

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Dates: January 8-24, 2008 (arrival no later than the 8th, depart no earlier than the morning of the 24th)

Place: Geneva, Switzerland

Open to: M.Div. and M.A. students from ELCA seminaries (limit 24) and students in theological degree programs in the Global South (limit 10)

Objectives:

- to hear and experience dimensions and activities of the global ecumenical movement
- to interact with and learn from students, teaching team and Ecumenical Center staff from multiple global contexts
- to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of what it means for local churches to be part of a global communion of churches
- to understand how globalization, interfaith realities and cultural differences challenge and are being addressed by the ecumenical church

Format: : Presentations/discussions with the teaching team and Ecumenical Center staff persons, as well as discussion in small reflection groups. These sessions will take place at the Ecumenical Center in Geneva. Engaged, interactive involvement of all is expected. One day will also be at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, as well as shorter visits to the Reformation Museum and UN-related organizations. There will be a total of ten days of class, normally for 5-6 hours a day. Participation in at least one Sunday of worship with the English-speaking congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Geneva is expected.

Themes:

- The work of the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and other confessional families
- The meaning and implications of being a Lutheran communion of churches in an ecumenical context
- The diversity of ecumenical dialogues and approaches in pursuit of church unity
- The particular challenges facing churches in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe
- How neoliberal globalization challenges what it means to be the church
- The necessity and challenges of interfaith dialogue and diapraxis
- Ecumenical efforts at humanitarian assistance and sustainable development in situations of poverty and conflict

- The involvement of the church in international affairs, human rights and advocacy
- How churches in different areas of the world perceive one another
- The global, cross-cultural experience of reading the Bible, worship and spirituality in venues such as the English-speaking Lutheran Church of Geneva.

Required readings: will include at least two books and a variety of shorter readings (to be distributed)

Other requirements: engaged participation in the presentations and cross-cultural discussions (plenary and small groups), and daily written reflections in response to key questions, to be compiled and submitted as a paper at the conclusion of the course.

Coordinators and Teaching Team: Rev. Dr. Karen Bloomquist (LWF Department for Theology and Studies) and Dr. Michael Reid Trice (ELCA Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations), with additional teaching team members: Rev. Dr. Robin J. Steinke (Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg), Rev. William Strehlow (retired ELCA pastor in Geneva), Rev. Debra Wells (Luther Seminary), and a teaching participant from the Global South (TBD)

Estimated costs (depending on currency exchange), in addition to airfare to be arranged by the participant (est. \$700-800), will be a total of approximately \$800 for two weeks of accommodations and meals. Students share a room with bathroom facilities at the John Knox Retreat Center in Geneva. Breakfast is included with the room charge. Additional meals (midday meal at Ecumenical Center and evening meal) will be on your own. Possible optional trips (e.g., to Taizé, the Ecumenical Institute at Strasbourg, or skiing) are the responsibility of the student.

Registration deadline: October 1, or as soon as places reserved for each ELCA seminary are filled. Reserve early to secure your participation. To reserve a place, send a brief statement indicating why you are especially interested in this course, former ecumenical experience and interest, along with a non-refundable registration fee of \$150.00 (checks made out to the “LWF”). Send to Dr. Michael R. Trice, Associate Director, Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations, ELCA, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago Illinois 60631. For further information, please contact Karen Bloomquist at kbl@lutheranworld.org or Michael Trice at Michael.trice@elca.org.