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1. Editorial, by Elizabeth McAnally
Greetings,

Welcome to the December issue of the newsletter for the Forum on Religion and Ecology. I have much to share with you this month with regards to developments in the field of Religion and Ecology, including publications, conferences, events, calls for papers, job openings, and more.

We want to let you know about a conference that is just being planned now at Chatauqua Institute in New York. The theme is “Our Elegant Universe” where scientists (such as Brian Greene) will speak in the morning and religion scholars in the afternoon. The afternoon sessions will include responses to Journey of the Universe from the perspectives of the world religions and are being organized by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim with colleagues from the Forum, including Heather Eaton, Chris Chapple, David Haberman, and James Miller. We hope you might save the dates to come June 23-29, 2013 so that we can continue the conversation with others interested in the Great Work. Stay tuned for more information in upcoming months by visiting the conference website: http://www.ciweb.org/education-lectures-week-one/

I am also happy to share a recent sermon by Tom Driver, the Paul Tillich Professor Emeritus at Union Theological Seminary. In his sermon “Provocative Thanksgiving,” Driver speaks of the urgent need for humans to care for their planetary home. Referring to Hurricane Sandy as a manifestation of human-caused global warming, he says “We will not get global warming under control until we experience a new birth of gratitude for the created world that is our home, our mother, our provider of life.” His sermon concludes with this powerful statement: “On this Thanksgiving Sunday, let us fill our hearts with love for all creation. Let us provoke one another to love the world. Let us preserve the global house in which we live, right here in New Jersey, and beneath the stars, for it is a gift that has been entrusted to us from the mind of God.” To read the sermon, visit: http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Provocative_Thanksgiving_sermon_by_Driver.pdf

I hope this newsletter supports your own work and helps you further your own engagements with the field of Religion and Ecology.

Warm wishes,
Elizabeth McAnally
California Institute of Integral Studies
Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale
Website Manager & Newsletter Editor
http://www.yale.edu/religionandecology
news@religionandecology.org

2. “Our Elegant Universe” (June 23-29, 2013 at Chatauqua Institute, NY, USA)

Chautauqua opens the 2013 Season with an exploration into the wonders of the cosmos. What theories are leading thinkers wrestling with, and how do they inform our understanding of space and time? Where do they disagree? In the morning sessions, we’ll hear from pioneering
scientists, deep space explorers and others who pursue answers to the most basic questions of existence. In the afternoon sessions, religion scholars will respond to Journey of the Universe.

http://www.ciweb.org/education-lectures-week-one/

3. “Provocative Thanksgiving” (Sermon by Tom F. Driver)

Meadow Lakes, NJ
November 18, 2012

My text is from Hebrews 10:24 – “... let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds ….” (NRSV)

Today is Thanksgiving Sunday. So I call my sermon “Provocative Thanksgiving.” I do want the sermon to provoke you, not in an irritating way, I hope, but as a provocation to a deeper kind of thanksgiving. [...]

My theme is the world that we inhabit, the planet on which we live, the air that we share with everything that breathes, the water on which all life depends, and the soil which nourishes our food. The Greeks called it the oikumene, which means “house.” From that Greek word we get our English word “ecology” as well as the word “ecumenical.” My theme is the house in which all humanity lives, and the danger that it is in. I am thinking about our responsibility for that house, and how we can best give thanks for it. [...]

On this Thanksgiving Sunday, let us fill our hearts with love for all creation. Let us provoke one another to love the world. Let us preserve the global house in which we live, right here in New Jersey, and beneath the stars, for it is a gift that has been entrusted to us from the mind of God.

Read the full sermon here:
http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Provocative_Thanksgiving_sermon_by_Driver.pdf


Music, dance and renewal of spirit at the great turning point of the year.

Winter Solstice is a contemporary take on ancient solstice rituals, when people came together during the longest night of the year to celebrate the turning point in the Earth’s journey around the sun, and the birth of a new year. Now in its 33rd year, this cross-cultural performance within the awe-inspiring space of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine has become one of New York’s favorite holiday events.

This year’s Solstice promises to be a landmark in Paul Winter’s tradition of interweaving diverse performers of the world. Joining the Paul Winter Consort will be renowned African griot
singer Abdoulaye Diabaté; dynamic vocalist Theresa Thomason; the 25 dancers and drummers of the Forces of Nature Dance Theatre; and the reunited Paul Winter Sextet, celebrating their new anthology Count Me In (http://paulwinter.com/music/count-me-in/), and the 50th anniversary of their historic jazz concert at the Kennedy White House.

Thursday, Dec. 13 – 8 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 14 – 8 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 15 – 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine
1047 Amsterdam Ave., Manhattan, NY
At 112th St., near Columbia University

Tickets: General Admission, $35 & $50 / Reserved, $80
Purchase online: http://solsticeconcert.com or call OvationTix: 866-811-4111

Visit http://solsticeconcert.com
- free download album (10 tracks)
- videos from past solstice concerts
- tickets and travel details

5. “Pray-In for the Climate” (January 15, 2013 in Washington, DC, USA)

The Interfaith Moral Action on Climate invites you to participate in a “Pray-In for the Climate,” which will occur in front of the White House on January 15, 2013, the 84th birthday of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. The action will be carried out in the spirit of Dr. King's work, and will proceed as follows:

11:00 am - Gathering at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church (1313 New York Ave., NW)
12:00 pm - Religious Procession to the White House (1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW)
12:30 pm - Prayerful Vigil asking that the President and the nation find the strength and wisdom to steer us away from the Climate Cliff

Please note: Some participants may feel called to risk arrest by nonviolently disregarding the conventional regulations and assuming positions of prayer in the area near the White House fence

To President Obama and Congress we will present the following demands:

1. Permanently refuse permits for the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline
2. Call a National Summit Conference on the Climate Crisis
3. Publicly support and advocate for:
   - a carbon fee that will generate hundreds of billions of dollars, with provisions to make sure that working families and the poor are not damaged by higher carbon prices
   - an end to subsidies to the coal, oil and gas industries
- substantial subsidies for research, development, and use of renewable, sustainable and jobs-creating clean energy sources

Survivors of Superstorm Sandy and their religious leaders from communities like the Rockaways and Staten Island in New York are expecting to participate and we hope you will agree to join us as well.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts regarding this action, and ask that you contact Steering Committee member Cynthia Harris at cynthiaharris4930@gmail.com, or by calling 202-288-8788. Please also visit our website: www.interfaithactiononclimatechange.org for additional information.

Read the full letter here: http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/a-pray-in-for-the-climate/

6. World View of Global Warming: The Photographic Documentation of Climate Change, by Gary Braasch

November 2012


The sacred Ganges River, essential to northern Indian life and source of much of Hindu religious practice, flows from a broad region in the Indian and Nepal Himalaya. The major stem of "Ganga" is the Bhagirathi River, which emerges as a large mountain stream from beneath the 28.5 km long Gangotri Glacier in the state of Uttarakhand, India, north of New Delhi. The glacier has been retreating for more than a century, recently at slightly more slowly than before, but still at a rate of 18 meters per year.

The Gangotri is the second largest glacier in India, a mountain glacier with six major and many minor tributary glaciers. Some of these side glaciers no longer connect with the central glacier. This source of the Ganges has been a holy place for more than a thousand years, the place where the Goddess Ganga touched down to earth, and thus has been the goal and destination of devout pilgrims and holy men to view and be blessed by the pure glacier water.

The photographs presented here are a preliminary report on our own World View of Global Warming journey to the Gangotri, part of our reports on climate change and water in the Himalayas. More images and information will follow.

To read full article and view photos, visit: http://www.worldviewofglobalwarming.org/

7. “Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4°C Warmer World Must Be Avoided” (Climate Change Report)
“Stand Still for the Apocalypse”
By Chris Hedges
Truthdig
November 26, 2012

Humans must immediately implement a series of radical measures to halt carbon emissions or prepare for the collapse of entire ecosystems and the displacement, suffering and death of hundreds of millions of the globe’s inhabitants, according to a report commissioned by the World Bank. The continued failure to respond aggressively to climate change, the report warns, will mean that the planet will inevitably warm by at least 4 degrees Celsius (7.2 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century, ushering in an apocalypse.

The 84-page document, “Turn Down the Heat: Why a 4°C Warmer World Must Be Avoided,” was written for the World Bank by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and Climate Analytics and published last week. The picture it paints of a world convulsed by rising temperatures is a mixture of mass chaos, systems collapse and medical suffering like that of the worst of the Black Plague, which in the 14th century killed 30 to 60 percent of Europe’s population. The report comes as the annual United Nations Conference on Climate Change begins this Monday [Nov. 26] in Doha, Qatar.

For full story, visit:
http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/stand_still_for_the_apocalypse_20121126/

To view the report, visit:
http://climatechange.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/Turn_Down_the_heat_Why_a_4_degree_centrigrade_warmer_world_must_be_avoided.pdf

8. New Books

*The Blue Sapphire of the Mind: Notes for a Contemplative Ecology*
By Douglas E. Christie
Oxford University Press, 2012
http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general/subject/ReligionTheology/Spirituality/~/dmlldz11c2EmY2k9OTc4MDE5OTgxMjMyNQ==

In *The Blue Sapphire of the Mind*, Douglas E. Christie proposes a distinctively contemplative approach to ecological thought and practice that can help restore our sense of the earth as a sacred place. Drawing on the insights of the early Christian monastics as well as the ecological writings of Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, Annie Dillard, and many others, Christie argues that, at the most basic level, it is the quality of our attention to the natural world that must change if we are to learn how to live in a sustainable relationship with other living organisms and with one another.

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Climate change is now the biggest challenge faced by humanity worldwide and ethics is the crucial missing component in the debate about what to do about this enormous threat. This book examines why thirty-five years of discussion of human-induced warming has failed to acknowledge fundamental ethical concerns, and subjects climate change’s most important policy questions to ethical analysis. This book is the first of its kind to go beyond a mere account of relevant ethical questions to offer a pragmatic guide on how to make ethical principles influential in formulating the world’s response to climate change.

Ecological Footprints: An Essential Franciscan Guide for Faith and Sustainable Living
By Dawn M. Nothwehr, OSF
Liturgical Press, 2012

The Franciscan vision offers a powerful antidote to the moral malaise that prevents ordinary Christians from making the necessary choices to live more simply and share the world’s goods more equitably. This is the driving conviction behind Ecological Footprints. Dawn M. Nothwehr unfolds the theological, spiritual, and ethical treasure trove of Christianity—especially as it has been developed and lived in Franciscan theology and tradition—as it relates to our efforts to achieve sustainable living. She succeeds admirably in presenting it all in a style that makes this book both accessible and compelling to nonspecialist readers.

Holy Ground: A Gathering of Voices on Caring for Creation
Edited by Lyndsay Moseley and the Staff of Sierra Club Books
Sierra Club, 2008
https://secure.sierraclub.org/site/Ecommerce/1058696287?VIEWPRODUCT=true&product_id=4801&store_id=1621

Religions worldwide celebrate Earth’s abundance and sustenance, and call on humankind to give thanks, practice compassion, seek justice, and be mindful of future generations. Here, leaders from many faith traditions, along with writers who hold nature sacred, articulate the moral and spiritual imperative of stewardship and share personal stories of coming to understand humans’ unique power and responsibility to care for creation. In a world polarized by “culture wars,” religious extremism, and political manipulation, this collection is a sure sign of hope.
initiative in each of the 50 states, "Faith In Action: Communities of Faith Bring Hope For the Planet," see: http://www.sierraclub.org/ej/partnerships/faith/.

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Change Everything Now: A Selection of Essays from Orion Magazine
By Emily Glaser
Orion, 2012
http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/newsfrom187/entry/7173/

The landmark essays in Change Everything Now, a new offering in the Orion Reader book series, tackle topics such as consumerism, corporatism, and even environmentalism itself. The essays collected here are not just a call to action; they’re a call to the bold and brave action commensurate with the transformation required of humanity at this moment in time. This literature of ecological urgency is a new genre evolved to address our profound ecological problems and their equally profound solutions.


Connecting areas of philosophical, theological, and ecological concern, Groundworks seeks to provide a home for books addressing some of the most profound issues of our day. It would be easy to attribute the ecological crises that confront us to unrestricted growth, unsustainable consumption, or technological overreach. At the root of them all, however, is the question of how human beings belong in and to the world. Groundworks is animated by the belief that philosophy, theology, and ecology each have something distinctive to say about this belonging, that they also have much to say to one another, and that the intersections among them demarcate a territory sorely in need of exploration.

The series will publish scholarly work from diverse fields, including environmental philosophy, ethics, ecotheology, philosophy of religion, and comparative religious thought. It seeks to foster dialogue by publishing work that transcends traditional boundaries and suggests novel perspectives on natural and built environments. While the series is built on a solidly academic base, it is open to works by nonacademic experts working at the intersection of its main areas of concern.

If you have additional questions, contact the Series Editors: Forrest Clingerman at f-clingerman@onu.edu or Brian Treanor at btreanor@lmu.edu.

For more information, including the flyer, visit: http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/groundworks-ecological-issues-in-philosophy-and-theology/

10. Calls for Papers
The European Forum for the Study of Religion and Environment (EFSRE) and the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature & Culture (ISSRNC)
Sigtuna Foundation, Sweden
May 23-26, 2013
Deadline for Submissions: January 4, 2013
http://figureground.ca/2012/10/17/nature-technology-and-religion-%C2%96-transdisciplinary-perspectives/

“Thinking and Acting Ecologically”
Tenth Annual Meeting on Environmental Philosophy
The International Society for Environmental Ethics (ISEE)
The University of East Anglia, UK
June 12-14, 2013
Deadline for abstracts: January 31, 2013
http://blog.uvm.edu/aivakhiv/2012/09/18/cfp-thinking-acting-ecologically/

“Mediated Spaces”
9th Annual Conference of the International Association for the Study of Environment, Space, and Place (IASESP)
April 26-28, 2013
University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA
Deadline for abstracts: February 1, 2013
http://www.towson.edu/iasesp/

American Academy of Religion (AAR) Annual Meeting
Baltimore, Maryland, USA
November 23-26, 2013
http://www.aarweb.org/
Religion and Ecology Group sessions at AAR
Deadline for abstracts: To Be Announced
http://fore.research.yale.edu/calendar/item/american-academy-of-religion-annual-meeting4/

Environmental Humanities
New international, open-access journal that aims to invigorate current interdisciplinary research on the environment.
Deadline for abstracts: ongoing
http://environmentalhumanities.org/

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*Thinking Nature: A Journal on the Concept of Nature*
A digital publication which serves as a forum for the study of nature and ecology through a philosophical lens.
Deadline for abstracts: ongoing
http://thinkingnaturejournal.com/

11. Events

The International Association for Environmental Philosophy (IAEP) Meeting
At the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association-Eastern Division
Marriott Atlanta Marquis, Atlanta, GA, USA
December 27-30, 2012
http://environmentalphilosophy.wordpress.com/2012-iaep-apa-call-for-papers/

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International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability
Ninth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability
International Conference Center Hiroshima, Hiroshima, Japan
January 23-25, 2013
Contact: support@onsustainability.com
http://onsustainability.com/conference-2013/

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“Everyday Religion and Sustainable Environments in the Himalaya”
March 8-10, 2013
The New School, New York, NY, USA

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“Global Environmental Justice”
Universität Bremen, Germany
April 26-27, 2013

12. Job Openings
Assistant Professor of Environmental/Ecological Theology
Concordia College, Religion Department, Moorhead, MN, USA
Application Deadline: Open Until Filled
https://hr.cord.edu/applicants/jsp/shared/frameset/Frameset.jsp?time=1354580998983

Abby Benjamin Postdoctoral Fellowship in Animal Studies
Queen’s University, Department of Philosophy, Kingston, Canada
Application Deadline: February 1, 2013.
http://www.queensu.ca/philosophy/Jobs.html

13. The Great Journey Calendar
The Great Journey Calendar combines contemporary science with heartfelt passion. It is the inspiration of Peter Adair, with graphic design by Julia Jandrisits. The calendar was conceived, written, designed and printed in Vermont. Twelve stunning images illustrate Adair’s evocative prose, as the story unfolds one month at a time. This beautiful calendar celebrates the story of our connection to an unfolding universe. Each month portrays an essential stage of the astonishing grandeur and creativity of our shared history. Through the revelations of science we learn that each human life is the magnificent individual expression of a vast cosmic journey.

This calendar is inspired and informed by the life’s work of Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker, without which the ideas expressed in The Great Journey Calendar would not be possible. Heartfelt gratitude goes to these three pioneers, whose work can be explored at www.journeyoftheuniverse.org.

http://www.earthstorycalendar.com/

14. Summer Institute: “Contemplative Environmental Studies: Pedagogy For Self And Planet” (July 28 - August 3, 2013 at Lama Foundation, NM, USA)
Workshop/Retreat for Professors
How can higher education best address environmental challenges? How can we most skillfully teach environmental studies with optimism and a sober sense of ecological realities?

This workshop focuses on the role of contemplation in environmental education. It explores the relationship between teaching environmental studies and cultivating our inner lives. Through scholarly discussions, artistic exercises, and regular contemplative practice (meditation, yoga, journaling, and nature walks), participants will investigate ways to deepen their teaching and enrich their lives at this historic moment of environmental intensification.

The Institute will take place at the Lama Foundation in the mountains of northern New Mexico. Lama is an off-grid, eco-laboratory committed to sustainable and mindful living. It is surrounded by the 1.5 million-acre Carson National Forest and draws its power from the sun, water from a spring, and much of its food in the summer directly from the garden.

Cost: $950 (includes all meals, workshop fee and workshop materials)

Program website: http://www.american.edu/sis/gep/Contemplative-Environmental-Studies-Workshop.cfm

Lama Foundation: http://lamafoundation.org

Contact: Paul Wapner at: pwapner@american.edu or Joe Brodnik at: joe@lamafoundation.org


The Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society is excited to announce the launch of its blog, “Seeing the Forest.”

The mission of the blog is to demonstrate the relevancy and importance of humanistic and historical perspectives in discussions about today’s environmental challenges. This blog seeks to provide the context that will help reveal the bigger picture, or “the forest,” explaining the long and complex relationship between humans and nature.

This blog is intended to serve as a resource and forum for those invested in and curious about the environmental humanities. Contributions are requested from scholars, students and professionals in the environmental humanities field.

http://seeingtheforest.org/

16. Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology

Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology has as its focus the relationships between religion, culture and ecology world-wide. Articles discuss major world religious traditions, such as Islam, Buddhism or Christianity; the traditions of indigenous peoples; new religious
movements; and philosophical belief systems, such as pantheism, nature spiritualities, and other religious and cultural worldviews in relation to the cultural and ecological systems. Focusing on a range of disciplinary areas including Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology and Theology, the journal also presents special issues that center around one theme. For more information, visit: http://www.brill.com/worldviews-global-religions-culture-and-ecology

For more information on other journals related to religion and ecology and to environmental ethics/philosophy, visit: http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/journals/index.html. If you know of a publication that needs to be added to this list, email news@religionandecology.org

For the archive of previous Forum newsletters, visit: http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/index.html