

A Communion of Communities:
Being Lutheran in A Globalizing World
December 1 (arrival) -12 (departure), 2009

This seminar is envisioned to equip North American leaders as multipliers in deepening and widening ecumenical and communion relationships in their respective communities. On the other hand, we continue to find ways on how the local communities shape the wider (global and regional) understanding and work of deepening ecumenical and communion relations. In order to continue to uphold each other in our “bringing it home” journey, we will find ways to support each other through networking. We hope that member churches would be able to use your learning and gifts in various ways beyond our time in Geneva.

THE SEMINAR

Arrival. All participants will stay at the John Knox Center (JKC), located at 27, chemin des Crets de Pregny, 1218 Geneva, Switzerland. The JKC phone number is +41 22 747 0000. At 6:30 pm, 1 December, we will have supper together at The JKC followed by a get-acquainted session where we will introduce ourselves, get to know each other, and share what brings us to this seminar. We will also share some logistical information and visit possibilities in Geneva.

Daily session. Most of our sessions will be held at the Ecumenical Center, located at 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. Our usual daily schedule, except where noted, or where adjustments must be made at a later time, the shape of the days will be like this:

- 8:30 – worship in the Ecumenical Center Chapel
- 9:00 – plenary session I in Salle II-III
- 10:45 – break
- 11:00 – small groups (in Salle II, III, VIII, and sitting area outside DTS)
(the group may decide to end early for networking and further conversations with Ecumenical Staff)
- 12:30 – lunch
- 13:30 – plenary session II in Salle II-III
- 14:30 -- break
- 14:45 – the day in context: _____ (participant-led discussion)
- 15:30 – conclusion (on most days)

After our common time, you can shape the rest of the day as you choose, making time to prepare for the next day, arranging for your evening meal, and following any number of the possibilities of Geneva before you rest.

We will have various speakers from various ecumenical bodies during plenary sessions with Q and A time. The small group reflections are very vital in our seminar. This is where we will share experiences and thoughts, network, learn from each other’s local context, discuss deeper some challenging learning and questions, start to form and share plans for local ministry, and create a community. There will be various possibilities in shaping this small group discussion which will be shared later.

In order to be able to envision our future roles as multipliers, we strongly recommend journaling. The schedule does not specifically tell when to do this as each one has its own style or mood to reflect and write. Nevertheless, these written reflections would be helpful in making your plans and their implementation when you return to your community.

Seminar requirements in Geneva:

1. Participants are expected to come to each day's sessions prepared for active participation in discussions, based on thoughtful reading of the assigned texts.
2. The principle requirement/s to receive credit will be shared later or you may contact Michael Trice (ELCA) or Paul Johnson (ELCIC).
3. In addition, participants are invited to provide these two forms of leadership:

a. Worship leadership

Participants in this seminar will plan and lead the morning worship at 8:30 a.m. in the Ecumenical Centre chapel. Teams of 3-4 participants will sign up for teams and plan the services during the first days of the course. Bring along with you some ideas or creative resources for this purpose that relate to the themes of the course and reflect your own contexts. Other ecumenical worship resources will also be available at the ecumenical center.

b. Participant led discussions

Participants will be responsible for bringing in additional perspectives, further readings, and experience from their own contexts, in order to lead discussions during the seminar

Here is an tentative overview of themes throughout the seminar:

A. A COMMUNION OF COMMUNITIES

Wednesday, 2 December: Being the Lutheran Communion within the *Oikoumene*

Objective: To explore what it means to be a communion of churches in international, global and ecumenical contexts.

Thursday, 3 December: -- The Topography of Ecumenical Dialogues in Pursuit of Church Unity and its impact on local and global ministry

Objective: To explore the major trends of ecumenical dialogue and relationship today. Identify these dialogues and relationships central to being Lutheran today.

Friday, 4 December: Diakonia

Objective: Develop a deeper awareness of the *diaconal* calling of the church surrounding humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and the realities underlying strategies for addressing issues, especially hunger, poverty, climate change and illegitimate debt.

Saturday, 5 December: Trip to Taize Community and ruins of the Abbey of Cluny We will depart at 8:00 am from the JKC. Expected returned to the JKC is between 6:00 and 7:00 pm.

Taize is an international, ecumenical community founded there by Brother Roger in 1940. You may visit: <http://www.taize.fr/en>

The Abbey of Cluny in Burgundy was the center of a major monastic movement in the Middle Ages. Its church was the largest Christian building in the world until St. Peter's Basilica was rebuilt in Rome in the 16th century. You may visit: <http://www.sacred-destinations.com/france/cluny-abbey.htm>

Sunday, 6 December

We gather at the JKC lobby at 10:00 am to proceed to the church. Sunday worship is at 11:00 a.m. at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Geneva, 20 Rue Verdaine. The rest of the day is free for preparation, exploration, and rest.

B. BEING LUTHERAN IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

Monday, 7 December: Joys and Challenges Facing Churches Today (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America)

Objective: To identify and translate the joys, struggles, gifts, assets and challenges of the communities inside the Lutheran communion.

Tuesday, 8 December: The *Oikomene* within God's Ecology and Economy: When Empire Fails

Objective: To develop a greater awareness of the current financial crisis and other challenges that affect the fundamental integrity of relationship.

Wednesday, 9 December: Being Lutheran Christians in Inter-religious World

Objective: To develop a greater awareness of the unique challenges posed by inter-religious realities and how churches can more effectively engage these realities

Thursday, 10 December: On the Freedom of a Communion: Lutheran Christians in the Global Square

Objective: A greater familiarity with the importance, processes, and challenges facing the church's international advocacy work, including in UN-related fora

Friday, 11 December: Bringing it all home

Objective: To provide time for reflection and writing of ideas and strategies to use in local communities.

Closing Worship and Celebratory concluding supper

Planning and Coordinating Team

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