

Students seek to revive a progressive movement

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Progressive Christian college students hope to reconstitute a movement that propelled young adults into pro-civil rights and antiwar activities before it was disbanded decades ago. The U.S. Student Christian Movement, which officially ended more than 40 years ago, will be revived at an October 8-11 meeting at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

"Students will come together to discuss how they will collectively put their faith into action toward progressive Christian concerns," said Luciano Kovacs, North American regional secretary of the World Student Christian Federation, in a statement released by the National Council of Churches.

"SCM USA will provide the coordination of ecumenical student activities in the U.S. and subsequently connect U.S. students with the rest of the global federation." Kovacs said students hope to address issues such as hunger, poverty, immigration, racism and worldwide ecological problems.

In the 1950s and '60s, the Student Christian Movement was an ecumenical network that paralleled the work of the National Council of Churches.

Students who have been involved in "New Fire" meetings prior to recent assemblies of the council seek to reorganize the national movement, said Philip Jenks, a spokesperson for the National Council of Churches.

A regional conference of the World Student Christian Federation was held in San Francisco in January 2009 and prompted an initiative to begin the new national Student Christian Movement. —RNS