

Grace and Peace!

I am very excited to be writing about my experiences at the 2007 Young Adult Ecumenical Forum on Environmental Justice. I had the great pleasure of being on the planning team of this year's event, primarily serving as the Worship Chair. One of the things that amazes me most about YAEF is how different each year's event turns out. Depending on the gifts of that planning team, the forum is transformed into something completely different. That is what makes this grassroots ecumenical movement so important to me. It truly takes advantage of the gifts that God has blessed us with.

It was very meaningful for me to gather liturgical resources from a number of different traditions to craft powerful worship experiences to nurture our faith at this event and to center ourselves as the Body of Christ every morning and night in the name of God – our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer – who unites us all. After all, this is why we came together for this event – our faith. We care about the responsibilities that God has entrusted to us for the care of God's creation and we seek forgiveness for the areas in which we have failed. We look to where God is calling us to action in such as time as this. We may come from at least a dozen different denominations and traditions but in worship, we all came together for prayer, to hear God's word proclaimed and to share at the table.

Through worship, education, reflection, dialogue, and community action, we learned about topics such as sustainability, racism, spiritual hunger, urban environmental planning, etc. Even though I was researching different aspects of environmental justice as a member of the planning team, I learned so much through the course of forum due to the incredible discussions that took place with other participants and the great speakers.

It wouldn't be a young adult ecumenical event without late night discussions lasting till 2am about the authority of scripture, the central tenants of Christianity, and the value of interfaith relations. These opportunities are what make ecumenical experiences like YAEF truly complete.

I can't wait until next year's event!

Thanks for helping make it possible!

God's Peace,
Kyle Severson