Member Services

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Vancouver WA 98686
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_____ My dues for 2012 ($30) or 2013 ($30) or 2012 - 2013 ($60) are enclosed
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Submissions for the Spring 2012 issue are due by March 1, 2012 and should be sent to: Dean S. Skelley, Editor, Newsletter, IBS-ELS, P.O. Box 160879, San Antonio TX 78280
or by e-mail to: dskelley@satx.rr.com

International Bonhoeffer Society
English Language Section

The Society has a new website: www.dietrichbonhoeffer.org

The Society is concerned with the rising cost of publishing the Newsletter, including the postage required for mailing. We would like to make this Newsletter available to as many members as possible by electronic distribution. Please provide us your e-mail address and inform us if an electronic version (pdf format) would be acceptable.

Name ________________________________________________________

E-mail Address _________________________________________________

Send to: Mark E. Randall (mark.e.randall@comcast.net)
or the Newsletter Editor Dean S. Skelley (dskelley@satx.rr.com).

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President’s Message

Dear Members and Friends of IBS:

Two separate conversations this past weekend. Each with a 20-30 something year old. Each bore the same tone. And each drew a similar conclusion. We are living in challenging times, which means that life is hard. And because it is hard, these young are hungry for both community and moral guidance. They want to be good people and are concerned about doing the right thing, yet find few places where serious reflection and conversation can take place. They are seeking answers, but at times are not sure where to turn. While they are not as active in church or faith communities in the traditional manner, they are still looking for the kinds of advice and insights our faith communities have provided throughout the centuries.

These conversations led me to think once again of Bonhoeffer’s own question posed at Christmas 1942. In his essay “After 10 Years,” written for his close circle of friends, reflecting on the previous decade and all the changes and challenges it brought, he was led to ask the question, “Are we still of any use?” Somehow I find that question and the probings that came from Bonhoeffer’s own exploration of his life and challenges to be somehow similar to the questions on the hearts and minds of today’s young adults, which pose a new set of challenges. Perhaps the future of the church will be determined by how those questions are handled and what kind of answers are proffered.

We now stand at an opportune time. Members of the global Bonhoeffer community and others will gather at Union Seminary in November to explore both what has been learned in the process of producing the new English edition of the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works and what this monumental achievement will mean for future generations as they seek, not only to appropriate Bonhoeffer for themselves, but guidance and insight into the larger questions that will shape their lives and world. May our conversation be the beginning of such fruitful endeavors in the years and decades to come. And may the contribution of the DBWE be such that many of these young people will be led to turn to this important voice from the church’s recent past.

The conference does not want to look back as much as to point us forward, which is something needed at this time. So thank you to the organizers of this event, most especially Guy Carter and Cliff Green, as well as the many translators, editors, and the team of people who have labored for over 20 years to make this publication a reality. When we consider the scope of this project, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Cliff Green. He has been the executive director of the project from its inception, but that title does not come close to describing the central role Cliff has had in guiding this project to completion. He has poured his heart and soul into each detail, has been its chief fund raiser, a mentor who has encouraged many along the way – and it is his commitment that stands behind this milestone. While the IBS can celebrate this achievement, we cannot do so without acknowledging the debt owed to Cliff.

It is a challenging, complex world that defies easy answers, but one also filled with opportunities. While it is a world asking questions Bonhoeffer himself could not have imagined, both his questions and his focused reflections during a most wrenching time of the 20th century can still provide guidance.

A blessed fall to all. Let’s keep the conversation going.

Sincerely and with thanks for your partnership,

H. Gaylon Barker
Ridgefield, Connecticut
Request for Nominations

Each year three members must be elected to the Board of Directors of the International Bonhoeffer Society - English Language Section. In order to prepare a slate of nominees for the election at the upcoming meeting of the society in San Francisco, November 19, the Nominating Committee is requesting names of candidates. If anyone knows of a society member who should be considered for election to the board, submit their name, along with their stated willingness to serve to: John W. Matthews (chair of the committee) (jwmatt@aol.com). Nominations from the floor will also be accepted at the time of the annual meeting.

Note to Society Members

Please send changes/updates of mailing addresses and e-mail addresses to:
Rev. Mark Randall, Salmon Creek United Methodist Church, 12217 NE Highway 99,
Vancouver WA 98686-3216 or to: mark.randall@salmoncreekchurch.org
Please notify the Editor (dskelley@satx.rr.com) if you prefer receiving the Newsletter by e-mail in a PDF format.

Future Bonhoeffer Meeting Dates and Sites

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INTERNATIONAL BONHOEFFER SOCIETY
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SECTION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011

Officers: H. Gaylon Barker (President) Ridgefield CT; Stephen Plant (Vice-President) Cambridge UK; Lori Brandt Hale (Secretary) Maplewood MN; and Mark Randall (Treasurer) Vancouver WA

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Newsletter Editor: Dean S. Skelley (San Antonio TX)

This new book by Jeffrey Pugh, professor at Elon University and former co-chair of the AAR Bonhoeffer Group, is a worthy attempt at an urgently important project: to connect Bonhoeffer’s prison reflections on a “non-religious Christianity” in the world come of age with current U.S. political reality, particularly the past ten years’ compounding “war on terror.” Following a preface by Martin Marty and two chapters of introduction to Bonhoeffer, Pugh proceeds into his engagement with these questions via chapters on the “world come of age,” the “eclipse of religion,” the “suffering God,” “confronting the powers,” and an outline of “Christianity for us today.”

The book’s strongest section is its sustained development of Bonhoeffer’s critique of religion in chapter 4, understood as the captivity of Christianity (or any other symbol system) to the overarching cultural and political ideologies within which it is enmeshed, and to which it is generally largely unconscious. Pugh’s account of how Christianity in Bonhoeffer’s time and throughout Western history became enmeshed within the agendas and machinations of the cultural and political powers that be (which use religious symbols, rituals, and communities to shape citizens’ deepest identities into alignment with the rulers’ projections of reality) – and how such dynamics equally pervade Christianity in the contemporary U.S. context – provides a nuanced grasp of these phenomena. Within this treatment, Pugh’s treatment on pp. 76f. of the connection between religious drives toward “purity” and the political emergence of totalitarianism is particularly helpful. And his tracing of the theology of the cross in chapter 5 brings these insights of a religionless Christianity into contemporary relief. As a U.S. citizen I resonate strongly with Pugh’s horror at how Christianity is used in our culture today; his passion throughout the text. We see all three in the following example (p. 153): “inasmuch as the state’s natural order appears to be violence, any gathering around a table where a genuine and non-coerced peace reigns constitutes a threat to those who want to manipulate populations to take up arms against those who threaten the regime.” Sentences like this continue for paragraphs on end, mostly without reference to specific state actions that would ground such assertions and allow readers to evaluate them.

2) The book includes failures to cite both Bonhoeffer and secondary authors. The missing citations of Bonhoeffer include, e.g., the treatment in chapter 3 of the 1944 theological letters from prison, listing the many authors Bonhoeffer was reading but not where the letters detailing his engagement with these authors are found (p. 46); a later reference to Bonhoeffer’s “witness to the ultimate in the midst of the penultimate” without noting the chapter in Ethics developing this topic (p. 133); and a use of the language of “ideal” vs. “real” that inverts Bonhoeffer’s treatment of these categories in Life Together (and doesn’t cite Bonhoeffer to indicate whether this inversion of categories is conscious, p. 141). Of secondary authors lacking, the most notable – given the book’s subject matter – are the many theorists writing today on church/state questions or analyses of war (including Chris Hedges, the title of whose award-winning 2002 book, War Is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, Pugh echoes almost verbatim, yet without reference or citation, on p. 129).

3) Most problematically, the author misreads Bonhoeffer to create what becomes, as the book progresses, a notably unusual “Bonhoefferian” account. One overarching misreading will illustrate the problem. Pugh uses Bonhoeffer’s terminology of the “world come of age” as a framing metaphor for the book; he explores this category at length in chapter 3 and uses it in the rest of the book as shorthand for Bonhoeffer’s view of the world today. As most interpreters of the prison letters concur, for Bonhoeffer “the world come of age” (mündige Welt) is descriptive and constructive language, not pejorative: he is referring to that human maturity in many public and private arenas which makes finally possible the end of the deus ex machina, the “puppet-master god,” who was an illusion all along. Thus Bonhoeffer believed that living in the world come of age makes possible for Christians, for the first time, a more honest and profoundly true glimpse of God than the one operative in the past: no longer the controlling Almighty, but the Crucified One: “God consents to be pushed out of the world and onto the cross; God is weak and powerless in the world, and in precisely this way, and only so, is at our side and helps us” (DBWE 8:479, letter dated July 16, 1944). Two days later, in a quote cited twice by Pugh, Bonhoeffer writes, if one wants to speak of God nonreligiously, then one must speak in such a way that the godlessness of the world is not covered up in any way, but rather precisely to uncover it and surprise the world by letting light shine on it. The world come of age is more god-less and perhaps just because of that closer to God than the world not yet come of age (DBWE 8:482).

Pugh confirms that Bonhoeffer “no longer saw this movement towards human autonomy in a purely negative light” (p. 52). Yet despite this realization, he uses the language of the “world come
of age” throughout the rest of the book to mean something very different: namely, as shorthand for the modern world precisely in its alienation from God. We see this in the following quotes:

In fact, the “world come of age” that we are creating is fashioning a fascist architecture of the soul in the service to abstractions like state and economics that take certain concrete forms, most often secured by violence.... It is a world that seeks to create all in its image, to eradicate all difference, all resistance, that stands as the apex of the “world come of age”.... [T]he “world come of age” allows the spirit of destruction to define it (pp. 64, 67, and 111).

Based on this understanding, Pugh is thus trying to trace a “type of Christianity that Bonhoeffer sees as able to resist the ‘world come of age’” (page 65, italics mine).

This misreading points to an underlying tone-deafness to a central aspect of Bonhoeffer’s thought; that is, the book reads as if Bonhoeffer thinks the world is fundamentally evil. In the chapter of his Ethics titled “Christ, Reality, and Good” Bonhoeffer had famously traced the problem of two-spheres thinking (DBWE 6:55-68), naming Jesus Christ as the one reality of both church and world. Pugh notes this and refers to it several times; but his writing does not reflect the radiant vision of the world already redeemed, embraced, borne, and loved that Bonhoeffer develops at his argument continues. Within this utterly loved world, the church is not a beleaguered citadel fighting against the darkness but those who perceive and live now in this already-accomplished redemption and who are inviting others also to live in reality. Two quotes from this material in the Ethics show Bonhoeffer’s thinking:

For it is [precisely] the “evil world” that is reconciled to Christ in God and has its ultimate and true reality not in the devil but, again, in Christ. The world is not divided between Christ and the devil; it is completely the world of Christ, whether it recognizes this or not. As this reality in Christ it is to be addressed... (DBWE 8:65).

In the body of Jesus Christ, God took on the sin of all the world and bore it.... Whoever perceives the body of Jesus Christ in faith can no longer speak of the world as if it were lost, as if it were separated from God... (DBWE 8:67).

Therefore, Pugh’s repeated use of “world come of age” as a metaphor for the powers of evil creates a rhetoric that simply doesn’t feel Bonhoefferian. He writes as if the trajectory of Bonhoeffer’s life and of Christian discipleship in the modern world were one of battle, stoicism, a grim march of confrontation with evil. Without minimizing the devastating losses and anguish Bonhoeffer endured, I sense a different underlying energy in his letters, visible in his outpourings of gratitude, his love of friends and family and music and the world, and above all the hermeneutically key assertion for him that “discipleship is joy” (Preface to Discipleship, DBWE 4:40, italics mine). In contrast, while Pugh’s final chapter on Eucharist starts to hint at a larger imagination and experience, the book’s overall tone is a drumbeat of joylessness.

Two final quotes show the interconnections of these various interpretive problems. First, at the beginning of a paragraph outlining Bonhoeffer’s acceptance of guilt and responsibility for his nation, Pugh writes: “For those who are inclined to make Bonhoeffer’s actions normative, then they should be prepared to follow Bonhoeffer to the Golgotha he walked” (p. 128). And, on page 132, “Do we really want to follow Bonhoeffer into the abyss of despair he suffered when he took the step of seeking to overthrow the government?” Pugh’s Bonhoeffer does not ring true to the one who found in the “world come of age” an opening for fresh new language about Jesus Christ; who never wanted to make his own (or anyone else’s) actions “normative” and fought against such abstracting, precedent-setting tendencies all his life; and who would find the idea that he himself was the one we ought to follow—rather than Jesus Christ—unthinkable.

Jeff Pugh’s outrage about present U.S. foreign policy and the “war on terror” is a tremendous gift, and we very much need the conversation with Bonhoeffer his book intends to create. I hope his next work will deepen this important discussion into an authentically Bonhoefferian vision of Christian discipleship, in a world already held and redeemed in love. Indeed, I would love to see Pugh’s final chapter here on Eucharist become the foundation of a Bonhoefferian Eucharistic spirituality of hope: God’s own provision of community, reconciliation, vision, and prophetic imagination in the body of Jesus Christ for a world in such desperate need.

Lisa E. Dahill
Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Columbus, Ohio

Recent Publication

Bonhoeffer and Business Ethics, Walton Padelford, Mountain Home AR, 72654 (P.O. Box 1383), 2011, ISBN 978-1-936670-14-7. The author is professor of Economics at Union University. Chapter titles: His Costly Discipleship, Ethics, Discourse on Business Ethics, Beyond Bentham and Kant, Business as a Mandate of God, Commerce and the Glory of God, Business as the Void, Vocation, Authority and Power and Bonhoeffer’s Consistent Ethical Response. Epilogue: Christian Formation in the Business School. The author states that he has not been “sure that a distinctively Christian point of view has been manifested to [his] students. He raises the question: “What is the distinctively Christian point of view with respect to business ethics?”
Due to his Christology and ecclesiology, Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theology is intrinsically political. On the one hand, his theological convictions make possible opposition to government authority. Early on, in his critical engagement against the Nazi regime, in “The Church and the Jewish Question” (1933), Bonhoeffer expected the church to oppose the state when the rights of those disdained by the state were violated. Ultimately, this stance resulted in Bonhoeffer’s participation in the resistance and his violent death. On the other hand, Bonhoeffer advocated a conservative, non-democratic political order for Germany after the war. How can one explain these apparent contradictions? How should we understand Bonhoeffer’s political theology?

The aim of the XI International Bonhoeffer Congress is to encourage reflections on the continuing relevance of Bonhoeffer’s political theology and ethics for the Christian church in a world that is now characterized by an increasing gap between the rich and the poor. Is the church once again expected to put up political resistance?

“A Spoke in the Wheel: Reconsidering the Political in Bonhoeffer’s Theology” is the theme for the Eleventh International Bonhoeffer Congress, to be held at the Sigtuna Stiftelsen near Stockholm, Sweden. Bishop Emer. Dr. Martin Lind is the President of the Planning Committee, Pastor Anders Jonaker the secretary and Prof. Dr. Kirsten Busch Nielsen the chair of the program committee. Members of the Planning Committee include Dr. Joel Burnell (Poland), Rev. Hans Buurmeester (Holland), Dr. Keith Clements (UK), Rev. Martin Hueneke (Germany), Rev. Anders Jonaker (Sweden), Prof. Dr. Kirsten Busch Nielsen (Denmark), Dr. Stephen Plant (UK), Dr. Shozo Suzuki (Japan), Prof. Dr. Jurgen Wiersma (Holland), Dr. Janusz Witt (Poland) and Rev. John Matthews (USA).

Sigtuna, Sweden is the location of the historic meeting in 1942, when details of the military conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler were shared between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Bishop George Bell. (The house where that meeting was held still stands and participants in the Congress will be able to tour the facility.) The congress will be hosted by the Sigtuna Foundation, with its beautiful conference center close to the shores of Lake Marlen, only twenty minutes from the Arlanda international airport that serves Stockholm. In addition to the lectures and informal conversations that always make these gatherings rich, participants will also enjoy local Swedish folk music and dance, as well as taste food as only the Scandinavians can offer!

Registration will begin online in September 2011, and the website for the congress can be accessed at: [http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/Bonhoeffer+congress+2012__1053.html](http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/Bonhoeffer+congress+2012__1053.html). The cost is approximately 530 euros/750 USD and there is a reduction in the fee for students.

More information will be forthcoming in the Winter 2012 issue of this Newsletter, but now is the time to begin planning to participate in this truly ecumenical gathering of people who have been inspired in some way by the legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The program, the location, and the people who will attend ensures a most memorable and educational event.

Keynote speakers include: Prof. Dr. Sven Erik Brodd (Uppsala), Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Huber (Berlin), Prof. Dr. Jean Bethke Elstain (Chicago), Prof. Dr. Wolf Krotke (Berlin), Prof. Dr. Nico Koopman (Stellenbosch), Prof. Dr. Christiane Tietz (Mainz) and Victoria Barnett (Washington, D.C.).
CONGRESS PROGRAM

Wednesday June 27, 2012
Arrival
18:30-20:00 Supper
20:00-20:30 Bishop Emer. Dr. Martin Lind (Linköping), President of the Congress
20:30-21:30 Prof. Dr. Sven Erik Brodd (Uppsala)
  *Sigtuna 1942. Structuring Factors in Political Ecclesiology*

Thursday June 28, 2012
**Theme of the Day: Bonhoeffer’s Political Resistance**
07:45-08:15 Morning devotions in the chapel
08:15-09:00 Breakfast
09:00-10:00 Bishop Emer. Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Huber (Berlin)
  *The Theological Profile of Bonhoeffer’s Political Resistance*
10:00-11:30 Prof. Dr. Jean Bethke Elshtain (Chicago)
  *The Profile of Bonhoeffer’s Political Resistance from the Perspective of Political Science*
11:00-11:30 Coffee Break
11:30-12:30 Plenary discussion
12:30-14:30 Lunch break
14:30-17:30 Seminar papers on Theology and Economy, Bonhoeffer and Hammarskjöld, Europe and the Refugees. Coffee break during afternoon.
18:30-20:00 Supper

Evening Program: to be announced

Friday June 29, 2012
**Theme of the Day: Bonhoeffer on Church, State and Civil Society**
07:45-08:15 Morning devotions in the chapel
09:00-10:00 Prof. Dr. Wolf Krötke (Berlin)
  *Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Verständnis des Staates. Theologische Begrundung – Praktische Konsequenzen – Rezeption in Ost und West (Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Understanding of the State. Theological Reasoning – Practical Consequences – Reception in the East and West)*
10:00-11:00 Victoria Barnett (Washington D.C.), Staff Director of Church Relations, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
  *Church, State and Civil Society*
11:00-11:30 Coffee break
11:30-12:30 Plenary discussion
12:30-14:30 Lunch break
14:30-17:30 Seminar papers on Bonhoeffer and Kierkegaard, Ethics and Political Theory, Lutheran heritage, Public Theology. Coffee break during afternoon
18:30-20:00 Supper

No official evening program
Saturday June 30, 2012

Theme of the Day: How do We Live Responsibly?
07:45-08:15 Morning devotions in the chapel
08:15-09:00 Breakfast
09:00-10:00 Prof. Dr. Nico Koopman (Stellenbosch)
   How Do We Live Responsibly?
10:00-11:00 Plenary discussion
11:00-11:30 Coffee break
11:30-12:30 Seminar papers on Bonhoeffer and Gandhi, Climate Change and Environmental Ethics
12:30-13:30 Lunch break
13:30-16:00 Seminar papers continue Coffee break during afternoon
16:00-17:00 Prof. Dr. Christiane Tietz (Mainz)
   Harvesting from the Congress
20:00 Banquet

Sunday July 1, 2012
09:30 Departure from Sigtuna for the Cathedral of Uppsala
11:00 High Mass (Church of Sweden, Lutheran) in the Cathedral
   Sermon: Bishop Emer. Dr. Martin Lind

Registration: Registration for the Congress will open in September 2011 at http://www.sigtunastiftelsen.se/Bonhoeffer+congress+2012__1053.html

Payment: Congress fee including lodging and meals at the venue will be 5.000 SKR (approximately 530 Euro/750 USD). Information about reduction of fee for students will follow.

Contact: Prof. Dr. Kirsten Busch Nielsen

Faculty of Theology
University of Copenhagen
Købmagergade 44-45
P.O. Box 2164
DK-1150 Copenhagen K
Denma
The following is from a statement made by Ernst Kaltenbrunner, one of the most feared henchmen in Nazi Germany. Kaltenbrunner attained huge power during World War Two and became involved with the extermination camps and all that is associated with the Holocaust. He was involved with the organization behind the murder of Jews and others in the death camps. In every sense, he simply carried on the work of Heydrich. Kaltenbrunner also gave orders that captured Allied POWs should be shot. When it became clear that Germany had lost the war, he traveled south in Germany in an effort to escape, but was captured by American troops. At Nuremberg he was charged with crimes against humanity and was sentenced to death. His execution was carried out on October 1, 1946.

Statements by the Chief of Security Police reviewing Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s remarks in meeting with Bishop Bell
Berlin SW 11, January 4, 1945

Regarding: Assertions of Lord Bishop Bell of Chichester in 1942 on English Politics

The Protestant pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, imprisoned in connection with the events of July 20, 1944, previously a pastor of the German Protestant congregations in London, met in May and June 1942 in Sweden with Lord Bishop Bell, a previous acquaintance of his. This meeting took place by order of former Admiral Canaris. Regarding the content of this discussion with Bell, Bonhoeffer gave the following statements in an interrogation.

Lord Bishop Bell, the most highly regarded and best known of the lord bishops of the Church of England, a decisive leader in the ecumenical movement, is apparently a man of balance and understanding, an outspoken friend of Germany. Therefore, in light of the war situation, will not, as might have been expected, become the successor to Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Is said to have visited Germany often in earlier years and become more closely acquainted with Rudolf Hess. In the beginning he attempted to come to terms with the German Protestant Reich Church under Müller but then switched his allegiance to the Confessing Church and stood in solidarity with Niemoller, Dibelius, and Koch.

The purpose of Lord Bishop Bell’s trip to Sweden at that point was supposedly to gather information about Swedish-Soviet relations and about church activities in Scandinavia. Bell is said to have declared that before beginning this trip he spoke at length with Eden and asked him what he should do if in Sweden peace feelers were extended from any direction. Eden is said to have answered very gruffly that short of an English victory peace would not be discussed. In this matter Eden is believed to conform fully to Churchill.

The stance of Stafford Cripps toward the problems of the war is supposedly entirely different from that of Eden. It is incorrect to assert, as some do, that he is a Bolshevist - on the contrary, he is a Christian socialist. Speaks with great concern about Russia’s power, which in England is almost universally underestimated. Cripps is said to know the situation in Moscow intimately and fears that the Soviets will march right up to the Brandenburg Gate and no power, even England, will be able to keep this from happening. Yet he believes the consequences for England of a Soviet victory are incalculable. Bell is said to have asserted that this view corresponds more closely to that of the English church than does Eden’s.

When questioned as to any possible U.S. intention of destroying or absorbing England, Lord Bishop Bell is said to have disputed this possibility with full conviction. America needs a strong England, and without its global empire England is not strong. Bell is said to have not wanted to entertain further thoughts about a union between the United States and England.

In the course of the discussion Bell also remarked about a visit by Lord Beaverbrook to Switzerland that had apparently taken place shortly beforehand. Beaverbrook is said to have met there with German industrialists and to have discussed the possibilities for negotiating peace in such a way as to create a united front between the Western powers and Germany against Russia.

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“Bonhoeffer for the Coming Generations”
Conference Schedule

Sunday, November 13

9:15 am  Gather in Bonhoeffer Room prior to departure for service at Abyssinian

11:00 am  Service at Abyssinian Baptist Church, 132 W. 138th Street, Harlem

3:00 pm  Afternoon Registration & Check-in: Hastings Desk area of UTS main entrance at 3041 Broadway & 121st.

5:30 pm  Welcome Reception & Supper: Refectory

7:30 pm  Conference Opening: Social Hall
Opening of Conference by DBWE Executive Director: Clifford Green
Welcome by Union Seminary President: Serene Jones
Introduction of Keynote Speaker: Barry Harvey

Keynote Address: Sam Wells, Dean of the Chapel, Duke University, “Bonhoeffer: Theologian, Activist, Educator, Challenges for the Church of the Coming Generations”

Monday, November 14

Bonhoeffer Lectures in Public Ethics: Retrospect and Prospect

7:30 - 8:30 am  Breakfast: Refectory

9:00 am  Retrospect: Bonhoeffer and Public Ethics 1945-2010: Social Hall

Convenor: Robin Lovin

Wolfgang Huber: “Inspiration, Controversy, Legacy. The Response to Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Three Germanys”

9:30 am  Plenary Discussion

9:45 am  Coffee Break: Social Hall Foyer

10:15 am - noon  Panel: Bonhoeffer & Public Ethics in Five Nations
John de Gruchy, South Africa; Keith Clements, United Kingdom; Larry Rasmussen, USA; Carlos Caldas, Brazil; Kazuaki Yamasaki, Japan
Moderator: Robin Lovin

Noon - 12:30 pm  Panelist and plenary discussion

12:30 pm  Lunch: Refectory
1:00 - 5:30 pm  Book Sale: Bonhoeffer Room*

2:00 pm  

Prospect: Bonhoeffer and Public Life. New Issues and Research  Social Hall

Moderator: Ralf Wüstenburg

2:00 - 3:00 pm  Panel: New Research Related to Bonhoeffer and Public Life

Reggie Williams, “Harlem Renaissance Literature and Theology as an Influence on Bonhoeffer’s Ethical Activism”

Florian Schmitz, “Reading Discipleship and Ethics Together. Implications for Ethics and Public Life”

Brigitte Kahl, “Church for Others: Bonhoeffer, Paul, and the Critique of Empire”

3:00 - 3:30 pm  Panelist and plenary discussion

3:30 - 4:00 pm  Coffee Break: Social Hall Foyer

4:00 - 4:30 pm  Christiane Tietz, “Bonhoeffer’s Strong Christology in the Context of Religious Pluralism”

4:30 - 5:00 pm  Questions and plenary discussion

5:30 pm  Informal Cocktail Hour (BYOB): Upper Refectory or Social Hall

6:00 pm  Union President’s dinner for Stiftung officers, German lecturers, & Bonhoeffer Society Committee for Lectures and Scholar Exchange

6:30 pm  Dinner: Refectory

Free Evening - To arrange space for informal gatherings on the campus please contact the Conference Coordinator (cell 717-424-1967 - Please call. Please do not text.)

Tuesday, November 15

Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English Edition (DBWE)

Theme of the Day: Translation and the Interpretation of History and Theology: Social Hall

Convenor: Victoria Barnett

9:00 am  Victoria Barnett: “The Bonhoeffer Legacy as Works-in-Progress. Reflections on a Fragmentary Series”

9:30 am  Discussion

9:45 am  Coffee Break: Social Hall Foyer

10:14- 11:45 am  Panel: “Bonhoeffer in Translation. Challenges and Discoveries”
Conference Schedule - Continued

Isabel Best, Peter Frick, Barbara Green, Reinhard Krauss, Nancy Lukens, Martin Rumscheidt, Anne Schmidt-Lange

Moderator: Victoria Barnett

11:45 am Hans Pfeifer, “Translating Bonhoeffer: Intercultural Theological Cooperation.”

12:15 - 12:30 pm Discussion

12:30 pm Lunch: Refectory

1:00 - 5:30 pm Book Sale: Bonhoeffer Room*

Afternoon Theme: History and Theology in Bonhoeffer Interpretation

2:00 - 3:00 pm Panel: “Bonhoeffer and the Historians. A Presence in Different Landscapes”
   Doris Bergen, Gary Dorrien, Robert Ericksen, Matthew Hockenos

   Moderator: Andrew Chandler

3:30 - 4:00 pm Panelist and plenary discussion

4:00 - 4:30 pm Coffee Break: Social Hall Foyer

4:30 - 5:30 pm Panel: “Reading Bonhoeffer the Theologian”
   Michael DeJonge: “Bonhoeffer from the Perspective of Intellectual History”
   Clifford Green: “Bonhoeffer: Toward a New Christian Paradigm”

   Moderator: Christopher Morse, Bonhoeffer Professor, UTS

5:30 - 6:00 pm Panelist and plenary discussion

6:15 - 7:00 pm Social hour (with jazz piano): Social Hall

7:00 pm Banquet: Refectory

MC: H.Gaylon Barker, President, Bonhoeffer Society


Wednesday, November 16

7:30 - 9:00 am Breakfast: Refectory

9:00 am Check-out & Departure
Book Review


Ed. Note: This review first appeared in the ibg Bonhoeffer Rundbrief, Nr. 95, July 2011 (pp. 33-38) and was translated for the Newsletter by Martin Hueneke with the help of his daughter, Janna Hueneke.

The French reformed pastor, Jean Lasserre (1908-1983), has become known in Germany not least through the relationship he had with Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The two had become acquainted during a university course in the USA in 1931. Lasserre had contributed essentially to Bonhoeffer's “Christian Pacifism” which he decisively propagated at an ecumenical conference in 1934 on the North Sea island Fano. His proposal there was for the “one great Council of the Holy Church of Christ” which would forbid war to all Christians.

More than thirty years later, in 1965, Lasserre published his essay “Christianity facing the question of violence.” Again, 45 years later in the series Friedenswissenschaft (Science of Peace) of the Catholic College Vechta, a German translation of the essay, shortened because of lack of money, was published, supported by the International Reconciliation Council. The editors made use of the relationship of Bonhoeffer and Lasserre in order to win more attention. The cover of the booklet shows the well-known photo of the two taken in Fano. The preface points to their friendship, and at the end of the booklet a few of Lasserre’s memories about Bonhoeffer are reprinted. No doubt this is intended to create the impression that Bonhoeffer confirms what Lasserre thought and wrote about the necessity for the churches and all Christians to refuse any form of war, although written in the completely different historic situation of the East-West conflict.

But Bonhoeffer does not play any explicit role in the entire essay, although one can easily find positions held by the German theologian in the mid-thirties of the last century. One of them is the view that Christians are “obliged to follow the commandments of the Lord” (14) and to live without violence just as Jesus Christ himself did. Participation in a war, therefore, would mean for them to depart from Jesus Christ (see 88). Another position is the idea of the Council. All Christians must swear a holy oath “never ever to raise arms against each other” (113). A “formal declaration of the representatives empowered by our churches should say: No one ever is allowed to take part in the criminal action of war. We command all our listeners in the future to refuse any participation in war or in the preparation of war” (120). Nearly, as if spoken by Bonhoeffer himself, sounds Lasserre’s argument supported by his “Creed” that in the Bible we encounter “Jesus as Lord of our whole life.” From here follows: No “area should be excluded from His view, His control, His commandments” (13).

Obviously Lasserre, to explain the implications and consequences of his refutation of a doctrine of the “two regimes,” did not refer to those texts which Bonhoeffer wrote during the time of his participation in the resistance against Hitler and while he was in prison. This is a much more independent, even headstrong theology of peace, defined by the four following points:

First: Lasserre’s biblical exegesis tries to establish that the Old Testament prophecies of a messianic “Peace Maker” came true in Jesus Christ, “often with amazing accuracy” (22). God’s peace had come to earth in him “as in a parachute,” creating a “bridgehead of peace” amidst the “dammed and bloody games of the heroes” (30). War is a matter of the “heathen,” i.e., the non-Christian religions. This judgment runs through Lasserre’s entire essay. He illustrated it with an extra chapter on the “heathenish character of wars” (see 61-70). In the religious ecstasy of war, between smoking ruins and shattered corpses, the army is offering to the God Mars the most cruel of all heathens’ Gods (67). Participation by Christians, therefore, has to be regarded as a relapse to “heathenism.” This relapse, according to Lasserre, occurred widely in the “Constantine era” when Christendom became the state religion. Here the “kingdom of Christ over the whole world lost its meaning.” Here the “church surrendered the worldly kingdom to its own laws and demons” (58). Besides the kingdom of Christ, the “law of the jungle” was established as “Christian,” as Lasserre repeats again and again (see 59 et al).

Second: The encounter with Judaism, which denies the Messianism of Jesus, led Lasserre to a special emphasis in confessing Christ. Christians who believe the kingdom of peace will only begin at the parousia of Christ, are, according to him, still “rather Jews than Christians” (26). Jesus, however, “died in the awareness that he had fulfilled the prophecies about the end of wars and the Messianic peace” (27). That’s how Lasserre interprets the last word on the Cross by the Johannine Christ: “It is accomplished.” The “nonviolence” of Christ, therefore, seems to prove his Messianism.

For that reason, Lasserre tries to prove that Jesus never justified violence against humans nor accepted the profession of the soldier. For example, he is of the opinion that Jesus took the whip only to expel animals, not humans, from the temple (Jn. 2:15) (see 40-42). Jesus’s word to “pay Caesar what is due to Caesar, and to pay God what is due to God” (Mk. 12:17) is understood this way: “Only the small gold coin is due to Caesar… But all the rest is due to God” (43). Such examples of a biblical exegesis led by special interest could be multiplied. However, Lasserre’s intention is weakened this way rather than strengthened.

His views about Jesus as “man” appear strange as well, in a chapter devoted to the subject (see 34-38). According to him, Jesus was “deeply a man who is really a man. He lived a heroic gentleness” (39). Here doubtless the counter-image of the war hero is to be sketched. But why now a “hero” again, while women play no role in the matter of peace whatsoever – apart from sometimes “taming their husbands, these ruffians” (95)?

Third: According to Lasserre, the nonviolent Christ also governs over the state. The Peace Theology of the reformed past, therefore, implies something like a theory of the state. But his theory is strangely confused. On the one hand the idea and concept of a state is refused altogether. It is supposed to be an idealization and idolization of “authority” (see 75-78). The state is rather a “very
human institution” with a “tendency to corruption,” supported by a “class and race judiciary”(77). On the other hand, the “supreme authority” according to Romans 13, is regarded as “God’s servant” in the spirit of Jesus Christ (see 78-84). To check the evil and to punish the offender, therefore, it has to use nonviolent “pedagogic” means only (see 84). In order to have the authority act in conformity to Christ, Christianity has to watch over it by making use of its prophetic supervisory duty (1.5) and through the effective signs made by conscientious objectors (see 95-105). Amazingly, Lasserre here even includes Martin Niemoeller (see 118) who is known to have asked Hitler to be excused from the KZ (concentration camp) and to deploy him as a U-boat commander.

It is noticeable that Lasserre seems to ignore the difference between a constitutional state and a dictatorship. He also does not say a word about the application of human rights in a democratic political system. Karl Barth’s effort, for example, to interpret the constitutional democratic system in line with God’s justification of man is turned down harshly (see 1.5). Lasserre seems not to know Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s teaching about the supreme authority having a “mandate” of Christ to “hold the power of the sword.” The way he speaks of the state, his opinion oscillates between the ideal of a non-violent political system governed by Christ and a state bowing to the idol of violence.

Fourth: All pacifism has to argue with the plea that every single human being, society, or state has the right to defend against the murderous attacks on the lives of people. According to Lasserre, in this case “nonviolent struggle” should be the matter of choice. This may consist of “a certain delaying of the requested obedience” against an aggressor, as in a “boycott, strike, general strike, or sabotage of any kind” (96f). On the other hand, the violent aggressors should still be seen as humans able to be talked with. One should appeal to their conscience, one should put them to shame by “accepting suffering without batting an eyelid.” One should speak the truth without guile and humbly bid for trust (see 100-105).

A good deal of this corresponds to the principles of the nonviolent resistance against colonial and racist violence as represented by Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Within the “peaceful revolutions” in the eastern bloc states in 1989, the “nonviolent struggle” even has proved how successful it can be. Lasserre’s appeals to Christendom are still up to date, ceaselessly to influence governments to solve conflicts between peoples, states and religions by nonviolent means and to pre-empt bloody escalations. The churches of the world must become more like peace churches than they actually are today if they don’t want to deny the basis and the origin of their message. Also, they must not cease to denounce “the horrible methods” of war which corrupt the aims of any war. But have they got a right to call those people “beasts” or “murderers” who, in executing their democratic responsibility, try to stop a genocide by force of arms, making them equal to those who savagely butcher other humans or peoples?

Lasserre, having been a soldier himself, is led by the experience of the dehumanization which happens in any war, because the only aim of the combatants is the killing of their fellow creatures. In relation to this experience, also, Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s support of the military’s assassination attempt on Hitler would fall under the verdict that this German pastor had made himself common with “murderers” and “beasts,” because if the attempt had succeeded, certainly the mass murderer would not have been killed alone. Bonhoeffer, as we know, joined the resistance against Hitler in order to help stop the genocide of the Jews and the killing of millions of people on all sides of the war. He knew that he would incur guilt on himself before Christ. Strangely, the knowledge about the holocaust does not play any role in Lasserre’s pleading for nonviolence. The occurrence of irrational eruptions of hatred and savage in the unredeemed world” where blinkered perpetrators are immune to any appeals of nonviolence and rather encouraged by them – this has no perspective in Lasserre’s thinking.

The fifth thesis of the Barmen Theological Declaration, subscribed to by Bonhoeffer, that the state, according to God’s commandment, has to “care for justice and peace on threat and execution of force (violence),” certainly is to be differentiated today. Violence must never be the normal means of securing justice and peace, neither within a society nor in relation to other peoples and states. The old Karl Barth who had formulated this thesis, therefore, self-critically said it should read “in an extreme emergency on threat and execution of force (violence).” This “extreme emergency is not something Lasserre includes in his thinking. This was different with his college friend from Germany.

The encounter with Jean Lasserre and his approach, based on the Sermon on the Mount, was an important impulse for Bonhoeffer in the early thirties. However, both went down different paths theologically. Therefore, to interpret Bonhoeffer’s theology, Lasserre may be drawn on in a limited and critically reflective way only.

Prof. Dr. Wolf Krötke, Nordendrasse 60, 13156 Berlin
Dietrich Bonhoeffer Study Tour

May 18 – 28, 2012

Tour Description
Visit Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic and see the major sites important in Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s life and work. Stops on the tour include his birth place, his boyhood home, university attended, pastorates, Confessing Church seminary which he directed, the monastery where he stayed during his involvement with the conspiracy against Hitler, and prison and concentration camps where he was held and finally executed. Specific places to be visited include Berlin, Zingst, Finkenwalde, Köslin, Breslau, Auschwitz, Prague, Flossenbürg, Regensburg, Munich and Ettal.

TOUR COST
Included: All hotel accommodations, all breakfasts, 7 Dinners, Entrance Fees
Not included: Airfare, Personal Expenses, Travel Insurance, Tips for Guides

TOUR LEADER
This will be the fourth Bonhoeffer Tour
Dr. Peter Frick, St. Paul’s University College, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

For further information, please contact:
Peter Frick, pfrick@uwaterloo.ca; Tel: (519) 885-1465, ext. 214

BONHOEFFER, CHRIST, AND CULTURE

The 21st Annual Wheaton College Theology Conference
April 12-13, 2012
Wheaton, Illinois

Conference Speakers include:
Jim Belcher (Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, Newport Beach CA)
Jean Bethke Elshtain (University of Chicago Divinity School)
Lori Brandt Hale (Augsburg College)
Keith L. Johnson (Wheaton College)
Timothy Larsen (Wheaton College)
Joel Lawrence (Bethel Seminary)
Charles Marsh (University of Virginia)
Stephen Plant (Cambridge University)
Daniel Treier (Wheaton College)
Reggie Williams (Baylor University)
Philip Ziegler (University of Aberdeen)

For other conference information, visit conference website at http://www.wheaton.edu/Academics/Department/Theology/Conferences-and-Lectures/Theology-Conference/Speakers

Contact Kristina Satern, Conference Coordinator, 630-752-5197
No. 13 June 1978
Society plans for November meeting in New Orleans.
Papers to be presented by Romney Moseley (Bonhoeffer and Erikson on the concept of community: Encounter between theology and the social sciences), Martin Rumscheidt (Two Voices from Prison: Boethius and Bonhoeffer), William Gould (After Thirty Years: Bonhoeffer’s Discipleship Revisited), Eberhard Bethge (Bonhoeffer and the Uses of Violence: The German Conspiracy and Modern Terrorism), and James Woelfel (The Christian Rebel: Camus and Bonhoeffer on Revolt) (abstracts of papers appear in Newsletter). Book Review by John Conway (Günter Brakelmann’s Protestantische Kriegs-theologie im 1. Weltkrieg: Reinhold Seeberg als Theologie des deutschen Imperialismus).

No. 14 September 1978
Three new members. Final plans for New Orleans meeting. Included is part of an introduction given by Paul Gerhard Schoenborn (Candler School of Theology) from a 1977 seminar on The Christology of Bonhoeffer and the New Testament Church. He writes: “Bonhoeffer has today become...virtually a nonperson in my country and in my church.” “The world around is intentionally religionless and atheistic.” “West German society lives without a historical consciousness. We did not succeed in coming to terms with the Weimar Republic and the Nazi tyranny. Nobody listens to the voices from abroad. Hardly anyone in West Germany knows that the subject ‘holocaust’ is competently dealt with in the USA.” Eberhard & Renate Bethge at Bryn Mawr College (Roian Fleck Resident-in-Religion). Bethges also to visit Atlantic School of Theology (Halifax), and churches and schools in Minnesota, Chicago, Kentucky, and Virginia.

Fragments aus Tegel published by Renate & Eberhard Bethge. Recently deposited at Columbia Univ. Library are papers of the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the churches, 1914-47 and of its American General Secretary Henry A. Atkinson (who collaborated with DB in a number of significant conferences 1931-34.) His papers “contain a wealth of material on the relations of the American churches to the peace movement, and also on the refugee question.” Conferences on the Holocaust and related issues planned for Philadelphia and Seattle. George Steiner’s article in NY Times cites Bethge’s biography of DB as “one of the few assured classics of our age, inexhaustible and uncompromising, as a classic must be, in its reading of the reader.”

No. 15 February 1979
Ten new members, including Wayne Floyd, Andrew Burgess and Prof. Richard Wangen. Report on New Orleans meeting, including Dale Brown’s response to Bethge’s paper: Cites differences in existential histories as well as differences in geography and connotations of word “terrorism.” “We need to be about removing the beam of terrorism of producing three atomic weapons each day, being the largest arms merchant in the world, manufacturing instruments of torture which are shipped to the little Hitlers around the world, actively training repressive armed and police forces in several countries, and continuing our idolatry of placing our security in vast expenditures for weapons of death and thereby robbing the peoples of the world of necessary energy and resources for life.” Celebration of Eberhard Bethge’s 70th birthday (b. 8-28-1909). International conference planned for Oxford in spring of 1980. Renate Bethge reviews TV film on DB shown in England. Her main criticism is that film portrayed DB as “a bit too soft and too openly pious.” Annual Scholars’ Conference on the Church Struggle and Holocaust planned for Spring 1979. John Boogaert’s film on DB sites now complete. Mary Glazener writing book on DB; Ruth Zerner published paper in The Rundbrief. John de Gruchy writes “life is...awesome at present...because the political situation in southern Africa becomes increasingly unstable and uncertain. Fortunately the forces of righteousness seem firm enough. Amidst it all there are the signs of hope and grace which enable us to discover anew the ‘Lord’s song in our strange land.’” De Gruchy writing book The Church Struggle in South Africa.
Meetings and Program Sessions of Interest

**A19-112  Saturday - 9:00 am - 11:30 am**

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group

Victoria Barnett, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Presiding

With the anticipated publication of the final volume in 2012, the sixteen-volume English translation of the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English Edition* (Fortress Press) is approaching completion. The series includes new translations of all of Bonhoeffer’s theological works, as well as his letters, sermons, historical documents, and other writings. Some of this material, particularly the historical documents and Bonhoeffer’s correspondence with his contemporaries, appears here in English for the first time. Energetic discussions about translation choices, historical interpretation, and theological meaning were an integral aspect of the project, which involved twenty-one translators. How will this series affect the study and interpretation of Bonhoeffer in the future? What is new or different in its translation of familiar texts? The proposed panel, consisting of three translators who have worked on several volumes in the series and a respondent who teaches in a seminary, will explore these questions.

Theme: *Discovering Bonhoeffer in Translation: New Insights from the Bonhoeffer Works, English Edition*

Panelists: Lisa Dahill, Trinity Lutheran Seminary
Peter Frick, University of Waterloo
Reinhard Krauss, Presbyterian Church

Responding: Katie Day, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia

**A20-111  Sunday - 9:00 am - 11:30 am**

Bonhoeffer: Theology and Social Analysis Group

Jennifer McBride, Wartburg College, Presiding

The increasingly important and nearly completed *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English Edition* (Fortress Press) frames the conversation of this session. Papers will either assess (using the resources of the volumes) the popular and Evangelical reception of Bonhoeffer, particularly as it is being influenced by Eric Metaxas’s best-selling biography of Bonhoeffer - *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (Thomas Nelson, 2010) - or will offer new interpretations of familiar Bonhoeffer texts by carefully utilizing the resources found within the *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English Edition* volumes.


See following page for Abstracts of this session
Robert David Nelson, University of Aberdeen

Metaxas on “Religionless Christianity”: A Test Case of Bonhoeffer’s Reception

This paper addresses the question of the extent to which popular perceptions in North America of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theology have been and are being influenced by Eric Metaxas’s biography, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. The paper examines this question through an extensive reflection upon the hermeneutical problem of the reception of Bonhoeffer’s thought by contemporary interpreters. Focusing on Metaxas’s rejection of ‘liberal’ receptions of Bonhoeffer’s idea of ‘religionless Christianity,’ the paper demonstrates that Metaxas himself reads the theology of the Tegel period from the perspective of an anachronistic and untenable interpretation of Bonhoeffer’s life and work. The paper argues that a careful scrutiny of Bonhoeffer’s writings from the Tegel period, aided by the recently published critical edition of these texts in the eighth volume of the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works, reveals a conception of the relation between Christianity and ‘religion’ that does not neatly correspond to Metaxas’s conservative evangelical worldview.

Stephen R. Haynes, Rhodes College

The Metaxas Phenomenon: A New Chapter in Bonhoeffer’s Evangelical Reception

Although American evangelicals have been drawn to Bonhoeffer since the 1970s, the German theologian’s evangelical reception has been a subject of scholarly interest for only the last decade. In 2010 the evangelical Bonhoeffer exploded into public view with the appearance of Eric Metaxas’s *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*, a new biography by an evangelical writer determined to permanently reposition Bonhoeffer in the American religious imagination. Challenging Bonhoeffer’s identity as the natural ally of mainline and liberal Christians, Metaxas casts him as a Christian hero “as orthodox as Saint Paul or Isaiah, from his teen years all the way to his last day on earth.” This paper seeks to assess the influence of the Metaxas phenomenon on Bonhoeffer’s reception among American evangelicals, as well as the evolving assessment of the evangelical Bonhoeffer by Bonhoeffer scholars.

Joseph McGarry, University of Aberdeen

Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Apocatastasis: A Challenge to Evangelical Reception

Universal human salvation was never far from the perimeter of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s theology. He directly refers to it as a consequence of his Christology, his emphasis on faith and justification as *actus directus*, and his presentation of humanity renewed in Christ through the resurrection. His adherence to these prior theological commitments leads him to speak of an “inner necessity” of *apocatastasis*. This paper details Bonhoeffer’s theological structure through his early work, drawing attention to the intricacies involved between his Christology and anthropology which point toward universal human salvation. Additionally, it will demonstrate theological continuity through his university years. It will show his conceptual outworking within *Discipleship* and its continued significance through his later theology. Though universal salvation was never more than a sigh and a hope for Bonhoeffer, he never formally moved away from the theological structure which saw it as an inner necessity.

Brant Himes, Fuller Theological Seminary

The Place of the Sermon on the Mount in Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s “Religionless Christianity”

This investigation traces Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s use and understanding of the Sermon on the Mount throughout his entire career, from a seminar paper delivered in 1925, to his development of a peace ethic in New York in 1930, and eventually to the strikingly implicit Sermon imagery in his proposal on religionless Christianity written in 1944. Certainly Bonhoeffer’s concept and application of the Sermon changes and develops throughout his life and career. However, once he accepts the principle obedience to the call of Jesus Christ in the Sermon, Bonhoeffer remains committed to taking seriously the command to concrete action. As now becomes clear, the Sermon on the Mount is - and remains - an important hermeneutic for Bonhoeffer’s exposition and application of religionless Christianity.

Matthew Puffer, University of Virginia

Three Rival Visions of Bonhoeffer’s Ethics: Interpreting Bonhoeffer in Light of DBWE

This paper argues that the editorial work done in preparation for DBW’s *Ethik* has unearthed important elements that are both promising for a better understanding Bonhoeffer’s project and for assessing diverse past interpretations of Bonhoeffer’s ethic. I offer an account of Bonhoeffer’s *Ethics* that draws from the editors’ work to consider how Bonhoeffer continued to advance and develop his thinking. Specifically, I look at how Bonhoeffer’s later essays handle the topics of lying, guilt, and the borderline case in ways that are distinct from the approach in the earlier chapters. Appreciating and drawing from past scholarly contributions, including Green, Pfeifer, and Rasmussen, as well as Dramm, Jüngel, and Schliesser, I argue that Bonhoeffer’s accounts of lying in “History and Good” and “What is Meant by Telling the Truth?” are best understood as presenting a genetic development that manifests important continuities in Bonhoeffer’s thought.
2011 Annual Dinner

Saturday, November 19, 2011

7:30 pm (gathering at 6:30 pm)

St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
1031 Franklin Street
San Francisco, California 94109

Program: To Be Announced

Cost: $35

For Reservations, contact Mark Randall
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International Bonhoeffer Society
English Language Section

Information

The Society has a new website: www.dietrichbonhoeffer.org

The Society is concerned with the rising cost of publishing the Newsletter, including the postage required for mailing. We would like to make this Newsletter available to as many members as possible by electronic distribution.

Please provide us your e-mail address and inform us if an electronic version (pdf format) would be acceptable.

Name ________________________________________________________

E-mail Address _________________________________________________

Send to: Mark E. Randall (mark.e.randall@comcast.net)
or
the Newsletter Editor Dean S. Skelley (dskelley@satx.rr.com).