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Ayman Oweida: Co-Editor
Josiah Klassen: Co-Editor
Jennifer Hamilton: Creative Director
Brigitte Naggar: Resident Poet
Asma Falfoul: Event Reporter
Courtney Waldie: Photographer

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FRONT COVER: ILLUSTRATION BY JOSIAH HENDERSON
BACK COVER: CREE SAYING ADAPTED BY JENNIFER HAMILTON
Another year is coming to a close and with it a year’s worth of accomplishments and failures, too. As we near the end of 2012, there are many things to think about, not the least of which being exams. But let us not forget the bigger picture: let us value our accomplishments, as little as they may have been, and let us learn from our failures, as big as they may have been. There are plenty of resources in the McGill community to help you plan for and achieve success. One of those services is McGill Chaplaincy, a place to free your mind, meditate, pray, chat, study, munch on a free cookie or sip a free coffee. As we put out our last edition of Radix magazine for 2012, we hope that you will take the time to ponder and reflect on its articles, poetry, images and the various contributions before you.

This edition of Radix magazine invites reflection on hope and fear. We enter the exam season with plenty of hope, but certainly with plenty of fear too. Take the time to explore the various contributions on hope and fear in this issue of Radix magazine. They may enlighten your day and cheer your being!

With cheer and much hope!

Ayman Oweida
Radix Co-Editor
The rain falls in sheets, and all around me are faces grinning, bodies dancing, hearts pounding to the rhythm of the rain. Hands reach up, up, up... we are twirling with eyes fixed to the sky, and as the dust turns to mud under our feet we sing our thanks to the world. An old man with a cane does what I could only describe as a jig on one side of me, his toothless smile electric with emotion.

In Salabwek, Kenya, this is the first rain in months.

Images of withered, dry fields of crops, of skeletal, sickly cows, and of children with yellowed hair and protruding bellies have undeniably become all too commonplace here, largely due to drought. These are the snapshots that we see when we open the newspapers every morning, and these were, unfortunately, what I knew of Kenya when I boarded the plane to Nairobi.

Yet what I learned was so much more.

Amongst many intertwining, often joyful, stories, I learned one of great hope — a hope that becomes tangible through the actions and beliefs of those living in Salabwek; a hope that carries people through crisis still smiling, caring, and engaging, because they know that a better time may come.

It is not necessary to travel across the world to find this hope. On the streets of downtown Vancouver people struggle daily searching for reasons to hope, a struggle that is made almost impossible by realities such as drug abuse, sexual violence, and poverty. They find this hope in places such as the Lookout Centre, an unassuming safe haven located in the very heart of the troubled Downtown Eastside. Here volunteers work tirelessly to keep hope alive for those who need it most, providing food, blankets, and most importantly, companionship.

A conversation over a simple game of Scrabble can reveal archives of stories and
dreams previously kept contained only because there was no one there who would listen. Stereotypes are torn down in a heartbeat, in a handshake, or in a hug. A drug addict reveals his passion for music. A gambling addict talks proudly of his children. A mentally ill man beats everyone at Scrabble because he has memorized the dictionary, and then gives up his title, proclaiming, “Everyone is a winner!”

I have found hope in the stories and resilience of my friends as well. I was there as my best friend fought a cycle of depression resulting in her struggles with eating disorders and self-harm. I saw the bandages on her arms and the tiredness in her eyes, and I found it hard to see hope. But it was there all along, and as long as people care, it will steadfastly remain.

My friend had a bad day; she had punched holes in the wall of her hospital room, and scratch marks streaked across the sanitized whiteness of the paint. It was as though she was trapped in a cage, pacing the floor and looking desperately for a way out. That day we started a project. I cut out rectangles of brightly coloured paper, and we both wrote words of hope: freedom, acceptance, love. We kept writing until we had exhausted every positive word in our collective vocabulary. We then worked together to tape the paper over the holes and scratch marks in the wall — like a band-aid of positivity.

Perhaps all it takes to find hope is a look within. Hope comes from caring — a deep and overwhelming desire to contribute to the world and to other people. Problems may seem too large, obstacles may appear insurmountable, and at times the world may look beyond repair — but when we make the decision to care, we are making the decision to hope. Clinging to this hope we make our way out of the darkness, and into the light.

Hannah Siden is a U1 student studying International Development.
And as they walk, their shadows are monsters looming over unsuspecting windows where unsuspecting widows once waded, waiting for their grace.

PHOTO BY COURTNEY WALDIE
Courtney is a U2 Religious Studies major at McGill, simultaneously battling her way through a DEC in classical voice. Although most of her graded work requires a certain amount of creativity, she enjoys the limitless nature of photography and the artistic freedom it provides her with.
song for autumn

i think you’re every crick in my house
every drop on my windowsill
i hope you’re every crack and knock and breath
and when i ask you to tell me something nice so
i can finally fall asleep
what i mean is for you to slip into my sheets,
slip into my skin
coat my veins so that i
have something to keep me warm for the fall

Brigitte Naggar is a U2 student in Religious Studies. She likes to write music, poems, and other kinds of things that come to her in delightfully unexpected moments. She is pleased to have found a welcoming community through which to share her compact but (hopefully) effective insights.
November 13, 2012, Redpath Museum. When I first entered the auditorium, I had a clear idea of the message the seminar would send to the crowd of interested students and teachers. It would certainly reassure Muslims on the compatibility between Islam and evolution, I thought.

The message, however, was more complex and more useful than that. It focused on the importance of dialogue between science and Islamic views as there is diversity in Islamic thought and ongoing progress in evolutionary science. This is important because the Quran, which is believed to be the literal word of God, is kept on a high pedestal. This means that it is possible that there are many more references to science that have yet to be read from the text, and interpreted by Muslims. Within the Quran is a complex world of science and Islamic views. Since Muslim scientists have endorsed different views on evolution, the common line can only be drawn if we increase the dialogue. Dr. Anila Asghar started the seminar by demonstrating how this dialogue can happen despite the secular view of Islam as being separate from, and antagonistic to, science. Moreover, she showed that science and religion are deeply intertwined in some Muslim countries. In Pakistan, science and learning goals advocate the study of nature as an act of religious devotion. Some Muslim countries even consider evolution as part of their school curriculum. According to Dr. Asghar, many Muslim scientists do not see any major conflict between Islam and evolutionary theory as both perspectives are often interrelated. In the second part of the seminar, Dr. Rafiqi addressed the Islamic view on evolution in liaison with his own research on the evolution of the morphology of flies. He also delved into different philosophies from the rich source of Islamic history. Bringing in Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Arabi, he argued that a proto-concept of the theory of evolution actually existed in the collective psyche of Muslim philosophers in the past. Rejecting the idea of pure creationism as well as pure scientific explanation, he examined other possibilities in between - possibilities that aim to reconcile Islamic thought and belief with the cold hard facts and data. By the end of the seminar, the message was clear: dialogue is the key to progress in Islamic thought on evolutionary science.

Asma is a second year International Development student minoring in History of Science.
a sermon

JOSIAH KLASSEN

A preacher stood in front of his congregation.

“Brothers and sisters,” he began. He talked at a measured pace, but his voice rose with emotion.

“Brothers and sisters, I have been disturbed of late. Once I thought we understood what it meant to love. Once I thought we were on the road to peace, to understanding, to forgiveness - to love. But now I doubt, and my heart is heavy. And why do I doubt?

“I doubt because your criticism has lost its passion and hope for change. Your disagreements have dissolved from debate to hopeless division. You write mocking words in public places for your friends to see, and for your enemies, too, although you address them only rhetorically. And yes, there is no other word for them now but enemy, for you have created them so. But would you engage them, would you listen? You delight in exposing their hypocrisy, for they claim they care about human beings, they claim they are reasonable, they claim they want what is best for everybody. But do you care? Are you reasonable? Oh, but you know you are right, so a little cheap joke is just so à propos, in the face of such maddening stupidity!

“You know of whom I speak, when I say to you, “Love your enemies.” It is the people you call wrong, the people against whom you strive for control of your nation. It is the other party. You know of whom I speak when I say to you, “Do not concern
yourself with the speck in their eye.” I know it is there, don’t I know it! But there is a log in our eyes, and we are all hypocrites. You know of whom I speak when I say to you, “Do not judge.” For we will be judged, and indeed we are being judged by the very ones we judge, and judgment is the spirit of this age.

“And what do I fear? I fear that we will fail in this one task entrusted to us. I fear that we will fail to love, to love our neighbour, to love the Christ. And if we do not love, we will not know peace, and have we no peace, we can have no hope.

“But why do I hope? I hope, because there was One who knew Love. One knew Love, and the world was changed. One gentle soul today, and a city can change. One kind soul, and a nation can fall to its knees before the power of Love. The world can change, but you must change yourself.

“Love, for the time is short. Always remember, that all speech is prophecy. Beware, lest in condemning you do the Accuser’s work. But I must cut my words short, for the Spirit is bidding me silence...

“Forgive me, my sisters and my brothers.”

Josiah is a U3 student in Religious Studies and Linguistics. He wants to be many things when he grows up, and before then, too.

PHOTO BY COURTNEY WALDIE
It sometimes seems to me that I experience life as a kind of vignette; that I can 'zoom out' from behind my eyes.
One summer, I worked as a dishwasher at a Lebanese food place, from 10 PM to as late as 8 AM, 6 days a week. Often I would leave work ~6 AM, walking home through eerily deserted downtown streets...

Dripping with garlic sauce and soaked up to my short-sleeves in dishwater, I imagined what it would mean for the sky to be "rolled back as a scroll."
That’s it — the worst —
someone pours buckets of beautiful
And your head — too full, too tired
can’t even make it to unchain
the chest
The wonder tumbles in scribbles
Down the door of your Felt,
Puddles of meaning missed
for open eyes before
morning breaks

Mark is a U2 Montreal native studying
English Literature and Religious Studies. He is fond of a good read, mystical material, and hearty breakfasts.
Viola Chen is a first-year Arts student. She enjoys writing, doodling and lying awake in bed. She wanders around aimlessly in the hopes that she will reach somewhere, someday.
My name is Özlem Maviş. I am a U1 student in Religious Studies. I had lonely times in May, June, and July. I found that words were not helping me anymore. So I started to paint, especially when it was quiet in the house. Watercolour taught me two things: to feel the lighter side of my surrounding, and to love other colours - not just blue.
This morning the mirror showed me the first of many wrinkles, a line lightly etched across my forehead. No, not the first: there are also the fine sweeping lines connecting the slim husks of my nostrils to the curving corners of my mouth. And then, the deep blue veins that frame my eyes, and that no amount of rest will erase. I am cold even before I walk out into the chill morning. The pigeons tuck their beaks into their breasts; I tuck my chin into my grey scarf. In the metro, the people are tired. They stare straight ahead or at the ground. A girl is fixing her hair in the window’s reflection. Her eyes are fixed on their own dark image. She catches my gaze in the window, we both look at the ground. I have reached my stop, and we move in quiet choreographies, ascending from the bowels of the earth. We emerge, and the wind rushes to meet us. Dry yellow leaves swirl around our black boots. The girl’s hair dances on her shoulders and glows warmly in the cold morning light. Somewhere a pigeon coos with delight at the wide blue of the sky.

Julia Isler is a third year English Literature student minoring in Religious Studies.
sources of hope and fear: a muslim perspective

AYMAN OWEIDA

We often come to conclusions by analogy to similar circumstances. One common analogy is that of a growing child. A child’s behaviour is often driven by their desire to explore people’s responses to their actions. A child may break things, throw stuff, shout, spit or even hit others and I’m sure we’ve all seen classic examples of it all. The corrective action taken by the parents or the school is to show the child disappointment and disapproval at their behavior and often to punish the child in some way, like detention.

We were all children once, and we’ve all gone through this. We’ve learned our lessons and for every action we venture, we strike a balance between what that action will bring in terms of punishment and what it will bring in terms of reward. We are therefore naturally adapted to behave within the confines of hope and fear. Let us now extend this concept into religion and see how religion can provide us with a better understanding of hope and fear than what we were taught by others!

It is commonly said that the heart of a believer is suspended between hope and fear. Let us take the believer to be a Muslim, although this can apply to other believers as well. A Muslim believer is taught to fear God. But the context of fearing God is very different than fearing anyone else.

When one fears inevitable punishment in life (like detention), they are really fearing the person who stands behind that punishment (a parent, school). If the parent dies, or the person quits school then the person becomes more able to perform the inappropriate action.
Similarly, we see increasing trends across the globe of homelessness, abuse, drugs and theft among people who were not educated or who were left alone at a young age. But that’s not always the case. A consciousness of God can limit a person’s actions within the boundaries of hope and fear. People of God-consciousness perform their actions while acknowledging that God is overlooking what they do. Such people are hopeful of a better tomorrow, paradise, and fearful of a miserable outcome, hell.

The notions of paradise and hell are shared by almost all faiths, and that’s no coincidence. It makes perfect sense for a believer who worships God and who limits their actions to a divine doctrine that enjoins good and forbids evil, to expect a reward in the afterlife and to expect justice to be served to those who committed evil acts, regardless of whether they got away with it in this life or not.

The reason faith is better equipped to be the source of hope and fear is because faith is eternal, whereas everything else is not. Over 80% of the world’s population subscribes to one of the major religions, including Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism. These faiths, along with others, will always exist. To fear God and to hope from God is much more virtuous for society and is a much more robust system than any other, whether parents, school, police or anything else!

Ayman Oweida is a PhD student in the department of experimental medicine at McGill. Ayman completed his writing diploma, along with his BSc and MSc in London, Ontario. He enjoys fishing and regularly contributes to local newspapers and blogs.
the path of peter, the path of judas:
a christian reflection on hope and fear

JULIAN PAPARELLA

In the first book of his trilogy Jesus of Nazareth, Pope Benedict XVI discusses the beatitude “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” in an illuminating way. He points out how odd it is to think that something as grim as mourning could be blessed or virtuous, even desirable. The Holy Father then delineates what he sees as the two types of mourning. The first is one which has lost all hope, and has become “mistrustful of love and of truth.” It thereby “eats away and destroys man from within.” But the other kind of mourning according to Pope Benedict is one “occasioned by the shattering encounter with truth, which leads man to undergo conversion and to resist evil.” This second sort of mourning “heals,” and “teaches man to hope and love again” (86).

Judas Iscariot, the Pope writes, is of the first type. In betraying Christ to the authorities, he allows himself to be consumed by his own failings and goes and hangs himself when the chief priests and scribes reject his pleadings to have Jesus released.

Peter, having denied Jesus as he sat imprisoned waiting to be condemned, takes a very different route: the Pope’s second type of mourning. Recognizing his guilt, he remains faithful to his fellow apostles and refuses to allow his own culpability to cloud his love for the Lord, whom he encounters in the days following the Resurrection. John’s Gospel relays the story of Jesus appearing to His disciples for the third time after His Resurrection. The Lord stands alone on the shore of the Sea of Galilee as Peter and six others are out fishing on the water. Peter immediately leaps from the boat upon seeing Jesus, and the group eats breakfast together on the seaside. Then Jesus begins to ask Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Thrice Peter responds saying, “Yes Lord; you know that I love you!” Jesus thus recommissions Peter saying, “Feed my lambs,” “Tend my sheep,” “Feed my sheep,” “Follow me.” Peter allows himself to be renewed in hope and does not permit the fear that stems from his own inadequacies and sinfulness to choke his desire to persevere and surrender himself to the mercy of God. He remains devoted to the Lord despite his own shortcomings, and is given the care of Christ’s flock, His pilgrim Church on earth. Peter allowed himself to hope despite all odds, and waited as the brutality of the Passion gave way to the brightness of the Resurrection.
As people of religion and particularly as Christians, we are called to pursue the path of Peter, the path of hope, the path of renewal and repentance. We too are asked along with Simon Peter, “Do you love me?” And we, like Peter, are invited to respond not just by the affirmation of our words but by the manner of our lives. We ourselves are to continue the mission of Christ on earth: to feed His lambs, tend and feed His sheep, to follow Him, to love. In doing so we must recognize that it is by no mere coincidence that Jesus’ Proclamation of the Kingdom is accompanied by a call to “Repent!” and that no matter how great our sin or weaknesses, God’s love for us is greater still. We ourselves can do nothing, but we “can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). It is in Him that we must hope, and in His mercy that we must trust. In our pursuit of personal holiness and a virtuous life, we must keep our gaze fixed not on our own merits but on the merit of the Cross, the ultimate sign that fear and despair always give way to hope and the radiant light of a new dawn. Let us dare to take the road less traveled, let us dare to see fear not as an inescapable endpoint but a fleeting antecedent to something far greater and more certain: let us dare to hope. Let us allow ourselves to be transformed by the hope that is in us, that hope that was in Peter; not some wishful or unfounded sense of optimism, but a living hope rooted in our own redemption: the promise of eternal life that radically alters the orientation of our present. Genuine hope arises from this conviction; it is founded on the solid ground of our firm faith in something — and more significantly Someone — greater. It calls us to live the present with a sense of what will come, to root our today in the supreme and everlasting peace of tomorrow, for which we long and for which we are destined as human beings. It is this hope that brings us joy and makes us enthusiastic witnesses to the truth of the Gospel in our modern world. This is the same certain hope that enabled the Apostle Peter to witness authentically to the faith he professed, to endure patiently even to shedding of his blood and the giving his life. This hope rests not in a set of ideals, not in a compendium of doctrines, or even in the words of a sacred text, but in a person: the person of Jesus Christ. In Him we rejoice, in Him we place our trust. For He is our light and our salvation, He dispels all fear, and He alone is our hope.

Julian Paparella is a U2 Biology student from London, Ontario pursuing a Minor in Catholic Studies. He is very active in the McGill Newman Centre, a practicing Catholic, and a firm believer in the crucial interplay between faith and reason in the pursuit of truth and meaning.
Near the end of Inherit the Wind, recently performed at McGill, renowned lawyer Henry Drummond asks his client, “You don’t suppose this kind of thing is ever finished, do you?” The play, a story of a high school teacher who is taken to court for reading from The Origin of the Species in his Southern 1920s science class, depicts a trial that puts two major political figures face to face, debating evolution and creation. Despite being set in the 1920s, with the help of an incredibly talented cast and brilliant directing, this play brings into question issues of faith and science that are still relevant today. From the “buckle of the bible belt” in the 1920s to a modern-day McGill campus, the pendulum has definitely swung – yet I think that this play has something to teach all of us about the way we interact with others’ beliefs.

Ironically, as a Christian in the faculty of Science, I found myself at one point relating to the character Drummond while he fervently defended his client’s right to teach students about evolution in a town where no one dared question the Creation narrative of Scripture. I sympathized with his frustration as he asked the courtroom to listen to the possibility of a truth different to what they had been taught. Drummond defends the right to think – the right to question information that has been handed down to us and decide for ourselves what we believe. A pretty basic right, but one that we too often forget to use. I think this is the key theme of the play. Both religion and science pose the danger of forcing presuppositions and beliefs on those who wish to be part of their community, without thinking to listen to the other side. If both religion and science are a search for truth, it’s crucial that they interact rather than exclude one another. For this reason, I think Inherit the Wind was a great demonstration of the prejudices and assumptions we’re prone to make in both religion and science when faced with beliefs different from our own. I also believe that a strong belief system, when questioned, will only become stronger. One of the pivotal steps in my becoming a Christian was questioning the faith that I thought I had in God. Henry Drummond and his opponent Mary Brady portray an argument that continues to this day and that forced me to consider the importance of using my right to think while discussing my own beliefs and those of others.

In order of personal importance, Sandra is a Christian, a fourth year Neuroscience student, and a lover of food of every kind.
Next Issue:

Beyond Words

Submission deadline: January 21, 2013.

Think we’re biased? One, two, three-sided? So do we! We’re an inter-faith student magazine, and we’re looking for more perspectives: Hindu, Sikh, Native American, Shinto, Buddhist, Secular Humanist, Jewish, Baha’i and others. Submit your creative writing, opinions, artwork, ideas, quotes and more by January 21.

radix@mail.mcgill.ca
Your Neighbour’s Faith
McGill Chaplaincy regularly visits Montreal’s diverse places of worship. This semester included a visit to a mosque, an Orthodox Christian parish and a Sikh Gurdwara. Contact chaplaincy@mcgill.ca for next semester’s events!

Radix looking for Volunteers
Like what you see? Believe in student creativity, and inter-faith collaboration? Help us do it better! We can always use help in marketing, web-development, research, distribution and much more! Email us to join the community. radix@mail.mcgill.ca

Ancient Wisdom Lies At Your Feet
It’s free! Just bring yourself. McGill Ecumenical Chaplaincy Try walking meditation using a labyrinth on campus. Every Tuesday afternoon 1-5pm, Break Out Room, 2nd Floor SSMU Building. For more information visit: Labyrinth McGill on Facebook or www.mcgill.ca/students/chaplaincy

Zen Meditation
Starting September 19, 2012 until December 12, 2012 Every Friday, 8:30am sharp to 9:30am Instructor: Myokyo Zengetsu Location: Birks Chapel, 2nd Floor, Birks Building, 3520 University Street For more info: Call 514-398-4104 or e-mail chaplaincy@mcgill.ca

Newman Centre
3484 Peel St, 398-4106 newmancentre@mail.mcgill.ca www.newmancentre.org Did you know that Roman Catholic Mass is held conveniently on campus several times per week?

Rabbit Hole Café
Vegan Kitchen Fridays 12:30-3:30 3625 Aylmer, downstairs Donations of $2.00 or a non-perishable food item are appreciated. www.yellowdoor.org

FREE ADS FOR SPIRITUAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUPS!

The Muslim Students Association of McGill
We aim to provide spiritual, social & educational services. We offer weekly study circles, free Islamic educational materials, Ramadan services, lectures/conferences, and a wonderful library called House of Wisdom. We also have many community events to serve others (ex. Project Downtown), as well as exciting social events (ex. ski trips, cultural dinner nights, MSA Frosh, and so much more!) Come drop by & say hi to us in our office (Shatner building, room B09.)

McGill Student Parents’ Network
The MSPN provides support to McGill students who are parents. Regularly we offer free of charge to McGill students: in-home babysitting, support group meetings, study sessions for parents with babysitting for children. Interested families should contact the MSPN.

STAND
Engaging students in advocating against genocide and mass atrocities

Conflict-Free Campus Initiative
This campaign works to educate the McGill community about the conflict in the DRC and the role of “conflict minerals”.

Fundraising for the Valentino Achek Deng Foundation
STAND McGill also holds fundraising events to benefit the VAD Foundation which builds a school complex in post-conflict South Sudan.

mcgill@standcanada.org www.standcanada.org Tuesdays @ 5:30 in the Arts Lounge
OIKOS Project  – what’s life worth to you?

Join the conversations!
neil.whitehouse@mcgill.ca
McGill Ecumenical Chaplain

Economy – Ecology – Ecumenism

International Students!
Are you freezing?
Lightly used coats, clothing, shoes, and boots are available free of charge to International Students. Stop by Chaplaincy Services.

Orthodox Christian Fellowship
Are you an Orthodox Christian, or interested in Orthodoxy? Come out to our weekly meetings in the Claude Ryan Library in the Newman Centre (3484 Peel, 3rd floor) at 6-7:30pm every Thursday for discussion with a great group facilitated by an Orthodox priest. Otherwise, join us for a potluck, event or monastery trip! mcgillstudentsocf@gmail.com

Radical Christian Student Association
Radical? Christian? Hungry? That’s us!!! Join us for dinner, discussion, and worship. Location: McGill Chaplaincy Meeting Time: Every Friday 6:00 - 9:00PM For more info. Visit us at www.rcsamcgill.com To contact email: rcsa.mcgill@gmail.com.

Ghetto Shul
House of Prayer

ERRATUM
Last time we advertised a Prayer Breakfast. Our mistake, it doesn’t exist! We sincerely apologize to all the hungry students who stormed Birks en masse only to find no food awaiting their arrival, and we hope that they were nevertheless able to find the peace to pray, and sate their spiritual hunger despite their physical pain. Also please note the changes to the Zen Meditation times.

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BEFORE THE LAST TREE DIES AND THE LAST RIVER IS POISONED AND THE LAST FISH IS CAUGHT, WE WILL REALIZE THAT WE CANNOT EAT MONEY.