough, working along with local governments to improve learning outcomes has become a success formula for the Youth United Foundation. Several chapters has been started elsewhere in the state of Maharashtra, where Bombay is located, and in the neighbouring state of Gujarat.

"The needs are endless and we have plenty of ideas to realize. We've been through periods of limbo, but we are determined to make a difference for Indian children. That objective can only be reached by igniting hope and self-confidence in those who are marginalized. They are God's children too and we are all created equal", Ruth points out.

Another injustice that she is determined to fight against is gender inequality, where the challenges also are huge. Ruth's inspiration is her mother, who beat the odds, pursued a higher education and became a well-respected scientist.

"My mother empowered me and I want to empower other women to have faith in themselves. There are fantastic women in my community," Ruth says. Her determination to advance women's rights and equal opportunities has not passed unnoticed in her own church, where men traditionally have been in charge.

"My religion should be empowering me, not subordinating me. We have beautiful traditions in my church and I will continue to provide service and work for the church. But it must stay relevant for new generations and a new thinking is urgently required. We must find new and creative ways for youth ministry and implement new and more palatable educational methods", Ruth explains.

In one or two decades she envisions a stronger, more inclusive and more accommodating church, a church where women take equal part in the decision-making and where transparency reigns. "A challenge for sure, but persistence is important. I have my will, so I've paved my way", she concludes.

On the 7 April, Ruth Mathen shared her story as one of the speakers at the Asia Ecumenical Youth Assembly in Manado, Indonesia, where 350 fellow young Christians from across Asia were gathered to discuss today's challenges. The word of her work is spreading.

Source: <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/determined-to-make-a-difference>

Global Youth Gather to Spur Action on Climate Change

Credit: Rosa Castañeda

Youth climate change delegates from around the world have been gathering in Bonn to share ideas, coordinate their efforts and urge negotiators meeting in Bonn, Germany over the next two weeks to take strong climate action in order to safeguard their future. At a the first ever ACE (Action for Climate Empowerment) Youth Forum at the week-end, just before the start of the 2018 UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn, youth delegates from 70 countries came up with a wide range of suggestions.

“Youth are an essential part of the climate change solution, so the youth must be active and heard in the international negotiations,” said United Nations Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa at the forum. “The role of the youth constituency is growing, and this is good for the international negotiating process and for the planet.”



Break-out groups at the Forum brainstormed on ways to increase the effectiveness of ACE activities. Suggestions included linking youth ACE activities internationally, supporting ACE national focal points, pushing for more funding for ACE activities and holding ACE festivals to create interest and awareness about the need for climate action.

These and other points will be combined, refined and put before government negotiators at a workshop from where they could find their way into negotiating text and a possible draft decision on ACE destined for consideration when nations meet in Katowice, Poland, in December of this year.

The ACE Youth Forum was an idea of Fiji, which holds the presidency Conference of the Parties (COP), since the 23rd COP, held in Bonn in November 2017. H.E. Mr. Inia Seruiratu,

High-level Climate Champion and Fiji’s Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management and Meteorological Services told delegates: “Our young people the world over are powerful agents for change. The stakes couldn’t be higher”.

“Fiji is urging the global community to commit itself to achieving the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement, which is to limit the average global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above that of the pre-industrial age.

“To achieve this, young people the world over must demand action. To raise their voices and force their politicians to take the tough decisions that are necessary. And also point out the wonderful opportunities that are out there if we make the shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy, and fast-track the development of the emerging technologies,” he added.

Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, countries recognized the critical importance of education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information and international cooperation to the success in tackling climate change. The youth constituency is central to the work.

“This forum is unprecedented in the way it brought together non-State actors, youths – more than half from the global South – UN Climate Change and the presidency of the Conference of the Parties to help shape matters under negotiation,” said Yugratna Srivastava, a youth co-organizer of the ACE Youth Forum. “The process is moving in the right direction.”

In Paris in 2015, countries committed to limiting global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius and to work towards the safer target of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Countries are now negotiating the Paris Agreement Work Programme, which they plan to adopt in Katowice.

The YOUNGO (youth NGO) constituency took the lead in organizing the ACE Youth Forum, which was co-organized by UN Climate Change and United Nations Development Programme and supported financially by the Government of Canada.



Source: <https://unfccc.int/news/global-youth-gather-to-spur-action-on-climate-change>

<https://googleweblight.com/i?u=https://unfccc.int/news/global-youth-gather-to-spur-action-on-climate-change&hl=en-IN>