

# BTESSC NEWS

BOARD OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION OF THE SENATE OF SERAMPORE COLLEGE

P.O. Box 4635, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 73, Miller's Road, Bangalore - 560 046

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## Secretary's Note

Greetings from BTESSC!

Everyday we see the growth of BTESSC in fulfilling the purpose for which it is instituted with a fulltime Secretary.

There are some new initiatives which need to be mentioned here. As you all know, the aim of BTESSC is to educate the Indian churches to promote and strengthen Indian Theological Education.

BTESSC has launched a Programme to reach out to the local congregation to share the objectives and the work of BTESSC and also to seek the congregation's financial support to strengthen the ministries of BTESSC. More than our expectation, the congregations of CSI Madras Diocese welcomed us happily. I visited the congregations on 10 weekends continuously, and teachers from TTS, Madurai, UTC, Bangalore and Gurukul, Chennai and pastors from CSI Bangalore, Madurai, Vellore, Madras, Coimbatore, and Trichy-Tanjore dioceses assisted me in this venture. We have already finalized the campaign in CSI Vellore, KCD and Trichy -Tanjore in the first part of 2013. I thank the Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. V. Devasahayam for permitting us to visit his congregations.

The long-awaited joint meeting between ATESEA and BTESSC was held and the officers of both the associations of schools met and created a sound basis for future cooperation. The meeting was held with an open mind, and we hope this dialogue will create more space for Asian Theology to grow.

Another new venture was also started at the Asia level as initiated by PTE-WCC and FTE in bringing most of the networks and associations of theological schools in Asia. A new forum was thus created to strengthen the networks and associations in Asia, building mutual cooperation among the members and to develop Asian theologies.

As we had decided, BTESSC concentrated on this year's theme 'Climate Justice' and organized many programmes to highlight this throughout the year. We had also organized an essay competition for the students on this theme, and we are happy about the entries. We have decided to give three prizes to the winners and the same will be announced during our Board meeting.

Many interesting programmes have happened in our member institutions. We congratulate the Student Christian Movement of India for celebrating their centenary year and BTESSC wishes them all success in the future also. Exciting another year is waiting for us. The new year will begin with the joint meeting with our ecumenical partners which will pave the way for our relations concretely. We are eagerly looking forward to our Board, Senate meetings and the Convocation, and we pray for a meaningful interaction and for a memorable fellowship.

We wish you all a meaningful Christmas and a challenging New Year. **There is Hope. Yes.**

**P. Mohan Larbeer,**  
Secretary

## BTESSC

### Work Place Policy

BTESSC organized a Workshop on Work place Policy at UTC, Bangalore in which 17 delegates from different theological colleges and Christian organizations attended.

Rev. Asir Ebenezer, the Finance Secretary from NCCI delivered the inaugural address by giving the history and objectives of the workshop. He also narrated the various policies produced by NCCI and emphasized the importance of the workplace policy in every institution. There were three input sessions – first on HIV/AIDS by Ms. Edwina Pereira from INSA India, then Mr. Elavarthi Manohar from SANGAMA shared the various aspects related to LGBTQ community, finally, Dr. Kerstin Neumann from TTS, Madurai presented a paper on sexual harassment policy. Finally, Dr. Mohan Larbeer presented a draft workplace policy for the members to react. In the plenary it was decided to make the BTESSC draft policy a guideline so as to prepare the workplace policy in each institution.

The workshop started with a devotion conducted by Rev. Vincent Rajkumar from CISRS, and the second day devotion was led by Dr. David Joy from UTC.

### A Theological Consultation on “Kairos Palestine”

The Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College and the Church of South India Synod in coordination with the Indian Solidarity Ecumenical Network - organized a theological consultation on “Kairos Palestine- A Moment of Truth” from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2012 at the CSI Synod Centre, Chennai. The consultation met with 46 participants representing theological colleges, churches and movements from south India.

The focus of the seminar was on the question of justice in Palestine particularly in the light of the document **“Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth – A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of the Palestinian Suffering,”** which was released by Palestinian Christians in December 2009. **Dr. Jamal Khader**, the Chairperson of the Department of Religious Studies and the Dean of Arts at Bethlehem University, and **Amjad Mitri**, the Legal advocacy coordinator at BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (BADIL) were the main resource persons. Along with them, Dr. Aruna Gnanadason (**Christian Zionism: Construction of an Ideology**), Dr. Mohan Razu (**Commonalities in the Dalit Palestinian Struggle –Towards a search of Truth**), Dr. Praveen Perumala (**Land Struggles and Indian National Movement – Adivasee and Dalit Experiences**) presented papers while Dr. Peniel Rufus and Dr. Dayam Prabhakar conducted the Bible Studies. There were different panels of participants led by Rev. Raj Bharath Patta, Rev. Vincent Rajkumar, Dr. Peniel Rufus and Rev. Deenadayalan. The sessions were moderated by Rt. Rev. Dr. V. Devasahayam, Rt. Rev. Dr. John Sadananda, Rev. Fr. Dr. Gnana Patrick, Rev. Viji Varghese Eapen, Dr. Arthur Jeyakumar, Prof. Mammen Varkey and Fr. Savio Fernandes. In the beginning, Rev. Vincent Rajkumar gave an orientation to the consultation highlighting its need, focus and aim.

The consultation provided the participants with greater clarity concerning the issues besetting the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict. In turn it helped to demystify the false ideological and theological constructs around which Christians have tended to be sympathetic to Israel and thus discount the legitimate claims of the Palestinians.

### Public Lecture by Rev. Dr. Christopher Duraisingh

A public lecture by Rev. Dr. Duraisingh, entitled “Revisioning the Mission of the Church and Leadership” was held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2012, at the Tagore Hall, United Theological College, Bangalore which was organised jointly by the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC) and the Women’s Studies Department, United Theological College. In his lecture, he observed that the current precarious situation of

many churches today is due to the triumphalistic understanding of itself and its mission, and an unhealthy focus on just worship. As a corrective towards this understanding, he posited that the church should re-vision itself based on the Jesus Movement, a social movement of subaltern people which started as a response to injustice and oppression prevalent in its time. Dr. Evangeline Rajkumar, Dr. Siga Arles and Fr. Dr. Selvaraj Arulnathan responded to the lecture. Dr. Duraisingh finally concluded that mission as co-walking with a moving God, entails that the church's future is in God and God's future is in the Church

## **BTESSC-ATESEA Joint Meeting**

At the initiation of Dr. H.S. Wilson of Foundation for Theological Education in South East Asia (FTESEA), a joint meeting was organized by the Board of Theological Education of the Senate of Serampore College (BTESSC with Association for Theological Education in South East Asia (ATESEA) in SCEPTRE, Kolkata on 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 2012. The main objective of this meeting was to build a relationship between BTESSC and ATESEA in strengthening Theological Education in Asia. The President, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos chaired the meeting in the presence of our Master of Serampore College, Rt. Rev. Dr. John Sadananda. Our Registrar, Rev. Dr. Ravi Tiwari presented a paper on the topic 'Theological Education in the Senate of Serampore College,' and Dr. Limuel Equina, the Executive Director of ATESEA presented a paper on 'Theological Education in ATESEA.' There was a detailed discussion on the agenda for a possible relationship between the two organizations. Towards the end, the following suggestions were taken for future co-operation:

1. Extending invitation to each other's programmes
2. Exchange of students
3. Exchange of faculty
4. Twinning of seminaries
5. Possible joint programmes on seminary governance, teaching methodology, seminars for doctoral candidates, librarians training etc.
6. Joint Consultation on equivalency of the different degree programmes
7. Mutual acceptance of centers of excellence in research
8. Mutual consultation on matters of affiliation/accreditation in South Asia

## **Public Lecture**

BTESSC organized a public lecture on *The Socio-Political Economic Realities of North East India* on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at UTC. Rev. Fr. Dr. Walter Fernandes, the former Director of ISI, New Delhi and the Founder Director of North-Eastern Social Research Centre, Guwahati was the special speaker. The public lecture was organized in the context of the recent events that happened in Bangalore and other places against the migrants from North East India.

In the public lecture, Dr. Fernandes analyzed historically the various factors which made inroads into the tribal culture which are the reasons for today's situation. Finally he suggested that peace is not merely the absence of armed conflict. It is a search for a new society and identity. His lecture was responded by Dr. Lalrinawmi Ralte, Professor from UTC and Mr. Vezo Akho, the President of North-East Students' Association. There was a lively discussion in which the members of the theological fraternity in Bangalore, pastors, NGOs, members from North-Eastern community, members from secular movements took part.

## **Bible Study Workshop on Climate Justice**

BTESSC organized a Bible Study Workshop in collaboration with the Ecumenical and Ecological Commission of the Church of South India from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2012 in CSI Synod Centre, Chennai. 26 participants representing different seminaries and churches participated which included faculty, students and pastors. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer, the Secretary of BTESSC and Rev. Viji Varghese Eapen introduced the mode of the

workshop which was followed by in-put sessions as given below:

1. Interface of Bible and Contextual realities and hermeneutical methods for contextual Bible studies (Dr. Jayachitra).
2. Bible in the Public Sphere: Hermeneutical Tools for Bible Studies on Social Issues (Dr. Royce Manoj Victor).
3. Climate Change: A Justice Issue (Mr. Vinod Wesley).
4. Towards an Ecological Hermeneutics with Special Reference to Climate Justice (Dr. George Zachariah)
5. Case Study from the life of the fisher folk.

After the input sessions, the participants were guided by the resource persons Dr. Jayachitra, Dr. Royce, Dr. George Zachariah, Dr. Allan Samuel Palanna to prepare Bible studies.

## Consultation on 10<sup>th</sup> WCC Assembly Theme

A National level consultation was organized on the 10<sup>th</sup> assembly theme "God of Life, Lead us to Justice and Peace," on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at LITE Campus, Chennai. The main purpose of this consultation was to produce an Indian concept paper of the theme from a lay perspective. Dr. Aruna Gnanadason, Prof. John M. Itty and Dr. Richard Devadoss presented three papers from different angles. Rev.Viji Varghese Eapen and Rev. Dr. Santanu Patro conducted two Bible studies. Most of the time at the consultation was spent by the participants to prepare a perspective paper, and finally the concept paper was released.

## BTTBPSA

Theological Writers' Workshop Report : BTTBPSA organized a theological writers workshop in Delhi for 2 days on November 13 & 14 in which 26 writers from different regions – Maharashtra, Gujarati, Punjabi, Delhi, U.P. Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan took part. Rev. Dr. Israel presented two papers, one on *Theology and Mission of Writing Theological Text Books*, the second paper on *Theological Text Books in the Light of the Revised BD Curriculum*. Along with the Rev. Dr. Israel Selvanayagam, Rev.J.H.Anand, Dr. Gier, Father Dominic and Father Monodeep from New Delhi were the other resource persons at the workshop.

## SCEPTRE

D.Min Colloquium : The enrollment of D. Min students is increasing year by year. There are 27 students in the second year programme and 38 students in the first year. To equip the students, SCEPTRE organized the Foundational Colloquium I from 21-30 September at SCEPTRE, Kolkata, where 14 students attended; Foundational Colloquium II from 2-12 September at OTS, Kottayam, where 24 students attended, Specialization Colloquium I from 11-19 October at OTS, Kottayam, where 17 students attended and Specialization Colloquium II from 1-10 November, ETC, Jorhat, where 11 students attended.

## Department of Research/SATHRI

NATIONAL COLLOQUIUM, 2012 : The National Colloquium for Doctoral students (2012) of the Senate of Serampore College was organized at the United Theological College, Bangalore (12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012). Forty six students from the second and third year D.Th and 7 faculty members from seven doctoral centers under the Senate of Serampore College (University) participated in this colloquium. The theme of the colloquium was "God of Life: Lead us to Justice and Peace."

The following papers were presented by students and resource persons: "Theology, Pastoral Ministry and the Art of Flying;" (Keynote address) "Ecumenical Perspectives: Engaging with Powers that deny the Purpose of God of Life;" "Ecological Perspectives: Naming the Powers that deny God's Justice for the Poor and the Earth;"

“Subaltern Perspectives: Listening to the voices of those in the Margins – Koodangulam issue as a case;” “Socio-politico-economic Perspectives: Engaging with Powers and Politics of the Market in our theologizing task;” “Grounding our Theologizing in the Framework of Life, Justice and Peace for all;” and “Feminist Perspective: That All may have Life in Abundance – Gender Justice Issues Today.”

The Colloquium was officially inaugurated by Rt. Rev. Dr. John S. Sadananda, Hon’ble Master, Serampore College by an inspiring message at the inaugural worship. Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philoxenos Episcopa, President, Senate of Serampore College, delivered the Presidential Address. Fr. Dr. K.M. George, Chairperson of the Committee for Research, Dr. Pratap Ch. Gine, Rev. Dr. Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar, Dr. Roger Galkwad, NCCI General Secretary, K.C. Abraham, Former Director of SATHRI, Dr. G. Patrick, Head of Department of Christian Studies, Madras University, Fr. Dr. Selvaraj Arulnathan SJ, Indian Institute of Social Studies, Rev. Dr. Israel Selvanayagam, Rev. Dr. P. Mohan Larbeer were the other resource persons.

K. P. Shasi an activist spoke on Koodangulam and Akkai Padmashali and Naina from ‘Sangama’ enlightened on the issues and challenges faced by the transgenders and sexual minorities in our society.

## Andhra Christian Theological College - Hyderabad

Faculty Families’ Exposure and Educational Programme: As part of the preparation for the new academic year, the Faculty with families were taken on an inter-religious exposure and educational programme. This was a co-sponsored programme with Inter-faith coalition for Peace, New Delhi. The programme included visiting important inter-religious sites in New Delhi and in our neighboring country Nepal.

Final Year’s Exposure Programme: The Final year B.Th. and B.D. old regulation students were given an intense exposure to the issues that confront Christians in particular, and humanity and environment in general. The exposure programme was organized in collaboration with the Ecumenical Christian Center (ECC), Bangalore and the following themes were dealt with: Understanding the Indian Constitution (Ms. Sapana Mohan), Environment issues (Rev.J.R. Paul Singh), Ecumenism / Wider Ecumenism (Rev.Dr. Jones Muthunayagam), Analysing the media : Print Media (Rev. Manoj Samuel), Listening to the Issues of Children ( Rev. Patterson S.R. Lamech)

Telugu Christian Writers’ Workshop: ACTC in collaboration with the National Christian Writers Forum organized a Telugu Christian Writers’ Workshop to Christian writers (who are regularly writing to secular newspapers and secular magazines) to encourage them to write on Christian themes. Many theological themes were discussed, which could form part of their writing ventures.

National Commission for Minorities: ACTC with collaboration with Aradhana Christian TV channel organized a meeting for the Andhra Pradesh Christian leaders addressed by Dr. H.T.Sangliana, the Vice Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi. Dr. Sangliana introduced the several programmes of the NCM, which Christians could avail for their welfare and development.

## Bethel Bible College - Guntur

Dr. Victor Permasagar Memorial Lecture was delivered on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 by Dr. B. J.Prashantham, Director of CCC, on the theme ‘The Wonderful Counselor.’ In his lecture he also shared the rare glimpses of Dr. Premasagar’s life and ministry. It was a memorable event and the lecture was very well received and appreciated by the participants. If anyone wishes to have the copy of the lecture he/she can request for it by e-mailing to drprashantham@gmail.com.

## Centre for Dalit/Subaltern Studies – New Delhi

The Centre for Dalit/Subaltern Studies, New Delhi organized a Book Release Function at the Indian Social Institute, Bangalore on 10 November 2012. Several eagerly awaited publications of CDS were released in the function which included,

1. *Rethinking Theology in India for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, edited by James Massey & T. K. John (Rs.1195/-)
2. *Theology for a New Community: Symbolic Universe and Meaning Systems*, edited by T. K. John & James Massey (Rs.500/-)
3. *Caste- Class Victims and their Assertion for Justice* by James Massey (Rs.300/-)
4. *Boom, Bubbles and Burst--capitalism falling by its inherent contradictions* by I John Mohan Razu
5. *Volume 9 - 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles* by I John Mohan Razu and James Massey(Rs.300/-)
6. *Volume 11 - Job* by A. Maria Arul Raja and (Rs.250/-)
7. *Volume 17- Jeremiah, Lamentations & Baruch* by James Massey(Rs.200/-)

The publications were released by prominent leaders such as Mr. Hans-Günter Löffler, Deputy Consul General, Consulate General of Germany, Bangalore, Prof. Dr. Richard Gnanakan, President, ACTS Group of Institutions, Fr. Prof. Dr. Saju Chackalackal, President, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Rev. Dr. Gudrun Löwner, Chaplain German Community, Bangalore, and Prof. Dr. P. Swarnalata Devi, Director, Dalit Open University, Guntur. The release function was graced by the presence of many students, prominent academicians, church ministers and Christian leaders.

## Christian Counseling Centre - Vellore

Suicide prevention: 75 University professors from Vellore Institute of Technology University (VITU) attended a three-day workshop in batches of 25 each. The workshop focused on helping students to adjust and cope better with the challenges students face in their life. The workshop was found to be very useful for extending counselling to needy students including suicide-prevention and appropriate referrals.

Preparation for retirement: Dr. Prashantham and Mrs. Meena Prashantham were invited for the second time to lead a seminar on 'Transitioning into Retirement,' for senior leadership of the State Bank of India in January 2013. Both had conducted a similar workshop earlier which was very well received.

Counselling Training: CCC continues to offer seminars and workshops on various areas related to counselling, and any one interested is requested to have that Programme either at Christian Counseling Centre, Vellore or on their own campus. They can contact CCC at [cccindia.org](http://cccindia.org) or website [www.cccindia.org](http://www.cccindia.org), for the same.

## Faith Theological Seminary - Manakala

"Faith and Praxis," was the title of the festschrift released on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in honor of the 80<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Rev.Dr.T.G.Koshy, the founder president of Faith Theological Seminary. It was released by Dr. Samuel W. Meshak, the Principal of Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil and the first copy was received by FTS Principal Dr.B.Varghese. This is a collection of articles on various contextual issues reflected from the perspective of T.G.'s life and witness. The articles were mostly contributed by seminary professors at FTS. Dr.K.C.Abraham has contributed an article entitled, "Response to New Challenges in India". Dr.B.Varghese has done an exegetical study on Mark 8:1-10 highlighting Jesus as a Passionate Visionary with a Compassionate heart. Dr.Simon Samuel, the Principal of New Theological College, made a critical observation on T.G.Koshy's Transformation and Missional Vision. Faith and Praxis : Jesus the Supreme Example of Humanization, is another article written by Dr.M.Stephen, the editor of this festschrift. A few others such as Dr. K.B. Georgekutty, Dr.Mathew C.Varghese, Rev.T.M.Jose, Dr.Annie George, Rev.P.G.Abraham, Rev.Jijoy Mathew and Charlie George have also contributed articles to this volume.

## Henry Martyn Institute - Hyderabad

At the end of August, HMI in association with SCEPTRE conducted a three-day seminar in Kolkata on the theme of Religious Pluralism and Mission. The topics discussed included "Living in the Conduct of Religious Pluralism and Discovering a Counter Culture," "Buddhism – a Religionless Religion," "Understanding of Islam," from various perspectives. There were more than 50 participants at this seminar. During the first week of

November, the Director and the Associate Director of Academics, Dr. M. M. Abraham, organized a seminar at Clark Theological College, Nagaland.

A three-day painting class for school children on Peace building in association with a Buddhist Trust from Delhi was held. More than twenty students participated under the guidance of an *ahimsa* artist, Ignatius Joseph, who has a special way of conducting these painting lessons. The concluding session was presided over by the Principal Secretary, Higher Education, A.P., Mr. M. G. Gopal, IAS. Many schools want such courses to be conducted often so that their children get exposed to such healthy vision and knowledge.

A three-day seminar for 11 peace activists from Nepal was organized to deepen their knowledge of peace-building and conflict transformation, and to have a firsthand experience of our community development work.

## ISPCK – New Delhi

Writers' Workshop for Women in Myanmar : ISPCK organized a Writers' Workshop in Yangon in July 2012 under the Women's Empowerment Programme (WEP). The workshop was in partnership with the Association for Theological Education in Myanmar (ATEM) and United Methodist Women (UMW) USA. Though specially aimed at women, it was attended by men as well. The participants were from churches, Christian organizations, theological seminaries both lay men and women.

The ISPCK General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Ashish Amos gave a brief overview of the workshop and the importance of the initiative. Rev. Dr. Saw Shwe Lin, General Secretary, MCC conducted the inaugural devotion. 'Hindi Cawnnak Kutken,' a book with English-Hindi-Hakha (Basic and simple words and sentences) published by ISPCK was released on the occasion. Mrs. Praveena Balasundaram, Executive Secretary, UMW was the main resource person. Teamed with her were Rev. Dr. Ashish Amos, General Secretary, ISPCK and Mrs. Ella Sonawane, Mission Secretary, ISPCK.

The Writers' Workshop was a milestone in the history of the Yangon church. Rev Dr. Lal Tin Hre, Executive Secretary, ATEM who was the local host remarked, "Words are insufficient to express our heartfelt thanks to ISPCK for conducting such a wonderful writers' workshop. This was the first of its kind in Myanmar. The participants enjoyed the workshop very much and even benefited and are grateful for organizing this workshop."

The General Secretary identified writers on the concluding day and the first Burmese Ecumenical and Contextual title with contributions by the trained writers on various issues faced by the people in Myanmar is scheduled to be published in April 2013. This will put Myanmar on the global publishing map and ensure wider reach and dissemination. An editorial board was also set up to network with the writers.

## NTC - Dehradun

A Conference on Jail Ministry was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov, 2012 which was followed by a visit to the District Jail of Dehradun. The conference was conducted by a team from Prisoners for Christ (PFC). The Principal, Dr. Simon Samuel, along with a few students, staff and a few prominent persons from the city spent time with the inmates of the jail and provided warm clothes to 100 inmates. Our efforts were well appreciated by the jail authorities. Although NTC has been providing opportunities to students in outdoor public ministries like participating and conducting literacy, health care and medical awareness camps, the ministry in the Jail was a new chapter in our public outreach. Practical Ministry Department of NTC conducted two programs during the third weekend in November. Member students of the NTC Street Theater (Angan Manch) led by Faculty member Rev. Ajay Kale and Rev. Shivraj Mahendra visited the villages in Pathri, near Haridwar in Uttarakhand. Through a puppet show in a school and through street-theatres in the villages, they created awareness on health, environmental issues and other economic, socio-cultural evil practices.

A conference on "Mental Health For All by All," was conducted on 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov for the NCT graduating students by Psychiatrist Dr. Paul Raj from Herbertpur Christian Hospital. A paper on the medical and Christian perspective on mental illness and the role of the church in the well being of this differently enabled people was presented by the doctor. A special seminar on Science and Religion was also conducted for the final year BD students. This was led by Dr. James Elrod.

## SCM India - Bangalore

The Student Christian Movement of India, one of the oldest youth ecumenical organizations of University students in India, formed in 1912 celebrated its 100 years in the pilgrimage of *praxis*. To commemorate this occasion, a Valedictory function was organised at SCMI Programme Centre at Mission Road, Bangalore on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2012. The function was graced by a number of students, senior friends and dignitaries. Ms. Sunita Suna, *Regional Secretary of the World Student Christian Federation-Asia Pacific Region*, delivered the inaugural address. Ms. Sunita emphasised on the role of SCM and Ecumenism, realities of social issues and challenges that young people face today. Later in the day, a public lecture was organised where Ms. Meena Kandasamy, noted poet and social activist, delivered a lecture presided by the Chairperson of SCMI Bishop Dr. Geevarghese Mor Coorilos. The lecture was based on the educational system in India. In her lecture, she highlighted how caste politics, patriarchy, laws of the land merge together in implementing educational plans.

Ms. Christine Housel, *General Secretary of World Student Christian Federation, Geneva* was the chief guest during the Valedictory function. Ms. Christine brought greetings from the global WSCF and appreciated the contribution of SCMI to the global society. She also named a few ecumenical leaders that SCMI has produced and asked all to draw inspiration from those leaders. She equally shared on the challenges that lay before the student community today as SCM strives to work among the students.

Besides these important events, there was a release of the *Centenary Souvenir, Bible Study Booklet* and *Special SCMI Postal Cover* and the re-dedication of SCMI reading room named 'Jagruthi' meaning 'Awakening' in Kannada. As a message to the wider world in the 100<sup>th</sup> year, the participants unitedly partook in a signature campaign against *Manual Scavenging*, in support of people's *Movement against Nuclear Energy*, and in solidarity with *Irom Sharmila against Militarisation*. The valedictory function also created a platform for alternate cultural expressions of people's movements wherein cultural troupes from all parts of India presented their dances and songs taking the audience on a voyage across India, expressing the message of unity in diversity, coupled with justice and peace.

## United Theological College - Bangalore

The Women's Studies Department of the United Theological College organized a unique programme on 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2012. Several people from various People's Movements and Adivasi Struggles for Justice came together on the lawns of UTC in front of the library to sing out Songs of Hope and Songs of Liberation on the eve of Independence Day. How can we interpret the meaning of Independence if we are still the slaves of a Market Ideology? How can we differentiate between a technology that is environment friendly and that which is not? How can we celebrate our sense of solidarity and commitment to issues of Justice, even if we belong to different faiths? All these and more was the message that was brought out by songs of various languages and genre of music. It was truly an evening to remember and celebrate the Independence Day with a difference.

The Women's Studies Department took an active role in bringing people together to work on Justice issues. One such occasion was during the sudden exodus of people from the North East of India who resided in different parts of Bangalore. The Bangalore Police also approached the Women's Studies Department of UTC to play a mediatory role in convincing people from the North East not to flee from Bangalore but give them courage, show solidarity and support during their time of crisis. As such a new body namely People's Solidarity Concerns was born, of which Dr. Rini Ralte now plays a key role in helping people to approach the forum in case of emergency, or help or counselling.

## Books published by BTESSC

1. ***Women in Theological Education: Pedagogical Issues*** by Limatula Longkumer
2. ***Kairos Palestine – An Indian Reflection*** edited by Viji Varghese Eapen & P. Mohan Larbeer
3. ***Posters – Climate Justice, Free Palestine, Ecological Barbarism, God of Life***