**Annual Meetings Themes**

**2008 Atlanta:**

As the 21st Century Report directs, the Society needs to increase the diversity of voices heard at the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SCE has decided to identify in the annual Call for Proposals some issues, figures and/or topics in religious ethics which express the diverse perspectives the Society wishes to welcome.

Proposals for our Annual Meetings are not limited to these issues, figures or topics, nor will proposals that address these subject areas be guaranteed acceptance. The Board’s intention in identifying these areas is to promote the inclusion of underrepresented voices and perspectives in the program.

Since we will be meeting in Atlanta in 2008 during the 40th anniversary year of the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the SCE Board encourages submission of proposals that engage the unfinished agenda of Dr. King’s dream.

For example, we invite proposals that examine the ways that race, ethnicity, and class intersect with:

* The prison-industrial complex and the criminal justice system
* Public policies on affordable housing and homelessness
* Access to healthcare
* Military service and militarism
* Educational opportunities
* Immigration
* Neo-liberalism
* Economic and ideological globalization
* Non-violent conflict resolution

Approved by both the SCE Board of Directors and the Co-Editors of the JSCE, January, 2007.

**2009 Chicago:**

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Since we will be meeting in Chicago in 2009 just before the inauguration of the next President of the United States and on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Society of Christian Ethics, it is a good time for us to reassess the moral qualities of political leadership and public policies. The SCE Board encourages submission of proposals that engage these subjects.

For example, we invite you to consider submitting proposals that examine the following:

* Morality and Public Policy
* Political Leadership
* Immigration
* Effects of Racism and Classism on the Support of Public Education
  + Voucher Programs
  + Public Funding
  + Urban Flight and Gentrification
* Environmental Racism
* Political and Police Corruption
* Ethical Issues over the Years
* Critical SCE/self-reflective History of SCE Responses to Issues over the Years

This Call for Papers was approved by both the SCE Board of Directors and the Co-Editors of the JSCE, January, 2008.

**2010 San Jose:**

As the 21st Century Report directs, the Society of Christian Ethics aims to address globalization and increase the diversity of voices heard at the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SCE has decided to identify in the annual Call for Proposals some issues, figures, and/or topics in religious ethics which express the diverse perspectives the Society wishes to welcome.

Proposals for our Annual Meetings need not limited to these issues, nor will proposals that address these subject areas be guaranteed acceptance. The Board’s intention in identifying these areas is to promote the inclusion of underrepresented voices and perspectives in the program.

We will be meeting in San Jose, California in January 2010. Because Silicon Valley is one of the symbols of our cultural future, it is appropriate to consider a number of issues related to the future of ethics, whether related to technology or other aspects of the human situation. And since California is one of the most diverse regions of North America, and includes people and cultures from around the world, it is appropriate to consider Christian ethics as a world phenomenon. The SCE Board encourages submission of proposals that engage these subjects.

For example, we invite you to consider submitting proposals that examine issues such as the following:

* Technology and the future
* Immigration
* Global environmental issues
* International effects of government policy
* Trafficking in sex and labor
* Indigenous cultures
* Future challenges in biomedical ethics
* Cross border complications of ethical issues
* The future of urban planning and public transportation
* International treaties and law
* Ethical issues in Asia, Africa, or Latin America
* International dimensions of race, ethnicity, and gender

**2011 New Orleans:**

As the 21st Century Report directs, the Society of Christian Ethics aims to address globalization and increase the diversity of voices heard at the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SCE has decided to identify in the annual Call for Proposals some issues, figures, and/or topics in Christian ethics which express the diverse perspectives the Society wishes to welcome.

Proposals for our Annual Meeting need not be limited to these issues, nor will proposals that address these subject areas be guaranteed acceptance. We will be meeting in New Orleans, a vibrant city with a diverse heritage and challenging future, and it seems appropriate to consider a number of specific topics. For example, we invite you to consider submitting proposals that examine questions such as the following:

* Ethics in the context of diverse Christian theological traditions
* Five years after Hurricane Katrina: Justice and disaster relief; environmental justice; urban planning, policy and reconstruction; the role of arts in reviving urban life
* One year after the Port-au-Prince earthquake: comparisons with Katrina; special challenges in the face of total physical destruction; the role of religion in reconstruction
* Politics and race
* Poverty

**2012 Washington DC:**

As the 21st Century Report directs, the Society of Christian Ethics aims to address globalization and increase the diversity of voices heard at the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SCE has decided to identify in the annual Call for Proposals some issues, figures, and/or topics in Christian ethics which express the diverse perspectives the Society wishes to welcome.

Proposals for our Annual Meeting need not be limited to these issues, nor will proposals that address these subject areas be guaranteed acceptance. We will be meeting in Washington, a city identified overwhelmingly with the diplomacy, military power, globalization and even empire. We invite you to consider submitting proposals that examine areas such as the following:

* War and peace
* Theological ethics as a resource for both peacemaking and reasoning about war-making
* US foreign policy and diplomacy
* Globalization and its impacts, particularly in regards to violence
* Political theology
* Church and state relations
* Faith-based initiatives
* Access to health care
* Immigration
* Government funding of research

**2013 Chicago: Doing Social Ethics from the Margins**

As the 21st Century Report directs, the Society of Christian Ethics aims to address globalization and increase the diversity of voices heard at the Annual Meeting. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the SCE has decided to identify in the annual Call for Proposals some issues, figures, and/or topics in Christian ethics which express the diverse perspectives the Society wishes to welcome.  
  
Proposals for our Annual Meeting need not be limited to these issues, nor will proposals that address these subject areas be guaranteed acceptance. We will be meeting in Chicago, a vibrant city with a diverse heritage and challenging future, directly after the US Presidential election and it seems appropriate to consider a number of specific topics.

The theme for 2013 is: “Doing Social Ethics from the Margins.” We invite you to consider submitting proposals that examine the central questions: (1) *"How is moral theory and ethical perspectives constructed within and influenced by marginalized spaces of disenfranchisement?"* and (2) *"What ethical contributions can be made from the underside of history when dealing with issues concerning but not limiting to:*

* *racism and ethnic discrimination;*
* *sexism and heterosexism;*
* *classism;*
* *ableism;*
* *speciesism and environmental degradation?"*

**2014 Seattle: Recovering the Theological Traditions**

The conference theme for the 2014 meeting is "Recovering the Theological Traditions."  The plenaries will attend to the general questions of the importance of "tradition(s)" and of the necessity and standards for "selective retrieval."  The question of the "development of doctrine" is more pressing in the field of Christian Ethics than in any other, and we all wrestle with it.  The two plenary addresses will be given by Lisa Cahill and Gene Outka, both esteemed members of SCE (and former presidents) who have wrestled with this issue in very instructive ways in their work.  We will hear from a Roman Catholic who is suspicious of "traditionalism" but attentive and appreciative of tradition and from a Protestant who is more appreciative of tradition than is the conventional Protestant position, but acknowledges the limits of "particularism" and emphasizes the need for selective retrieval.    
  
Paper proposals are encouraged that engage in the selective retrieval of particular traditions as a resource to reflection on contemporary moral issues.  The tradition considered need not be a (narrowly defined) theological tradition, but then theological judgment should be brought to bear on the selective retrieval of that tradition.  As in previous years the identification of a thematic emphasis is not meant to discourage proposals on worthy and timely topics not related directly to the thematic emphasis.

**2015 St Louis: Law and Christian Ethics**

The conference theme for the 2015 meeting is "Law and Christian Ethics." This theme is meant to be very broad, to cover topics ranging from theological questions (e.g.,  law and grace in the Christian life;  the relation of Law and Gospel; the Old Law and the New Law; natural law and divine command) to questions of  Christian jurisprudence (e.g., the relationship of law and morality in a pluralistic society; the moral basis of international law), to neuralgic contemporary questions of law and policy (e.g., the tension between religious freedom and women's rights or right to marriage equality). Also welcome are reflections on how Christians ought to engage questions of law and policy in a pluralistic society (e.g., with biblically based arguments; natural law arguments; pragmatic arguments). These examples, of course, are meant to be illustrative, not prescriptive or exhaustive.

**2016 Toronto: Humanity and the Global Future**

It is commonplace nowadays to note that we live within a global and post-secular world marked by deep connectivity among peoples as well as conflicts that riddle our shared world context. At the same time, we confront the global environment crisis and climate change. What contribution can religious ethics and, specifically, Christian ethics make to this global situation? What revisions are needed within ethical thinking in order to address these challenges? It is even possible to speak of a shared “humanity?” The theme for the 2016 meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics is *“Humanity and the Global Future.”* The purpose of this theme is to provoke reflection across several registers of ethical thought.

For example, papers might be given topics like these:

* environmental ethics
* responsibility to and for future generations
* cosmopolitianism and Christian Ethics
* distinctly religious (Christian, Jewish, Islamic) conceptions of humanity
* eschatology and its import for ethics
* religious humanism or post-and trans-humanism
* distinct identities and the idea of shared “humanity”
* the ethical and religious status of the future
* the future and the hermeneutics of tradition
* Christian thought and human rights
* Reconciliation after cultural conflict and devastation
* Globalization and post-colonial thought.
* etc.

In a word, the 2016 meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics along with the Society of Jewish Ethics and the Society for the Study of Muslim Ethics seeks to explore those problems that place pressure on these religions to develop new patterns of ethical thinking and responsibility.

**2017 New Orleans:** **“Structural Evil, Individual Harm, Personal Responsibility”**

The theme for our 2017 return to New Orleans is “Structural Evil, Individual Harm, Personal Responsibility.” Since 2005, Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans have been emblems of the profound and extensive personal harms that follow when crises reveal inadequacies, biases, and blind spots in human systems, all too evident this year in Chicago, Flint, Baltimore, and many other communities globally.

Thus, although the Program Committee welcomes proposals on all topics, we especially invite proposals that explore methodological and systematic approaches to structural evils that have no easily discernible actors and yet cause specific, often devastating harm to individuals and communities. Such proposals might explore the social goods that are due to persons, or questions of personal and corporate accountability. Proposals can extend, for example, to the theorization of vulnerability; the limits and capaciousness of government responsibility; the theorization of power both in building systems and in dealing justly with their shortfalls; ways of accounting for human-caused and human-discerned environmental change as an “actor” in harm; and others. They might also contribute to these topics from applied, practical, or ethnographic directions. In addition, we invite papers that draw on related fields and methods—historical and social science analysis, narrative, etc.—to illuminate these questions, possibly focusing on the period before, during, or after the hurricane. Finally, in recognition of the Reformation quincentennial, some members may want to focus on the contributions of sixteenth-century thinkers to these questions.

**2018 Portland OR: “Christian Ethics: Retrospect & Prospect”**

The modern discipline of Christian Ethics can be viewed as roughly 120 years old, and the Society of Christian Ethics turns 60 in 2019. Many well-respected senior figures of the discipline have recently died or retired to private life. Painful fractures in approach and method surface periodically in our guild, and it sometimes appears as if we are falling into subfield and methodological niches with little awareness outside our niches. Meanwhile the place of our beloved discipline in higher education seems increasingly in question. The 2018 SCE meeting will feature purposeful efforts to *look back, look around, and look ahead*, in order to build greater mutual understanding of each other and of the history, current state, and potential future of our field, in all its complexity.

Proposals are solicited that contribute to this effort by such approaches as assessing the legacy of a wide range of particular figures or methods in the modern history of Christian ethics, considering the "state of the question" at this moment on particular themes or issues, highlighting continuities and changes in ethical methodology and treatment of specific moral problems, identifying important new and emerging voices in Christian ethics, and suggesting next steps for inquiry in various areas. The presidential address will offer one version of this effort.

The two presidentially-arranged plenaries will also seek to contribute to the theme, in an unusual way. Rather than inviting outside speakers, **the first presidential plenary will be devoted to hearing from the conveners of the three SCE working groups representing historically underrepresented communities**, all of whom have agreed to develop a 15-18 minute state-of-the-question presentation reflecting key current ethical concerns and areas of current research. Working group leaders will consider such questions as: What is the cutting edge of the conversation in your working group and area/s of research? What scholarly voices are making particular contributions? What questions are most urgently being pursued? What authors and books must all responsibly informed Christian ethicists now be reading? Each working group will also provide a bibliography of 15-20 key works in their field of inquiry for distribution to all who attend this plenary, and on the website, to enrich our mutual exposure to the breadth of the field.

**The second plenary will feature *new and emerging voices* who may be important to the future of our discipline**. The president solicits recommendations of "best first books" by SCE members in Christian ethics that have been published in 2014 and later or are in the publishing pipeline for release in the next eighteen months. Authors may nominate their own book or that of another. The president will select three of these books/authors who will be invited to speak for 15-18 minutes on their books in the plenary session. A bibliography of all relevant nominated "first books" will also be distributed at this plenary, and on the website. By Monday, March 20, 2017 (same as Call for Proposals deadline), send or recommend a book to 2017-2018 SCE President David Gushee at Mercer University, 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta GA 30345, or [gushee\_dp@mercer.edu](mailto:gushee_dp@mercer.edu). 678-547-6457.